



How to Learn

The Rebbe Teaches Us the Proper Path in Limmud HaTorah.



The Third Method

There are numerous methods of Torah-study; there is the “*Litvishe*” style of learning, which employs logic and elucidation, and there is the “*Poishish*” method, which employs mental acuity and sharp analysis. However, [the method that emphasizes] precise analysis of the wording and phrasing isn’t very popular.

The reason for this is presumably [that people] don’t have enough time [to engage in this method]. Another reason is the difference between the Written Torah, in which the **words**¹ are essential (there is an entire chapter of *Shas* based on a single letter of the Torah) and the Oral Torah, in which the **concept**¹ is most important, as explained in *Lekutei Torah*.

Nevertheless, it’s obvious that the wording of the Oral Torah is precise

as well, to the point that one can extrapolate heaps of information from the exact wording and phrasing.

Reb Nechemya of Dubrowna, who was one of the great *Chassidim* of the Alter Rebbe, would analyze the wording of the Taz and the Magen Avraham, and would learn concepts in *halacha* from [their wording]. All the more so, we should analyze the wording and phrasing of *Shas*.²

How Much to Learn

You wrote that you have little interest and effort invested in studying Gemara. This is certainly one of the tricks of the *Yetzer Hara*—to blame your decreased interest in learning on your taking on extra responsibilities in holy duties. “A mitzvah leads to another mitzvah” and not, Heaven forbid, to the opposite. When the opposing forces realize that [their

plot] isn’t causing any weakening in your dedication to Chassidus, its ways and its customs, they will weaken.

With regards to your question whether it’s appropriate to establish a daily study program of learning and reviewing several pages of Gemara with commentaries; this, of course, depends on the skill level of the one studying, as well as the atmosphere he finds himself in. Therefore, you should consult with close friends who know you well.

The following can and should be done by everyone: Studying *iyun* [in depth] as well as *girsas* [at a faster pace], both *nigleh* [the revealed Torah] and Chassidus; in addition to reviewing the laws that pertain to day-to-day life as well as to Shabbos and Yom Tov. The in-depth study should be in whatever subject your heart desires, as *Chazal* instruct.³

LEARNING L'IYUN MEANS THAT WHEREVER THE GEMARA, RASHI, OR TOSFOS QUOTE ANOTHER PART OF SHAS OR THE LIKE, YOU SHOULD OPEN THAT SEFER AND READ WHAT IT SAYS.

What is Iyun

Question: The Rebbe expects that daily studies include iyun as well as girsa, in both nigleh and Chassidus. What is the definition of "learning l'iyun"?

The Rebbe replies: "Learning l'iyun" regarding nigleh means that wherever the Gemara, Rashi, or Tosfos quote another part of Shas or the like, you should open that [other] sefer and read what it says. This way, you will better understand the piece of Gemara that you are learning. [The study of iyun should take place] in this same way for Chassidus.⁴

L'iyun or L'girsa?

You write that your learning is being disrupted.

It will help you to study l'iyun during seder and l'girsa outside seder.

The same applies to the contemplation of Chassidus. You write that you're unsuccessful in doing so. You should choose a *maamar* or *kuntres* and study it from the printed words. Doing so will help you avoid daydreaming.

The same applies to davening; concentrate on the printed words.

Hashem will give you success in all the matters that you write about, [and] may you be a Chossid, *yarei Shamayim*,

and *lamdan*, and may you go from strength to strength in all matters.⁵

Improving Your Memory

Regarding what you wrote about your *koach hazikaron* [memory]; obviously the first thing to do is review your studies many times, including from the printed words. [You should also] act in a *tzniusdike* way. For additional *siyata dishmaya* [help from Above] in this regard, you should give several coins to *tzedakah* before *shacharis* each day, and keep the three known *shiurim* of *Chitas*.⁶

How to Reconcile Meshalim in Chassidus

You ask that in Chassidus numerous *meshalim* [parables] are often brought to explain one concept. Being that everything in Torah is precise, this must mean that one *meshal* explains something that the other does not.

First of all, in this area of study it's incorrect to precisely analyze the details and minutia, rather you should understand that just as there are many explanations in every part of

Torah, so too one can find numerous *meshalim* for each concept in Torah, or at least for many of them.

In general, in the vein of the *passuk* מִבְּשָׁרִי אֶחָזֶה אֱלֹהִים – "From my flesh I see G-d," Chassidus usually brings a *meshal* from the faculties of the *nefesh*. In many cases, where preexisting *seforim* bring other *meshalim* for whatever reason, these *meshalim* are used as well.

Additionally, it is clear that numerous *maamarim* speak about the broad distinctions between various levels, without going into detail; as a result the *meshal* used is about the general concept. Once the details within a specific level are being characterized, the *meshal* used is one that fits with only one of the details and not the others.⁷ ①

1. Emphases are in the original.
2. Toras Menachem vol. 1 p. 153
3. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 232
4. Yechidus, published in Heichal Menachem 5755 p. 210
5. Ibid p. 211
6. Igros Kodesh, vol. 16 p. 272
7. Ibid vol. 18 p. 376



BOCHURIM LEARN IN THE SMALL ZAL, UPSTAIRS 770. 21 ELUL 5737.

JEM/THE LIVING ARCHIVE ID: 20671