 Reading time: 1 min.

A famous biblical scholar had invited a group of colleagues to his home. They sat around a table that had a magnificent vase of flowers in the middle and began to argue over a page of the Bible. They argued animatedly, breaking down every word, hypothesising ancient roots, conjecturing, postulating, comparing, distilling, historicising, demythologising, psychologising, feminising…
They could agree on almost nothing.
Suddenly the host interrupted the discussion and turned to one of the guests who was taking flowers from the vase in the middle of the table and systematically destroying them.
“What are you doing?”
“I am counting the whorls, dividing the stamens and pistils, setting aside stalks and filaments…”
“This scientific zeal does you credit, but you are ruining all the beauty of these beautiful flowers!”
The man smiled bitterly: “That is exactly what you are doing.”

Rabbi Elimelekh had delivered a wonderful sermon on the art of living. Full of enthusiasm, the listeners joyfully accompanied him as he took the carriage back to his village.
At one point, the rabbi brought the carriage to a halt and asked the driver to go ahead without him as he mingled with the people.
“What an example of humility!” said one of his disciples.
“Humility has nothing to do with it,” replied Elimelekh. “Here people walk happily, sing, drink wine, chat, make new friends, and all thanks to an old rabbi who came to speak on the art of living. So I prefer to leave my theories in the carriage and enjoy the party.”