



NASO

Sameness Is a Shame

Why King David's "Songs" Missed the Music

PARSHAH OVERVIEW

Naso

Naso

Completing the head count of the Children of Israel taken in the Sinai Desert, a total of 8,580 Levite men between the ages of thirty and fifty are counted in a tally of those who will be doing the actual work of transporting the Tabernacle.

G-d communicates to Moses the law of the *sotah*, the wayward wife suspected of unfaithfulness to her husband. Also given is the

law of the *nazir*, who forswears wine, lets his or her hair grow long, and is forbidden to become contaminated through contact with a dead body. Aaron and his descendants, the *Kohanim*, are instructed on how to bless the people of Israel.

The leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel each bring their offerings for the inauguration of the altar. Although their gifts are identical, each is brought on a different day and is

individually described by the Torah.

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

There's comfort in predictability, but also a kind of dullness. Where's the line between a life that feels stable and one that feels stuck?

TEXT 1

Numbers 7:6-9

ו. וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת הָעֲגָלֹת וְאֶת
הַבָּקָר וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם אֶל הַלְוִיִּם.

ז. אֶת שְׁתֵּי הָעֲגָלֹת וְאֶת אַרְבַּעַת
הַבָּקָר נָתַן לְבְנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן כַּפִּי
עֲבֹדָתָם.

ח. וְאֶת אַרְבַּע הָעֲגָלֹת וְאֶת
שְׁמֹנֶת הַבָּקָר נָתַן לְבְנֵי מֵרָרִי
כַּפִּי עֲבֹדָתָם בְּיַד אִיתָמָר בֶּן
אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן.

ט. וְלְבְנֵי קֹהַת לֹא נָתַן, כִּי עֲבֹדַת
הַקֹּדֶשׁ עֲלֵהֶם, בְּכַתְּף יִשְׂאוּ.

6. So Moses took the wagons and the cattle and gave them to the Levites.

7. He gave two wagons and four oxen to the sons of Gershon, according to their work.

8. And he gave four wagons and eight oxen to the sons of Merari, according to their work under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

9. But to the sons of Kohath he did not give, for incumbent upon them was the work involving the holy [objects], which they were to carry on their shoulders.

The sons of Kohath had the task of carrying the holiest vessels on their shoulders.



TEXT 2

Maimonides,
Mishneh Torah, Laws
of the Temple
Vessels 2:12-13

בַּעֲת שְׂמוֹלִיכִין אֶת הָאָרוֹן מִמָּקוֹם לְמָקוֹם אֵין מוֹלִיכִין אוֹתוֹ לֹא עַל הַבְּהֵמָה וְלֹא עַל הָעֶגְלוֹת, אֲלָא מִצְוָה לְנוֹטְלוֹ עַל הַכֶּתֶף.

לְפִי שֶׁשָּׂכַח דָּוִד וַיִּנְשְׂאוּ עַל הָעֶגְלָה גְּפָרִץ פְּרִץ בְּעוּזָא.

אֲלָא מִצְוָה לְנִשְׂאוֹ עַל הַכֶּתֶף, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "כִּי עֲבוֹדַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ עֲלֵיהֶם בַּכֶּתֶף יִשְׂאוּ".

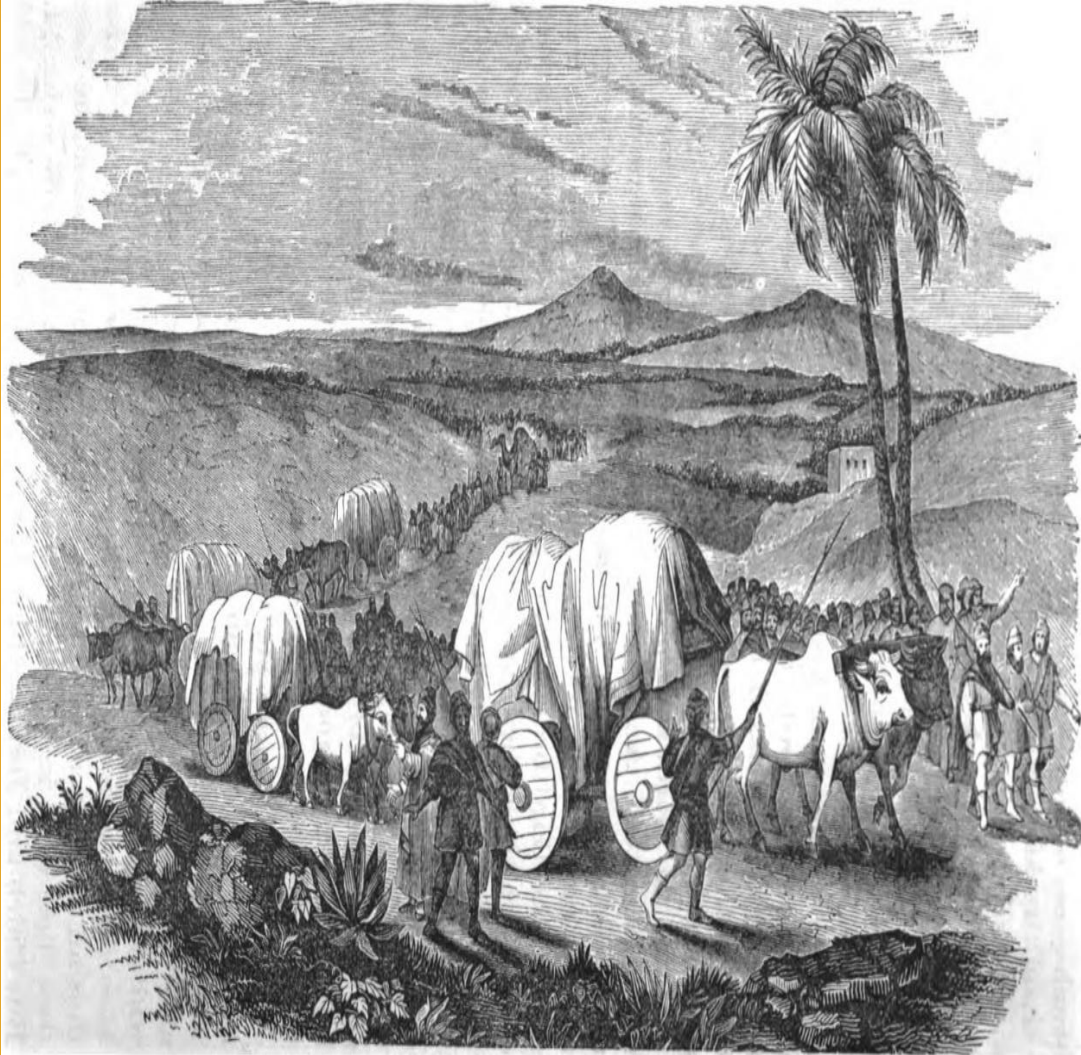
כְּשֶׁנוֹשְׂאִים אוֹתוֹ עַל הַכֶּתֶף נוֹשְׂאִין פָּנִים כְּנֶגֶד פָּנִים, וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם לְחוּץ וּפְנֵיהֶם לְפָנִים

When the ark is transported from place to place, it should not be transported on an animal or on a wagon. Instead, it is a *mitzvah* for it to be carried on one's shoulders.

Since David forgot and had it transported on a wagon, there was an outbreak of Divine anger at Uza.

Instead, it is a *mitzvah* to carry it on one's shoulders, as the verse states, "For the holy task is their obligation. They shall carry it on their shoulders."

When the Levites carry the ark on their shoulders, they should carry it face-to-face, with their backs pointed outward and their faces inward.



We see that it is a *mitzvah* to carry the ark specifically on the shoulders and in no other way.

The Holy Ark's Timeline: From Mishkan to Jerusalem



TEXT 3

II Samuel 6:2-7

ב. וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְכָל הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ
מִבְּעֵלֵי יְהוּדָה לְהַעֲלוֹת מִשָּׁם אֶת אֲרוֹן
הָאֱלֹקִים אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא שֵׁם שָׁם ה' צְבָאוֹת
יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרֻבִים עָלָיו.

ג. וַיִּרְכְּבוּ אֶת אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹקִים אֶל עֲגָלָה
חֲדָשָׁה, וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ מִבַּיִת אַבִּינָדָב אֲשֶׁר
בַּגְּבֻעָה, וְעֹזָא וְאַחִיו בְּנֵי אַבִּינָדָב נֹהֲגִים
אֶת הָעֲגָלָה חֲדָשָׁה.

ד. וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ מִבַּיִת אַבִּינָדָב אֲשֶׁר בַּגְּבֻעָה
עִם אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹקִים, וְאַחִיו הִלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי
הָאֲרוֹן.

ה. וְדָוִד וְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל מְשֻׁחָקִים לִפְנֵי
ה' בְּכָל עֲצֵי בְרוֹשִׁים וּבְכַנּוֹת וּבְנִבְלִים
וּבְתַפִּים וּבְמִנְעֻנְעִים וּבְצִלְצְלִים.

2. And David arose and went with all the people that were with him, from Baale-Judah, to bring up from there the ark of G-d, which is called a name, the name of G-d Who dwells upon the cherubim [being] upon it.

3. And they set the ark of G-d upon a new cart, and they carried it from the house of Avinadav that was on the hill; and Uza and Achyo, the sons of Avinadav, drove the new cart.

4. And they brought it out of the house of Avinadav, which was on the hill, with the ark of G-d, and Achyo went before the ark.

5. And David and all the house of Israel made merry with all [manner of instruments of] cypress wood, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with sistra, and with cymbals.

TEXT 3

II Samuel 6:2-7

ו. וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד גֹּרֵן נָחוֹן, וַיִּשְׁלַח עֲזָא אֶל
אָרוֹן הָאֱלֹקִים וַיֵּאָחֵז בּוֹ כִּי שָׁמְטוּ
הַבָּקָר.

ז. וַיִּחַר אֵף ה' בְּעֲזָה וַיִּכְהוּ שָׁם הָאֱלֹקִים
עַל הַשָּׂל, וַיָּמָת שָׁם עִם אָרוֹן הָאֱלֹקִים.

6. And they came to Goren-Nachon, and Uza put forth [his hand] to the ark of G-d, and grasped hold of it, for the oxen swayed it.

7. And G-d's anger was kindled against Uza; and G-d struck him down there for his error; and there he died by the ark of G-d.

TEXT 4

Talmud, Sotah 35a

דַּרְשׁ רַבָּא: מִפְּנֵי מָה נֶעְנַשׁ דָּוִד?

מִפְּנֵי שֶׁקָּרָא לְדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה
"זְמִירוֹת", שְׁנֵאמַר: "זְמִירוֹת הֵיוּ
לִי חֻקֶּיךָ בְּבֵית מְגוּרַי".

אָמַר לוֹ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: דַּבְרֵי
תוֹרָה שֶׁכָּתוּב בָּהֶן "הִתְעַיֵּף עֵינֶיךָ
בוֹ וְאִינְנוּ", אַתָּה קוֹרָא אוֹתָן
זְמִירוֹת!? הֲרִינִי מִכְּשִׁילְךָ בְּדַבָּר
שֶׁאֲפִילוֹ תִּינוּקוֹת שָׁל בֵּית רַבָּן
יִזְדַּעֲוּן אוֹתוֹ, דְּכָתִיב: "וְלִבְנֵי קְהָת
לֹא נָתַן כִּי עֲבַדְתָּ הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְגוֹ",
וְאִיהוּ אֲתִיבָהּ בְּעַגְלָתָא.

Rava taught: For what reason was David punished with Uza's death?

He was punished because he called matters of Torah "songs," as it is stated: "Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage" (Psalms 119:54).

G-d said to him: Matters of the Torah are so difficult and demanding that it is written: "Will you set your eyes upon it? It is gone" (Proverbs 23:5), and you call them songs? For this reason I will cause you to stumble in a matter that even schoolchildren know, as it is written concerning the wagons brought to the Tabernacle: "But to the sons of Kohath he did not give, for incumbent upon them was the work involving the holy [objects], which they were to carry on their shoulders" (Numbers 7:9). David erred and brought it in a wagon.

זְמִירוֹת הָיוּ לִי חֻקֶיךָ בְּבַיִת מְגוּרָי

Zemirot hayu li chukecha b'veit megurai

Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage

QUESTION

What was so bad about calling the Torah “songs” that it warranted such a tragic punishment?”



The Ark contained the word of G-d, the holy tablets given at Mount Sinai.

TEXT 5A

Exodus 32:16

וְהִלְחַת מֵעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹקִים הֵמָּה, וְהַמְּכֹתֵב
מִכְּתָב אֱלֹקִים הוּא, תְּרוֹת עַל הִלְחַת.

Now the tablets were G-d's work, and the inscription was G-d's inscription, engraved on the tablets.

G-d engraved his
words directly onto
the tablets.

Miraculously, the
writing could be read
from all four sides.



TEXT 5B

Rabbi Yom Tov
Lipman Heller,
Tosafot Yom Tov,
Avot 5:6

"והמכתב". לשון הרב ברטנורא "שֶׁהָיוּ נִקְרָאִים מִכָּל הַד' צְדָדִים".

והקרוב אלי שֶׁהָיָה דְבָר נִסְיֵי וּמַעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹקִים הֵמָּה . . .

בעל עֲשָׂרָה מְאָמוֹת שֶׁכָּתַב בְּמֵאמָר חֲקוּר דִּין חֶלֶק ב' פָּרָק עֲשָׂרִים עַל אוֹתוֹ
מֵאמָר דִּירוּשְׁלָמִי: שֶׁהָיָה זֶה מַעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹקִים בְּלִתֵּי מְשׁוּעָר בְּשִׁכְלָנוּ. לֹא כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה
הַדְּיוֹט שֶׁצִּיּוּרוֹ זוֹלָתֵינוּ לְפָנֵינוּ בְּבֵית הַמְּדַרְשׁ וְנִעַר יְכַתְּבֵם. עַד כָּאן.

“And the inscription”: In the words of the Bartenura, “It could be read from all four sides.”

What seems most correct to me is that this was miraculous, an act of G-d. . . .

The author of *Asarah Maamarot* writes on that statement: This was a Divine act beyond our comprehension—not the ordinary handiwork that some have imagined, as if someone sketched it before us in the study hall and a youngster wrote it.

QUESTION

What, then, is the deeper significance of this particular miracle?

TEXT 6

Midrash, *Bereshit*
Rabah 44:17

רַבִּי חַנִּינָה בַּר יִצְחָק אָמַר: שְׁלֹשׁ נֹבְלוֹת הֵינן: נֹבְלוֹת מִיְתָה, שְׁיִנָּה; נֹבְלוֹת נְבוּאָה, תְּלוּם; נֹבְלוֹת הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, שַׁבָּת.
רַבִּי אֲבִין מוֹסִיף תְּרֵתִין: נֹבְלוֹת אוֹרָה שֶׁל מַעְלָה, גִּלְגָּל חֲמָה; נֹבְלוֹת חֲכָמָה שֶׁל מַעְלָה, תּוֹרָה.

Rabbi Chanina bar Yitzchak said: There are three “byproducts” (reflections or lesser forms) in this world: the byproduct of death is sleep, the byproduct of prophecy is a dream, and the byproduct of the World to Come is Shabbat.

Rabbi Avin added two more: the byproduct of the supernal light is the sun, and the byproduct of the supernal wisdom is the Torah.

The Midrash
describes the Torah
simply as a **byproduct**
of higher wisdom.

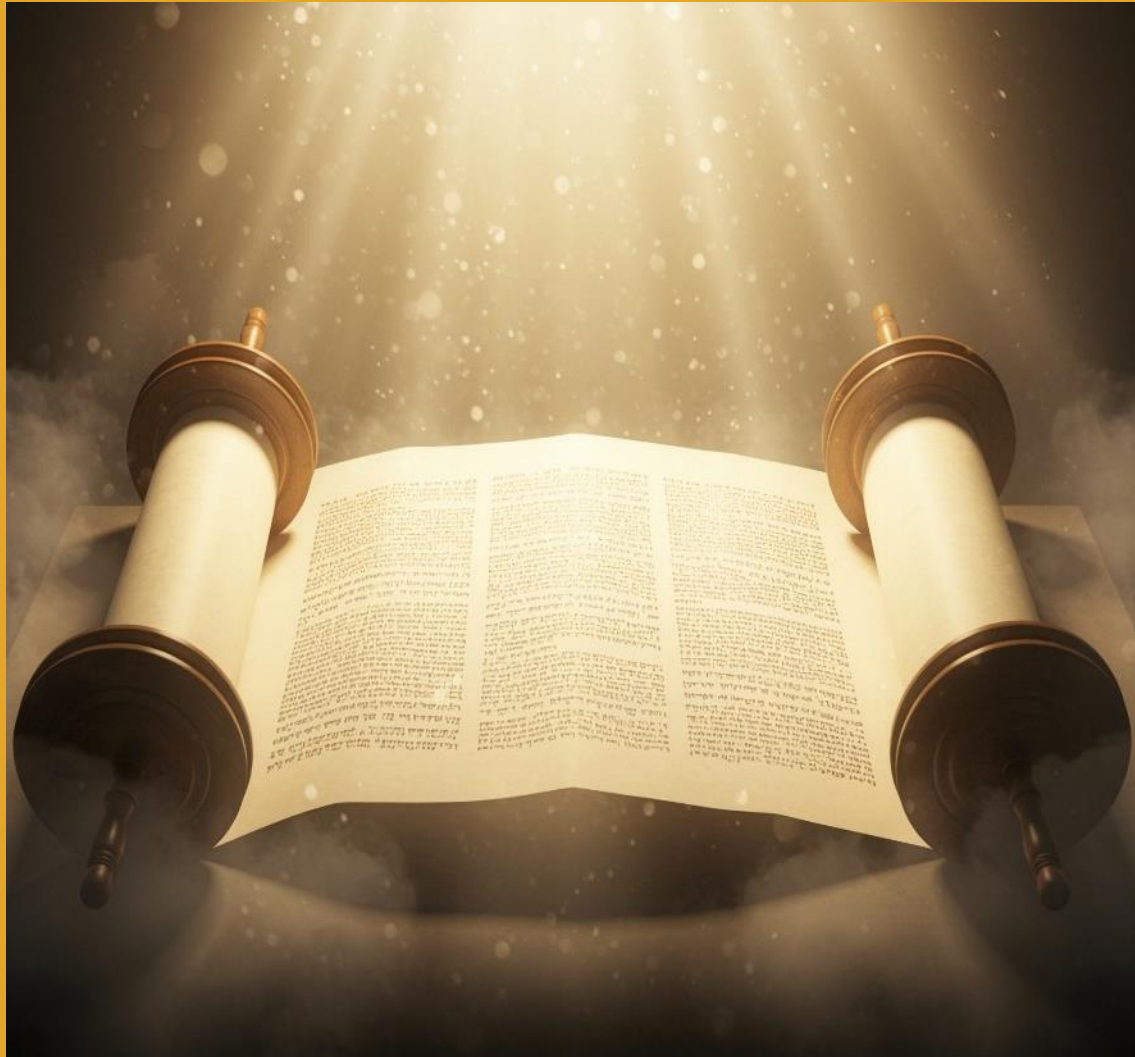


TEXT 7

Proverbs 8:30

וְאֶהְיֶה אֶצְלוֹ אֲמוֹן, וְאֶהְיֶה שִׁעֲשִׁיעִים
יוֹם יוֹם, מִשְׁתַּקֵּת לְפָנָיו בְּכָל עֵת.

I was a nursling beside Him, and I was [His] delight every day, playing before Him at all times.



A byproduct is secondary yet King Solomon describes the Torah as something G-d delights in constantly.

PENIMIYUT



the inner, authentic expression of
your deepest self

CHITZONIYUT



an outer, less authentic
expression shaped for others

QUESTION

Which one is the Torah? Is it the “inner delight”- *penimiyus*? Or is it a “byproduct”- *chitzoniyut*?

ANSWER

The Torah has two parts. Even Moses could only understand a small part of it; the deepest *penimiyut* stays connected with G-d and is beyond our reach.

TEXT 8A

Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, *Derech Mitzvotcha, Mitzvat Masa Aron Bakatef*

אך הענין דשניהם אמת: דמה שכתוב
"נובלות חכמה שלמעלה תורה", קאי על
התורה שניתנה לנו . . . נקרא בחינת
"אחוריים דחכמה" . . . שנה סוד התורה
שלפנינו . . . [אבל] שרש התורה ותכליתה
ועיקרה, על זה נאמר "ואהיה אצלו כו'
שעשועים כו'".

וביאור הענין . . .

הנה בחינת חכמת אלקות ברוך הוא
המלוכנות בתרין ג' מצות התורה נקרא בשם
בחינת "אחוריים דחכמה", כי כל אחוריים
שבספירות הן מדריגות החיצונות
והתחתונות במעלה שבספירה זו מה שיוכלו
לירד ולהתפשט למטה להתלבש בברואים
להחיותם. ובחינת פנים היא הספירה עצמה
המיוחדת במאצילה ברוך הוא בתכלית
היחוד . . .

Both are true: When it says “the byproduct of the supernal wisdom is the Torah,” it refers to the Torah that was given to us. . . . This is called the level of “the backside of Torah,” . . . the Torah presented to us. . . . [But] the root, purpose, and essence of the Torah—about that it says, “I was [His] delight every day.”

To explain . . .

The aspect of G-dly wisdom, as it is vested in the 613 *mitzvos* of the Torah, is called “the backside of G-d’s wisdom,” because on every level, the “backside” is the outer and lower gradations within that particular level. It’s the part capable of extending downward to integrate within Creation and give it life. The “inner side” is the level itself as it is utterly united with G-d. . . .



TEXT 8A

Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch,
*Derech Mitzvotcha,
Mitzvat Masa Aron
Bakatef*

פירוש על דרך משל כמו שפאדם התחתון,
שיש בנשמתו ה' מדריגות זו למעלה מזו,
שהן בחינות השכל ומדות, ומחשבה ודיבור
ומעשה — והמעשה היא התחתונה שבכולם.
שהחיות המתפשט מהנשמה ומלופש בכת
המעשה הוא כאין לגבי החיות המתפשט
ממנה ומלופש בכת הדיבור, שהיא כאין לגבי
החיות המתפשט ומלופש במחשבה ומדות
ושכל.

כן על דרך זה ממש הוא בחינת חקמתו
יתברך מה שיוכל להתפשט ממנה להשפיע
בתחתונים, כולם הם כאין לגבי בחינת פנים
המיוחד במאציל ברוך הוא דכולא קמיה פלא
חשיב. וההשפעה לכל הנבראים כולם שהם
בעלי גבול ותכלית נחשבת ירידה וצמצום
בכיוול לגבי המאציל אין סוף ברוך הוא . . .

This can be understood by way of a simple analogy from a human being. The soul has five graded levels within it: intellect, emotions, thought, speech, and action—each higher than the next; and action is the lowest of them all. The life-force that spreads from the soul and manifests into action is as nothing compared to the life-force that spreads into speech; and that, in turn, is as nothing compared to what spreads into thought, emotions, and intellect.

So too, in the very same way, whatever extends from G-d's wisdom to influence the lower realms is all as nothing compared to the inner dimension as it is united with G-d, before Whom "all is as nothing." Any flow to finite, created beings is, so to speak, a fall and dilution relative to G-d Himself. . .



TEXT 8A

Rabbi Menachem
Mendel of Lubavitch,
Derech Mitzvotcha,
Mitzvat Masa Aron
Bakatef

וּמוֹכֵן מִזֶּה שֶׁ . . . בְּחִינַת טַעְמֵי תּוֹרָה שֶׁנִּתְגַּלּוּ
לְמִשְׁפַּח רַבֵּינוּ עָלְיוֹ הַשְּׁלוֹם . . . נִקְרָא בְּחִינַת
אַחֲרָיִים "נוֹבְלוֹת דְּחֻקְמָה" . . . אֲכָל עֵיקָרֵי
טַעְמֵי הַתּוֹרָה כְּמוֹ שֶׁהֵן בִּידְעֵת עֲצָמוֹ כִּבְיָכוֹל,
זֶהוּ פְּנִימִיּוֹת הַחֻקְמָה.

From this it is understood that . . . the Torah that was revealed to Moses our Teacher . . . is still called the "backside," the "byproducts" of G-d's wisdom. . . . But the essence of Torah, as it is in G-d's own knowledge, so to speak: *that* is the inner dimension.

The *luchot* (tablets) had no back, showing that the Torah's deepest wisdom shines all the way through.



TEXT 8B

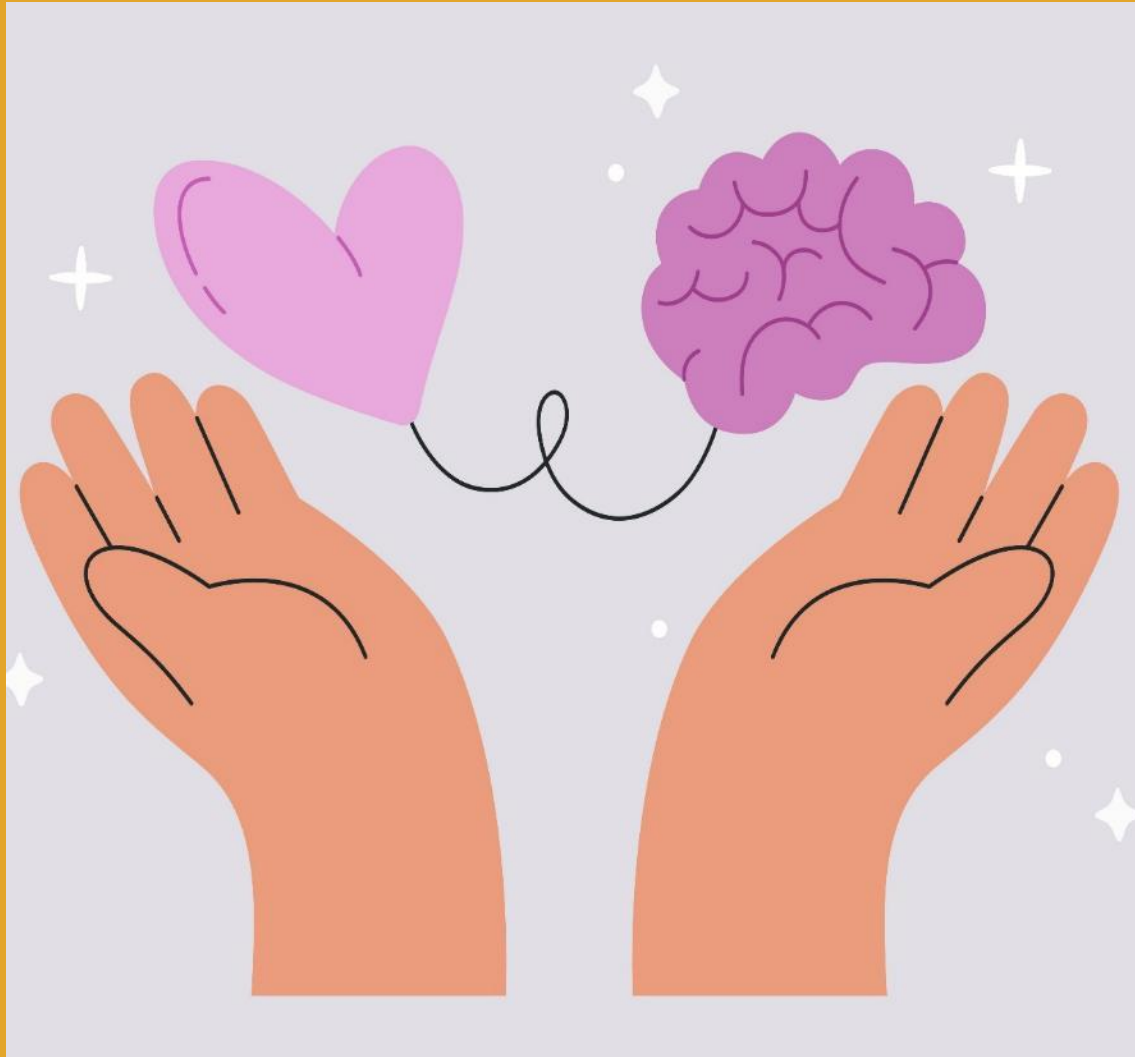
Rabbi Menachem
Mendel of Lubavitch,
ibid.

וְהִנֵּה הַלֹּחֹת שֶׁבְּאֲרוֹן נִמְשְׁכוּ מִבְּחִינַת פְּנִימִית, וְלָכֵן לֹא
הָיְתָה בָּהֶן בְּחִינַת פְּנִים וְאַחֹר גַּם בְּגִשְׁמִיּוֹת, שֶׁזֶּהוּ נֶגֶד הַשֵּׁכֶל
לְהִיּוֹת כְּתוּבִים מִשְׁנֵי עֵבְרֵיהֶם וְיִהְיוּ נִקְרָאִים מִכָּל צַדֵּיהֶם
בְּשׂוּהָ. אֵלֶּא מִחֲמַת גִּילּוֹי בְּחִינַת פְּנִים הָעֲלִיּוֹן בָּהֶם.

The tablets in the ark were drawn from the innermost dimension of holiness. That is why they had no “front” or “back” even in the physical sense—the writing could be read equally from every side, something that defies human logic. This was because the higher inward light shone openly within them.

The miracle
expressed the
spiritual reality
of the Giving of
the Torah.





Our actions and feelings are on the surface. *Ratzon* is what we want, and *taanug* is the deep enjoyment that shows who we really are. In the same way, Torah expresses G-d's will, while His deeper delight is unknowable to us.

TEXT 9

Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, *ibid.*

הנה המצוות נקראים רצון העליון ברוך הוא, ופנימית הרצון הוא התענוג. ומצד בחינת הרצון שבמצוות, ושהוא בחינת חיצונית לגבי התענוג, הוא הנשבח הזה ששיבח דוד המלך עליו השלום ואמר "זמירות היו לי חוקיה".

כי כמו הזמר שיכולים לנגן ולזמר ניגון אחד כמה פעמים, אף על פי שהכל עריבות ומתיקות אחד, מכל מקום כשערב לו איזה ניגון, מנגן וחוזר ומנגן אותו כמה פעמים ולא תקוץ הנפש בו. ואדרבה תתענג כל פעם כמקדם מעוצם יפיו.

וכך "היו לי חוקיה", "חוק" נקרא מצוה שאין בה טעם ודעת מושג, כמו פרה אדומה ושעטנז. . . ובאמת כל המצוות נקראים חוקים, כי הטעמים הגלויים לפנינו אינן מספיקים כלל ואינן בערך הטעמים האמיתיים כמו שהן למעלה. ונמצא שלעינינו הם רק חוקים גזירת מלך, כלומר שפך רצונו בלי טעם מובן.

Mitzvot are called "G-d's supreme will." The inner core of that will is delight. King David's praise, "Your statutes were like songs to me," refers to the supreme will of *mitzvot*, which is considered external relative to G-d's delight.

Think of a melody you love. You can play the same tune over and over: it stays sweet. In fact, when a song really speaks to you, you replay it and the pleasure doesn't fade—it deepens.

So too with *chukim*. A *chok* is a *mitzvah* whose reason isn't accessible—like the Red Heifer or *shaatnez*. In truth, all *mitzvot* are *chukim*, because the reasons we're given are not the real, ultimate reasons as they exist above. To us, they are G-d's decree: this is His will, beyond our grasp.



TEXT 9

Rabbi Menachem
Mendel of Lubavitch,
ibid.

וְאָמַר שְׂאֵף עַל פִּי כֵן "עֲרִיבִים עָלָיו עַד לְמָאד",
לְהִיּוֹת כִּי בְחֵינֵת הַרְצוֹן הַזֶּה הוּא רְצוֹנוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ,
שֶׁהוּא לְמַעַלָּה מִהֵיוֹת מוֹשֵׁג לְשׁוֹם נִבְרָא בְּעוֹלָם
. . . וְאֵף עַל פִּי שְׂהַרְצוֹן אֵינוֹ מוֹשֵׁג, וְאִם כֵּן
הַרְצוֹן שְׂבָצִיצִית שְׁנָה, עַל דְּרָךְ מְשָׁל, אֶל הַרְצוֹן
שְׂבִתְפִילִין — מֵאַחַר שֶׁהַכֹּל רְצוֹן בְּלִי טַעַם
מוֹשֵׁג — הֵרִי זֶה כְּזִמְרֹת, שְׂמִנְגָנִים נִיגוֹן אֶחָד
כַּמָּה פְּעָמִים כְּאֲשֶׁר טוֹב לְפָנָיו וְיָפָה בְּעֵינָיו.

And that's precisely why they are "exceedingly sweet." What we touch in every *mitzvah* is His will itself, which no created mind can comprehend. Since will isn't something we can grasp, the "will" in *tzitzit* is, for us, no different from the "will" in *tefilin*. It's like hearing the same beloved melody again and again—because it is His will. it delights us each time anew.

RATZON (DESIRE)

- **Chitzoniyus**
- G-d's will for Creation and *mitzvot*.
- Something we can grasp and follow.

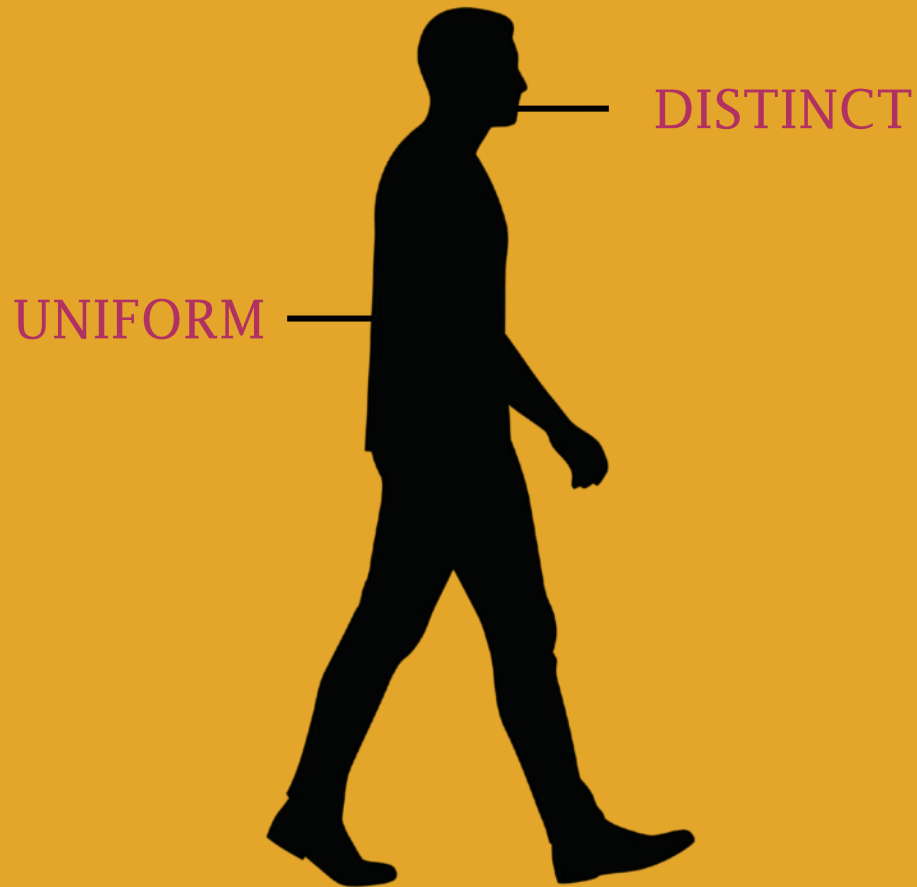
TAANUG (PLEASURE)

- **Pnimityus**
- G-d's delight when his creations fulfill the world's purpose.
- Beyond human understanding.



King David's description of the Torah as songs highlights the outer aspect of the *mitzvot* as they reflect G-d's unchanging will.

- *Mitzvot* Can be repeated without revealing the inner meaning
- *Chukim* (statutes) can be performed without understanding the reasoning.



The **back** of the head corresponds to the outer layer, where every *mitzvah* is driven by the same will of G-d. The **face** corresponds to inner dimension: it shows His joy in each distinct *mitzvah*.

TEXT 10

Rabbi Menachem
Mendel of Lubavitch,
ibid.

וְלִזְהָ נִקְרָא הַתַּעֲנוּג בְּשֵׁם פָּנִים וְהֶרְצוֹן בְּשֵׁם
אָחוֹר.

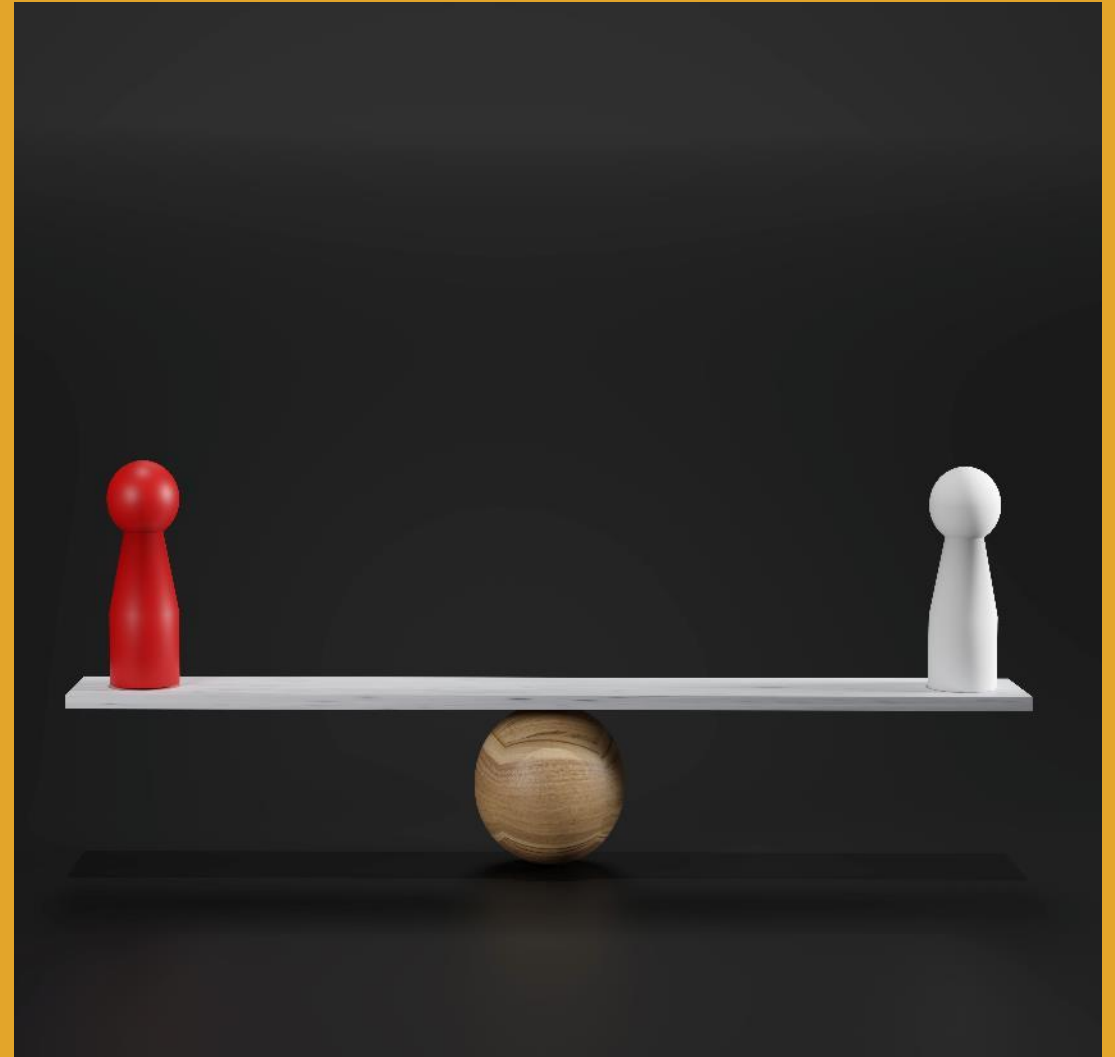
כִּי עַל דֶּרֶךְ מְשַׁל הָעוֹרָף וְהַצְּוָאר וְאַחֲרֵי
הַגּוּף שֶׁנִּקְרָאוּ בְּכֻלָּם בְּחִינַת אָחוֹרָיִם, הֲרֵי
כּוֹלֵן בְּצוּרָה אַחַת שְׁעוֹר אֶחָד מְכֻסָּה לְכוֹלֵן
בְּשִׁנְיָה וְאֵין הַתַּחֲלָקוֹת בֵּינֵיהֶם. אֲבָל הַפָּנִים,
כָּל אֵיבָרִים מְיֻחָדִים וְשׁוֹנִים וְנִיפְרִים
מוֹבְדָלִים בְּפַעּוּלָתָם וּבַתְּמוּנָתָם זֶה מֶה זֶה,
רְאִיָּה בְּעֵינַיִם, וְשִׁמְיָהּ בְּאֲזָנַיִם כּו'.
וְכֹף מֵצַד הֶרְצוֹן, הֲרֵי כָּל הַמְּצוֹת צוּרָה אַחַת
לְהֵן לֹאמַר שֶׁכֹּף רְצוֹנוֹ — עִם שֶׁהֶרְצוֹן נִפְלָא
וְנִכְבָּד לְמַאֲד. אֲבָל מֵצַד הַתַּעֲנוּג שֶׁבָּהֶם
שֶׁהוּא פְּנִימִיּוּתָם, הֲרֵי נִיפְרִים כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד
בְּצוּרָה מְיֻחָדָת וְעִנְיָן מְיֻחָד וְנִפְלָא בְּיֻחָד
לְאֵין קֶץ וְתַכְלִית . . . שֶׁעֲשׂוּעַ הַפְּלֶה הַמְּיֻחָד
בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּעֲצָמוֹתָו.

That is why delight is called *panim*—"the inner face," while will is called *achor*, "the outer side."

By way of analogy: the neck, back, and nape—collectively called the *achorayim* of the body—are all covered evenly by one layer of skin. They share the same surface, with no visible distinction between one part and another. The face, by contrast, is comprised of unique features—eyes, ears, mouth—each distinct in form and in function.

So, too, with *mitzvot*. On the level of will, they all share one form: "This is His will." As lofty as that will is, it remains a single, undifferentiated expression. But on the level of delight, which is their essence, each *mitzvah* is unique: each reveals a different, wondrous delight without limit or end. . . . This is the special delight of the King Himself, blessed be He, within His very essence.

The Kohanim (priest) carried the *Aron* with their faces toward it, showing the balance of inner focus guiding outer actions.





1. David focused on the Torah's outer layer, and did not internalize the deeper Divine significance of each mitzvah
2. Forgetting the proper way to carry the Aron was a result of his missing the deeper spiritual alignment that carrying the Aron represents.

Seeking delight in each new mitzvah, each new opportunity, allows us to tap into the inner dimension and experience the pleasure of the unique potential concealed within.



KEY POINTS

1. It's a *mitzvah* to carry the ark on the priest's shoulders. King David forgot this detail, and the tragic result of that sin was Uza's death.
2. King David was punished for calling the Torah a "song."
3. There are two dimensions to the Torah, an outer and inner level. The former is revealed to us, while the latter, far loftier dimension remains hidden with G-d.
4. Desire and pleasure parallel these two inner and outer dimensions, with pleasure being closer to the essence than desire.

KEY POINTS

5. David's "songs" reflected the beauty he saw in the Torah's rhythm and sameness—its outer layer.
6. The face shows individuality; the back looks uniform. So, too, life has its "face" and "back." The priests, carrying the *aron* while facing it, model how to bring inner awareness into outward repetition.
7. King David's error was not rebellion but relating to holiness from its "back"—seeing pattern without presence.

