



Published on www.bilvavi.net

[Home](#) > 48 Ways - 012 Getting to the Truth

48 Ways - 012 Getting to the Truth

Discussing The Torah: Getting To The Truth

One of the 48 qualities to acquire the Torah is "*pilpul talmidim*" – for a teacher to discuss Torah with his students.

Why is it that "*pilpul*" is so necessary to acquire the Torah?

The Torah is called "*Toras Emes*" – the "Torah of truth". It was given to Moshe Rabbeinu at Har Sinai and passed on to his student, Yehoshua, who passed it on to the elders. Torah has to be given over in a *mesorah*, from teacher to student, because it is a "Torah of truth".

"Hashem's seal is truth", and He has placed his seal of truth on the Torah, which is *emes l'amitoh* - the perfect truth.

Searching For True Understanding, When We Learn Torah

When a person learns Gemara, what he is looking for in his learning? He must search for the **truth** in his learning.

We all understand that it is impossible to really understand the Gemara unless we exert ourselves to understand it. But the question is: what are we *searching* for as we learn? It is not enough for a person to simply try to 'understand' what the Gemara is saying and what the *Rishonim* are saying; that is certainly necessary, but it is not enough. A person has to be concerned about what the *truth* is in what he learns.

The Torah is called "*Toras Emes*". If a person doesn't seek to understand the truth in what he's learning, he is far from the true Torah, even if he works hard to understand it intellectually.

One's Torah learning is measured according to how much truth he seeks in his learning. Our soul must be searching for the truth in all that we learn. This is a way on how to view life.

Motivations In Learning

Some people learn because they want to know the *masechta* (tractate of Gemara), or because they want to learn for a certain amount of hours a day. Others want to learn the Gemara well so that they can feel like they know a part of Torah. These are all kinds of motivations that people have in learning, but it isn't enough; one has to seek the truth in what he learns, or else he is very far from

the Torah, no matter how much he learns.

Even if he finishes the *masechta* of what he's learning, he can still be very far from the Torah if he doesn't seek truth in his learning.

We must know our motivations in why we learn Torah. We aren't addressing people who learn for competition and honor. We are addressing even those who learn for better motivations, such as those who learn Torah because they want to really know it and be clear in it – that even this is not enough. A person has to undergo an internal clarification with himself and ask himself: "What is connecting me to the Torah? Why do I learn Torah..."

It is not enough for a person to know that we are *commanded* by Hashem to learn Torah. One has to know what *personally motivates* him to learn Torah. There is no one answer for all people - each person has his own personal reason of why he learns Torah.

But whatever the motivation one has in learning Torah, he should make sure that *seeking the truth* in our learning is mainly part of the equation.

The 'Torah of Truth'

When we read the words of the Gemara or the *Rishonim*, it is not enough to try and understand their words, or even to have *chiddushim*. We must get to the truth of each matter that we learn. The Torah is a "Torah of *emes* (truth)"!

When Moshe Rabbeinu broke the first set of *Luchos* after the sin of the Golden Calf, we lost the *Torah shel Emes*. In this original level of Torah, we didn't require *pilpul talmidim* (discussing it with students). Now we need *pilpul talmidim*, because since we have lost the true level of Torah, we need *pilpul talmidim* to get us back to the truth.

We can see this from the fact that there are so many ways to learn every *sugya*; there are multiple approaches to every *sugya*. This is all because we have lost the true level of Torah, which was contained in the original set of *Luchos*.

How To Seek The Truth In The Torah

What does it mean to search for the truth in Torah?

Here is an example. Let's say a person is learning the words of the *Ramban* on a *sugya* of *Gemara*. If he's simply trying to understand it – but he doesn't want to get to the truth – how does he feel afterwards? Does he feel complacent afterwards, or does he seek even afterwards to keep knowing more?

If he is really searching for the truth, he will not be satisfied even after he understands the words of the *Ramban*. He will demand for a more truthful understanding.

One of the *Gedolim* once said, "Who is arrogant enough to say that he understands what Abaye is saying in the Gemara, when Abaye himself didn't even know what he was saying...?"

When we learn the Gemara and the *Rishonim*, we must realize that the Sages were way above us, and even when we understand their words, it's only according to our limited comprehension. There is so much more to their words that we don't understand. Our comprehension is so limited. And surely when it comes to learning *Chumash*, which was written by Hashem Himself, we don't understand it! We don't understand the true meaning. If someone thinks he understands, he's totally conceited.

A person has to feel that there is always a more truthful way to understand what he is learning.

Examine Your Connection To The Torah

Let's ask a simple question. It is now the year 5773. Compared to a year ago, do you feel more connected to the Torah? Do you think you understand the Torah better now than a year ago?

It can't be, because Torah is called "an endless sea". We should not ever think that we really understand it. It's endless!

It's not enough for a person that every year, he resolves that he will keep finishing *masechtos* (tractates). This is of course commendable, but the real question is: How much have you developed an inward kind of connection to your learning?

We must keep searching for the truth - more and more. We must always search for a more and more subtle understanding in whatever we learn in the Torah.

A person needs to therefore ask himself if his connection to the Torah has grown since a year ago. We must yearn to keep finding the truth of Torah and to keep refining it.

Thus, the concept of "*pilpul talmidim*" is not just a way for us to clarify what the Torah is saying. It exists so that we can get to the truth of the Torah.

We must know what our connection is to the Torah, and if we have changed since a year ago towards the Torah. And we must ask ourselves how we will prepare for the Torah.

May we be *zoche* to the coming of Moshiach, when we will hear the Torah directly from the mouth of Hashem.

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/48-ways-012-getting-truth>