

The Shabbat As a Delight

By

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There is only one place in that Tanakh where we are told to call Yom Shabbat a Delight. So does this mean we must do things in this day that will make it a delight for us. Or is it the way we keep it that makes it a delight. We find this in Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58. Let read this in context to see what is being talked about here.

1 **Call out** (qera קרא) with the throat do not spare. Like the trumpet lift up your voice and show my people **their trespass** (pish'am פִּשְׁעָם), and to the house of Ya'aqov **their sins** (Chattotam חַטֹּאתֵם).

2 Yet me day by day they seek knowledge of my ways **they desire**. (2654 – yech'patzun יַחַפְצוּן) As a nation that righteousness has done (made), **and the judgement** (umishpat וּמִשְׁפָּט) of Eloheynu not forsake. They ask of me **judgments of righteousness** (mishpatay-tzedek מִשְׁפָּטַי-צְדָקָה) to draw near to Elohim **they desire** (yech'patzun יַחַפְצוּן).

3 Why have we fasted (zam'nu צָמְנוּ) and not you see? We afflicted (ininu עֲנִינוּ) our soul and not you know? Behold, on the day of **your fast** (tzom'khem צִמּוֹכֶם) you find **delight** (2656 – chefetz חֵפֶץ) and your toilers you drive hard (vekal וְכָל-עֹצְבֵיכֶם) **and those you grieve you will extract him** (tin'goso – וְתִגְשׁוּ).

4 Look! For strife and debate you fast and strike with the fist of wickedness. Not do fast as today, to make heard in the height you voice.

5 Like this is the fast I will choose, a day to afflict a man his soul? To bow down like a bulrush his head, and sackcloth and ashes he spreads? To this will you call a fast and a day of **favorable** (7522 – ratzon רָצוֹן) to Yehovah?

6 Is not this the fast I have chosen: to **open bands of wickedness** (patach har'tzubot reshah פִּתַח חֲרָצְבוֹת רֶשַׁע), to **undo** (hatter הַתֵּר) thongs (binds) of the yoke,

and let go the oppressed ones free, and every yoke that you pull off [Free those from doing wrong/show how people are being bound by doing wrong – wicked]

7 Is it not to break to the hungry your bread, that the poor wandering you should bring into your house when you see the naked and cover him and from you flesh not will you hide flesh?

8 Then shall break as dawn your light and your healing shall quickly spring up and shall go before you your righteousness the glory of Yehovah shall gather you.

9 Then you shall call and Yehovah shall answer, you shall cry and he say here I am. If you turn away from your midst the yoke (doing wickedness), sending out [pointing] the finger and speaking of **iniquity** (205 – **aven** אָוֶן).

10 And if you let out [your] **soul** (5315 – **nef'shekha** נֶפֶשְׁךָ) and satisfy **the afflicted soul** (**venefesh ne'anah** וְנֶפֶשׁ נֶאֱנָה), then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom shall be at noonday.

11 And shall Yehovah guide you always and satisfy in dry places **your soul** (**nef'shekha** נֶפֶשְׁךָ) and your bones brace up. And you shall be like a watered garden and like a spring of water, which not do prove false its water.

12 And shall build from you the wastes of forever the foundation of generation and generation you shall rear. And one will call to you repairer of the breach restorer of paths to live in.

Here a change happens. Yet no break happens in the Hebrew text. We are talking about fasting and what makes fasting acceptable in Yehovah's eyes. Now we start talking about Shabbat.

13 If you turn away from the Shabbat your foot to do what **you please** (2656 – **chefatzekha** חֶפְצֶיךָ) on day my holy and **call [you]** (**veqara'ta** וְקָרָאתָ) the Shabbat a **delight** (6027 – **oneg pleasant/delight** עֲנֵג) to the holiness of Yehovah glorified and shall **glory** in it (3513 – **mekhubad vekhibado** מְכֻבָּד וְכִבְדוֹ) away from doing [or making] (**me'asot** מַעֲשׂוֹת) your own ways (1870 – **derakheikha** דְּרָכֶיךָ), from finding **your own pleasure** (**chef'tzakha** חֶפְצֶיךָ) or speaking word (**vedaber dabar** וְדַבֵּר דָּבָר).

14 Then you shall **delight yourself** (6026 – **tit'anag** תִּתְעַנֵּג) on Yehovah. And I will make you ride on the high places of the earth, and make you eat the inheritance of Yaaqov your father, for the mouth of Yehovah has spoken.

One of the first word we encounter here is 2654 – chafetz which the verb form of the root (Chet-Fey-Tzadie) It has a general meaning delight as in being pleased. It is found in the NEHC on page 451 to 452 and in the BDB on page 342-343.

We see this in some of the following verses.

Bamidbar/Numbers 14:8

⁸If Yehovah is **pleased** (**chafetz** חָפֵץ) with us, He will bring us into that land, a land that flows with milk and honey, and give it to us;

Here Yehovah is said to be please with us like one who approves.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 21:14

14 Then, should you no longer [you] **want** (**chafetz'ta** חָפֵצְתָּ) her, you must release her outright. You must not sell her for money: since you had your will of her, you must not enslave her.

The beautiful captive female after he has made her his ishah (woman/wife) if he no longer is pleased with/accepts her he may send her out.

Shemuel Aleph/I Samuel 18:22

²²And Saul instructed his courtiers to say to David privately, “The king is **fond** (**chafetz** חָפֵץ) of you and all his courtiers like you. So why not become the king’s son-in-law?”

Here the King Shaul is pleased with /approves David. He desires him to be his son-in-law.

Tehillim/Psalms 41:12

¹²Then shall I know that You are **pleased** (**chafatz'ta** חָפֵצְתָּ) with me: when my enemy cannot shout in triumph over me.

The kind of delight one has that it is pleasing, desirable or of acceptance. In the Hebrew it is khi chafatz'ta or for you are pleased.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 9:23

22 Thus said Yehovah: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; Let not the strong man glory in his strength; Let not the rich man glory in his riches. 23 But only in this should one glory: In his earnest devotion to Me. For I Yehovah act with kindness, Justice, and equity in the world; For in these **I delight (chafatz'tiy חַפְצָתִי)**

Yehovah delights/is pleased with kindness, justice and equity.

We see that the House of Ya'aqov delights or is pleased to know of Yehovah's way. They seek it out to know it. This is how the verse Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58:2 starts out.

The next word we encounter here is 2656 – chafetz which the masculine noun from the root (Chet-Fey-Tsadie) It has a general meaning delight as in pleasure. It is found on page 452 of the NEHC and page 343 of the BDB.

Tefillin/Psalms 1:2

²rather, the teaching of Yehovah is his **delight (pleasure – chaf'tzo חַפְצוֹ)**, and he studies that teaching day and night.

Here a person who finds his pleasure in the teachings of Yehovah and studies then.

Shemuel Aleph/I Samuel 15:22

²²But Samuel said: “**Does Yehovah delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices (hachafetz leYehovah ba'olot uzevachim חַחֲפֵץ לַיהוָה בְּעֹלוֹת וּזְבָחִים)** As much as in obedience to Yehovah's command? Surely, obedience is better than sacrifice, Compliance than the fat of rams.

Shemu'el asks Shaul if Yehovah get pleasure/acceptance from burnt offerings without obedience. Shaul was disobeying Yehovah.

Ecclesiastes/Kohelet 5:3

³When you make a vow to Elohim, do not delay to fulfill it. For He has no **pleasure (chafetz חַפְצֵי)** in fools; what you vow, fulfill.

When making a vow one should fulfill it. Only a foolish person would think he will escape/delay the fulfilling of it.

We can see that while they were fasting they were doing other things than what they should have been doing. Doing their delight or what pleased them. When also mentioned the working of their laborers it could be referring to their conducting business.

For when they fasted they also caused those the grievance and extract it from them which alludes to forced work.

The context goes on to describe what kind of fasting they were doing. The question is asked is what kind of fasting is favorable to Yehovah.

Lets look at that word Favorable. 7522 – ratzon. It is from the verb form of ratzah. The root is Resh-Tzadie-Hey. The general meaning is acceptable or favorable. It is also used in a sense to reflect ones pleasure or delight in an action or outcome. It is found on page 1189 in the NEHC and page 953 in the BDB.

Tehillim/Psalms 30:6

⁶For He is angry but a moment, and when He is **pleased (בִּרְצוֹנוֹ bir'tzono)** there is life. (JPS)

6 For a moment he is angry, long-life is **his favor (בִּרְצוֹנוֹ bir'tzono)** (Interlinear)

If one is found in favor or accepted then there is life.

Mishlei/Proverbs 11:1

False scales are an abomination to Yehovah; An honest weight **pleases (רָצוֹנוֹ ratzono)** Him.

Honest scales are acceptable to him.

Mishlei/Proverbs 15:8

⁸The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Yehovah, But the prayer of the upright **pleases (רָצוֹנוֹ ratzono)** Him.

Here we see that what is favorable or acceptable to Yehovah pleases or delights him. Free those from doing wrong/show how people are being bound by doing wrong – wickedness. To help those who are needy and share what we have. But what are we to do “If you turn away from your midst the yoke, sending out [pointing 7971 – shelach **שְׁלַח**] the finger and speaking of iniquity” (205 – **aven אָוֶן**). The yoke is the wicked/guilt state of transgressing his commands. It binds us and in the sense enslaves us to his punishment. The pointing finger is them pointing out the deeds of others and speaking their iniquity.

Then in verse 13 and 14 it changes from fasting to discussing keeping the Shabbat. But the same theme is being used here. That is the idea of delight or pleasure. So lets take a look again.

13 If you turn away from the Shabbat your foot to do what **you please** (2656 – **chefatzekha** חֶפְצֶיךָ) on day my holy and **call [you]** (veqara'ta וְקָרָאתָ) the Shabbat a **delight** (6027 – **oneg pleasant/delight** עֲנֵג) to the holiness of Yehovah glorified and shall **glory** in it (3513 – **mekhubad vekhibado** מְכֻבָּד וְכִבְדוֹ) away from doing [or making] (me'asot מַעֲשׂוֹת) your own ways (1870 – **derakheikha** דְּרַכֶּיךָ), from finding **your own pleasure** (chef'tzakha חֶפְצֶיךָ) or speaking word (vedaber dabar וְדַבֵּר דָּבָר).

Again we see that Chefetz as a masculine noun is used. What was it that they were doing that was pleasing or a delight to them that they should not do on the Shabbat. Lets look at verse 3 again.

3 Why have **we fasted** (zam'nu צָמְנוּ) and not you see? **We afflicted** (ininu עֲנִינוּ) our soul and not you know? Behold, on the day of **your fast** (tzom'khem צִמּוֹכֶם) you find **delight** (2656 – **chefetz** חֶפֶץ) and your toilers you drive hard (vekal itzebeykhem tin'goso – and those you grieve you will extract him וְכָל-עֹצְבֵיכֶם תִּנְגְּשׁוּ).

Does this mean Yeshayahu is also condemning them of doing the same thing on Shabbat. Is the delight they find in extracting forced labor while they rest. If so then that was a breaking of the commandment to have your servants rest on the Shabbat Day. We know from verse 5 the form they took in fasting.

5 Like this is the fast I will choose, a day to afflict a man his soul? To bow down like a bulrush his head, and sackcloth and ashes he spreads? To this will you call a fast and a day of **favorable** (7522 – **ratzon** רָצוֹן) to Yehovah?

So the delight or pleasure they found was not in the fast but in what they were looking like they were fasting. They were into the form of fasting not in the preparation to be acceptable. It is not that one finds pleasure in fasting but that they were to fast to gain favor or acceptance of Yehovah. So turning your foot from doing business (work) on the Shabbat. This may be what the focus of this chapter really is.

Is the following a fast that one should do.

Shemuel Bet/II Samuel 12:16-23

16 David entreated Elohim for the boy; David fasted, and he went in and spent the night lying on the ground. 17 The senior servants of his household tried to induce him to get up from the ground; but he refused, nor would he partake of food with them. 18 On the seventh day the child died. David's servants were afraid to tell David that the child was dead; for they said, "We spoke to him when the child was alive and he wouldn't listen to us; how can we tell him that the child is dead? He might do something terrible." 19 When David saw his servants talking in whispers, David understood that the child was dead; David asked his servants, "Is the child dead?" "Yes," they replied.

20 Thereupon David rose from the ground; he bathed and anointed himself, and he changed his clothes. He went into the House of Yehovah and prostrated himself. Then he went home and asked for food, which they set before him, and he ate. 21 His courtiers asked him, "Why have you acted in this manner? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but now that the child is dead, you rise and take food!" 22 He replied, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept because I thought: 'Who knows? Yehovah may have pity on me, and the child may live.' 23 But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will never come back to me."

David's fasting was to seek the mercy and favor of Yehovah on the part of his son. He did not find it but look at the reactions of his servants. David was fasted to a level that they thought his life was in danger. And over a period of a week it probably was.

Next, you are to call out or proclaim the Shabbat as a delight/pleasant. The word here is Oneg – 6027 (Ayin-nun-gimmel). It is from the verb form Anag and the same root. It too is delight or pleasant. If it is delightful to us it is desirable to be done. Thus, by calling it a delight we are saying that keeping the Shabbat is desirable to us. In keeping it we give honor or glory to Yehovah. In keeping it the way he wants us to make it acceptable or favorable to Yehovah. So he delights in that we keep it. It is an everlasting covenant.

Shemot/Exodus 31:12-17

¹²And Yehovah said to Mosheh: ¹³Speak to the Israelite people and say: Nevertheless, you must keep My sabbaths, for this is a sign between Me and you throughout the ages, that you may know that I Yehovah have consecrated you. ¹⁴You shall keep the sabbath, for it is holy for you. He who profanes (makes common) it shall be put to death: whoever does work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his kin. ¹⁵Six days may work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be a sabbath of complete rest (shabbat shabbaton), holy to Yehovah; whoever does work on the sabbath day shall be put to death. ¹⁶The Israelite people shall keep the sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout the ages as a covenant for all time: ¹⁷it shall be a sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel. For in six days Yehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and was refreshed.

Thus, turning from our own ways (derekh), which is again a reference to the earlier reference in turning your foot. Which appears to be a reference to working ones laborers on Shabbat or doing one's work. To find one's pleasure on shabbat would seem to indicate action on the part of the individual to seek to do something they desired that would not be appropriate for the Shabbat. We see this addressed earlier in verse 4 and followed up in verse 9.

4 Look! For strife and debate you fast and strike with the fist of wickedness. Not do fast as today, to make heard in the height you voice.

9 Then you shall call and Yehovah shall answer, you shall cry and he say here I am. If you turn away from your midst the yoke, sending out [pointing] the finger and speaking of iniquity.

They were debating and arguing to make themselves seem important. The words they discussed was speaking of iniquity. We see that in practice they were keeping what they felt was the requirements for fasting and what was required for the Shabbat. Yet, what they were doing was not favorable or pleasing to Yehovah. We see this in verse 1.

1 Call out with the throat do not spare. Like the trumpet lift up your voice and show my people their trespass, and to the house of Ya'aqov their sins.

In keeping the Shabbat properly and in the attitude of something we desire to do which is pleasant/delightful, then the result is in verse 14.

14 Then you shall delight yourself (6026 – tit'anag לַעֲנֵנִי) on Yehovah. And I will make you ride on the high places of the earth, and make you eat the inheritance of Yaaqov your father, for the mouth of Yehovah has spoken.

Clearly, if we are proclaiming the Shabbat as a delight or something pleasing and teaching his people "Yaaqov" to keep it properly (removing the yoke) and turning back from keeping it in a way (derekh) that is not pleasing and sinful/iniquity. So delighting in the Shabbat is not something we should expect the Shabbat day to be instead it is our attitude and approach that make it a delight. Let us proclaim the Shabbat is a delight to us to keep.