



# THE HARRY H. BEREN TORAH WEEKLY

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Because Torah Is for Every Jew

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## A Taste of Torah Mind & Body

By Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher

Ever tried dieting? You know the drill. Here you are, at a great party, surrounded by lots of delicious (read: fattening) food, and you are doing your utmost to stick to the carrot sticks (no dressing; it's not fat-free). Then, you notice the ribs, and your resolve just melts away. Three platefuls later, you groan as you come to your senses, realizing that you've done it again. That's right, despite your realization that all this food is not conducive to good health, or, for that matter, to fitting into your new suit come Rosh Hashanah, your physical desire has once again prevailed over your better judgment.

This trait of human frailty presents itself rather clearly in this week's Torah portion. While discussing the sojourns of the Jewish People through lands of idolatrous nations, Moshe states, "And you saw their abominations and their detestable idols... Perhaps there is among you a man or woman... whose heart turns away...to go and serve the gods of those nations..." (Devarim 29:16-17) Moshe's concern seems difficult to comprehend. After seeing how despicable and abominable the idols of these nations are, why would anyone wish to serve them?

But there are two aspects to every human that are constantly in conflict: one's intellect and one's desires. And while one may realize that something is wrong, even detestable, he may still have a strong urge to involve himself with it. The challenge we face, day in and day out, is to make the intellectual realization the reality that we live, to

allow it to define our essence, not just to be a nice idea.

This idea is expressed succinctly in a verse that is recited at the end of the three daily prayers. "And you are to know this day, and take to your heart that Hashem is the only G-d, in heaven above and on the earth below, there is none other." (Devarim 4:39) The first step we are need to achieve is the awareness that there is one G-d in heaven and earth. The next step - the more difficult one - is to take this awareness to heart, to make it a part of our essence, to allow it to guide our thoughts, our actions, and our lives.

Moshe knew that the Jewish People had a clear perception of the repugnance of idols. His fear was that this awareness was a mere intellectual realization, but was not powerful enough to make its way to their hearts. Thus, there was a possibility that the urge to turn to idol worship would overpower the desire to avoid that which was horribly wrong.

At the threshold of Rosh Hashanah, we stand poised to declare Hashem as King of the world - and our King, as well. But a mere declaration - sincere as it may be - isn't enough. The declaration must translate into a life that reflects that reality. So, as you steer clear of that gooey, creamy, seven-layer cake that has your name written all over it, recalling that you paid good money for that suit, make the commitment to make real changes for the coming year - changes that are the result a heart filled with the awareness of what your life's purpose is really about.

## Stories For The Soul

### Chain Reaction

A miser died and was called before the heavenly court. In the courtroom there stood a scale. Prosecuting Angels placed numerous deeds on the sinful side of the scale, while the mitzva side remained empty.

"Surely I must have some merit," the man cried.

A scrawny angel limped in and placed two coins on the scale. Then he returned with a loaf of bread, which he threw on the scale. Then he dragged in a sack of flour, which he heaved onto the scale. Finally, he hauled in a huge farm plow, which tipped the scale in the man's favor.

"Who are you?" the man asked.

The angel related, "Once, a poor man begged you for alms. You gave him two coins. With that, he had enough money to buy a loaf of bread for his family. The baker, after selling that loaf, was able to buy another sack of flour and continue his business. The farmer, after selling that sack of flour, was able to afford the new plow he needed to continue his farming operation. You got credit for all these good things that you set into motion with your one deed."

"I am so thankful," said the man, "but, tell me, why are you limping?"

"When that poor man asked you for help, you threw the coins at him, stomping your feet and screaming. When you threw the coins, I was created. And when you stomped down, you stepped on my foot."

May we all merit a good judgment this Rosh Hashana.

*Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.*

## Kollel Happenings

### DERECH HASHEM

Join Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher for a philosophical series on "Derech Hashem", a sefer by Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto. Discover and delve into the vital understanding of Hashem's world. The women's class will resume after Sukkos, at EDOS. For info, email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org) or call 303-820-2855.



### DONOR APPRECIATION EVENT

The Denver Community Kollel is celebrating its 15th year of bringing Torah to Denver at its annual Donor Appreciation Event. The event will take place at the home of Brad and Dana Licht, 6156 East Powers Ave on September 24 at 7:00 p.m. For more information or to donate, please visit [www.denverkollel.org](http://www.denverkollel.org)



### A DEEPER LOOK AT THE PARSHA

Join Rabbi Shachne Sommers as he discusses a number of difficulties encountered in the weekly Torah portion, and develops a comprehensive approach to resolve the issues, simultaneously conveying a deeper understanding of the material being discussed. The class will resume after Sukkos.

## Interpersonal Issues Safeguarding a Lost Object

The finder may not borrow the item for personal use, nor may he lend it to others, even for a charitable cause. This is true regardless of how long the item has been under his watch.

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

## Ask the Rabbi Why is Honey Kosher?

Balint from Grinell in Iowa writes:

I have the following question that no one could answer yet:

Why is honey Kosher? I thought that the product of non-Kosher animals was not Kosher as well. Bees are not Kosher, so why is honey Kosher?

I appreciate your time and hope you know the answer.

Thank you,

Dear Balint,

The Mishna in Tractate Bechoros states:

"That which comes from something which is Tameh [non-Kosher] is Tameh, and that which comes of that which is Tahor [Kosher] is Tahor." So you were right, Balint - the product of a non-Kosher animal is not Kosher. So why is bee-honey Kosher?

The Talmud in the same Tractate quotes a Beraita (a Halachic teaching from the time of the Mishna) which says:

"Why did they say that bee-honey is permitted? Because even though they bring it into their bodies, it is not a \*product\* of their bodies [it is stored there but not produced there]."

All the Sages of the Mishna agree with this ruling. One of them, Rabbi Yaakov, disagrees with the \*reasoning\*. He claims that bee-honey is Kosher based on his interpretation of Vayikra

11:21. According to him, the verse prohibits one to eat a flying insect, but \*not\* that which is \*excreted\* from it.

Maimonides codifies bee-honey as being Kosher, as does the Shulchan Aruch.

You may wonder: How could one even think that bee-honey is not Kosher - the Torah refers to the Land of Israel as "a Land flowing with milk and honey"! Certainly the Torah would not choose a non-Kosher product as a means for describing the beauty of the Land of Israel! This may come as a surprise, but the honey mentioned in the verse about "milk and honey" is not bee-honey - rather it is fig-honey. The Talmud in Tractate Berachot tells us that another verse "It is a Land of wheat, barley, grapes, figs and pomegranates - a Land of olives and \*honey\*" - is referring to date-honey.

Sources:

Tractate Bechoros, pages 5b, 7b.

The Codes of Maimonides, Laws of Forbidden Foods 3:3.

Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah, 81:8.

Tractate Megillah, page 6a, Rashi. Chumash, Book of Devarim, 8:8.

Tractate Berachos, page 41b, Rashi.

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