

The One and Only תורה אחת



Torah is extremely diverse.

Within every facet of Torah, in every area and in every subject, there are four general ways to explain the concepts at hand: “*P’shat*,” the literal meaning; “*remez*,” the allegorical meaning; “*drush*,” the metaphorical meaning, and “*sod*,” the secret and hidden meaning.

We are also told that there are “*shivim panim laTorah*,” seventy angles of how to understand each concept in Torah.

There is *Mikra*, *Mishnah*, *Halacha*, *Aggadah*, *Kabbalah*, and so on.

But at the very base of it all, Torah is really all one.

The *possuk* says: “תורה אחת יהי” — “*One Torah shall be for you all*,” and the Midrash interprets this to mean that entirety of Torah is called “One.”¹

The Rebbe explains that the reason Torah is essentially one, even though it seems so diverse and multi-faceted, is because the Torah comes from Hashem—who is the ultimate “One.” Hashem put Himself into the Torah

and it is therefore a true manifestation of His Oneness. Just like Hashem’s greatness radiates to the lower worlds through various manifestations of *chesed*, *gevurah*, etc.—but we all understand that Hashem’s essence is truly one; so too the Torah is only superficially divided. When we dig deep beneath the surface and get to its core, we discover that the Torah is indeed the “תורה אחת.”²

A Major Theme

This becomes a major theme throughout the Rebbe’s Torah and is seen in almost every *sicha* in Likkutei Sichos and throughout all of the Rebbe’s *farbrengens*.

The Rebbe’s *sichos* famously weave through every area in Torah seamlessly. It is almost impossible to find a time when the Rebbe spoke about only one area in Torah without touching upon various others and bringing them into the discussion.

The Rebbe might be analyzing Rashi’s comments on a *possuk* in *Chumash* and explaining how they

can be appreciated in the mind of a five-year-old child. At the same time, he points out a wonderful *chiddush* in *halacha* implied by this same Rashi. And he concludes with a lesson in *avodas Hashem* that draws upon the deepest concepts of Chassidus.

Likewise, within each area of Torah itself, the Rebbe seeks to reveal an underlying principle that weaves through the entire subject and shows a unifying aspect to it all. When two *Tanaim* or *Amoraim* argue with one another in more than one instance, even if the subject matter is vastly different in each instance, the Rebbe will find an underlying theme to explain how each of their respective opinions is aligned with what they stated about another subject. Beis Shammai’s opinion in one subject is likely due to the same underlying principle applied in another subject, and so is Beis Hillel’s.³

In this vein, the Rebbe very much follows the precedent set by the Rogatchover Gaon, who often sought the connection through these

לזכות
ברכה ליפשא תחי'
שוחאט
לרגל יום הולדתה - י"ז אלול
ולזכות הוריה
הרה"ת הרב שלום דוב בער
וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא שיחיו
ולזכות אחיותיה עליזה ושיינדל תחיינה

underlying principles of various personalities and various subjects in Torah.⁴

This premise that all of Torah is one, leads us to many conclusions:

Once and For All

Firstly, since all of Torah is one, a lesson that we learn from one area of Torah is applicable to all other areas as well. And a lesson that we learn from the whole of Torah in general can be applied to each specific subject.

For example:

The Rebbe points out how the whole of Torah is supposed to be learned every day with the enthusiasm and excitement of something new. "Don't let it be like an antiquated law," says Rashi, "but like a new one..."⁵ In another source it says that Torah should be not only *like* new, but **חדשים**—genuinely new, without any qualifications.⁶ The Rebbe explains that while we start with viewing Torah and mitzvos *as if* they were new, the ultimate goal is to view them as literally new.

This is a lesson about Torah in general. And since the whole of Torah is one, the Rebbe says that we can apply this principle to another area as well:

Chazal say that when one learns the Torah taught by a certain Rebbe, he should consider it *as if* the originator of that Torah teaching is standing in front of him. But based on Rashi's words about the two-steps in "*like* new" or "*really* new," we can apply the same principle here: Not only is it *as if* the original teacher is in front of us—on a higher level he is *actually here!*⁷

One and the Same

Another important point that stems from the fact that all of Torah is one, is something the Rebbe repeated numerous times and in variety of contexts:

All the various *pirushim* in one Torah-concept all must share an underlying connection. Even if they sound vastly different on the surface, if we dig deep enough we should be able

to find that unifying thread between them all.⁸

As Rashi says, the Torah's words are "כפטיש יפוצץ סלע"—like a hammer shattering a stone into many small pieces. Meaning, all the various explanations on any given *possuk* are offshoots of the same stone. Obviously then, we can look and find the underlying unifier between them all.⁹

Additionally, when one learns even a single small part of the Torah, in a sense he is really learning the Torah in its entirety. For we know the rule that "עצם כשאתה תופס במקצתו אתה תופס" —when you grasp even a small part of the essence of an entity, you have the entirety of the entity in your hand.

That's why *Chazal* say that when you learn one part of Torah, "הוא עמל" —"במקום זה ותורתו עומלת לו במקום אחר"—when one toils in Torah in one place, the Torah works for him in another place. Even though they may be two completely different subjects in Torah, learning one of them will help you understand the other.¹⁰

Nigleh and Chassidus

Some people ask: How can you demand of me to learn Chassidus? Let me first fill my mind with Shas and *poskim*. *Halevai* I should fulfill my obligation of Torah study in that area...

But the truth is, every Yid is obligated to learn the entire Torah; both the revealed aspect and the hidden. The whole of Torah was given

by Hashem to each and every Jew personally. At *Mattan Torah* Hashem addressed each person as “ה' אלקיך”—your G-d, in the singular form. You cannot say that one part of Torah is for you while the other part is not. It's all **תורה אחת**—Torah is one!¹¹

The Rebbe spoke about this almost fiercely and on a constant basis: *Nigleh* and Chassidus are not two separate entities, *chas v'shalom*. Both are part

of the one and only Torah, given by Hashem *Echad*.

For this reason, Chassidus is for every Jew—even small children. We cannot distinguish and say that until a certain age we should refrain from teaching someone an entire section of the Torah. As a matter of fact, the Rebbe often noted that even as a toddler, the Frierdiker Rebbe was taught to read *Aleph-Beis* from the title page of a *Tanya*! Even before he was shown the “Beis” of *Bereishis*, he was already taught to learn from a *sefer* of Chassidus. And this mirrors the way Hashem taught Torah to the Jewish people as a whole: Even before teaching them the first mitzvah of “*Anochi*,” He first revealed Himself at Har Sinai, showing the Jewish people the deepest secrets of the *Merkava*, etc.¹²

Likewise, it is impossible to understand all of *nigleh* properly without learning Chassidus as well. In fact the Rebbe pointed to several *halachos* and *sugyos* in *nigleh* that are quite difficult to understand without an explanation of Chassidus.¹³

Ultimately, all of Torah is comparable to a person (“זאת התורה אדם”). Just like a person is made up of a body and a soul, likewise the Torah has the body—*nigleh*, and the soul—Chassidus. Both must work together in

“It’s In My Name”

In many *sichos*, the Rebbe pointed out that the style of the Tzemach Tzedek was to connect *nigleh* and Chassidus seamlessly. His *maamarim* are filled with quotes from all areas of Torah—and they all make up a beautiful tapestry demonstrating how the whole of Torah is really one. (See 29 Elul 5742.)

In one instance, the Rebbe told a prominent rav in *yeichidus*:

“The Rogatchover was not the first one who was able to weave all of Torah together. We find a similar precedent in the work of the Tzemach Tzedek, in his *sefer Derech Mitzvosecha*.”

The rav commented that he noticed this style in the Rebbe’s *sichos*, and the Rebbe remarked:

“I am named after the Tzemach Tzedek, so I try to follow his path in this regard...”

(*Yechidus* with Rabbi Moshe Grossberg, *Hamelech B’mesibo*, vol. 2, p. 259.)

In another letter, the Rebbe attests that the objective of all the Rabbeim is to “connect and unify the revealed aspect of Torah and the hidden aspect of Torah, to make them into one **תורה אחת**...”

(4 Shevat 5715)



perfect symmetry: You cannot have one without the other and there can be no irreconcilable conflicts between them either.

As the Rebbe once wrote to an individual:

“I was shocked that you wrote how you have ‘no idea’ about *pnimius haTorah* (which in our time has been revealed in the teachings of Chassidus). Obviously my trouble is that you write this so heartlessly and as if this is a ‘technical issue’ which doesn’t necessarily need to be addressed. [This is a gravely wrong approach, for] all parts of the Torah complement one another. We were all given just one Torah...”¹⁴

One People

In addition to the Torah itself being “one” as a manifestation of “*Hashem Echad*,” the Torah is also the ultimate “unifier” in this world; particularly in

bringing the Jewish people together and revealing how they too are really one.

The Rebbe elaborated on this concept when launching two of his landmark global campaigns: the daily study of Rambam¹⁵ and the global *Sifrei Torah Hakloli'im*.

In addition to the symbolism that a *sefer Torah* has—how each and every letter is important to make up a complete and kosher *sefer Torah*, just like every *neshama* is important for the completion of *Klal Yisroel*—moreover:

The only way to bring out the deepest and truest *achdus* between all Yidden is through Torah—תורה אחת.

In all other areas of life, we differ from one another. We all have unique needs and wants when it comes to the material aspects of our lives, and we all have unique strengths and talents when it comes to building a community and so on. The only thing that can really bring about true *achdus* is Torah.¹⁶

This is what has kept the Yidden together throughout the generations. Starting from the birth of our nation: at Har Sinai, the Torah highlights that we camped at the mountain כאיש אחד—like one man with one

heart. Why? Because we were נגד ההר, at the backdrop of Har Sinai, where we would receive the “*Torah Achas*” from “*Hashem Echad*.” The Torah was our first unifier, and this has kept us as one nation ever since—no matter what level a Yid stands at, whether as a “head of the tribes” or a “wood chopper” and “water drawer.” We are all part of the same nation, chosen by “*Hashem Echad*,” brought together by a “*Torah Achas*” forever.¹⁷ **T**

1. Yalkut Shimoni, Torah, 1-2.

2. See 19 Kislev 5733, sicha 4.

3. See *Torah Achas, Toras Emes, Toras Chaim*, an essay by Rabbi M.M. Kaplan in the *sefer Hashvi'i*.

4. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 19 p. 57; vol. 16, p. 572.

5. Rashi and Sifri Vaeschanan 6:6.

6. Rashi and Tanchuma, Yisro 19,1; Rashi and Sifri Eikev 11,13; Rashi and Tanchuma Ki Savo 26:16.

7. 10 Kislev 5744, sicha 1.

8. See 12 Sivan 5743, sicha 1.

9. Purim 5721, sicha 3.

10. Shabbos Parshas Noach 5745, sicha 4.

11. Shavuot 5716, sicha 6.

12. Shabbos Parshas Shemos 5743, sicha 2.

13. See 19 Kislev 5722, sicha 8.

14. Letter 7 Nissan 5718.

15. See Likkutei Sichos vol. 27, p. 230.

16. See 12 Tammuz 5743, sicha 1, et. al.

17. See letter Lag B'Omer 5735. Michtav Kloli 11 Nissan 5742. 6 Tishrei 5743, sicha 1. Et. al.