

THE KTM

# DAF PARASHA

BRINGING A TASTE OF ISRAEL TO MONTREAL



TORAH תורה  
מִצִּיּוֹן MITZION

KTM MONTREAL

**SHAVUOT**  
**6-7 SIVAN 5786**  
**MAY 21-23 2026**  
**CANDLE LIGHTING**  
**THURSDAY NIGHT: 8:07 P.M.**  
**CANDLE LIGHTING**  
**FRIDAY NIGHT: 8:08 P.M.**  
**HAVDALAH: 9:22 P.M.**

**CHAG SAME'ACH!**



## TORAH STUDY - AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE DIVINE

BY RAV ARI FAUST (ROSH KOLLEL)

The most formative experience in Jewish history was receiving the Torah and Mount Sinai, an event we celebrate on Shavuot. It is the time when, some 3,300 years ago our national moral covenant with Hashem was initiated. Torah study takes a centre pedestal in Jewish life, with expressions in our tradition such as: "Torah study is paramount to all mitzvot" (Mishnah Pe'ah 1:1); "You shall deliberate therein day and night" (Yehoshua 1:8).

What is so important about studying Torah? What is this prime value that makes Torah study the most exalted of all mitzvot?

Regarding Torah study, Rav Kook comments (Orot HaTorah 6:1):

**"When studied with holiness, Torah refines both intellect as well as aspiration and inclination. The divine light ... fills all existence, and the spiritual life-lustre expands over all substance, just as the blood rushes throughout the entire body."**

According to Rav Kook, true Torah study has a two-pronged benefit: First, Torah isn't only an intellectual pursuit, it is also a spiritual one. Second, Torah doesn't only affect the specific field being studied, rather it is all-encompassing.

Let's explain this with an example: When a person studies geography they do not necessarily become empowered to live a more eco-friendly lifestyle, nor do they become more connected to questions of the age of the universe or Pythagoras' Theorem. This is because geography is not a moral discipline, nor is it inherently linked to mathematics. There is a chance that one who studies geography will become motivated regarding its moral implications (such as global warming), and there is a chance that some disciplines overlap (such as math to calculate geographical distances). But these are not necessary outcomes, they are not inherently connected to the study of geography.

This is true about all intellectual pursuits: A person may hold a PhD in moral philosophy and behave corruptly, just as a doctor could behave in ways that are detrimental to their health. The only direct outcome of studying geography is to know more about geography.

While this is true of all other disciplines, true

Torah study is different. When studying Torah one doesn't merely become well-versed in the specific subject they are studying, rather they undergo a holistic persona transformation. The particular piece of information studied influences a character change – making them a better person, and connecting them to all other disciplines of life, in addition to the particular knowledge acquired.

How can this be so? What is true Torah study? What is the supreme value of Torah?

When we study Torah "with holiness", we are not merely tapping-into knowledge, but we are tapping-into the source of that knowledge. Learning Torah is not an intellectual pursuit, it is an encounter; when we learn Torah we have the opportunity to encounter Hashem.

Based on this, Rabbi Yehudah Loew, the famed Maharal of Prague (Tiferet Yisrael, Introduction), explains that there is value to erring in Torah study. The Midrash teaches (Shir Hashirim Rabba 2):

**Rabbi Acha said: An unlearned person who misreads "ahavah" ("love") as "eivah" ("hatred") - for example, reading "ואהבת" as "ואיבת" - about him the Holy One, blessed be He, says: "And His banner over me is love."**

The Hebrew words *ahava* and *eiva* are spelled similar and sound the same. Yet there is perhaps no greater error than misinterpreting the *pasuk* (Devarim 6:5) "You shall love Hashem, your God..." to "You shall hate Hashem, your God..." How can it be that Hashem's love is spread over a person who makes such an acute misunderstanding of Torah? Maharal explains that the essence of Torah study is an encounter with Hashem. In as much as the unlearned person made an effort to have this encounter, his effort for a relationship with Hashem is reciprocated. This, explains Maharal, is the reason the bracha over learning is not "to learn Torah", but to "engage in the words of Torah".

When Hashem gave us the Torah, He gave us the means to connect to Him. When Hashem gave us the Torah, He gave us His self.

When we study Torah – an exercise of constantly receiving the Torah as on Sinai – we

are encountering Hashem, the source of all. Thus Pirkei Avot (5:22) teaches:

**"Ben Bag Bag would say: Delve completely into it, for all is in it. See with it ..."**

Not all knowledge is included in the Torah; we don't go to Rabbis for medical advice, we go to doctors. Ben Bag Bag's teaching is rather to see all through *the prism* of Torah. One can see all when seeing it with Torah, because true Torah study is an encounter with the source of all.

We live in a time when all information is at our fingertips. The most inspiring – as well as the most destructive – can be accessed by even the youngest child with the click of a button. AI has infinitely more knowledge than can be amassed by most Talmidei Chachamim. With the knowledge we have today, nothing is beyond the scope of our power. What is lacking, though, is context and direction for that knowledge. We know what, but we don't know why. It is not Torah *knowledge* we need, but Torah *relationship* - a relationship with the source of the Torah.

True Torah study provides our knowledge with divine scaffolding - it is an encounter with divine will, purpose, context and direction. True Torah study is transformational, inasmuch as it is an encounter with Hashem, the source of the "all".

*Chag Sameach!*



## SHABBAT'S GREATEST HITS: Yafa Ve'tamah

BY EVYATAR KERNER

Imagine someone gives you a gift. You open it excitedly and discover... a locked box with a keyhole, just waiting to be opened.

But when you open the box, you find another, smaller box inside, and another key, and again another box. You look at the person who gave you the gift and say, "Thank you... but why didn't you just give me what was inside the box?"

And the answer? Because the real gift is not only what is inside. The gift is the process. The search. The opening. The discovery.

That is exactly what God did for us on Shavuot, thousands of years ago at Mount Sinai. He gave us the greatest gift possible: the Torah. But He did not give it to us "already opened." He gave it to us with tools, with keys, with ways to uncover it. And He told us: now work, search, dig deeper, discover.

And this is where the song "Yafeh Ve'tamah" comes in:

לכו לחמו תמיד בלחמי

**Go and fight my battle always**

This is an invitation. Do not sit on the side. Do not wait for someone else to explain everything to you. Do not assume the Torah is something only great scholars can understand. God gave you the tools. He gave you the keys. Now use them.

But why not just give everything to us simply?

That is the question we all ask. Why did God not write the Torah like a simple instruction manual? Do this, do not do that, this is how it works, finished. Simple and clear. So why did He give us something that needs to be interpreted? Something that requires the Thirteen Principles of Interpretation to understand it? Kal vachomer, hekesh, gezerah shavah, rules and details, this entire complex system of understanding Torah?

The answer is: because God did not want us to be robots. He wanted us to be partners. He wanted us to work, to think, to struggle and grow. Because only something you work for truly becomes yours, and something you discover by yourself changes you.

If God had given us everything ready made, we would read it, keep it, and move on. But this way, when we need to learn, interpret, and work hard to understand, the Torah becomes alive. It is not just a book sitting on a shelf. It becomes part of us.

And every method of interpretation opens another world. Suddenly you see connections you never noticed before. Suddenly you understand something new. Suddenly the Torah speaks to you in a way it did not yesterday.

כללים עם פרטים תוציא לאורה

**Extract the principals with the details**

Bringing the Torah to light, that is our mission. Not just to read the Torah and leave it closed, but to bring out what is hidden inside, to take

general principles and details, to work with the methods of interpretation, and to discover what God placed there.

Because God hid things inside the Torah. On purpose. Not because He wanted to keep them from us, but because He wanted us to discover them. There is a huge difference between hiding something and placing it somewhere to be found. When you hide something, you do not want anyone to find it. When you place something to be discovered, you want people to search and uncover it. God placed treasures inside the Torah and gave us the tools to find them.

This is the week of Matan Torah, the giving of the Torah. The week when we remember that we received the greatest gift of all. But the question is: what are we doing with that gift? Do we leave it sitting on the shelf, closed, respected but untouched? Or do we open it, struggle with it, and learn from it deeply?

**Shabbat Challenge**

This week, choose one pasuk from the parashah. Just one verse. Try to understand it on four levels:

Peshat: what does it mean simply?  
Remez: what does it hint to?  
Derash: what can be learned from it?  
Sod: what is its deeper meaning?

See how much depth exists in words you may have read hundreds of times.

*Chag Shavuot Sameach, a holiday of receiving the Torah and searching deeply within it.*



## THE ROOTS OF MALCHUT BEIT DAVID

BY RABBI AMI YUNGER

There is something surprising about the way Tanach tells us the story of David HaMelech. If David is the foundation of Jewish kingship, and if Mashiach ultimately comes from his family, we might have expected his background to be simple, clean, and unchallenged. Instead, when we trace his roots, we find complicated stories. Ruth comes from Moav. Moav comes from Lot and his daughters. David comes from Yehuda and Tamar. Even in Megillat Ruth itself, the turning point happens quietly at night, on the threshing floor of Boaz.

Why would Hashem arrange that Malchut Beit David should come from such unexpected places?

The first point is that this was not an accident of history. Chazal show us that Hashem was guiding these events very carefully.

When Lot and his daughters are in the cave, they give him wine. Rashi asks the obvious question: where did wine come from in a cave after the destruction of Sedom? He explains that Hashem prepared wine there because two nations were meant to emerge from Lot. One of them was Moav, and from Moav

would eventually come Ruth. Rabbenu Bachaye adds that the Pasuk says "layla hu" - "that night" - hinting that Hashem Himself was present in the unfolding of that moment.

We see the same idea in Megillat Ruth. The Pasuk says, "vehinei Boaz ba miBeit Lechem" - "and behold, Boaz came from Beit Lechem". The word "vehinei" tells us that his arrival was not ordinary. Boaz arrives at exactly the right moment. Later, the closer redeemer also appears at exactly the right moment. These are not random meetings. Hashem is placing the people of the story where they need to be.

Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz suggested two answers to why Hashem built Malchut Beit David in this way.

The first answer is that Tanach is teaching us how to understand "yichus" - pedigree. Yichus matters in Judaism. We honor a Kohen. Family lineage has halachic significance. Mashiach himself will clarify lineage when he comes. But yichus is not the whole measure of a person. Chazal teach that a mamzer Talmid Chacham takes precedence over a Kohen ignoramus. A person's beginning matters, but it does not define the full story.

That is one of the great messages of Ruth. Ruth comes from Moav, but she chooses Naomi, Am Yisrael, and Hashem. She is not trapped by where she comes from. Her greatness is built through loyalty, modesty, kindness, and quiet strength. Boaz notices her because she lives with dignity. From that choice comes David HaMelech.

The second answer is that greatness often grows from a feeling of incompleteness. A person who thinks he is finished rarely grows. Growth begins when a person knows that there is more to fix, more to become, and more to reach. Malchut Beit David does not emerge from a perfect background. It emerges from people who rise above their background.

This is not a weakness in the story of David. It is the point of the story. Hashem builds redemption from hidden places, from complicated beginnings, and from people who choose to become more than where they started.

That is why we read Megillat Ruth. It teaches us where David comes from, but even more, it teaches us how Jewish greatness is born. Not from perfection. From choice.

Rabbi Ami Yunger is COO of Mizrahi Canada.



## HALACHIC Q&A

BY RABBI YOSEF ZVI RIMON - NASI, WORLD MIZRACHI

**Question: What is the beracha on cheesecake?**

**Answer:** There is a custom to eat dairy foods on Shavuot (Rema 494:3). Some explain that dairy foods serve as a metaphor for Torah (Mishna Berura 11), since Torah is compared to milk, as the verse says: "Honey and milk are under your tongue" (Shir HaShirim 4:11), referring metaphorically to the sweetness of Torah in one's mouth.

Others explain that because Bnei Yisrael received the laws of kashrut for the first time at Matan Torah, they could not immediately eat meat or kasher their utensils, and therefore ate dairy foods instead.

Many people eat cheesecake on Shavuot. But what beracha should one recite?

Baked cheesecake contains pastry (mezonot) and cheese (shehakol). Similar mixtures of distinct ingredients exist in many modern foods, such as the Israeli "Krembo". What beracha should be recited in such cases?

**Possibilities:**

Perhaps we should recite shehakol, because the cheese or cream seems to be the primary component of the cake. Perhaps two berachot should be recited: mezonot on the pastry or crust and shehakol on the cheese or whipped cream. Or perhaps only mezonot should be recited.

The Mishnah (Berachot 44a) states:

**"This is the rule: whenever there is an essential food and a secondary food [within a mixture], one recites a beracha on the essential food and thereby exempts the secondary food."**

The Gemara (Berachot 36b) teaches another principle: when a mixture contains both shehakol ingredients and mezonot ingredients, the flour is generally considered primary — even if it seems less important — unless its taste is entirely insignificant or unnoticed. The reason is that the five grains possess unique significance, since bread is typically made from them. Therefore, even when grain appears only in a relatively small but noticeable amount, it is considered the main ingredient.

As the Gemara states:

**"Anything that contains one of the five grains — its beracha is borei minei mezonot."**

Therefore, the beracha on baked cheesecake is mezonot alone. Even though the cheese may seem more important, the crust or cake base is considered primary.

The same applies to chocolate bars that contain grain ingredients (such as Israeli Kif-Kef or Pesek Zman bars). Although the chocolate may be the main attraction, the mezonot component is considered primary because it contributes recognizable taste and enjoyment.

However, one of the major poskim, the Mishna Berura (168, 45), clarifies that this rule applies

only when the ingredients are baked together. When the ingredients remain distinct and are merely combined — such as ice cream in a cone — and one enjoys both components independently, two separate berachot are required:

- 1) Mezonot on the cone
- 2) Shehakol on the ice cream

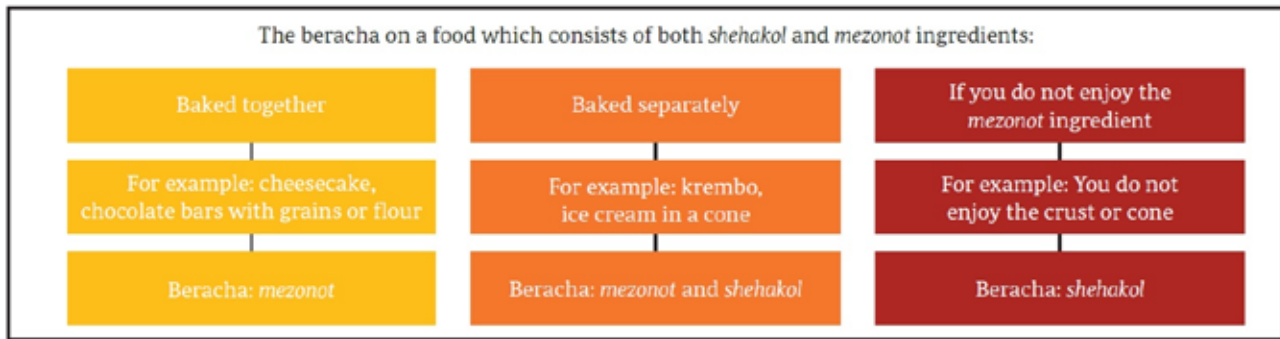
Accordingly, one should recite two berachot on a Krembo as well, since its components are separate and not baked together.

If a person does not enjoy the mezonot component at all — for example, if the crust or cone merely serves as a holder — then one recites only shehakol. If someone does not like the mezonot in the cake at all (or ice cream cone), and the foods are used only as a 'container' to hold the cake or ice cream, one should not say mezonot at all, only shehakol.

The diagram below summarizes.

On Shavuot, we try to raise ourselves up a level, to be filled with the desire to fulfill God's will in the world, to be ready to receive the Torah. We hope that we will prepare properly and not only hear the ba'al koreh reading Aseret HaDibrot, but hear God's very voice emanating from within the words. As the Kedushat Levi writes:

**"Thus a person merits that on every Shavuot he hears the voice announcing Anochi Hashem Elokecha. We find that a person must greatly prepare himself to merit hearing the words of God."**

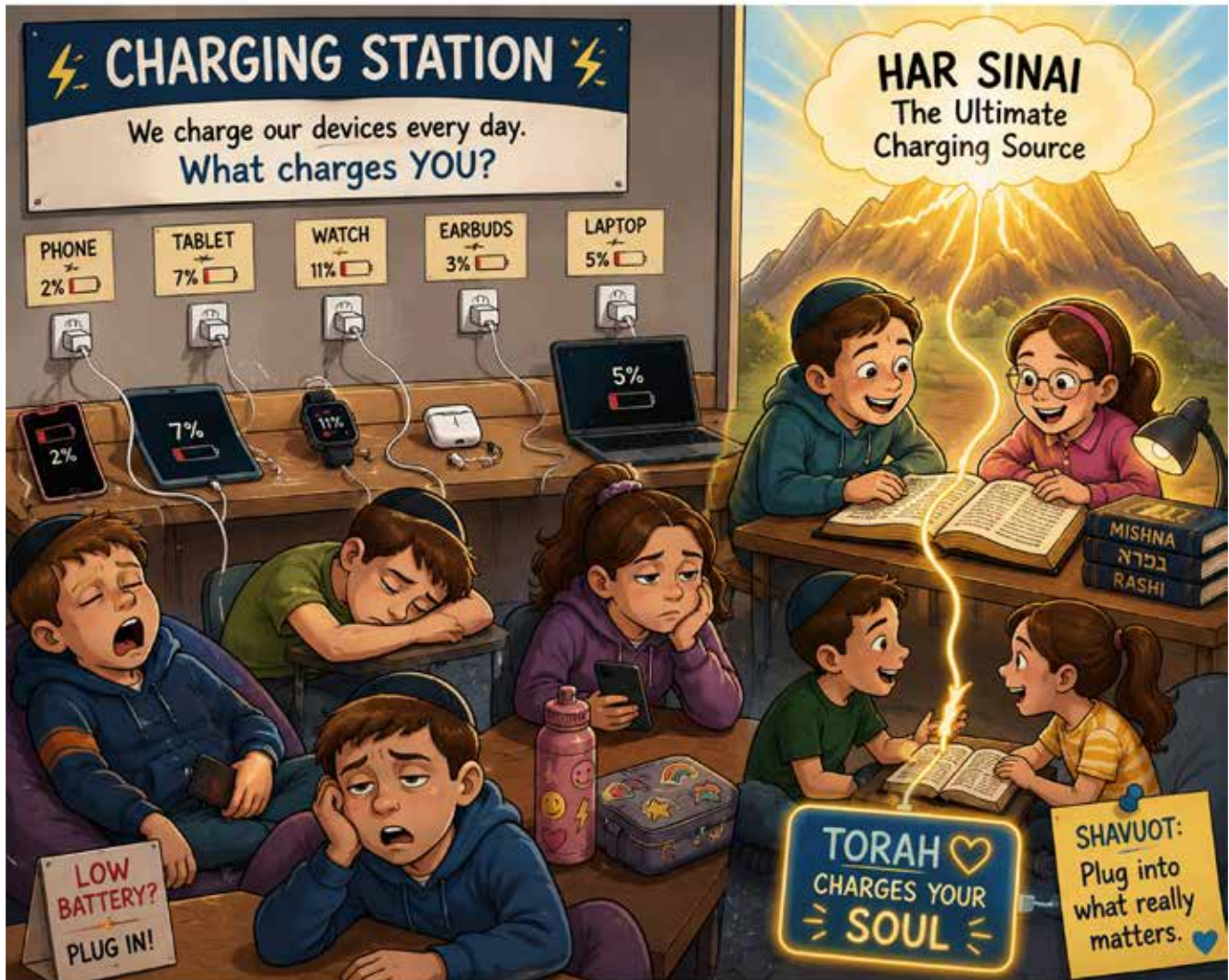


### PARNESS HAYOM :: SIVAN

- 1 Sivan | Manny Dalfen, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Morris Dalfen z"l
- 2 Sivan | Gerald Bernstein, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother, Phylis Bernstein z"l (Chaya Faiyge bas Yosef Halevi)
- 3 Sivan | Baila Aspler, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her mother-in-law, Rita Aspler z"l
- 17 Sivan | Yael Miller, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her father, Rabbi Abraham Wahrhaftig z"l
- 22 Sivan | Moshe Reiss, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, David Reiss z"l
- 23 Sivan | Kamal Gabbay, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother, Muzli Gabbay z"l



# Charged Up for Matan Torah



Every day, we make sure our phones, tablets, and devices are fully charged. But Shavuot reminds us to ask an even more important question: what charges *us*? Torah is not just information to learn — it is something that fills us with energy, purpose, connection, and meaning. On Shavuot, we reconnect ourselves to Har Sinai and recharge our souls.