



VA'ETCHANAN

Memory Is Life

Forgetting Torah Is Like Losing a Part of Yourself

PARSHAH OVERVIEW

VA'ETCHANAN

Moses tells the people of Israel how he implored G-d to allow him to enter the Land of Israel, but G-d refused, instructing him instead to ascend a mountain and see the Promised Land.

Continuing his "review of the Torah," Moses describes the Exodus from Egypt and the Giving of the Torah, declaring them unprecedented events in human history. "Has there ever occurred this great thing, or has the likes of it ever been heard? Did ever a people hear the voice of G-d speaking out of the midst of the fire . . . and

live? . . . You were shown to know that the L-rd is G-d; there is none else besides Him."

Moses predicts that in future generations, the people will turn away from G-d, worship idols, and be exiled from their Land and scattered among the nations; but from there, they will seek G-d and return to obey His commandments.

Our *parshah* also includes a repetition of the Ten Commandments and the verses of the Shema, which declare the fundamentals of

the Jewish faith: the unity of G-d ("Hear O Israel: the L-rd our G-d, the L-rd is One"); and the *mitzvot* to love G-d, to study His Torah, to bind "these words" as *tefilin* on our arms and heads, and to inscribe them in the *mezuzot* affixed on the doorposts of our homes.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What are we looking for in these books?

What do we gain from them?

How do you benefit from your Torah studies,
especially our Torah Studies lessons?

G-d wants us to
learn Torah **daily**.



TEXT 1

Deuteronomy 5:1

וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם, שְׁמַע
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי דֹבֵר
בְּאָזְנֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם, וּלְמַדְתֶּם אֹתָם וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם לַעֲשֹׂתָם.

Moses summoned all the Israelites and said to them,
“Hear, O Israel, the laws and rules that I speak to you
today. Study them and be careful to observe them.”

TEXT 2

Rabbi Shneur Zalman
of Liadi, *Shulchan*
Aruch HaRav, Laws of
Torah Study 2:1

מִי שֶׁלֹא לִימְדוֹ אָבִיו תּוֹרָה חַיִּיב לְלַמֵּד אֶת עַצְמוֹ כְּשֵׁיכִיר, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, "וּלְמַדְתֶּם
אוֹתָם וַשְׁמַרְתֶּם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם" (דְּבָרִים ה, ו), זֶה מִצְוַת עֲשֵׂה שֶׁל תִּלְמוּד תּוֹרָה. עַל כָּל
אָדָם לְעַצְמוֹ לְלַמּוֹד כָּל הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָּב וְשֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה כּוּלָּה . . .

לְפִיכָךְ חַיִּיב הוּא לְשַׁלֵּשׁ זְמַן לְמִידָתוֹ שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם וַיּוֹם שְׁלִישׁ בְּמִקְרָא שְׁלִישׁ בְּמִשְׁנָה
שְׁהֵן הִלְכוֹת פְּסוּקוֹת בְּלִי טַעָמִים . . . שְׁלִישׁ בְּתִלְמוּד הַמִּבְּאֵר טַעָמֵי הִהְלָכוֹת.

If your father did not teach you the Torah, you must teach yourself when you are old enough to understand. When the Torah states, "Study them and be careful to observe them" (Deuteronomy 5:1), it refers to the *mitzvah* of Torah study. It is a positive commandment for every Jew to study the entire Written and Oral Torah. . . .

Therefore, one is required to divide one's daily Torah study like this: a third of the time should be devoted to the study of the Written Torah, a third to Jewish law, . . . and a third to the reasons behind the laws.



Torah study is a *mitzvah* itself, not just a way to know what to do.

TEXT 3

Mishnah, Avot 2:16

לֹא עָלֶיךָ הַמְלָאכָה לְגִמּוּר, וְלֹא אַתָּה בֶּן חוּרִין
לִיבָטֵל מִמֶּנָּה. אִם לָמַדְתָּ תּוֹרָה הֶרְבֵּה, נוֹתְנִים
לְךָ שָׂכָר הֶרְבֵּה.

It is not incumbent on you to complete the task. Nor are you free to absolve yourself from it. If you have learned much Torah, you will be richly rewarded.

QUESTION

How can we possibly complete the entire Torah?

ANSWER

We're not meant to finish the entire Torah only to pursue it constantly, using every free moment to learn.

TEXT 4

Talmud, Menachot
99b

אֶפִּילוּ לֹא שָׁנָה אָדָם אֶלָּא פָּרָק אֶחָד שְׁחֵרִית וּפָרָק
אֶחָד עֶרְבִית, קִיִּים מְצֹנֹת "לֹא יָמוּשׁ סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה
הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ" (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ א, ח).

Even if we only study one lesson in the morning and one lesson in the evening, we have fulfilled the obligation of "This Torah must never depart from your mouth" (Joshua 1:8).

“לֹא יָמוּשׁ סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ”

Lo yamush sefer haTorah hazeh mi'picha

“This Torah must never depart
from your mouth”

Once you've finished work and everything else
on your plate, take time for Torah even just a
few minutes in the morning and evening.

TEXT 5A

Deuteronomy 4:9

בַּרְק הַשֹּׁמֵר לָךְ וְשָׁמַר נִפְשְׁךָ מְאֹד, פֶּן תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת
הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ, וּפֶן יִסּוּרוּ מִלְבָּבְךָ כָּל
יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ, וְהוֹדַעְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וּלְבָנֵי בָנֶיךָ.

Be careful and guard your lives exceedingly, lest you forget the events that your eyes observed and lest they depart your heart all the days of your life. And you must make them known to your children and your children's children.

Only the first generation actually experienced the giving of the Torah. We keep the memory alive by constantly reviewing the Torah, ensuring that **nothing is forgotten.**



TEXT 5B

Rabbi Shneur Zalman
of Liadi, *Shulchan*
Aruch HaRav, Laws of
Torah Study 2:3

בְּתַחֲלִילַת לְמוֹדוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם בֵּין בְּמִקְרָא בֵּין בְּמִשְׁנָה בֵּין
בְּתַלְמוּד בְּכָל יוֹם לֹא דֵי לוֹ בְּלִימוּד פַּעַם וְשִׁתִּים
וְשִׁלֵּשׁ, אֲלָא צָרִיךְ לַחְזוֹר עַל כָּל אֶחָד פְּעָמִים רַבּוֹת
מְאֹד, הַכֹּל לְפִי כַח זְכוּרוֹנוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם כְּדֵי שְׂיִזְכוֹר הֵיטֵב.

When we begin our daily Torah study, whether we study the Written Torah, the laws, or their explanations, learning the material two or three times is insufficient. We must review each detail as many times as it takes to remember it well.

QUESTION

if we must constantly review old material, how can we ever hope to complete the entire Torah?

ANSWER

The idea isn't to complete the Torah, but to keep learning and reviewing it. Some focus on one area deeply which is why some scholars have specialties. Even after learning, review is still essential.

TEXT 6A

Mishnah, Avot 3:8

רַבִּי דוֹסְתַּאי בֶּרֶבִּי יָנָאִי מֵשׁוּם רַבִּי מֵאִיר אֹמֵר: כָּל הַשּׁוֹכֵחַ
דָּבָר אֶחָד מִמִּשְׁנָתוֹ, מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכָּתוּב כְּאִלּוּ מִתְחַיֵּב
בְּנַפְשׁוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, "רַק הִשָּׁמֶר לָךְ וְשִׁמְרֵם נַפְשֶׁךָ מְאֹד כֹּן
תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ" (דְּבָרִים ז, ט).

Rabbi Dosta'i, the son of Rabbi Yana'i, would say in the name of Rabbi Meir, "Those who forget even a single word of their learning are considered by the Torah as if they had forfeited their life. As it is stated, 'Be careful, and verily guard your soul, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen' (Deuteronomy 4:9)."



Those who forget even a single word are “as if” they forfeited their lives. This is framed as a consequence, not a punishment.

TEXT 6B

Rabbi Ovadiah of
Bartenura, ad loc.

כְּאֵלּוּ מִתְחִיב בְּנִפְשׁוֹ, לְפִי נְשֹׂאוֹתָהּ מִשְׁנָה
הֵיטָה מְשַׁמְּרָתוֹ וְעַכְשָׁיו נְשַׁכְּחָהּ אֵינָה
מְשַׁמְּרָתוֹ.

It is like forfeiting one's life because that study would have protected this person, but now that they have forgotten it, it can no longer protect them.

THE TORAH

- **When we learn and keep the Torah**, it surrounds us like a shield, protecting us in life.
- **If we ignore it or forget it**, that protection fades.



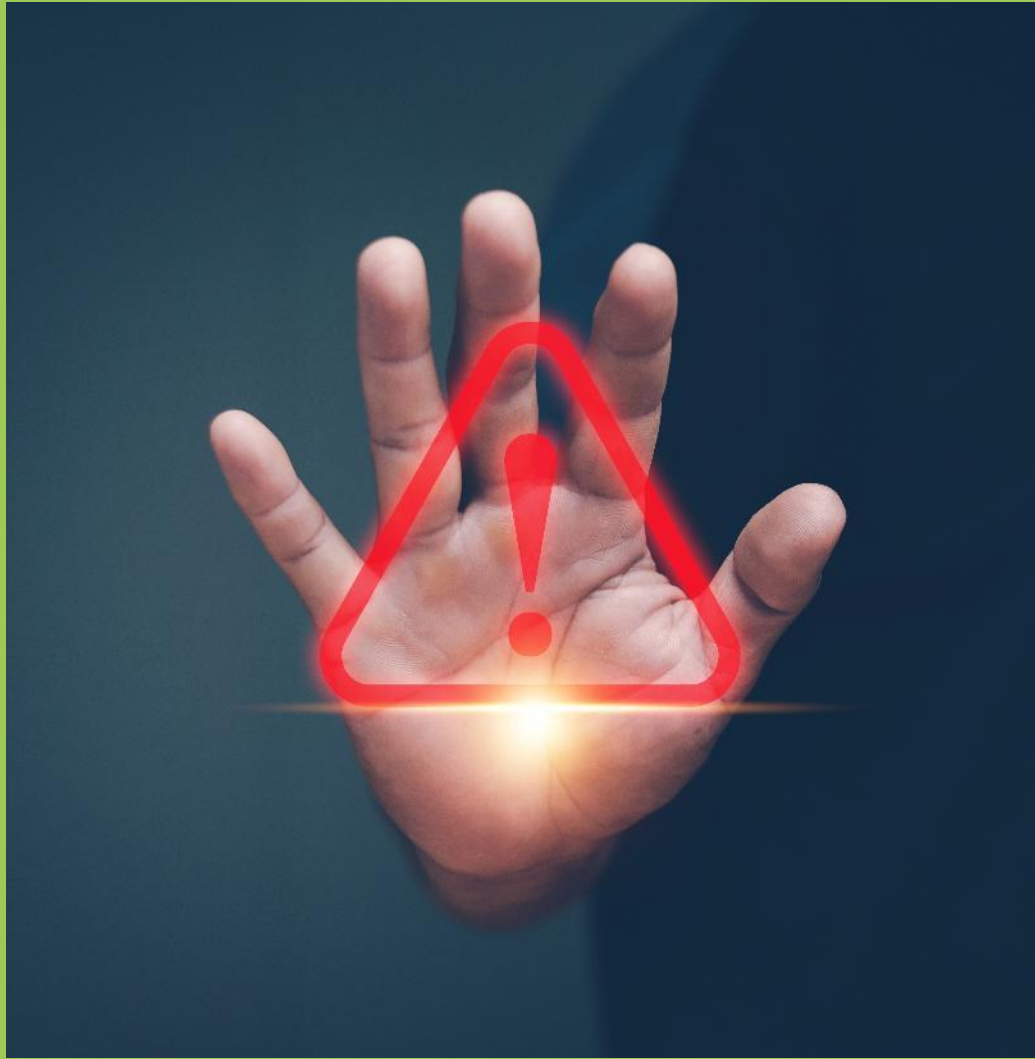
TEXT 7

Deuteronomy 11:19,
21

יט. וְלַמְדֶתֶם אֹתָם אֶת בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם, בְּשֹׁבְתְךָ
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ . . .
כא. לְמַעַן יִרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם וְיְמֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאֲדָמָה.

19. Teach the Torah to your children so they will speak of it, when you sit in your home, when you journey on the road, when you lie down, and when you wake up. . . .

21. So that you will lengthen your days and the days of your children on the Land.



Forgetting Torah risks
both our spiritual and
material blessings.

TEXT 8

Talmud, Berachot 61b

תָּנּוּ רַבָּנָן: פַּעַם אַחַת גָּזְרָה מַלְכוּת הָרָשָׁעָה
שֶׁלֹּא יֵעָסְקוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּתּוֹרָה. בָּא פָּפּוּס בֶּן
יְהוּדָה וּמָצָאוּ לְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא שֶׁהָיָה מְקַהֵל
קְהָלוֹת בְּרַבִּים וְעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה. אָמַר לוֹ:
עֲקִיבָא אֵי אַתָּה מַתְיָרָא מִפָּנֵי מַלְכוּת?

אָמַר לוֹ: אֶמְשׁוּל לָךְ מָשָׁל, לְמַה הַדָּבָר
דּוֹמֶה.

לְשׁוּעָל שֶׁהָיָה מְהַלֵּךְ עַל גַּב הַנָּהָר, וְרָאָה
דָּגִים שֶׁהָיוּ מִתְקַבְּצִים מִמָּקוֹם לְמָקוֹם. אָמַר
לָהֶם: מִפָּנֵי מָה אַתֶּם בּוֹרְחִים?

אָמְרוּ לוֹ: מִפָּנֵי רֶשֶׁתוֹת שֶׁמְבִיאִין עָלֵינוּ בְּנֵי
אָדָם.

אָמַר לָהֶם: רְצוּנְכֶם שֶׁתַּעֲלוּ לִיבְשָׁה, וְנָדוּר
אֲנִי וְאַתֶּם, כְּשֶׁם שֶׁדָּרוּ אֲבוֹתַי עִם
אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם?

Our sages taught: One day, the wicked authorities decreed that Jews may not study the Torah. Papus, son of Yehudah, came and found Rabbi Akiva gathering Jews in public to teach them Torah. He said, "Akiva, do you not fear the authorities?"

Rabbi Akiva replied, "Let me draw a parable for you.

"The fox was walking along the riverbank and saw the fish swimming to and fro in the river. He asked, 'What are you trying to escape?'

"They replied, 'The nets that humans set for us.'

"He said, 'Would you like to come up on dry land, and we will reside together as my ancestors resided with your ancestors?'

TEXT 8

Talmud, Berachot 61b

אָמְרוּ לוֹ: אַתָּה הוּא שְׂאוּמְרִים עָלֶיךָ פָּקַח
שְׂבִיחוֹת!? לֹא פָקַח אַתָּה, אֲלָא טָפַשׁ אַתָּה!
וְמָה בְּמָקוֹם חַיּוּתָנוּ, אָנוּ מִתְּיָרְאִין, בְּמָקוֹם
מִיתָתָנוּ — עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה.

אַף אֲנַחְנוּ עֹכְשִׁיו שְׂאֵנוּ יוֹשְׁבִים וְעוֹסְקִים
בְּתוֹרָה, שְׂפָתוֹב בָּהּ: "כִּי הוּא חַיֵּיךָ וְאַרְךָ
יָמֶיךָ" (דְּבָרִים כ, ל), כָּךְ, אִם אָנוּ הוֹלְכִים
וּמִבְטָלִים מְמֻנָּה — עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה.

"They replied, 'Are you the animal they call the wisest of all animals? You are not wise; you are a fool. If we fear death in a habitat of life, how much more will we fear death in a habitat of death?'

"We are in the same boat" [concluded Rabbi Akiva].
"If we fear for our lives when we sit and study the Torah, in which it is written, 'For it is our lives and the length of our days' (Deuteronomy 30:20), how much more so if we walk away and cease our studies."



Material blessings
naturally flow from the
study of Torah.
Stopping to learn stops
the blessings.

TEXT 9

The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, *Likutei
Sichot* 34, p. 31

וְזוֹהִי גַם כֵּן הַהִסְכָּרָה שֶׁשׁוֹכַח דְּבַר
אַחַד מִמִּשְׁנָתוֹ מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכָּתוּב כְּאִילוֹ
מִתְחַיֵּיב בְּנִפְשׁוֹ. דִּלְכָּאוּרָה תָּמוּהָ, וְכִי
נִשְׁכַּחַת דְּבַר אֶחָד מִדְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה תָּמוּהָ
כָּל כֶּף עַד שִׁיתְחַיֵּיב בְּנִפְשׁוֹ?

אֵלָּא שָׂאִין זֶה בְּגִדְרָ עוֹנֵשׁ, אֵלָּא מְסוּבָּב
מִהַשְׁכָּחָה. כִּי דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה הֵם חַיֵּי נִפְשׁוֹ.
וְכֵאֲנֶשֶׁר נִשְׁכַּח וְהוֹסֵר מִמֶּנּוּ דְּבַר אֶחָד
מִדְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה, הוֹסֵרוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ חַיֵּי נִפְשׁוֹ
אֵלָּה.

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ מֵאֲמַר רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכוֹרֹנָם
לְבִרְכָּהּ, "מָה לִּי קְטָלָא כּוּלָּהּ אוֹ קְטָלִי
פְּלִגָּא" (בָּבָא קַמָּא סָה, א). מִתְחַיֵּיב
בְּנִפְשׁוֹ.

This explains why the Torah considers those who forget a single Torah teaching as if they have forfeited their lives. On the face of it, this is shocking. Is forgetting a Torah teaching such a severe offense that it is tantamount to suicide?

The explanation is that this is not a punishment but a *consequence*. The Torah is the source of life. When one Torah teaching is forgotten and removed from us, we lose the specific part of life that it carries.

As our sages said, "Is there a difference between outright murder and partial murder?" (Talmud, Bava Kama 65a). It is forfeiting [a dimension of] life.



Throwing away Torah is like throwing away
part of life.

TEXT 10

Talmud, Bava Metzi'a
85a

רַב זֵירָא כִּי סָלִיק לְאַרְעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל יְתִיב מָאָה
תַּעֲנִיתָא דְלִשְׁתַּכַּח גְּמָרָא בְּבִלְאָה מִיְיָיָהּ, כִּי הֵיכִי
דְּלֹא נְטַרְדִּיהּ.

When Rabbi Zeira left for the Land of Israel, he fasted one hundred days, praying that he would forget the Talmud he had studied in Babylon so that it would not interfere with his studies in Israel.

Rabbi Zeira: Despite his noble purpose, he appears to have deliberately violated the law against forgetting Torah by praying to erase his memory.

QUESTION

How could he **justify** this and **risk his life** by forfeiting his Torah?

TEXT 11

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak
Schneersohn, *Sefer
Hamaamarim* 5708, p.
122

בִּידוּעַ, שְׁבָאֲרֵץ יִשְׂרָאֵל הָיוּ לוֹמְדִים
הֶלְכוֹת פְּסוּקוֹת בְּלִי פִלְפוּל עֲמוּק
וְאֲרוּךְ כָּל כָּךְ. רַק מֵאֲשֶׁר נִצְרָךְ לְבַרֵּר
טַעְמֵי הֶלְכוֹת עַל בּוֹרֵיין הָיוּ מְקוֹבְלִין
בְּזֶה אִישׁ מִפִּי אִישׁ . . . רֹב
הַתְּלִמִּידִים הָיוּ לוֹמְדִים הֶלְכוֹת
פְּסוּקוֹת בְּקִצְרָה, רַק טַעְמֵיהֶן שֶׁל
הֶלְכוֹת כְּפִי שְׁהִיָּה בְּקִבְלָה, שֶׁהוּא
הַנִּקְרָא גִירְסָא.

אָבֵל בְּנֵי בָבֶל, כָּל הַתְּלִמִּידִים עִיקַר
עֲסָקֵיהֶם הָיָה דוֹקָא בְּפִלְפוּל בְּרוֹב
קוּשְׁיּוֹת וְתִירוּצִים עַל כָּל הֶלְכָּה וְדִין
בְּעוֹמֶק רַב, עַד שֶׁהוֹצִיאוּ לְאוֹר כָּל
דָּבָר וְדָבָר לְאַמְתָּתוֹ. וְנִתְחַדְּשׁוּ בְּפִלְפוּל
זֶה רִיבּוּי דִּינִים מְחֻדָּשִׁים לְגַמְרִי.

It is well known that in Israel, the sages studied accepted law without lengthy, in-depth analysis. Only when it was necessary to clarify the reason for the law was it transmitted orally from teacher to student. . . . Most students studied the accepted law briefly and [elaborated on] the reasons received by tradition. This form of study is called *girsa*.

By contrast, in Babylon, most students were primarily engaged in debates. They asked many questions and offered many answers on each point of law, delving deeply into each until every detail emerged clearly. This analysis also produced many new laws.

BABYLONIAN TALMUD

- Long back-and-forth debates before reaching a conclusion.
- Deep analysis until the law is completely clear.
- By the end, the students fully grasp the law and develop new laws in the process.

JERUSALEM TALMUD

- Hardly any debates, it usually went straight to the final answer.
- The sages in Israel relied on strong traditions.
- Closer to the original teachings from Moses, so less back-and-forth was needed.



Rabbi Zeira was used to debating and rethinking ideas so he worried that he would be unable to immediately accept the truths being presented by his teachers in Israel.

When things don't work out the way you hoped, it isn't a step in the wrong direction, it's just gathering the energy and momentum you need to rise to the next level.



TEXT 12

Rabbi Shneur Zalman
of Liadi, Introduction
to *Shaar Hayichud*
VeHa'emunah

הִנֵּה יָדוּעַ לַיּוֹדְעִים טַעְמָא דְקָרָא, מֵאִי דְכָתִיב, "כִּי שֶׁבַע יִפּוֹל צַדִּיק
וְקָם" (מִשְׁלֵי כד, טז). וּבִפְרָט שֶׁהָאָדָם נִקְרָא מֵהֶלֶךְ וְלֹא עוֹמֵד וְצָרִיךְ
לֵילֵךְ מִמַּדְרָגָה לְמַדְרָגָה, וְלֹא לַעֲמֹד בְּמַדְרָגָה אַחַת לְעוֹלָם. וּבֵין
מַדְרָגָה לְמַדְרָגָה, טָרָם שְׁיִגִיעַ לְמַדְרָגָה עֲלִיוֹנָה מִמֶּנָּה, הוּא בְּבַחֲנֵית
נְפִילָה מִמַּדְרָגָה הָרְאוּשׁוֹנָה.

Those familiar with these teachings are well aware of the meaning behind the passage, "A righteous person falls seven times and then rises" (Proverbs 24:16). This is because the human soul is in perpetual motion; we are not stationary creatures. We must always climb from level to level and never remain in place. However, at the point of suspension between two levels, we're in limbo. It is like having fallen from the lower level [but not having yet reached the next level].

ANSWER

For Rabbi Zeira, the Israeli method was a step up, so letting go of his old way was a temporary descent for a higher purpose. Forgetting is only forbidden when it comes from not caring enough to remember.

TEXT 13

The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, *Likutei
Sichot* 34, p. 30

התועלת בלימוד והשגת תלמוד ירושלמי אינה רק באופן הלימוד בכלל, אלא זה נוגע לענין זכרון דברי תורה גופא . . .

ומובן בפשטות, שריבוי השקלא וטריא מקשה על הזכרון, מה שאין כן באשר הפל גלוי וברור, קל יותר לזכור כל פרטי הענין.

ונמצא, דזה גופא שרב זירא צם מאה מעניתא דלשםפח מיניה גמרא בבבליא כי היכי דלא נטרדיה (ויוכל ללמוד תלמוד ירושלמי) גרם שהתורה תשמר בזכרוננו ביטור שאת ויתר עז.

The Israeli method is not just a better way to learn and study but also a better way to remember the Torah's words. . . .

The back-and-forth analysis method is undoubtedly harder to remember. When all the teachings are laid out clearly, it is easier to remember the details. . . .

This means that fasting one hundred times to forget the Torah he studied in Babylon (to enable him to access the Israeli method) enabled Rabbi Zeira to remember it even better.

Rabbi Zeira didn't want to forget Torah in order to lose it.

He wanted to relearn it with the Israeli method more deeply and purely.



TEXT 14A

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak
Schneersohn, *Sefer*
Hamaamarim
Kuntresim 2:678

דִּהַתּוֹרָה הִיא כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת וְכּוֹס שְׁל בִּרְכָּה,
לְהִיּוֹת כִּי בָּהּ וְעַל יָדָהּ נִמְשָׁכֶת הַבִּרְכָּה הָעֲלִיוֹנָה
דִּהַמְשָׁכָה הַכֹּלְלִית שְׁנֵימִשָּׁךְ בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה.

The Torah is a cup of salvation and of blessing.
The general supernal blessing for the new year
that we draw down on Rosh Hashanah is
channeled through our Torah study.



If we seek blessings,
the best solution is to
increase our Torah study.

TEXT 14B

The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, *Torat
Menachem* 5731:1 (62),
pp. 129–130

בְּנוֹגֵעַ לְכָל יַחִיד . . . גַּם אִם הוּא בֶּעַל-עֵסֶק . . . עָלָיו לְדַעַת
שֶׁגַם הוּא חַיִּיב (כְּמוֹ כָּל אֶחָד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל) בְּקִבְיָעוֹת עֲתִים לַתּוֹרָה.
וְאֲדַרְבָּה, דּוֹקָא עַל יְדֵי לִימוּד הַתּוֹרָה תִּהְיֶה לוֹ הַצְלָחָה בְּכָל
הָעֲנִינִים, הֵן בְּעֲנִינֵי הָעֵסֶק וְהֵן בְּעֲנִינֵי הַכֶּלֶל. שָׁכֵן, אֲצֵל בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַתּוֹרָה הִיא כְּלִי וְכוֹס שֶׁל בְּרָכָה לְכָל הָעֲנִינִים.

Every Jew, . . . including businesspeople, . . . must know that they (like all Jews) must have fixed times for Torah study. In fact, success in all material ventures, whether in business or communal activism, depends on Torah study. The Torah is the Jewish cup of blessing for all things.

No matter your
level, if you're
Jewish, your
blessings come
through Torah.





Torah study should be done with joy, not as a burden. It gives spiritual pleasure and life, even if we don't feel them right away.

TEXT 15

Rabbi Shmuel de
Uceda, *Midrash
Shmuel*, Avot 6:6

וְהַתּוֹרָה וְהַשְׂמֵחָה אֲחִים הֵם וְלֹא יִתְפָּרְדּוּ,
כִּי "פְּקוּדֵי ה' יִשְׁרִים מְשַׁמְּחֵי לֵב"
(תהלים יט, ט).

The Torah and joy are siblings that never part,
for "G-d's laws are upright; they cause the
heart to rejoice" (Psalms 19:9).

Every night, after work and errands, we should make time to learn Torah, especially now that the nights are getting longer.



TEXT 16

Rashi, Taanit 31a

מִתְמַנֶּשֶׁה עֶשְׂרָה בְּאָב וְאֵילָךְ דְּמוֹסִיף לַיְלֹת עַל
הַיָּמִים לַעֲסֹק בַּתּוֹרָה יוֹסִיף חַיִּים עַל חַיָּיו.

After the fifteenth of the Hebrew month of Av,
the nights grow longer than the days. Those
who increase their Torah study increase in life.

KEY POINTS

1. There is an obligation to study Torah every day and to remember every teaching we learned.
2. Daily Torah study is for every Jew, not just the scholarly. As the source of blessing, Torah study makes us more successful in whatever we do.
3. Torah is the source of life. So forgetting the Torah we learned is tantamount to forfeiting life. In turn, memorizing the Torah we study is like clinging to life.
4. It is permissible to forget a Torah teaching if we seek to relearn it in a better way, and our old knowledge will impede our new study method.
5. As the nights grow longer, it is incumbent on us to increase our nightly commitment to Torah study.

