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

Should I Give Away Your Bed: The Steady over the Spike

Dovid Kopel

There were times in Yeshiva when I used to have a סדר very early in the morning. It was quiet. No one to disturb. Me and my coffee and קדשים, learning before Shacharis. I did this for a while. One day the Mashgiach came over to me, maybe before 6 in the morning, and interrupted my learning. He asked, just as he always did, "Dovidyl… should I give away your bed?" He didn't wait for an answer, and just walked away. I smirked and kept learning. Was this sustainable? Probably not. He was giving me a dose of medicine.

I recall another moment with the same Mashgiach. Looking back, I think it was the same point in a different form. He said to me, "Dovidyl, to die על קידוש השם — that's easy. You say ברוך שם כבוד, and you let the guy kill you, and you die a צדיק. You feel great! To live a life of Yiddishkeit — where you get up for davening and daven with כוונה, where you learn your סדרים like a mentsch — that's hard!" That stuck with me. The dramatic version always looks like the higher one. But the Mashgiach kept saying — and the bed story was just another form of the same thing — that the spike isn't the עבודה. The daily, unglamorous, sustained one is.

Can I learn eighteen hours a day? Maybe. But for how long? Being a בן תורה is not a sprint. It is a marathon. Shteiging and growing is more than your Yeshiva years — it is setting you up for the rest of your life. When you have all the טרדות (*worries and distractions*) that come with life, can you block them out and learn?

I once heard a story Rav Einstadter told when he was מספיד (*eulogizing*) a Rebbe of his. All the bochurim would come to his Rebbe during בין הזמנים (*the break*), and he would shmooze with them, ask how they were doing, chit-chat. But to Rav Einstadter, his Rebbe would say only this: "Is your learning good? Good. Then go and learn." He didn't need more than that. He valued his learning, and he valued Rav Einstadter enough to assume he didn't need the small talk.

A Rebbe knows where his talmid is holding. And part of our עבודה is to know it too. We can't hear stories of גדולים and say "I should do that," and we also can't discount ourselves and say "we are beneath that." Be real about where you are. That is itself a form of the same teaching.

And at the same time — you are spending time with your wife, with your family. Yes, say a vort. But put רבי עקיבא איגר down for a bit and give her the attention she needs. A בן תורה is more than only being שקוע (*immersed*) in his learning or rushing to the next מצוה. It is also knowing how to apply that to the right time and the right place. This is something I still struggle with. When you get into the סוגיא it isn't always easy to stop. And the opposite is true as well. Everyone has their struggles.

The Mashgiach was teaching me, in both moments, the same thing — the real עבודה is not the spike. It is the steady. Not the dramatic gesture, but the daily one. That is the part that is hard. That is the part that is asked of us. May we be זוכה to feel the elation of learning Torah and performing מצות with great alacrity, and still find a way to balance it all — because that is what a true גדול does.

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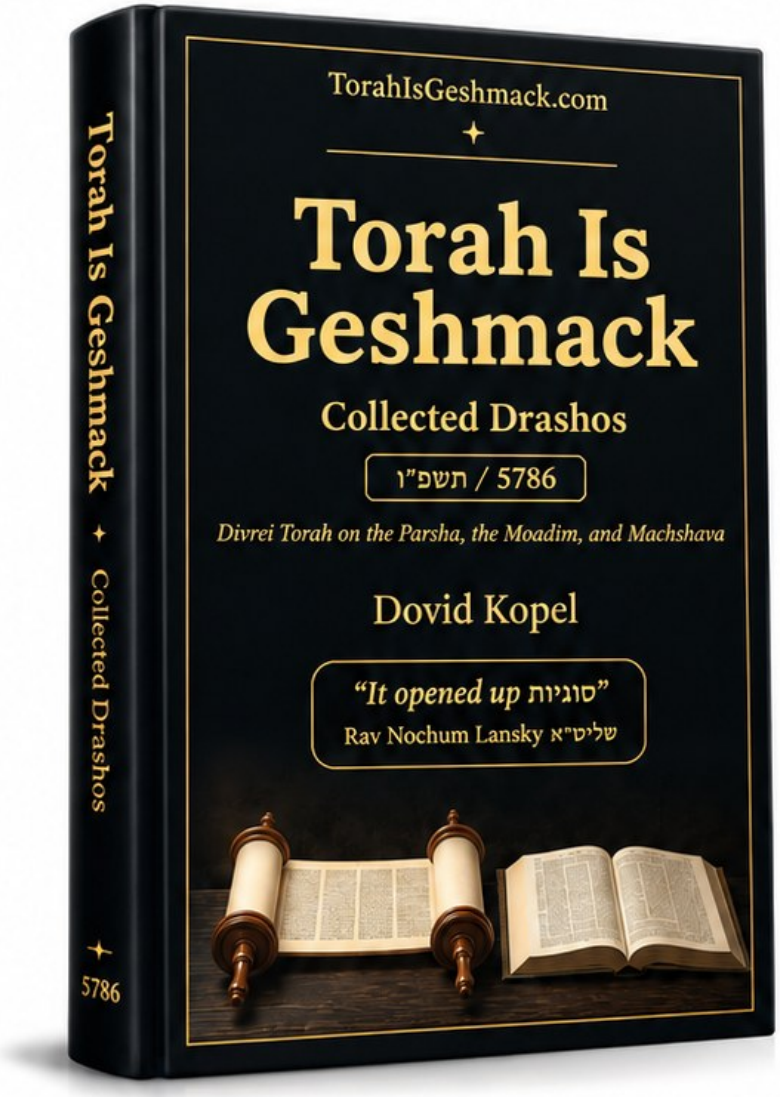
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