

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
ישראל מאיר הכהן שיחי'
לרגל הולדתו ט"ז סיון ה'תשע"ט
ולזכות אחותו **חנה תחי'**
ולזכות הוריו הרה"ת ר' **שמואל הכהן**
וזוגתו מרת **חי' מושקא שיחי'**
נדפס ע"י זקיניו
הרה"ת ר' **מנחם מענדל הכהן**
וזוגתו מרת **מליא רחל שיחי'**
טייטלבוים



Our Very Life

MIVTZA
TORAH

MAKE TORAH YOUR TRADE

In the times of the *tannaim* and *amoraim*, there were people who were completely dedicated to Torah: תורתם אומנותם, “Torah was their trade,” a designation that came with significant halachic ramifications. Although we can no longer attain this halachic status, the Rebbe explains, we all have the ability to accomplish this by seeing to it that during our limited study-time—תורתנו אומנותנו the Torah is our sole occupation and focus.

This means that during the time set aside to study, the only thing in your world is Torah. No other thoughts can disturb you—and it’s not that you are constantly *fighting* those thoughts; rather, you put yourself in the mindset and mood that the only thing in your world at that moment is Torah. “We see clearly, that if a person makes a determined decision that for a certain period of time he will be completely dedicated to one single thing—whether it’s for a few minutes, a quarter of an hour, or an hour—he is able to do so. It is a very achievable thing to do, and you don’t have to be on a high level; even regular people, and even non-Jews, are able to achieve this.”⁴

Your study-time is like Shabbos, a time when you are uplifted above weekday matters, as the Rebbe explains in a *sicha*:

“If the phone rings, you don’t pick up—it’s Shabbos! If someone comes and tells you about a business deal where you can make a million dollars—you respond that it’s Shabbos; if someone comes to you about a health matter—you answer that ‘Shabbos hi milizok urefua krova lavo,’ [it is not appropriate to discuss health matters on Shabbos, but the healing will surely come].”⁵

“When your family approaches you to discuss something—even good and positive things—you must respond in a



ZAUMAN KLEINMAN

The 15th of Shevat 5731 is the date of the famous surprise *farbrengen* when the Rebbe announced that the time had come to “conquer the world with the study of Torah”—a *farbrengen* that, the Rebbe later revealed, was held at the instruction of the Frieddiker Rebbe.¹ This *sicha* essentially laid the groundwork for Mivtza Torah, which the Rebbe *shTUREMED* about throughout the following years.

KVIUS B’NEFESH

Some of the ten *mivtzoim* are self explanatory. Mivtza Tefillin is to get others to put on tefillin, Mivtza Mezuzah is to put up mezuzos. But then there are *mivtzoim* that are more general, and, thus, may seem a bit vague: Mivtza Torah, for example, can mean a lot of things, and the same goes for Mivtza Chinuch. However, the truth is that each *mivtza* does have a unique bend to it.

The thrust of Mivtza Torah, as the Rebbe explained it in *sichos* throughout the years, has a very specific emphasis: that every single person—man, woman, and child; business people, activists, and shliach—should have a set time to learn Torah. And, the Rebbe emphasized again and again, this time should be set in your soul—nothing should disturb you while you’re learning.²

Rabbi Yehoshua Tzeitlin was one of the three geonim of Shklov who were appointed by the misnagdim to debate the Alter Rebbe about the ways of Chassidus. He asked the Alter Rebbe, “What’s happening with you [—the Chassidim—] in Torah?”

“The baalei-batim have set times to learn,” the Alter Rebbe replied.

*“The same is true by us,” he said. “What is the innovation of Chassidus?” The Alter Rebbe replied: For you, it’s a *kvius b’zman*, it is set in time. Chassidus teaches us that it must not only be a set-aside time, but a *kvius b’nefesh*, it must be set [and ingrained] in the soul.”³*

positive, peaceful manner... but now I am learning Torah! My entire being is Torah! Torah is studying Torah!

“When you say this with sincerity... they will accept it, and not only will they not disturb your study, but they will prevent other things from disturbing you as well.”⁶

One can choose to study Torah while still allowing himself to be disturbed by mundane matters; as the Rebbe once put it, “You can study Torah in a *baalebatish* fashion... which means that you are studying while the worldly matters bother you.”⁷ We are told, however, that לא ניתנה תורה אלא לאוכלי המן, Torah was only given to the [Yidden in the *midbar*] who ate the *man*, because they were completely removed from the day-to-day worries of life. Every individual has the power to uplift himself and study Torah like the Yidden in the *midbar*, to uplift himself from the daily drudgery and study Torah as if he has nothing else on his mind.⁸

When you study Torah in this fashion, the Rebbe says, the entire world is completely nullified, the Torah protects and saves you, and you become the *baal habos* over the entire world.⁹

HOW TO ACHIEVE THE MINDSET

A way to achieve this, the Rebbe explains, is by contemplating the value of Torah. The Midrash tells us that יקרה היא מפנינים, אפילו מזה שנכנס לפני; studying Torah is even more special than a Kohen Gadol who enters the *Kodesh Hakadashim*. Now, even the most simple individual can appreciate what a Kohen Gadol is, what the *Kodesh Hakadashim* is, and what Yom Kippur is. It follows that he can understand what it means when all three come together: when the **Kohen Gadol** enters the *Kodesh Hakadashim* on **Yom Kippur**—a tremendous level of holiness. And yet we go on to say that the Torah study of this simple Jew is even greater than that!

By contemplating the value and the *geshmak* of Torah, “Every Yid can sit down and study Torah to the extent that he stands above all worldly matters, and nothing can bother him.”¹¹

TORAH AS YOUR FOCUS

Torah study is above time, so even if you don’t spend the majority of your time studying Torah, your entire day can still be a *Torah’dike* day. By studying Torah with the proper approach, every individual has the power to permeate his entire day with Torah.¹²

“These 15 minutes, or half hour, or hour, that is spent on Torah, must be spread out and seeded throughout the entire 24 hours—to the extent that when you sleep, it should be clear that this is a Yid who studied Torah... If you are truly invested in Torah, then you gain knowledge even during your sleep.”¹³

WHO DOES MIVTZA TORAH APPLY TO?

Every person is included in Mivtza Torah, the Rebbe says.

- **Fulfill your halachic obligation:** Every single person has a halachic obligation to study Torah twice a day, in the morning and at night—so if you don’t have set study-times, then make them. Many people do not fulfill their halachic duty with the bare minimum studies in the morning and night (as explained in Hilchos Talmud Torah¹⁴), so even if you do have the minimal study sessions, be sure to fulfill your personal halachic obligation.
- **Increase:** Even if you already fulfill your halachic obligation, you should add more and more. Even if you have the full right to be spending your

A SHLIACH MUST HAVE KVIUS ITIM

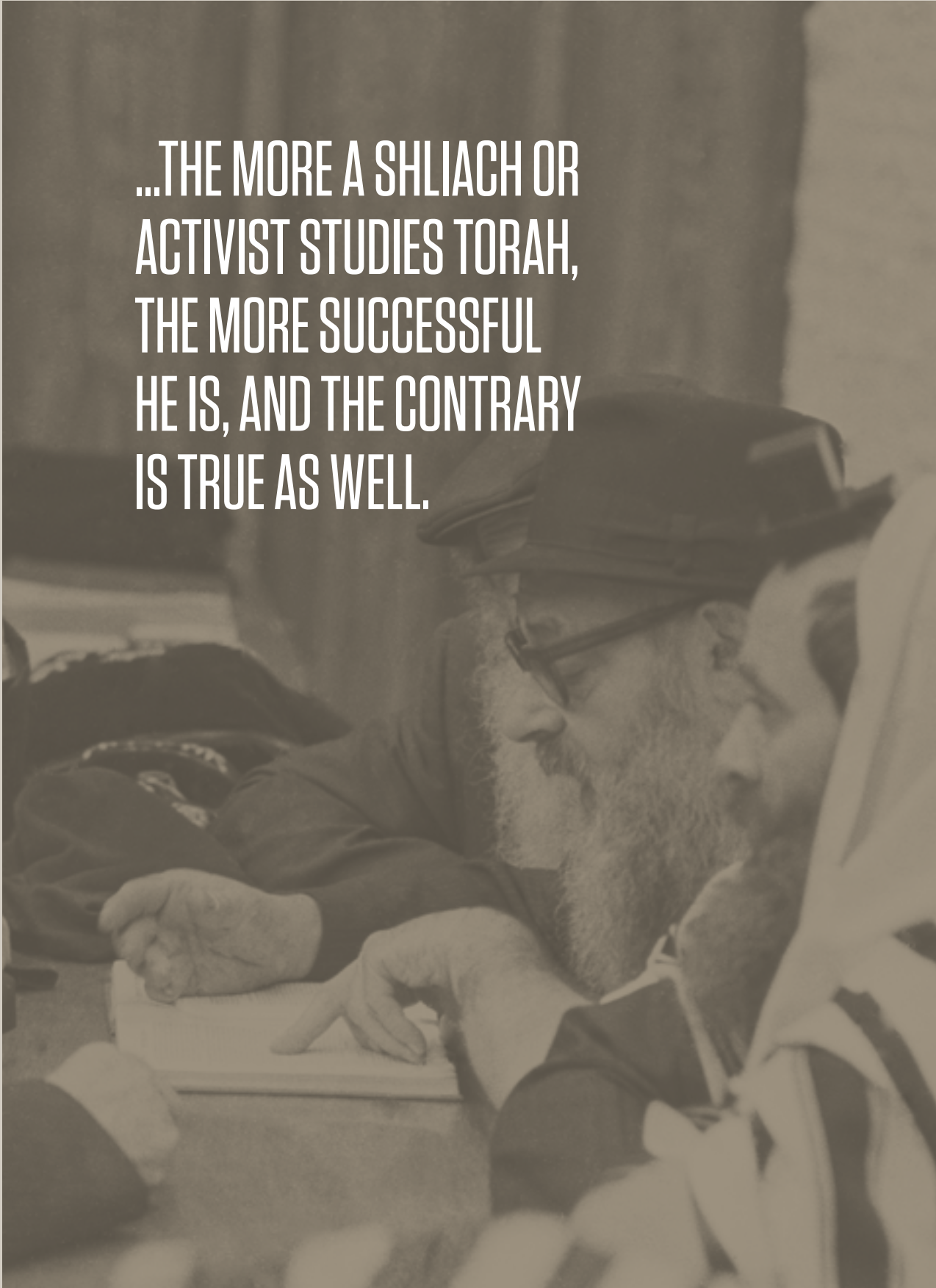
In a *yechidus* with a shliach in 5737*, the Rebbe spoke strongly about his studies. The following are some excerpts:

“...The fact that you don’t have set times to study calls all your activism into question... The test of whether you are a true עסקן ציבורי (community activist) is if it doesn’t disturb your own study of Torah and *avodas Hashem*. If you don’t have any study schedule at all—that’s a *vilde hanhaga*, a ‘wild’ behavior.

“This is all regarding yourself. But also, the truth is that if you don’t study, it harms your עסקנות (activism). We see clearly that the more a shliach or activist studies Torah, the more successful he is, and the contrary is true as well.

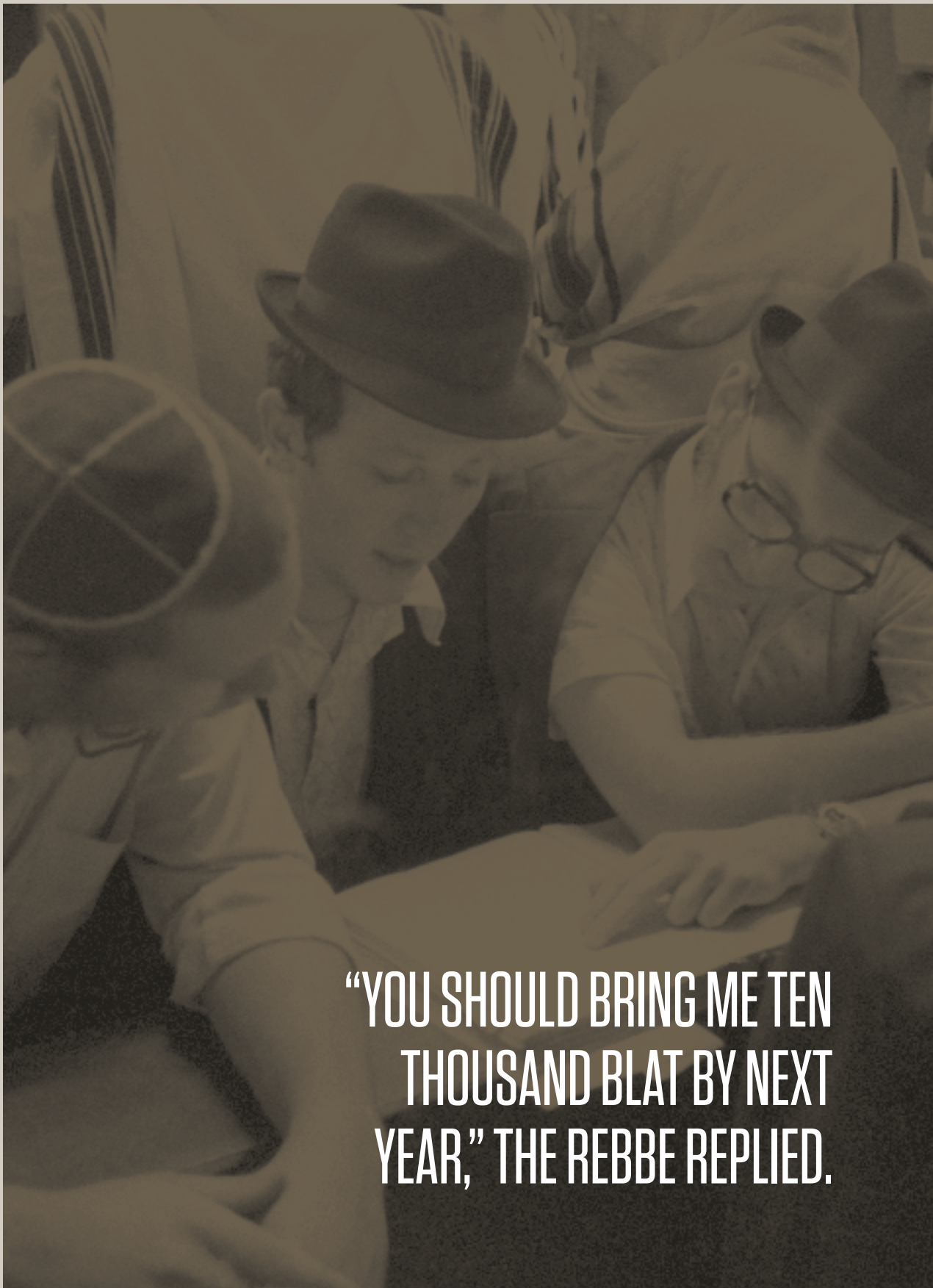
“The worst part is that you are *schlepping* me into this. Your justification for not learning is because you are involved in my matters, and I’m at fault for everything!

“From now on, at least, this must be corrected. You must make a firm decision, *azoi un nit andersh*, that not a day will pass without a set time to study. The more you add in Torah, the more Hashem will add for you: with tremendous success in your community activism, and with בני חיי ומזונא רויח in your personal life.”



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ACTIVIST STUDIES TORAH,
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9 TISHREI 5736, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 141960



**“YOU SHOULD BRING ME TEN
THOUSAND BLAT BY NEXT
YEAR,” THE REBBE REPLIED.**

19 ELUL 5737, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 20723

time doing other activities, you should “steal” extra time to study! If you have already filled every single moment of your day with study, the Rebbe said, you too can still increase—by raising the *quality* of your study.

- **Women:** Women are obligated to study Torah pertaining to the mitzvos that apply to them—which includes many parts of *nigleh* and the entirety of Chassidus, since they are obligated to fulfill the constant mitzvos—including loving Hashem, fearing Hashem and so on—and they too should have set times for study.¹⁵ In addition, they should encourage their husbands and children to add in their studies.¹⁶
- **Children:** Children need to study as a part of their education, and they must also have set study sessions.¹⁷

THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE!

This applies to every single person, no matter how important the work you are doing is. “Nobody should say that they cannot do it because they are too busy,” the Rebbe says in a farbrengen. “...You can claim that you’re going on *mesiras nefesh*, you’re going on *mivtzoim*, and you’re involved in communal activities... These are all great things, and you will receive the greatest reward for it, but that doesn’t rise to the level of actually sitting down and learning Torah!

“For this, there are no *kavanos* that can help you... You must actually set aside time to learn... Even if you help others study Torah and receive the reward for it—that’s all *reward*, and it cannot be compared to learning Torah yourself. There’s nothing greater than that.” Through toiling in Torah,

the Rebbe says, that is how a person will achieve success in his worldly matters.¹⁸

LIFE’S DREAM

Every Yid must yearn for a time that he will be able to just sit and learn Torah.

We learn this lesson from Mordechai:

Mordechai was by all accounts a tremendously successful activist. By virtue of the fact that he was close to the king and “sat at the king’s gate,” he saved the entire Jewish nation from physical annihilation, in addition to saving them spiritually by bringing

their *mesiras nefesh* to the fore and uniting them together.

He then went on to become viceroy—second in command in a government that ruled the entire world! One would imagine that he would choose to continue his activism and continue helping his brethren.

Yet, when a small contingent of Yidden went up to Eretz Yisroel, he left everything and joined them. He became a member of the Sanhedrin, and the Gemara tells us that after the second *Beis Hamikdash* was built he was in charge of a certain collection box in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

IS IT ENOUGH TO DONATE?

Reb Berel Weiss, a successful businessman and philanthropist, was once in *yechidus* where the Rebbe offered him some advice in significant business matters. Towards the end of the *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked him, “And what will you bring me in return?”

“I said, ‘I’m willing to give whatever I have.’”

“The Rebbe replied, ‘I mean, how many *blatt* Gemara are you prepared to give me?’

“I said: ‘Rebbe, when I give money to *roshei yeshivos* and rabbonim for their institutions, I always tell them that they should have me in mind when they give their classes. I thought that I fulfilled my obligation by giving to them.’

“The Rebbe told me that in the *brachos* for Yissachar and Zevulun in *parshas Vezos Habracha*, the *possuk* says that they would be ‘nourished by the abundance of the seas,’ and Rashi says that ‘thereby, they will have spare time to study the Torah.’

“‘When the ‘Zevuluns’ would travel on the ships, they brought with them a Tanya, a Tehillim’l, a Chumash’l [a small travel size Tehillim and Chumash]—and they learned! You cannot depend on someone else having you in mind. So—how many *blatt* Gemara will you bring me?!’

“‘How much should I bring?’ I asked.

“‘You should bring me ten thousand *blatt* by next year,’ the Rebbe replied.

“‘We settled on a thousand *blatt*...’



REB BEREL WEISS RECEIVING LEKACH FROM THE REBBE, HOSHANA RABBAH 5743*.

This provides an amazing lesson for anyone that is involved in the business world or activism, the Rebbe says. On one hand, you must never leave your place at the front of the battle, *chas veshalom*. Until the *nossi hador* tells you differently, you must continue soldiering on with absolute *kabbalas ol*.

But that doesn't mean that you should *enjoy* the fact that you are involved in activism instead of studying Torah. To the contrary: "At the same time that you are involved in community activism, you must have a powerful longing for the time that you will be able to study Torah with diligence. As soon as you receive a clear instruction that you have completed your work—you must immediately drop everything and sit down to learn, just like Mordechai who left his post as viceroy and returned to Eretz Yisroel..."

"...When you have this attitude, then any free moment that you have from your business or activism—*chaper zich*, you seize the opportunity to study Torah, with energy and diligence that surpasses that of the full time Torah scholars!"¹⁹

MILESTONES IN MIVTZA TORAH

The Rebbe spoke about Mivtza Torah throughout the years, but there were occasions that there was a focus on a specific area.

- **Chamisha Asar Bishvat 5731:** The Rebbe announced that the time has come to conquer the world with the study of Torah.
- **Summer 5734:** The campaign is renewed on a broader scale, this time as one of the 10 *mivtzoim* [as a method of protection for world Jewry].
- **Simchas Torah 5745** and in the following farbrengens: The Rebbe makes a strong push

that every person should have a set time to study.

- **Noach 5750** and in following farbrengens: The Rebbe calls for a renewal of the public classes in shuls on Shabbos afternoon.

TEACHING OTHERS

In addition to learning on one's own, the other fundamental part of Mivtza Torah was that people should encourage *others* to study and toil in Torah. The Rebbe said that you should encourage every person at their individual level. And if they already study Torah, then you should convince them to study more, and even to become teachers themselves.

If *chas veshalom* they don't have any *shiurim* at all, then work your hardest, with all your heart and all your soul, that they should begin having *shiurim* in Torah. If you can convince them to study twice a day, in the morning and at night, thereby fulfilling their halachic obligation—that would be ideal. But if starting with that is difficult, then they should at least study once a day, or even once every few days; the main thing is that it be a *set* study, and eventually it will grow and grow.

It doesn't matter *what* they learn, the Rebbe emphasized. They should study whatever they find interesting, whether it is Tanach, Mishna, Gemara and so on. העצם כשאתה תופס במקצתו—אתה תופס בקולו—when you take hold of part of the essence, you have the whole thing; this little bit of Torah will draw them into studying the Torah in its entirety.

NO STRINGS ATTACHED!

In a fascinating passage, the Rebbe added that there is a point that needs to be emphasized: "When you approach a Yid to speak to him about setting a time to study, you shouldn't mix it with anything else; you

shouldn't ask him about his behavior in Torah and mitzvot, whether he fulfills mitzvot with *hiddur*, *lechatchila* or *bedieved*—the only thing you should tell him is that as a son of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, and as a daughter of Sara, Rivka, Rachel, and Leah... he should go study Hashem's Torah.

"Don't ask him about his background, don't ask him for his passport... and certainly don't ask him for money (unless he offers it on his own). You are asking one thing of him: 'תן לי הנפש! Give me your soul! Sit and learn Torah! Hashem says that if only the Yidden would forsake me'²⁰ and keep my Torah!" No matter where a person is holding, Hashem wants him to study Torah!

"This is also the answer to all those who argue that Torah must be studied in purity and so on: Hashem himself says, 'If only... they would keep my Torah.' The study of Torah will bring him closer to all areas of Yiddishkeit!"²¹

HOW TO AFFECT OTHERS SUCCESSFULLY

The keys to convincing others are:

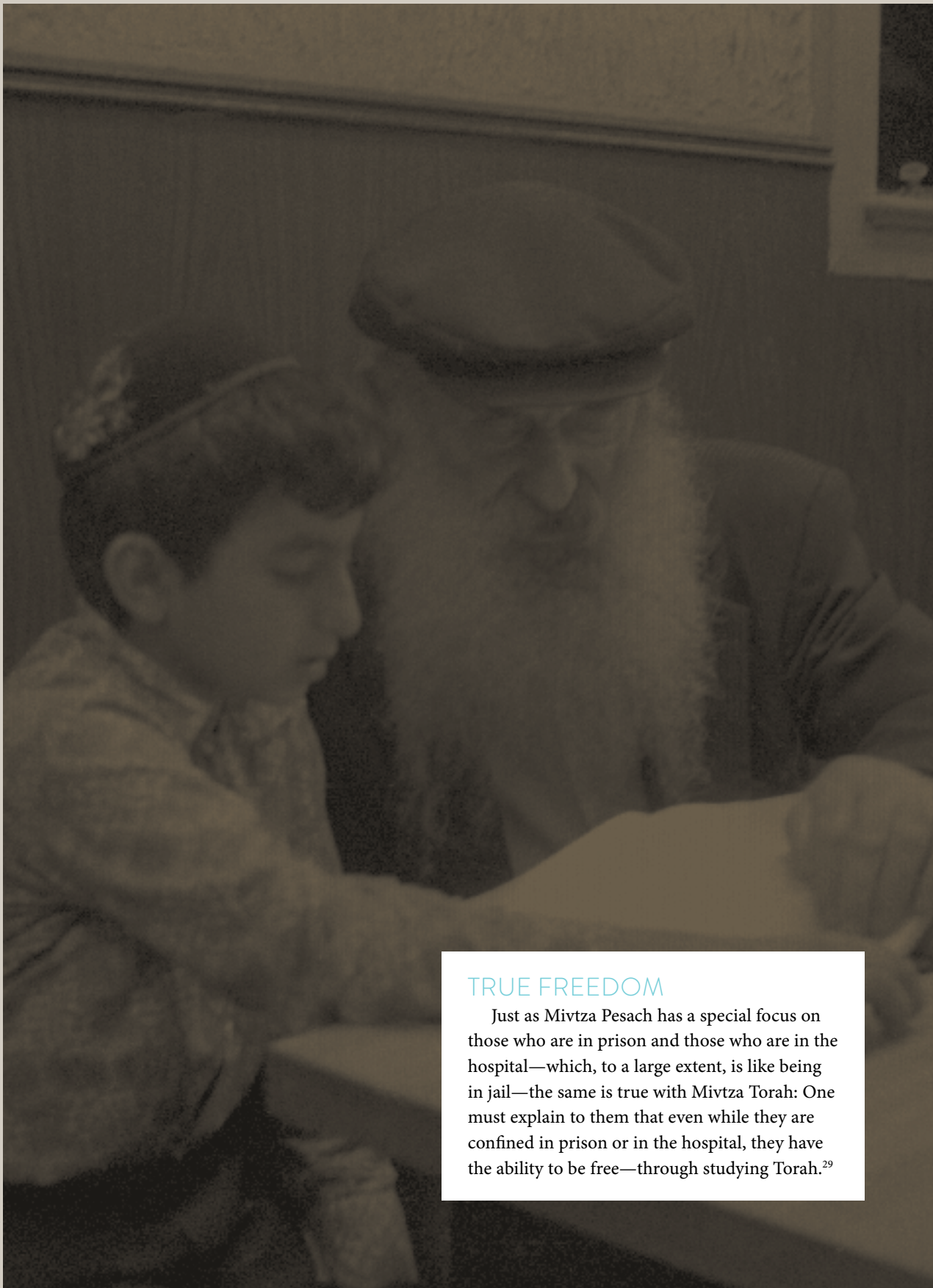
- To appreciate the value of Torah yourself, and speak sincerely, for words that come from the heart enter the heart.²²
- To set a *דוגמא חי*, a living example by studying Torah on your own. And it should be a *living* example, meaning that it should be evident that this is your entire life, ער לעבט מיט דעם!²³

The Rebbe adds that if you want the other person to study a certain amount, obviously you must do double as much. Because the other person will make the justified calculation that it is enough for him to do half as much as you do. Therefore, you must double your Torah study, and thus you will

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT THEY LEARN.
THEY SHOULD STUDY WHATEVER THEY FIND
INTERESTING, WHETHER IT IS TANACH,
MISHNA, GEMARA AND SO ON...



ELUL 5735, LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 140814



TRUE FREEDOM

Just as Mivtza Pesach has a special focus on those who are in prison and those who are in the hospital—which, to a large extent, is like being in jail—the same is true with Mivtza Torah: One must explain to them that even while they are confined in prison or in the hospital, they have the ability to be free—through studying Torah.²⁹

7 TISHREI 5741, LEVI FREDIN VIA JEM 191059

TIPS

In private letters, the Rebbe advised people on how to overcome challenges and increase their Torah studies.

Addressing a person who felt that he lacked the patience or diligence to maintain *shiurim* in Torah on a consistent basis, the Rebbe advised him to begin immediately—but slowly: start off with a short session (e.g. 15 minutes or half an hour daily), and to build it up over time.³⁰

Study with a *chavrusa*, this will help your Torah session be long-lasting.³¹

Don't give up! Even if your first or second attempt does not succeed, do not give up. The way the world works is that not everything succeeds on the first attempt, but with strong willpower you will overcome.³¹

Give *tzedakah* every morning in the merit of more success.

succeed in convincing him to study Torah on his own level.²⁴

WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LEARN?

But what if you yourself don't know how to learn? How can you accomplish Mivtza Torah with others?

First of all, the Rebbe said, the fundamental point of Mivtza Torah is not that you *yourself* must teach others; all you have to do is convince them to attend *shiurim*.²⁵

Furthermore, the Rebbe said, being that we are holding in the final days before Moshiach, every person must share whatever knowledge they have.

“There are those who argue: How can you tell me to get involved in Mivtza Torah, when I myself only know a single chapter, or a single letter? It's not my fault—I am a *tinok shenishba bein ha'akum*; the bottom line is that I don't have any knowledge, so how can you expect me to get involved in Mivtza Torah?!”

“[We say to him:] Listen up! There is no time! Moshiach is coming soon! Run out to the street and study Torah with someone! If you only know ‘one chapter,’ then learn with him ‘one chapter!’”

“Even if you only know ‘one saying, or even one letter’—you were taught how to read the Alef-Beis, and all you know is the shape of an Alef—then go out and shout ‘Alef!’ You will surely meet someone that doesn't know what an Alef is, and you will be able to explain it to him!”

“But”—this person argues—“What will they gain from knowing what an Alef is?!”

“No! You will begin with Alef, and it's possible that this will be all; but because you gave him ‘one letter’ of Torah, it will blossom into ‘one chapter,’ and before long into a tremendous amount of Torah.”²⁶

SUCCESS IS CERTAIN

“When you exert sufficient effort,” the Rebbe said, “you will certainly succeed... with results that completely outshine your efforts.”

“It's like finding a precious stone and picking it up—the effort that must be expended to dust off the stone is insignificant! The Yidden are a ‘precious land,’ with precious stones and diamonds, and the effort involved in dusting it off and finding the stones is nothing compared to the gain!”

LIBERATED

There is not a moment to waste. אין לך בן חורין אלא מי שעוסק בתלמוד תורה, you are only free if you toil in Torah.

Every moment that you study, you become a free man, and if you waste even a single moment, at that moment you are subjugated (enslaved); by giving someone the opportunity to learn, you are giving them the gift of freedom.²⁷ While still in *galus*, Torah gives us the opportunity to rise above and become free—free of any limitations whatsoever.²⁸ **1**

1. For more on this farbrengen, see Derher Shevat 5773, “ראש השנה לאילנות”.
2. The Mishnah in Pirkei Avos tells us, “עשה “תורתך קבע” make your Torah-study permanent. Although, on a simple level, this is telling a person to spend most of his time learning, if you cannot actually spend most of your time studying, you must still make Torah study a permanent part of your life; the study should be ingrained in your soul.
3. Likkutei Diburim vol. 1 p. 13. See also Or Hatorah Nach p. 37; Hemshech 5672 vol. 1 p. 9.
4. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2, p. 307.
5. Sichos Kodesh 5735 vol. 2, p. 150.
6. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2, p. 310.
7. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2, p. 295.
8. Sichos Kodesh 5735 vol. 2, p. 150.
9. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2, p. 298.
10. Bamidbar Raba 6:1.
11. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2 p. 297.
12. Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2 p. 95; *ibid* p. 166.
13. Sichos Kodesh 5732 vol. 1 p. 523
14. See third *perek*, *se'ifim* 4-6.
15. See Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 461
16. Igros Kodesh vol. 20 p. 331
17. See Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 461
18. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 2 p. 238
19. Sichos Kodesh 5738 p. 79
20. In the *sicha*, the Rebbe left out this word.
21. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 461.
22. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5742 vol. 1 p. 823
23. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 1 p. 526
24. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 1 p. 587.
25. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5745 vol. 1 p. 664
26. Sichos Kodesh 5739 vol. 2 p. 720
27. Sichos Kodesh 5737 p. 709-710
28. Sichos Kodesh 5735 vol. 2 p. 15
29. Sichos Kodesh 5737 p. 711
30. Igros Kodesh vol. 9 p. 298; vol. 14 p. 243
31. Igros Kodesh vol. 14 p. 243