

How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by EscapeArtist - 07 Mar 2021 03:05

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I've been along the yeshiva-guy conveyor belt, spent many years in yeshiva & kollel; thank God for sending me this addiction so I'm forced to join SA & take some serious introspection about my actions & beliefs.

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My problem is with learning torah; I guess I don't really feel any major connection to God while learning, especially not while learning seemingly redundant & nitpicky sugyas in shas, or while going teef teef teef trying to outdo the next guy with better svaros... At the same time, I'm not willing to drop learning torah, as it's the foundation of our existence v'chulei v'chulei v'chulei.

I guess I'm looking for some mekor as to how learning torah brings us closer to Hashem, no matter what we're learning?

I'm not even sure what I need, I'm probably traumatized from sitting in seder after seder after seder for years on end, while watching the clock & feeling like I was wasting my time, stuck on the yeshiva-guy conveyor belt.

I spoke to a Rebbe, he called it ??? ?????. I don't really think so. I'm not looking to get away from learning; I'm looking to get closer to my learning, so I can appreciate it & perhaps do some more of it, the way it's *supposed* to ben done.

Any advice is appreciated, but if you dare give me mussar you're gonna be labeled a "conveyor-belt-guy-who-doesn't-really-believe-in-God" so watch out.

Thanks for letting me rant.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?
Posted by OivedElokim - 07 Mar 2021 03:56

Ever learned Tanya?

See ??? ? and ??? ??.

I will leave to others to post the relevant sources in ??? ?????, but I understand that it's a similar ???? to Tanya...

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?
Posted by OivedElokim - 07 Mar 2021 04:00

The gist of it is that whatever the subject, the Torah is Hashem's wisdom and will and therefore when we study it we connect to him at a very deep level, more so then other Mitzvos when we are just fulfilling his will.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?
Posted by DavidT - 07 Mar 2021 04:22

You raise very valid points.

In Mesillas Yesharim (Chapter 5), the Ramchal elaborates on the importance of Torah study for fighting the yetzer hara:

Hashem, Who created the yetzer hara in man, is the One Who created Torah as its antidote, as our sages said (Kiddushin 30b), "[Hashem says,] 'I created the

yetzer hara and I created its antidote, Torah.'" Now, it is obvious that if the Creator did not create any cure for this wound [the yetzer hara] other than this antidote

[Torah], it is impossible for man to be healed from this wound in any manner other than with this

cure. Any person who thinks he will be saved without Torah is making a mistake, and he will eventually realize his mistake when he dies with his sins. This is because the yetzer hara really is very strong within man, and

without the person realizing it, the yetzer hara increases his strength over the person and rules over him. And if a person uses all the tactics in the world but does not take the medicine that was created for the yetzer hara, which is Torah as I wrote, he will not notice or realize as his illness [the yetzer hara's anipulation] increases and overpowers him, [and he will not realize what is happening] until he dies in his sins and his soul is lost.

What can this be compared to? To a sick person diagnosed by doctors and told to take a certain medicine. This man, knowing nothing about medicine, did not take that medicine and instead took whatever medicines he decided. Of course this man will die!

The same applies here, because there is nobody who knows the illness known as the yetzer hara and the strength embedded within it other than the Creator Who created it, and He warned us that its antidote is Torah. Who can disregard Torah and take something else instead and live? Surely, the darkness of physicality

will progressively overpower him, and he won't even realize it until he discovers that he is so entrenched in evil and so far from the truth that it doesn't enter his

mind to seek the truth.

But if he toils in Torah, when he sees its ways, its positive commandments, and its prohibitions, it will eventually automatically renew within him motivation

that will bring him to the right path. This is what our sages said (Eichah Rabbah, Pesichta 2), "[Hashem said,] 'If only they had left Me [but] kept my Torah, because the light within it would bring them back to good.'"

Because the yetzer hara knows learning is so important, he makes it hard for many people to learn. He makes them not feel comfortable with learning.

If you face this challenge, you must know that your learning is incredibly precious. The difficulty and discomfort makes your Torah study hundreds of times more valuable than it would have been had it been easy. Hashem is immensely proud of whatever learning you can muster. It's worth much more than learning all day without difficulty.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by Bigmoish - 07 Mar 2021 05:45

[EscapeArtist wrote on 07 Mar 2021 03:05:](#)

I'm gonna do something stupid now & hit "submit" before re-reading everything I just typed to make it more politically correct. Hope I don't join the ranks of Dr. Seuss.

Mr. Giesel: People have said far worse and not been "cancelled" here. There are few unpardonable offenses (though I do remember the guy who got the boot because he was advocating being mekarev prostitutes while being mekarev them a little too much...).

I think a person needs to learn what gives him a sipuk hanefesh. If kvetching through a sugya is not cutting it, why not try a little more bekiusdik, or halacha l'maaseh?

Also, maybe try to get a second opinion from another rabbi/mentor - an anonymous sex addiction forum is probably not going to cut it.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?
Posted by YeshivaGuy - 07 Mar 2021 05:56

First and foremost, I beleive it's important to appreciate the tragedy, that it's shayach for someone to have learnt Torah for so many years and yet never understand what it accomplishes.

Obviously, this is in no way Your fault, but rather the fault of the system in which you were raised.

Personaly, I only began enjoying and being motivated to learn sugyos b'iyun once I learnt and understood that which takes place when one learns Torah.

There is a simple equation.

God is One. That means (as the rambam and others, explain) that His Self and His Will are one.

We have an arm and a leg. And though they are both part of Me, they remain two distinct entities.

But HaShem is One. A unity that we can't fully fathom, is won't spend more time on that here now.

Torah is the Ratzon of HaShem.

That means, as the Nefesh Hachayim brings from the zohar (I'll try finding the perakim in the morning, I'm just about to fall asleep), that the Torah is (kivyachol) HaShem.

Because God and His Will are One.

What does this mean?

Thats a large discussion, one that I have yet to fully grasp.

But the equation makes sense, it's just the "Havana" that is difficult.

When one learns Torah they are encountering HaShem. Literally.

At that moment they become a Kli for Hashraas Haschena etc etc.

Torah is the ultimate connection to God. Even more than davening.

Because Limud HaTorah is the very literal encounter with God Himself (k'vyachol).

This takes place whenever someone learns Torah. And it takes place regardless of how one Feels, even if it doesn't Feel Good, or like one is experiencing a euphoric high.

Regardless of that, they are experiencing this D'veikus.

The Tachlis Ha'Adam is for Man to elavate Himself and the world around him through Torah u'Mitzvos.

So when one learns Torah, elevates himself, he is at that moment leading the world to its completion.

There is much much more to discuss.

I would definitely recommend learning the Nefesh HaChayim (Shaar Daled). I'm honestly shocked that you went through the Yeshiva system without learning it. I know my Rosh Yeshiva tells us to learn it...

You can also learn Tanya (Likutey Amarim).

Personally, I find the Nefesh Hachayim to be much much easier to read because the Tanya uses more the Lashon HaKabola, but if you do choose to do Tanya I would recommend you do it with a Peirsush.

There is a slight difference between the Nefesh Hachayim and Tanya as per the definition of Torah Lishma. But as far as "what happens when one learns Torah."

That is agreed upon by everyone.

Anyway, feel free to reach out with any more questions etc.

I completely understand the way you feel. And I'm so sorry that you, like so many of us, have been robbed of the true meaning and richness of Yidishkeit.

YeshivaGuy

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?
Posted by bm263 - 07 Mar 2021 06:00

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 07 Mar 2021 05:56:](#)

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Perhaps the system is broken, perhaps not.

I've heard many people make this complaint for a million different issues they have.

Let's not use it as an excuse.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?
Posted by YeshivaGuy - 07 Mar 2021 06:03

[bm263 wrote on 07 Mar 2021 06:00:](#)

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 07 Mar 2021 05:56:](#)

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Excuse? Not sure what excuse I was making.

I'm in a mainstream Yeshiva and my Rebbi (not the "mushy" type) discussed with us what Torah does to a person.

And I beleive shtark that to have guys learn with no understanding of what it does, is in fact a shame.

No excuses being made here buddy

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by mggsbms - 07 Mar 2021 06:05

Thanks for bringing up an important topic. I will state the simple, but its always good to review even simple truths.

Torah as the word of Hashem is the ultimate connection to Hashem and his infinite wisdom. Also connecting to chazal, and to the great torah sages throughout the generations who elevated their beings to become an expression of that infinite wisdom is also connecting to Hashem.

This connection might not be cognitive on a conscious level as tefilah and other overt expressions of closeness to Hashem, however learning Torah the right way for the right reasons elevates our whole being to that of a vessel of Hashems Torah. And ultimately has the power of reshaping us in his image. As chazal say "zoche ledvorim harbe".

"going teef teef teef trying to outdo the next guy with better svaros" is in direct opposition to the goal of gaining what we need from limud hatorah, because that is ego driven, and we are striving for the core and kernel of truth the light of Hashem in torah, not to build our self esteem through torah.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 07 Mar 2021 06:13

[EscapeArtist wrote on 07 Mar 2021 03:05:](#)

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Thanks for letting me rant.

I'm gonna do something stupid now & hit "submit" before re-reading everything I just typed to

make it more politically correct. Hope I don't join the ranks of Dr. Seuss.

I am going to tiptoe here, okay.

Firstly, you ain't the only one who feels that way. In general, something that's difficult will be even more difficult if it's meaningless as well, so it makes total sense that you feel drawn to davening and and brachos (gratitude and asking Hashem may be something you even learned in SA) because you feel a purpose in them.

So for starters, focus on what you are motivated to do and build up your relationship with through those.

There are many sources that deal with your question but one that I found very insightful is Rav Dessler in *Mabat HaEmes*, "The Truth Perspective" (chelek alef towards the beginning). Towards the end of it, he explains one of the purposes of learning Torah, I would be glad to elaborate if you are interested.

In Yeshiva they taught us that Torah is *tavlin* for the Y"H. That never did it for me, and I am guessing that won't cut it for you either. In my search for an explanation to the same question that you ask, I actually found a pshat for Torah tavlin that made some sense and it is nothing like a pill, learn Torah and the Y"H weakens. I mean, how many of us can say truthfully that this works for them. What I learned is that the Y"H comes where ever we let it in, wherever there is a void. Filling ourselves up and making sure there are no empty spaces is the proper antidote for the Y"H. While it's true that learning Torah is the ultimate thing to fill that hole, if it doesn't fill anything for you, it ain't gonna work.

One way to connect with Hashem when you are learning, is to learn out of gratitude. You already say berachos out of gratitude, most of davening is gratitude, you know the power of gratitude and how that can bring you closer to people and motivate people so how about using gratitude here also. Assuming that you know the importance of learning, *"I'm not willing to drop learning torah, as it's the foundation of our existence"* do it out of gratitude. You know it's the will of Hashem, He does so much for us, we therefor want to do His will and learn Torah.

Does that make any sense?

I too went through most of Yeshiva spending most of my time looking at the clock. I had no sense of what I was doing there other than "that's just what you gotta do". I had no sense of *chovaso b'olamo* either, which didn't help much. I feel your pain, it's murderous to try to do things that we don't understand and can't connect with.

One more thing, you have to make it a goal if you want to feel satisfaction from it. That is one of the beauties of Daf Yomi. It gives people who wouldn't necessarily feel satisfaction from learning a sugya in depth, a different kind of goal. It is one that when completed, is a huge accomplishment and gives immense satisfaction. It's the goal that drives people who otherwise would have very little interest in learning. In Yeshiva the goal is to learn and understand the sugya, to have clarity and seek the truth. Once we leave Yeshiva (and for many of us in Yeshiva as well) it becomes much more difficult to focus on this, if you can, great, if not, making goals similar to Daf Yomi can really help keep someone motivated by being a concrete goal.

Hope this makes some sense, I would love to hear your thoughts.

All the best,

Wilnevergiveup

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 07 Mar 2021 06:33

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 07 Mar 2021 05:56:](#)

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Just saying, I went through a rough time with "the system" during my Yeshiva days. I had every

reason to point fingers and it was everyone's fault except for mine (I mean that seriously). Didn't get anywhere until one Rebbe told me, "it's your life, it doesn't really make a difference who's fault it is, it's your life you've got to live so it's you who has to fix it".

Casting faults only accomplished fore frustration.

I would say that I believe in one day at a time, focus on what needs to be done today and forget about the past (for now) and focus on putting your best foot forward.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by Lou - 07 Mar 2021 06:49

I am nowhere near qualified to answer your question, but I can just share what has worked for me at times. Find a limud that you do enjoy and focus on that. It could be Halacha, Chumash, Mishnayos, Mussar, English Seforim etc. It could be more biyun or more Bekius in Gemara. Some part of Torah will probably resonate with you. Focus on that and see if you feel learning that brings you closer to Hashem.

Hatzlocha!

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by Shteeble - 07 Mar 2021 10:31

I'm basically just subscribing to this post.

There may also be some helpful info on this thread back from 2010.

<https://guardyoureyes.com/forum/2-What-Works-for-Me/76702-Tips-on-how-to-enjoy-learning-torah---the-thread>

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 07 Mar 2021 14:19

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YeshivaGuy

See Perek 19 in Nefesh Hachayim-Shaar Daled (the Targum on the zohar should be in the sefer to make it easier) where he brings the equation I brought above about encountering HaShem "Mamash, k'vyachol."

See Perek 10/11/26 where he says that/how Torah is ?????? the ??????...

See Perek 29/30 where he explains how/why Torah is greater than other mitzvos, and the affect it has on us more than other mitzvos.

See Perek 31/32 where he says Torah is ????? on all aveiros (even Kares). I beleive that the Tanya says b'feirush that Torah is mechapeir on zera levatala, but I don't recall where he says that.

These are basic Maarei Mekomos, feel free to reach out with any questions.

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Re: How does Torah Connect you to God?
Posted by YeshivaGuy - 07 Mar 2021 14:26

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 07 Mar 2021 06:33:](#)

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 07 Mar 2021 05:56:](#)

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Casting faults only accomplished fore frustration.

I would say that I believe in one day at a time, focus on what needs to be done today and forget about the past (for now) and focus on putting your best foot forward.

I wasn't coming to condemn any system or anything, especially cuz I'm not a product of "the system," though sometimes I wish I was!

I was simply pointing out a fact, which I beleive is not controversial, that if there are Jews who go many years learning Torah without having any chinuch in "the point" of learning etc, then that is a shame.

Im not getting angry, looking to cast blame, or getting stuck in any "past."

Im simply pointing out this basic fact, which I beleive, at least according to the Nefesh HaChayim, to be true.

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