



A Taste of Torah Over and Over and Over and...

By Rabbi Mordechai E. Fleisher

Simchas Torah. The dancing. The singing. The candy. The kiddush. The flags. The tired, sugar-filled, happy children. The sweaty talleisim. The completion of the Torah on this day, the final day of the holiday of Sukkos, is certainly reason to celebrate.

Wait! Hold on just a minute! What are they doing now? They're taking out another Torah scroll? Why? We just finished the final verses! What?!? They're starting all over again? But why? Why not begin studying something else?

Before your head starts spinning in the same circles you were going in a few minutes earlier, stop for a moment to consider the following: Torah study is fundamentally different than any other area of knowledge in the world. While other areas of study, such as mathematics, medicine, or history are just something that one learns, understands, and knows, Torah is G-d's Word to humanity. As Rabbi Mordechai Gifter (1915-2001), Dean of the Telz Yeshiva of Cleveland, said, "Prayer is man speaking to G-d; Torah is G-d speaking to man."

This important principle has two major ramifications. The first is that, regardless of how great one's expertise of Torah may be, there is always more waiting to be discovered. This is Hashem talking, after all; just as He is infinite, His Words are infinite, as well. There is always another layer waiting to be uncovered, another insight waiting to be discovered, another wellspring of thought waiting to be tapped. Torah is endless, and every Jew, including you, has his own unique portion of the Torah.

The second important fact to realize is that while knowledge of Torah is vitally necessary if one wishes to live in accordance with Halacha, Torah study is much more than that: it is the study of, and connection to, G-d's Word. It is thus one of the primary ways of coming closer to, and of building our connection with, G-d Himself. It is something worth learning again and again, even if one already knows what must be done in day-to-day life. And the more we pore over the tomes containing those Divine words, the more we delve into a passage of Talmud, the more we sweat over a difficult piece of Tosafos, the more we build our connection with our Father in Heaven.

So go ahead, dance at having completed the Torah. And dance some more at having the opportunity to begin all over again! Because as happy as we are to have merited coming to the end, of having seen the entirety of the Written Torah, we rejoice even more at having the opportunity to begin anew, and to discover another layer of the endless depth and breadth of every one of those words.

our usual physical selves; we need to become angelic. If we remain the same as always, we will be unable to receive this gift from Hashem. But becoming angelic requires a departure from our physical bodies. To that end, continues the Ramchal, the Torah commands us to withdraw from certain major areas of physical. Not merely to make us suffer, but to enable us to rise above our bodies. Then, and only then, can we tap into the special spiritual light, utilize the power bestowed upon us, and truly return to our Father in Heaven.

Stories For The Soul

A Gift from Heaven

On Simchas Torah we rejoice as we appreciate our wonderful Torah.

Our Sages tell us (Shabbos 88b) that when Moshe Rabbeinu was up on Har Sinai, receiving the Torah from Hashem, the Angels were in an uproar. They complained that Hashem should give them the Torah, not the Children of Israel.

"Master of the Universe, why give the holy Torah to human beings who are sinful, deceitful and frail," the Angels argued, "Give the Torah to us. We Angels are perfect and obedient. We sing songs in praise of You every day. We follow your bidding to perfection. We are far superior to mere mortals both in strength and in knowledge. We understand secrets that would boggle the mind of man."

They were so aggressive in their demeanor, Moshe was afraid they were going to kill him. Moshe clung to the Kisei Hakavod (G-d's Heavenly Throne) for dear life.

Hashem said, "Moshe, do not be afraid. Answer the angels."

Moshe gathered up his courage and responded, "Angels, the Torah says 'Honor your father and mother.' Do Angels have parents to honor?"

They had no choice but to reply, "No."

Moshe continued, "Angels, the Torah says, 'Thou shalt not steal.' Would an Angel ever steal?"

"No."

"Angels, the Torah says not to eat unkosher food. Does an Angel even eat?"

Again the Angels had to admit, "No."

Kollel Happenings

The Kollel is on Sukkos break. Classes resume October 30.

KNOW THY ENEMY TUES. AT AISH

Join Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers in studying the tactics and strategies of the Yetzer Hora, and develop your own battle plan for the greatest challenge of your life - the war against the Evil Inclination. Based on the classic work Chovos Halvevos. Tuesday mornings 7:55-8:25 at Aish. For information, please contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at rmh@denverkollel.org or 303-820-2855.



THE LATE SHOW: THURS. NIGHT SEDER AT AISH

Join the Chevra for learning and cholent at Aish. Maariv is at 9:00 p.m. followed by learning and refreshments. For chavrusas or other information, contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at rmh@denverkollel.org or 303-820-2855



LIBERATED PARENTS, LIBERATED CHILDREN WITH MRS. AVIGAIL STEINHARTER

Join Mrs. Avigail Steinharter for "Liberated Parents, Liberated Children: Your Guide to a Happier Family." This six part series for moms integrates the timeless wisdom of the Torah with the approach of the world-renowned Dr. Haim Ginott. Classes will be held on Tues., Nov. 1, Nov. 8, Nov. 15, Nov. 22, Nov. 29, & Dec. 6 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.. Cost: \$80 for all six classes. For information, call 303-820-2855 or email info@denverkollel.org

Interpersonal Issues Bal Tolin

If the employer has only a large bill, this is regarded as having available funds, and he must trouble himself to change it in order to pay.

If the employer has some money available, but not enough to pay the full wages, he must use whatever is available towards paying the worker. This is true even if he won't have a penny left in

his pocket, and even if he won't be able to purchase for Shabbos. (He may, of course, ask the worker to waive his right of immediate payment.)

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi Kiss of Honor

Louis Orzech wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

What is the best way to honor the Torah as it is carried in the synagogue? This question applies to both when we are "touching-distance" from the Torah as well as when we are too far away.

Dear Louis Orzech,

One should stand. If the Torah is carried past you, it is a mitzvah to follow behind it until it is brought to rest. It is also customary to kiss the Torah, or to touch the Torah and kiss your hand. If you are too far away, you should stand

and face the Torah as it is taken to and placed on the bima (table upon which the Torah is placed and read). Likewise, when the Torah is being carried back to the holy ark.

Rabbi Yehuda Segal, zatzal, the late Rosh Yeshiva in Manchester, used to point out that although it is a beautiful custom to kiss the Torah, very often people surge forward and push or elbow others out of the way! Rabbi Segal cautioned his students that it's better not to kiss the Torah than to push others in order to kiss the Torah.

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Stories for the Soul

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"You are right," Moshe explained, "Angels are more perfect than humans, but it is our frailty that makes us need the Torah. We have parents whom we tend to neglect, unkosher food that we are tempted to eat, money that we are blinded by. Every day in the life of a human is filled with temptations and opportunities to sin. The Torah is the medicine that will help us live our lives with purity. It will enable us achieve greatness."

"You see Angels," concluded Moshe, "It is because of our many imperfections that we SHOULD receive the Torah."

Hashem then gave the Torah to the Children of Israel and the Angels did not complain.

The Torah is our life and the length of our days. May we dance with joy as we realize what a special and precious gift we have - The Torah.

Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.