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The True Joy

"Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!"

Psalms 32:11 NKJV

Our winter festival, the Farsang, is the time for happiness. Unless there is a sick person in the house, or the family is mourning, the households follow traditions handed down by their ancestors. The revelers frequently don masks to emphasize the joy and merry-making during the festivities.

Life ought to be like a merry, joyful song, and not like a funeral elegy - as professed by some people of pessimist leanings. It is the will of God that our life is filled with a joyful, happy, and cheerful outlook. The reason why we aren't always in that state of mind is that we pursue the magical world of unreachable wishes, and enjoyments. We are like that child who lived with his parents in a house on the hilltop. Every morning he would sit on the front steps of the house, and he would look at the valley below. He frequently sighed: *How small is our house. I would be so happy if I lived in a palace with golden windows.* One morning he sighted the house of his dreams; it's glistening windows lit up the area far and wide. He decided to go down to the valley to see up close the house he found so beautiful. He started next morning and arrived by sunset. But what had happened to the glistening palace he admired from the top of the hill? Standing right next to it, he saw a dilapidated, empty house. He threw himself on the ground, weeping and sobbing. When he lifted his head and looked up the valley, through the shimmering drops of his tears, he spotted a sparkling point. It was his family home on the top of the hill. Lo and behold, its windows gleamed like pure gold in the setting sun.

It is striking how much we adults resemble that daydreaming child. Day after day, we are tempted by a house created by our imagination, a home far off in the distance. We always seek the joys of life at a place where actually there is no true joy. We all hope the day will come when we enter that house where joy and happiness await us.

True joy and virtuous happiness are born of moral living: honorable humane behavior, in-depth thinking, support of our neighbors, and the carrying out of good deeds. Our joy

commences from our kindhearted thoughts and actions. That sort of joy is not attained easily, because we must work hard for it. It needs to be accumulated like a bee would gather nectar. As we journey through the garden of life, we accumulate our joy by drawing it from the flowers of our life's struggles. The largest measure of joy will go to those who have completed the greatest measure of good deeds. Each benevolent act of our life, such as helping others, serving the advancement of humanity, and getting our daily work done in a respectable manner undoubtedly contribute to the true joy of life. Those things that construe the most valuable part of our life, and bring the most joy, are attainable by all of us. *Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!*

God has created all of us for a life that brings us health, strength, financial and spiritual wealth, and enjoyment. Through its warmth, the sunlight brings about millions of miracles to seeds, roots, flowers, and trees. It kindles a zest for life in the natural world, and in the human soul. A biologist said it once: *I have never watched a sunrise without feeling its invigorating effects.* Sunlight is a precious gift that creates joy for the entire planet and for the human soul. Joy is the reflection of our state of mind, according to the deeds we have done for others. Together, a virtuous state of mind and our good deeds open a gusher of joy and happiness.

It is the time of Farsang; the faces of the children of God ought to radiate happiness and cheerfulness. Indeed, we possess the capability to live in spiritual harmony with God and our fellow human beings - not only in the afterlife, but right here on this planet. Jesus emphasized, too, the goodness, truthfulness, fairness, and gentleness we can achieve during our Earthly lives. He proclaimed the Gospel of faith and joy: be joyful you pure of heart who seek the Kingdom of God! Our faith is the wellspring of our spiritual joy. God created human beings for a faith-filled life, for productive work, and for spreading joy. God created human beings with a destiny to follow the calling to reach perfection. Let our faith in God proclaim the cheerfulness and joyfulness, and the good news of the Gospel. Let our faith be the sunshine that warms our lives when we fulfill our fateful duties in this life. May our faith in God mold us into human beings who live with the joy of Farsang, human beings who consider themselves truthful, joyful and satisfied. May we rise above the concerns of our everyday lives, and fill our spirits with light and happiness, so we remain the builders of a new, always improving moral and humane life. *Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart! Amen.*