

House of Sages

JUDAISM AND LEARNING

26TH OCTOBER, 2025

COME & LEARN

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ-הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ
לְעַסֵּק בְּדַבְרֵי-תוֹרָה.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, who calls us to holiness through mitzvot, commanding us to engage in the study of Torah

Morning Blessings



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FRAMING QUESTIONS

What comes to mind when you think about Judaism and learning?

What does Jewish text study look like to you?

What is your connection, if any, to Jewish text study?

SOURCE 1 – JOSHUA 1:8

Let not this Book of the Teaching cease from your lips, but recite it day and night, so that you may observe faithfully all that is written in it. Only then will you prosper in your undertakings and only then will you be successful.

לֹא יִמּוּשׁ סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ
וְהָגִיתָ בוֹ יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה לְמַעַן תִּשְׁמַר
לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל-הַכְּתוּב בּוֹ כִּי-אֲז
תִצְלִיחַ אֶת-דְרָכְךָ וְאֲז תִשְׁכִּיל:

SOURCE 2 – PIRKEI AVOT 6:9

Rabbi Yose ben Kisma said: Once I was walking by the way when a man met me, and greeted me and I greeted him. He said to me, “Rabbi, where are you from?” I said to him, “I am from a great city of sages and scribes”. He said to me, “Rabbi, would you consider living with us in our place? I would give you a thousand thousand denarii of gold, and precious stones and pearls.” I said to him: “My son, even if you were to give me all the silver and gold, precious stones and pearls that are in the world, I would not dwell anywhere except in a place of Torah; for when a man passes away there accompany him neither gold nor silver, nor precious stones nor pearls, but Torah and good deeds alone

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי בֶן קִסְמָא, פְּעַם אַחַת
הָיִיתִי מֵהַלֵּךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ וּפָגַע בִּי אָדָם
אֶחָד, וְנָתַן לִי שְׁלוֹם, וְהִחֲזַרְתִּי לוֹ
שְׁלוֹם. אָמַר לִי, רַבִּי, מֵאִיזָה מְקוֹם
אַתָּה. אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ, מֵעִיר גְּדוֹלָה שֶׁל
חֲכָמִים וְשֶׁל סוֹפְרִים אָנִי. אָמַר לִי,
רַבִּי, רְצוֹנְךָ שֶׁתְּדוּר עִמָּנוּ בְּמִקְוָמָנוּ,
וְאֲנִי אֶתֵּן לְךָ אֶלֶף אֶלְפִים דִּינָרֵי זָהָב
וְאַבְנִים טוֹבוֹת וּמְרַגְלִיּוֹת. אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ,
בְּנִי, אִם אַתָּה נוֹתֵן לִי כָּל כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב
וְאַבְנִים טוֹבוֹת וּמְרַגְלִיּוֹת שְׁבַע עוֹלָם,
אִינִי דֹר אֶלָּא בְּמִקְוָם תּוֹרָה. וְלֹא עוֹד,
אֶלָּא שְׁבַשְׁעַת פְּטִירְתּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם אֵין
מְלִוִין לוֹ לְאָדָם לֹא כֶּסֶף וְלֹא זָהָב
וְלֹא אַבְנִים טוֹבוֹת וּמְרַגְלִיּוֹת, אֶלָּא
תּוֹרָה וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים בְּלִבָּד

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SOURCE 3 – PIRKEI AVOT 2:4

Do not say: ‘When I have free time, I will study.’ Perhaps this free time will never come.

וְאַל תֹּאמַר לְכַשְׁאֲפָנָה אֲשֶׁנָּה, שְׂמָא לֹא תִפְנֶה:

SOURCE 4 – TAANIT 7A

The Gemara cites other expositions that deal with Torah study. Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “Iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend” (Proverbs 27:17)? This verse comes to tell you that just as with these iron implements, one sharpens the other when they are rubbed against each other, so too, when Torah scholars study together, they sharpen one another in halakha.

אָמַר רַבִּי חָמָא בְּרַבִּי חַנִּינָא, מַאי דְכָתִיב: “בִּרְזָל בְּבִרְזָל יִחַד”, לֹאמַר לָהּ: מָה בִּרְזָל זֶה — אֶחָד מְחַדֵּד אֶת חֵבִירוֹ, אִף שְׁנֵי תַלְמִידֵי חֲכָמִים — מְחַדְּדִין זֶה אֶת זֶה בְּהַלְכָּה.

SOURCE 5 – QUOTE FROM ILANA KURSHAN

If All the Seas Were Ink by Ilana Kurshan is a memoir that intertwines personal transformation with daily Talmud study, as the author navigates divorce, love, and self-discovery through the Daf Yomi cycle. This quote is about her book.

All of us are vessels for the Torah we study, and the Torah we study fills us and assumes our shape – much as wine and all liquids take the shape of their containers. And there is a chemical reaction that takes place between who we are and what we learn – we are transformed by the Torah we study, and the Torah we study is transformed by our encounter with it. And so that is why my book is as much about myself as it is about the Talmud, and as much about Talmud as it is about myself.