

PARSHAT KI TISA
EXODUS 30:11-34:35
HAFTARAH EZEKIEL 36:16-38
16 ADAR 5783/09 MARCH 2023



Enso Circle
Brushed ink by Mugaku Soen (1720-1791)

WORDS THAT LIGHTEN THE LOAD

1. “When you lift up (*ki tisa*) the heads of the children of Israel (*rosh b’nei Israel*)...” (Exodus 30:12)
2. Moses took the tablets and went down the mountain, and the letters were carrying themselves and Moses. When the letters saw the golden calf, they flew off the tablets and became heavy. Moses could no longer carry them, so he threw them out of his hands. (Pireki D'Rebbe Eliezer 45)
3. “You shall not make for yourself any graven image nor any image...” includes even God’s commandments, if the form becomes more important than the vitality it expresses. (Based on Beit Yaacov)
4. Scripture says that the words were “incised [*harut*] on the tablets” (Exodus 32:16). The rabbis comment: “Freedom [*heirut*] from the evil urge, from the Angel of Death, from death itself.” But what does “incised on the tablets” really mean? Only as the light of Torah is incised on the hearts of Israel are the letters incised on the tablets as well. The real writing is on the heart, of which Scripture says: “Write them on the tablet of your heart” (Proverbs 3:3). Torah depends on the preparation of Israel, on the readiness of those who are to receive Torah. (Sefat Emet)

5. You are a volume in the divine book.
A mirror to the power
that created the universe.
Whatever you want, ask it of yourself.
Whatever you're looking for can only be found
Inside of you.
(Rumi)

6. You should not see your fellow's donkey or ox falling on the way and hide yourself from that; you should raise it up with him. (Deuteronomy 22:4)