

Pleasure as a Doorway

מֵהַיִּפְיִית וּמֵהַנֶּעְמְתָ אֶהְבָּה בְּתַעֲנוּגִים

Mah-yafit u'mah-na'amt ahavah batanugim

How beautiful and how sweet is Love
In all its pleasures! (Song of Songs 7:7)

In a *Birkat HaMazon* I composed many years ago, I wrote, "Pleasure is a doorway to expanded reality." Allowing pleasure to be a doorway means that we must commit to walking through ... which is very different than the usual patterns of grabbing on to pleasure and pushing away pain. The Song of Songs knows love as the highest and most profound pleasure. Its profundity is rooted in the fact that it is indeed a doorway and a force of beckoning. We are called through that doorway of pleasure into an expanded reality, where we can know ourselves as part of the greater whole. Called by beauty, we walk through, tasting each sensation, and letting go, opening into the greater mystery.