



LESSONS IN LIKUTAY TORAH

PRECIOUS TEACHINGS THAT AWAKEN THE HEART
TO DIVINE SERVICE FROM THE HOLY MASTER
❧ **RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN OF LIADI** ❧
TRANSLATED AND EXPLAINED

לקוטי תורה

חג השבועות

דבור המתחיל

ענין התורה שניתנה על הר סיני

“The Lesson of the Humble Mount Sinai”

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ב"ה

Likutay Torah English translation project:

With Hashem's help we would like to present this installment of **Lessons in Likutay Torah.**

The original text of the maamarim with נקודות and punctuation is presented side by side with a phrase by phrase translation and explanation. The translation of the text is in **bold** whereas the commentary is in regular font. The explanations of general concepts that are not directly relevant to understanding the flow of the maamar are in footnotes.

All of the commentary of the Tzemach Tzedek printed with brackets in the original Likutay Torah have been moved to the Hebrew footnotes and left untranslated.

The Goal

The main purpose of this project is to enable the reader to learn the Likutay Torah in the original. By learning the words, structure, and concepts of the maamarim, eventually they should be able to learn it by themselves in the original.

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I would like to thank: Kehot for permission to use the text of the maamarim, the administrator of the לקוטי תורה מנוקד project for helping with the נקודות and punctuation, to see any Maamar from Torah Or/Likutay Torah with נקודות go to his website www.ChassidutBehirah.com, and to R' Baruch Katz for creating the website and the editing.

Please Donate to Keep this Project Going

Translating these maamarim takes many hours of work per week, and funding is needed to cover the expenses to make this possible. Please donate at our website www.LearnChassidus.com

For comments and questions please email me at avraham.t.katz@gmail.com

Likutay Torah

לקוטי תורה

חג השבועות

דבור המתחיל

ענין התורה שניתנה על הר סיני

פרשת במדבר דף ט"ו, ב - ט"ו, ג

“The Lesson of the Humble Mount Sinai”

We have a question: Why was Mount Sinai chosen as the mountain to give the Torah on?

ענין שניתנה התורה על הר סיני
דוקא,

We need to understand the idea that the Torah was given specifically on Mount Sinai,

ולא על הר תבור וחרמון וכרמל,
שבאו גם כן שתנתן התורה
עליהם,

and not on the mountains of Tavor, Chermon, or Karmel, who also came to ask Hashem to have the Torah given on them,

וכמו שכתוב בתרגום יונתן,
בשופטים סימן ה', על פסוק (ה) "הרים
נזלו [מפני ה' זה סיני מפני ה' אלהי
ישראל]"¹.

as it is written in the translation and commentary on the Tanach of Rabbi Yonasan ben Uziel on the verse in the book of Shoftim (5:5) “The mountains trembled before Hashem, this is [a reference to what happened] with Mount Sinai, [who

¹ (ושם): "טוריא זעו מן קדם ה'. טוריא דתבור, טוריא דחרמון וטוריא דכרמלא מתרגשין דין עם דין ואמרין דין לדין, דין אמר: עלי תשרי שכנתיה ולי חזיא! ודין לדין אמר: עלי תשרי שכנתיה ולי חזיא! אשרי שכנתיה על טוריא דסיני, דהוא חלש וזעיר מכל טוריא".

was humble] before Hashem, G-d of the Jewish People.”

This is what is written there in his commentary: What is the meaning of: “The mountains trembled before Hashem?” That the mountains of Tavor, Chermon, and Karmel fought with each other, and each one said to the other: “Upon me should Hashem reveal His Divine Presence, since I am worthy of it!”, and the other mountain replied the same thing: “Upon me should Hashem reveal His Divine Presence, since I am worthy of it!”

Hashem said: “I will reveal My Divine Presence on the Mountain of Sinai since it is the weakest and smallest of all the mountains.”

And in his commentary on the verse in Tehillim (68:17): “**Why do those tall mountains dance around haughtily?** The mountain [of Sinai is the one] that Hashem has chosen to rest [his Divine Presence on by giving the Torah], [through this] Hashem will also dwell eternally [in this world].”

In his commentary, he explains the verse as follows: “**Hashem says: It is not my desire to give the Torah on haughty and arrogant mountains, it is on this humble**

וְשָׁם: “טוֹרָא זָעוּ מִן קֶדֶם ה’ טוֹרָא דְּתַבּוֹר, טוֹרָא דְּחֶרְמוֹן וְטוֹרָא דְּכַרְמֶלָא מִתְרַגְּשִׁין דִּין עִם דִּין וְאִמְרִין דִּין לְדִין, דִּין אָמַר: עָלַי תִּשְׁרִי שְׁכִנְתִּיהּ וְלִי חֲזִיא! וְדִין לְדִין אָמַר: עָלַי תִּשְׁרִי שְׁכִנְתִּיהּ וְלִי חֲזִיא!

אֲשֶׁרִי שְׁכִנְתִּיהּ עַל טוֹרָא דְּסִינִי, דְּהוּא חֵלֶשׁ וְזַעִיר מִכָּל טוֹרָא.”

וּבִתְלִים סִימָן ס”ח, עַל פָּסוּק (יז) “לָמָּה תִרְצְדּוּן הָרִים גְּבָנִים הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹהִים לְשִׁבְתּוֹ אֵף ה’ יִשְׁכֵּן לְנֶצַח.”

לִית רַעְיוֹתֵי לְמִיתָן אֲוִרִיתָא עַל טוֹרָא גִּיּוֹתָנִין מִבְּסֻרְיָא, הָא טוֹר סִינִי דְּמַכִּיךְ וְגַג מִמְרָא דִּי לֹא שְׂרָאָה עָלָיו שְׁכִנְתִּיהּ כּו”³.

² (תרגום 'הבוז לגאי יונים' (תהלים קכג, ד) - מבסרניא וגיונתניא)

³ (תרגום: אין רצוני ליתן התורה על הרים גאים וגאווותנים, הרי הר סיני הנמוך).

mountain of Sinai that Hashem desires to dwell His Divine Presence on.”

וְהֵייוֹנוּ, שְׁעִנֵּן הַגְּבוּהוֹת שֶׁל תָּבוֹר
וְחֶרְמוֹן וְהוּ עִנֵּן הַגְּדֻלוֹת, שְׁמִגְבִּיהָ
אֶת עַצְמוֹ בְּגִסּוֹת, וְהַגְּסוֹת הוּא שֶׁרֶשׁ
כָּל הָרָע.

Meaning, that the idea of the tallness of the mountains of Tavor and Chermon (and Karmel) is the concept of greatness. Each one raises himself up with haughtiness, and haughtiness is the source of all evil.

וּבְנוֹדָע מֵעִנֵּן שְׁבִירַת הַכֵּלִים כו'.

This is like it is known regarding the concept of the “shattering of the Keilim.”

To explain this concept, we need to have a brief review of the concept that Hashem creates everything using His “Light-Auror” and “Keilim-כלים”:

The term “Light” refers to the revelation of Hashem, which reveals Hashem’s limitlessness, how Hashem is beyond the limitations of time, space, spiritual levels, and any possible definition.

The word “Keilim” literally means “vessel” or “garment” or “instrument.” In this context, it refers to Hashem’s ability to contain His limitless revelation in specific parameters and attributes such as wisdom and kindness. These vessels are then able to be a source for the creation of limited creations and how Hashem interacts with His creations. Thus, when His Light becomes invested in the Keilim and expressed through them, the creations can receive His Light in a manner that they can receive existence from Him and interact with Him.

The analogy for this process is as follows: The soul is a spiritual existence that can’t be divided into parts. It is one simple essence. When it gives life to the body, it expresses itself differently in each part of the body; the power to see in the eye, the power to hear in the ear. Thus, the simple, indivisible life power of the soul becomes limited by being “invested” in the organs of the body. This life takes on the property and is expressed differently

according to the nature of each organ. Similarly, Hashem's simple infinite and indivisible Light becomes invested and expressed through the Keilim.

Now, when Hashem decided to create the world using His "Light" and "Keilim", He first created a system of Keilim called "Tohu", where each one strove to be infinite, just like the Light is infinite. The attribute of Kindness wanted to be infinite Kindness, not leaving room for the opposing attribute of Severity. Similarly, Severity wanted infinite Severity without any room for Kindness at all.

Even though, in theory, the desire to be infinite matches up with the theme of the Light, which is infinite, in actuality, it was a disaster. Since all the attributes wanted to be infinite at the same time, none of them were able to co-exist, and they all broke apart. This is like a team of workers who each wants to be the boss until the whole thing falls apart, and no one gets anything done.

Thus, the "shattering of the Keilim" of the system of Tohu was a direct result of the fact that each attribute only felt its own need to be infinite. This idea is the spiritual source of the ego that we, created beings, have, where we feel our own spiritual or physical needs more than those of others.

After the "shattering of the Keilim" of Tohu, Hashem made a new system of Keilim called Tikun, where each attribute is not only nullified to the Light, but also to all the other attributes. Since the Keilim of Tikun are more "selfless" and "humble", they are able to work together to reveal Hashem.

The lesson of this story is that in order to reveal Hashem, one needs to be humble and selfless (just like the Keilim of Tikun) and not self-absorbed (like the Keilim of Tohu). (Obviously, the Keilim of Tohu weren't selfish in a physical sense, G-d forbid. Each one wanted to be infinite because it felt that this is what Hashem wants. This is a spiritual source for the ego that exists down here, where the ego wants to expand itself continuously, but not for Hashem's sake anymore.)

This is the meaning of the *maamar*: "Haughtiness is the source of all evil, as it is known regarding the concept of the 'shattering of the Keilim.'" The source of all unholiness derives from the "shattering of the Keilim" of Tohu, and the cause of that "shattering" was from the aspect of spiritual "ego" that those attributes had. Thus, the ultimate source of all unholiness is from ego.

וְעִקֵּר הַתּוֹרָה הוּא לְהִיּוֹת בְּבַחֲנֵינָת
 בִּיטוּל, "וְלֹא תַחַלְלֻ אֶת־שֵׁם קְדָשִׁי
 וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה
 מִקְדָּשְׁכֶם." ⁴ (אָמֹר כֹּב, לֵב) וְכִמּוֹ
 שְׁנִתְבָּאָר בְּכֶמֶה דּוּכָתִי.

The main concept of the Torah is to nullify one's ego to Hashem, as this concept is explained in connection with the verse (Vayikra 22:32): "And you will not make yourself into a place devoid of My holy Name (through your ego), and I will be sanctified in the midst of the Jewish People, I am Hashem Who makes you holy." This concept is explained in many places.

The word "תַּחַלְלו" which literally means "desecrate," which comes from the word חָלַל, and could also be translated as "make an empty space" from the word חָלַל. Thus, the simple meaning of וְלֹא תַחַלְלֻ אֶת־שֵׁם קְדָשִׁי is that you should not desecrate Hashem's name. Since His Name is called upon us, when we do something improper it reflects badly on Hashem.

However, the interpretation used here of וְלֹא תַחַלְלֻ אֶת־שֵׁם קְדָשִׁי is as follows:

"Hashem's Name-שֵׁם קְדָשִׁי" refers to a revelation of Hashem. The verse is telling us that we must allow Hashem to be revealed through us, just like a window allows light to be revealed through it, and "not to create a vacuum-וְלֹא תַחַלְלֻ" devoid of Hashem's revelation. How is such a vacuum created? Through our ego. Like it says in the Talmud (Sotah 5a), Hashem says about someone who is haughty that "there isn't enough room for both of us to dwell together." Meaning, that one's inflated ego blocks out Hashem's revelation, creating a void, a חָלַל, where Hashem cannot be felt. Thus, the verse is telling us to nullify our ego enough that we don't create a vacuum empty of Hashem's revelation. This, then, is the main idea of the Torah: to reveal Hashem in the world, which is only possible when we nullify our egos to Him.⁵

⁴ וְעִינֵין בְּבִיאָוֹר עַל פְּסוּק "וְלֹא תַשְׁבִּית מְלַח" (לְעִיל וְיִקְרָא ד, ד וְאִילָן).

⁵ See Likutay Torah on Vayikra דף ע"ד where the Alter Rebbe explains the concept of וְלֹא תַחַלְלֻ to mean to not make a place devoid of Hashem's revelation

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁאָמְרוּ (עִירוּבִין, נ"ד, א'): "אִם
מֵשִׁים אָדָם עֲצָמוֹ כַּמִּדְבָּר שֶׁהֵכֵל
דָּשִׁין בוֹ - וּפִירֵשׁ רִשׁ": "שְׂאִין לוֹ גִּסוֹת" -
תּוֹרָה נִתְּנָה לוֹ בְּמִתְנָה.

And this is also the idea of what our Sages say (Eiruvין 54a): "If a person makes himself like a desert that everyone steps on – Rashi on that passage explains that this means that he has no ego – then the Torah will be given to him as a gift."

וּכְמֵאמֶר: "וְנִפְשִׁי כְּעָפָר לְכָל
תְּהִיָּה", וְאֲזִי דוֹקָא - "פֶּתַח לְבִי
בְּתוֹרָתְךָ".⁶

And like we say at the end of the Shemona Esrai prayer: "And let my soul be like dust to all," and only afterward do we ask in the next verse "open my heart in the study of your Torah."

וְלָכֵן נִתְּנָה עַל הָר סִינַי - "דְּמֻכָּה",
שֶׁהוּא עֲנִין הַשְּׁפָלוּת, שְׂאִינוֹ מַגְבִּיָּה
אֶת עֲצָמוֹ כו'.⁸

Therefore, the Torah was given on a mountain, which is "low," which is the idea of humility, meaning that he doesn't lift himself up above others.

The first question of why Mount Sinai specifically was chosen over other mountains is answered: It is because of Mount Sinai's "lowness" and humility, which is needed in order to receive the Torah.

The Alter Rebbe now asks the main question of the maamar:

If the ego is a contradiction to Torah, then why give the Torah on a mountain at all?

through one's ego.

⁶ (וְנִפְשִׁי . . בְּתוֹרָתְךָ - תְּפִלַּת "אֱלֹקֵי נְצוֹר". בְּרֵכוֹת יז, א).

⁷ (וְכִמּוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר מִזֶּה סוֹף דְּבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "וּשְׂאֲבַתְּם מִים בְּשִׁשּׁוֹן" (לִקְמָן סוֹכוֹת עַט סוֹף עֲמוּד ג)).

⁸ רֹאה בִּאוּה"ת מַג"א (תש"נ) ע' נה שֶׁמַּצִּיין לְכֹאֵן וּמוֹסִיף: "וְלָכֵן מ"ת נִתְּנָה עַל ה"ס הָר הַתְּנִשּׁוּת וּמ"מ הָר קָטָן ע"ד שְׁמִינִית שְׁבַשְׁמִינִית". וְרֹאה תו"א צא, ב, קִיט, ג וְאֵילָךְ.

אך צריך להבין, אם כן למה היה
"שום הר"?

However, we need to understand: If it is true that having ego and "tallness" is the opposite of being able to receive the Torah, then why was it given on any mountain at all?

שהרי גם הר סיני הוא הר על כל
פנים, שהוא ענין הגבהה רק שאינו
גבוה כל כך.

Indeed, Mount Sinai is also still a mountain, which is the idea of "tallness" and ego, it just isn't as tall compared to other mountains, but it is a high place relative to a plain or valley, so why was the Torah given on any mountain and not in a low place like a valley?

The Alter Rebbe will now begin the answer to the main question of the maamar:

אבל הענין, כי באמת, עם היות
שצריך כל האדם להיות שפל
במאד, מכל מקום צריך התחזקות
וקצת הגבהה,

However, the idea that will answer this question is as follows: In truth, even though every person needs to be very humble, nonetheless, he needs to be strong and courageous and to raise his self-esteem to some extent,

כמו שכתוב (דברי הימים ב' יז, ו): "ויגבה
לבו בדרכי ה'".⁹

as it is written regarding King David (Divrei Hayamim II 17:6): "And

⁹ (וכמו שנתבאר מזה בדבור המתיחל "יביאו לבוש מלכות" (תורה אור צא, ב)).

(אך להבין מ"ש ויקח המן את הלבוש ואת הסוס כו' מאין זכה המן לבחי' הללו. הנה ארז"ל המן מן התורה מנין דכתיב המן העץ כו'. והענין דכתיב ראשית גוים עמלק שכל העכו"ם הן מבחי' עה"ד טו"ר ועמלק הוא למעלה מהן. וזהו המן העץ בתמיה שהוא למעלה מבחי' העץ. ומ"מ מאחר דכתיב המן העץ אפי' בלשון תמיה הרי יש לו עכ"פ קצת שייכות אל העץ. שאל"כ למה מזכירו אצל העץ. אך הענין שהוא בבחי' מקיף להעץ נוגע ואינו נוגע והוא בחי' חוצפה וגסות הרוח. והנה לעומת זה יש בקדושה ונק' ג"כ בחי' המן לאחר הברור. כי מבני בניו של המן למדו תורה ברבים. הרי שיש בחי' המן לאחר הברור שנכלל בקדושה והוא ויגבה לבו בדרכי ה' וכמארז"ל שצ"ל עיניו למטה ולבו

he lifted up his self-esteem (lit. "his heart") so he can go in the ways of Hashem."

כִּי אִם לֹא יִהְיֶה בְּבַחֲנֵית הַגְּבָהָה
כָּלֵל, לֹא יַעֲרֵב לָבוּ לַגֶּשֶׁת אֶל
הָעֲבוּדָה בְּאִמְרוֹ: "מִי אֲנִי וּמָה
עֲבוּדָתִי".

For if he doesn't pick up his self-esteem at all, then he won't have the courage to approach the service of Hashem since he will tell himself: "Who am I anyway, and what is my service worth?"

לִכְךָ צָרִיךְ לוֹ הַגְּבָהָה הַלֵּב,
בְּתַשׁוּקָה וְהִצְמָאוֹן שֶׁבּוֹ כו', אֲלֵא
שֶׁהֵיטוּל צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת יוֹתֵר הֶרְבֵּה
כו'¹⁰.

Therefore, he needs to raise his heart in yearning and longing to come close to Hashem and have his own feeling that *he wants* to come close to Hashem because this is best for *him*; but, at the same time, he needs to have much more selfless dedication and

למעלה. עינים הם בחי' חכמה כח מ"ה בחי' משה שהיה ענו מכל האדם בחינת בטול. ובחי' הלב צ"ל למעלה ששם יסוד האש והצמאון וטבע האש להגביה ולעלות למעלה. והאדם צ"ל כלול משניהם. כי אם לא יהיה בבחי' הגבהה כלל לא יערב לבו לגשת אל העבודה באמרו מי אנכי ומה עבודתי. לכך צריך לו הגבהת הלב בתשוקה והצמאון שבו. וגם בחי' עינים למטה להיות בחי' בטול ממש באוא"ס ב"ה בהמשכת ח"ע כח מ"ה בעסק התורה דאורייתא מחכמה נפקת וכמ"ש ודברי אשר שמתי בפין כו'. וזהו ענין שהת"ח צריך להיות בו שמינית שבשמינית. כי הנה בבחי' חכמה יש ל"ב נתיבות החכמה וגם לב בגימטריא ל"ב וכללות שניהם עולה ס"ד. ושמינית שבשמינית הוא חלק א' מס"ד והיינו הגבהת הלב המחובר אל מוח החכמה כי העיקר היא החכמה המשכת בחי' הבטול אלא שצריכה העלאה תחלה בבחינת הגבהת הלב כדי להמשיך אח"כ שאם אין העלאה אין המשכה. והגבהה והעלאה זו הוא בחי' התנשאות דקדושה בחי' המן לאחר הבריור ומקורה ושרשה למעלה באורות עליונים הם בחינת לבוש וסוס. כי הלבוש הוא ה' מלך גאות לבש בבחי' גאות והתנשאות. וסוס בגימטריא ב"פ ס"ג. משא"כ בחי' כתר מלכות הוא בחינת בעטרה שעטרה לו אמו דוקא שאין בזלעז"ז בבחי' המן בחי' זו כלל אלא היא בחי' בטול רצון ממש נעשה קודם לנשמע כו' וד"ל)

¹⁰ עיין שם. ובדבור המִתְחִיל "הִחְלָצוּ מֵאֲתָכֶם" (לִקְמָן מִטּוֹת פּו, ג), גִּבִּי עֲנִין "שְׁלוֹם בְּפִמְלֵיא שֶׁל מַעֲלָה", שְׁבִנְפֶּשׁ – מוֹחַ וְלֵב כו'.

commitment to fulfilling Hashem's will than his own personal interest.

The Alter Rebbe has given one answer to why the Torah was given on a mountain: The idea of a mountain is ego, and a person needs some ego, some self-esteem and pride in order to have the motivation to start coming close to Hashem with learning, prayer, and mitzvos. However, even this pride in holiness needs to be kept in check so that it shouldn't get out of hand. This is the idea of a "small mountain", a well-balanced ego that is just big enough to push the person forward but not too big to think he is better than others.¹¹

¹¹ The idea of Mount Sinai being a "mountain" but also "small" will be understood by the Alter Rebbe's explanation in Torah Or on Megilas Ester 91b of the following concept mentioned in the Gemara:

"A Torah scholar needs to have an "ego" consisting of one eighth of one eighth, and that small amount of ego (1/64) he needs to wear like a kernel of grain is encompassed by the chaff."

He explains that in the mind the main component is Chochma, wisdom, which is said to have 32 paths, and the heart is called לב which is the numerical equivalent of 32. Thus, 1/64 of ego means that out of all of his combined intellect and emotion, only one single aspect should be in a mode of "ego", meaning, there needs to be a yearning in the heart that he should want to have Chochma, that he should want to achieve nullification to Hashem and a connection to Hashem. For if there is no yearning to strive higher, then he will never achieve the true nullification and true connection to Hashem.

Why is it compared to a kernel of wheat wearing chaff?

The Mittler Rebbe explains in Hosafos on Torah Or (119c-120b) as follows:

When wheat starts to grow from the ground, the chaff protects the kernels while the grain is growing from the wind and the heat of the sun, but once it is fully developed, then the chaff is no longer needed and should be discarded so the person can eat just the kernels (after being ground into flour and made into bread etc.).

So too, when a person starts to serve Hashem he needs that "ego", meaning the yearning and striving for more that he feels he is missing and he wants to grow spiritually to become something much greater. Only after years of spiritual growth can he come to a level that he is so nullified to Hashem that he doesn't feel himself at all, and he doesn't feel he has any spiritual agenda. He only feels Hashem and His mission. At that point he can discard his "ego" for spiritual growth, just like

Now the Alter Rebbe will give another answer of the meaning of a “small mountain”:

וְהוּא עֲנִין "וְיִסְפוּ עָנוּיִם בָּהּ" שְׂמִיחָה
(ושעיה בט, יט):

And this is also the idea of what it says (Yeshayahu 29:19): “And the humble will increase in their joy in Hashem.”

כִּי הִנֵּה הַשְׂמִיחָה הִיא הַתְּחִיזוּת
וְהַגְבָּהַת הַנַּפֶּשׁ,

Now, usually, the idea of joy is that the person feels himself strongly and picks his ego up, which is the opposite attitude of total surrender to Hashem’s Will with dedication and selflessness,

אֲלָא שְׂשִׂמְחָה וְהַגְבָּהָה זֶה נִמְשָׁךְ מִן
הָעֲנָוָה וְהַשְׁפָּלוּת דְּיוֹקָא.

However, this type of joy and uplifted feeling comes specifically from his humility and selflessness,

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּ"סִפּוּר שֶׁל בֵּינוּנִים"
סוּף פָּרָק ל"ד: שֶׁמֶצֶד הַגּוֹף וְנַפְשׁ-
הַבְּהֵמִית הוּא נִבְּזָה בְּעֵינָיו מְאֹד,

as it is written in Tanya at the end of chapter 34, that because of one’s body and animal soul he feels very bad about himself since they are constantly pushing him after physicality instead of striving to connect to Hashem,

the chaff is discarded.

However, until he reaches that level he needs that “ego” to protect him from the “wind and heat”, meaning from feelings of inferiority saying “who am I to grow spiritually and want closeness to Hashem. I’m a nobody, I’ll never accomplish it,” or similar feelings. To protect him from that he needs that tiny ego (1/64) to keep him going.

וְהַיּוֹתוּ בְּשִׂמְחָהּ הוּא מֵצֵד נֶפֶשׁ-
הָאֱלֵקִית וְנִיצוֹץ אֱלֹהוּת הַמְּלוּבָשׁ
בָּהּ לְהַחְיּוּתָהּ כּו'. עֵינַי שָׁם,

whereas his joy comes from his G-dly soul and the spark of Hashem, which is invested in his soul to enliven it. (See there where this concept is explained at length).

וּבְמַה שֶּׁכָּתוּב (לְקַמֵּן תָּבוֹא מִגּוֹ, סוֹף עֲמוּד
א) סוֹף דְּבוּר הַמִּתְחִיל "תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא עָבַדְתָּ
בְּשִׂמְחָהּ" (תָּבוֹא כּח, מו):

See also what is explained in a different place in Likutay Torah:

דְּאֶדְרֵבָּהּ,

There is something that seems contrary to what would be expected:

כָּל מֶה שֶׁיַּעֲמִיק בְּעֵנֶינּוּ פְּחִיתוּת
עֲצָמוֹ, וְיִהְיֶה נִבְזָה בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָס,

The more that a person will think deeply into how lowly his animal soul is, to the point of being disgusted by it,

אֲזִי יִהְיֶה שִׂמְחַת נִפְשׁוֹ בְּעֶסֶק
הַתּוֹרָה כְּפֹלָה וּמְכּוּפָּלָת כּו'.

then not only will it not stop him from having joy, but just the opposite, it will enable him to have true joy, for then his G-dly soul's joy in the study of the Torah will be doubled and redoubled.

וְהוּא "וַיִּסְפוּ עֲנוּיִם" דּוֹקָא - "בָּה'
שִׂמְחָהּ".¹²

This is the meaning of what it says: "and -specifically- the

¹² ראה תו"מ ח"א ע' 88-90:

א. במאמר דחג השבועות, ד"ה ויספו ענויים בה' שמחה (קונטרס חג השבועות סה"מ תש"י), מבאר כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הכ"מ השייכות שבין ענוה לשמחה, שלא זו בלבד שאינם הפכיים זמ"ז, אלא אדרבה, שהם מסייעים זל"ז.

ונקודת הביאור בזה - ש"בעצם מהותו הנה העניו הוא תקיף בדעתו וכל מה שהוא עושה הכל הוא בדעת חזקה", כי, "שפלות העניו אינה ענין הכנעה וביטול מצד שהוא שפל בעצם, דהעניו יודע מעלת עצמו, ויודע דמעלות הללו הם חשובים ביותר, אבל להיותו מכיר את האמת אינם חושבים למעלה ומדריגה שלו", ש"מכיר את האמת דכל ענין הטוב שיש לו אינו מצ"ע כ"א מה שבא בירושה

humble will increase in their joy in Hashem."

In Tanya chapter 34 the Alter Rebbe concludes a lengthy explanation on how to serve Hashem with joy. In chapters 26-27 he explains that we should be joyous at all times in Hashem's service since only with the energy of joy will one be able to overcome the yetzer hara and serve Hashem with the proper zest.

In chapters 28-31 he explains how to deal with the fact that the ego and coarseness of the animal soul encompass the G-dly soul and don't let the person experience the joy hidden in his soul. He explains that the person needs to refine the ego and coarseness by having a system of making a proper accounting of where he is holding in the service of Hashem, and just how far off course he is from the proper path that Hashem wants.

A person should sometimes think about how lowly and coarse the ego and desires of his animal soul are and question himself about how much does he work on himself to become refined and sensitive. When he does this, then his ego will begin to loosen up and allow some expression of his G-dly soul to enter his consciousness.

Now, we come back full circle- if the goal of this entire process is that one should experience the joy of his G-dly soul, then how can he do that if he is focused on how much he should be unhappy about his spiritual situation? How can he be expected to be happy about Hashem and sad about his spiritual exile at the same time?

The answer to this is in chapter 34, where he explains that since the joy is from the G-dly soul and the sadness is from the animal soul, and each soul is separate. Therefore, it is possible to have both feelings be expressed in

מאבותינו, ומשו"ז הוא הביטול, אבל ביטול זה אינו ענין השפלות כ"א הנחת עצמותו מהכרת האמת", ועד ש"אינו מתחשב עם עצמו כלל", לפי שנחשב בעיני עצמו לאין, וביטול זה (ענוה) הוא כלי לשמחה העליונה.

וההוראה מזה בנוגע אלינו: צריכים אנו לידע שהמעלות והכחות שיש לנו אינם אלא מה שניתן לנו ע"י כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר, ובמילא, צריכים אנו להיות בתכלית הביטול, למלא את השליחות של הרבי בכל התוקף, כאמור, שהעניו בעצם מהותו הוא תקיף בדעתו, מבלי להתחשב בשום הפרעה, העלם והסתר.

his consciousness at the same time. Not only are they not a contradiction, but actually the very brokenness of the animal soul's ego is what allows the person to experience the joy of the G-dly soul.

This then is the idea of “the humble will increase in their joy in Hashem,” meaning that because of the person's humility and selflessness, this allows him to increase in experiencing the joy of the G-dly soul.¹³

וְזֶהוּ עֲנִיָּן "הַר סִינַי" - שְׂרָרָה
שְׂנֵאָה¹⁴ עַל מִדּוֹת הָרָעוֹת, **And this is also the idea of the name of the mountain "הַר סִינַי" Mount Sinai,** since the word "שְׂנֵאָה" is related to the word "שְׂנֵאָה - Hatred," **meaning that** through the study of the Torah **there comes down,** from Hashem to the person, the power **to hate the negative attributes of** his animal soul.

¹³ On Shavuot 5710 (Torat Menachem vol.1 pp. 88-90) the Rebbe quoted the Friediker Rebbe's maamar on this pasuk, "וַיִּסְכּוּ עַנְיִים בָּהּ" שְׂמֵחָה - the humble will increase in their joy in Hashem," and explained the idea in short: A humble person is someone who is very strong in his opinions and he does everything with a great conviction. The fact that he is humble isn't because he thinks he is nothing. Rather, he knows his own capabilities and strengths and knows that they are very important, but since he recognizes the truth that everything he has is only from Hashem and what he inherited from the forefathers Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov, he doesn't attribute any greatness to himself. Therefore he doesn't feel himself. However, the fact that he doesn't feel himself isn't because he puts himself down, but because he totally puts himself aside since he recognizes the truth that his achievements and abilities are not from his own effort and accomplishment. This type of selflessness and humility which comes from recognizing the truth is what allows him to experience the joy of the G-dly soul.

The Rebbe ends off that the same idea applies to a chasid and Rebbe: A chasid needs to know that the Rebbe has given him power and capability to fulfill his shlichus. As long as he knows that it's not his power and accomplishments but that he is just using what was given to him, then he will have the strength to accomplish whatever the Rebbe wants from him regardless of any opposition from his own animal soul or someone else's animal soul, since he is just going with the Rebbe's power.

¹⁴ (סִינַי שְׂרָרָה שְׂנֵאָה [לְאַמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם] - שְׁבַת פֶּט, א.).

על דרך "לעולם ירגיז אדם יצר-טוב
על יצר-הרע" (ברכות ה, ריש עמוד א),

Just like it says in the Gemara (Brachos 5a): **"A person should always arouse his good inclination** stemming from his G-dly soul **to be angry at the evil inclination** stemming from the animal soul."

ורוגז זה הוא גם-כן הגבהה
והתנשאות על היצר-הרע כו'.

And this anger against his own animal soul **is also an expression of the uplifted feeling and supremacy of the G-dly soul over the animal soul's evil inclination;** thus, this anger is a "הר-הר" of self-esteem and pride of the G-dly soul that is expressed in giving the person the strength to "סיני-hate" his evil inclination and overcome it.

אך שהוא עיקר הביטול להיות
אתכפּיּא כו'¹⁵.

However, specifically, this type of "pride" in serving Hashem and overcoming the evil inclination is the main selfless dedication to Hashem, that he pushes himself to do what Hashem wants against his own animal soul's nature.

¹⁵ ועיין מה שנתבאר עוד מענין "הר" - בדבור המתחיל "שימני כחותם" (לקמן שיר השירים מה, ב).

ועיין מה שנתבאר בדבור המתחיל "קול דודי", בענין "מדלג על ההרים", "ישאו הרים שלום לעם" (לקמן שיר השירים טו, ד). ועיין מה שנתבאר סוף דבור המתחיל "שובה ישראל" (לקמן שבת שובה סה, ג).

We thus have another explanation of the idea of a “small mountain”: A mountain represents ego, and there are two types of ego: the ego of the G-dly soul and that of the animal soul. The ego of the animal soul is called a “tall mountain” since it wants everyone to look at it and only cares about itself. The ego of the G-dly soul is called a “small mountain” since its whole ego is just that it wants to fulfill Hashem’s will and connect to Hashem. Thus, even its “pride” and “ego” are really selfless dedication to Hashem. In other words, it doesn’t take pride in itself but in making Hashem happy. Since the whole Torah was given in order to reveal this strength and pride of the G-dly soul and give it the power to overcome the animal soul, therefore the Torah was given on a “small mountain”.

Summary of the Maamar

Question 1: Why was the Torah given specifically on Mount Sinai as opposed to another mountain?

Answer: Because Mount Sinai was the “lowest” and “most humble” of all the mountains, and to receive the Torah one needs humility.

Question 2: If the ego is a contradiction to receiving the Torah, and the tallness of the mountain represents ego, then why was the Torah given on a mountain and not in a plain or a valley?

Answer 1: Some ego is needed in order for a person to have the motivation to push himself forward in learning Torah and coming close to Hashem. He needs to feel that he wants to come close and have a yearning to progress spiritually. However, he needs to keep that small amount of ego in check, so that he shouldn't think that he is better than others. His “mountain” of yearning for closeness of Hashem needs to be “small” so he won't think his greatness makes him more important than others. It's just a gift from Hashem.

Answer 2: The idea of the Torah is to bring out the pride and power, the “mountain” of the G-dly soul and how it overpowers and transforms the animal soul. However, even this holy “pride” needs to be “small”, since the G-dly soul's pride is only in making Hashem happy, not for itself. Thus, if someone feels his own ego too much he can know it isn't the “pride” of the G-dly soul.

Lessons from the Maamar in the Service of Hashem

1. A Jew needs to have a balance between selfless dedication to Hashem and having a personal feeling of yearning to accomplish and grow in the service of Hashem. He should truly want to learn how to daven with excitement and passion, how to truly understand Chassidus and Gemara etc. and he should feel driven to accomplish. At the same time, he should be humble and not think he is better than others. It is only Hashem's help and what he inherited in his neshamah that enables him to accomplish, not his own personal greatness.
2. A Jew needs to reveal the joy, the power, and the pride of his G-dly soul by refining himself and removing the coarseness and ego of his animal soul. The more he can overcome the desires of his animal soul, the more he can experience the true joy and strength of his G-dly soul.

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