The mission of **Torah Is Geshmack** is to bring out the richness and enjoyment of Torah for everyone, and in doing so bring them closer to Hashem.

תשפ״ו

Chosen Despite: The Trait Klal Yisrael Had to Master

Dovid Kopel

My Rebbe, HaRav Nochum Lansky שליט״א, says a beautiful idea. We say in דאוונען (*prayer*) on the holidays: אתה בחרתנו מכל העמים — Hashem chose us from all the other nations. If כלל ישראל were inherently better than all the other nations, would it really be a choice? No — it would simply be logical to choose the nation with the best qualities. Some nations are killers, some are robbers, and so on.

What, then, was the negative trait that כלל ישראל had? He said: they had a challenge of wanting to do more in their עבודה (*service*) than was prescribed. A similar fate led to the death of נדב ואביהוא, two of the children of אהרן הכהן, who brought an offering without permission to do so.

We must find the way to live within the confines of the law and to do what is expected of us. I once argued with a Rav about a certain topic, telling him my opinion that people did not seem to be stringent about a given concept and that I felt they should be. The Rav agreed with me, but cautioned me: "You are right, but you still need to be normal."

Especially in the ישיבה system, you need to find a balance between what you want to do and fitting in. Build relationships with good people, quality חכמים, and trust in the סייגים that help protect our עבודת השם. Try to find your flavor of עבודת השם that works for you, while still being "normal" and truly dedicating your life to עבודת השם. May you be inspired and be an איש מצליח (*successful person*)!

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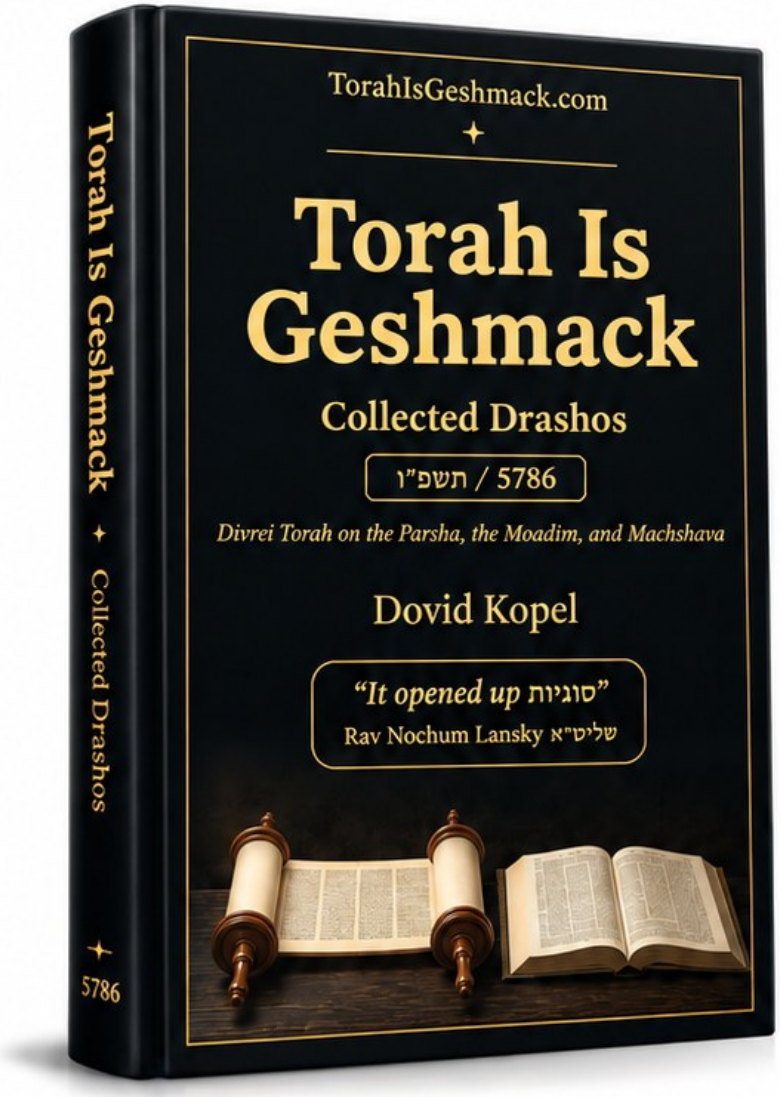
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