



The Ten Principles Of The Baal Shem Tov

The following is a summary of the principles that the Baal Shem Tov taught his holy students. This precious text was found in the possession of a grandson of the Baal Shem Tov in Hamburg (copied from the holy handwriting of the Admor Moharash).

1. The entire Torah and the entire world contain nothing but the light of the Infinite One (blessed be God) concealed within them. All the verses that speak of this, such as "there is no other than God" and "I fill the heavens and the earth," are to be taken literally.
2. The "exile of God's Presence" refers to the life-force and divine power that gives a person life and existence even at the moment that he is transgressing God's will.
3. The evil inclination and lust are agents of God. They carry out God's will to mislead a person in order that he will overcome them.
4. Having no [divine] source, evil does not come down from heaven. Nevertheless, evil that exists has an inner power giving it life. And this [inner power] is total goodness. So if you look at the inner aspect of evil, you will only see the good in it.
5. A person has to cling to the words that s/he speaks. Because each word contains a soul and divinity, when you cling to them, you are connected to divinity.
6. Everything that happens in the world, no matter how insignificant, comes from God. And so do not concern yourself with whether or not what has occurred is in accordance with your will.
7. Neither thinking about the day of one's death nor the fear of punishment in hell will arouse a person's heart to serve God. But yearning to cling to the source of life and goodness will do so. And neither fasting nor afflicting oneself will be of any help. But forgetting oneself out of the depth of one's yearning will do so.
8. Every person in his own right is [essentially] a complete spiritual Torah. If he goes in God's path, that [Torah] is absorbed into his being, according to his level.
9. When a person prays for something that he needs, he should pray for the divine life-force hiding within that thing and giving it life, which is now suffering because of whatever it is lacking. And so one should ask God to have pity on His life force that is hidden in that thing.
10. God's Providence extends to all created beings, even to inanimate objects and plants. There is nothing that is not viewed from above in every detail. Everything was made with a particular intent. And a word to the wise is sufficient.