

Torah Tavlin

Posted by eerie - 04 Jun 2025 18:17

Hi there, dearest friends

I'd like to bring up a topic for discussion and share what I've found, though I know that for some this is a loaded topic.

As believing Jews, we know that the gemara says the Hashem says "I created the YH, and I've created the Torah as the antidote (debatable whether that's the correct translation) to the YH

The question many of us have is, why doesn't it seem to work for us?

Many of us have deep feelings of pain and frustration from this question, because when we did reach out to rebbeim etc, they told us to just keep learning and all would be fine. But it wasn't. And it only added to our yiush and pain. So, yes, we feel that there has to be a different system where we can help people, and BH many of us have seen great success, but the question still nags, what about the words of Chazal? Why didn't learning Torah help me?

So I'd like to share 4 points I've seen.

There was a whole discussion between Reb Itzele Peterberger and Reb Chaim, that there's another gemara, in brachois, where the gemara says that a person should learn Torah to defeat the YH, and if it didn't work, he should say Shema, and if it didn't work he should remind himself that one day we will all pass on to a different world. From this gemara it seems that Torah doesn't always help a person defeat the YH, which seems to contradict the words of Chazal that Torah is the Tavlin for the YH

1- Reb Itzele answered that Torah helps against the YH as a segula, and therefore it only works if it is learned in the perfect way, Lishma, with complete devotion, but people who are not on that level, they need the other tactics, namely, mussar.

2- Reb Chaim said that Torah helping against the YH is not a segula, it's b'teva, but he explained that Torah is only completely effective as a preventative measure, not as healing measure. And therefore, the gemara in brachois is talking about someone who already slipped in a little, and he might need other things as well

So, according to Reb Itzele and Reb Chaim, it's hard to say that just learning could help the average struggler, who has slipped in already, and might not be learning Torah in the most perfect way

3- I recently saw Reb Yitzchok Sorotzkin quote the Toras Chain that the YH of the time before Moshiach will be so strong that the Torah Tavlin will not work for it

4- In the fantastic book "Secrets of the soul", (shoutout to my dear friend who bought it for me! I wouldn't have bought it myself, but now that I have it, I loved every single word in that book. It's mamash amazing!) he explains the idea of "keep learning" the same way that we over here

usually talk to people, when we try to impress on a friend that you are not all evil just because you watched porn, your mitzvois are still mitzvois, your learning is still learning, focus on the positive within you and your actions, don't judge yourself as a terrible person just because of some poor choices, and don't stop doing the good things you were doing before. Perhaps this point was something we weren't told or we didn't understand properly

Bottom line is, keep trucking! Friends, I would be nowhere without you all!!!

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by kavey - 04 Jun 2025 19:09

Beautiful

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by yitzchokm - 04 Jun 2025 19:22

I hate to say this but for me reading Krias Shema and remembering the day I will die didn't help either. Although I was dealing with the YH, he was clothed in my mental illness of bipolar disorder so the only things that could heal me were tools in the toolbox and other tools that address my negative moods.

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by BenHashemBH - 04 Jun 2025 20:23

It hit me really hard one day. This is my life. This is the current trajectory, and I don't like where it ends. Not at all. Can I change that tomorrow, next week, perhaps next year? How? There is nothing special about tomorrow that makes it any better than today, so if I'm not doing anything

about it today, chances are I could do nothing about it forever. That's no good. So, I internalized that today is yesterday's tomorrow. If not now, then perhaps never. I didn't know what I was capable of doing (I still don't, and probably never fully will), but nothing was no longer an option. Like ODAAT, today I need to change, and tomorrow, and the day after. Each day matters in its own right.

BezH I want to have a full life, one that won't meet its end too full of regrets. I want to stand knowing that I didn't passively let life continue to play itself out, that I made a conscious decision to grab the reigns and attempt to direct what is within my ability to control--me.

The day of death motivates me out of the fear of regret, but it also motivates me to do something that allows me to fear that day less. Almost, I can look forward to looking back on trials and triumphs.

Kol Tov

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by alex94 - 04 Jun 2025 22:30

Personally, the challenges that were underlying my difficulties with lust, were also making it very hard for me to positively engage with and enjoy learning, and I therefore couldn't access the great potential for connection and strength against the yetzer attained through learning.

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by azivashacheit101 - 05 Jun 2025 13:31

For myself and others with an addiction level of acting out the answer is pashut, we have a mental illness and the healing (12-Steps) isn't even about stopping to act out but about dealing with the underlying issue that causes us to act out. Torah Tavlin is talking about the YH for normal people.

For those with underlying emotinal issues also the main problem is what is causing them to act

out once they deal with that then Torah can work on the regular YH.

In addition Rav Shlomo Wolbe ZTZ"L, would say that Torah Tavlin only works when learning (or doing) six of the following types of torah on a consistent basis.

The six are:

1. Learning beiyun
2. Learning bekiyus
3. mussar
4. Halachah
5. tefillah
6. I don't remember forsure the last one if someone knows please correct me, but I think it's chumash (maybe shnayim mikrah)

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by chosemyschem - 05 Jun 2025 21:41

An interesting point. Perhaps a better question than answer.

But I'll share this thought that hit me over shavous. Idk if it's true, but it seems correct.

Lulei Torascha Shashui Az Avadati B'unyi.

The difference between me and my friends who went off the derech in their teenage years likely boils down to two things. 1) I had a better relationship (not perfect, but better) with my parents. 2) I enjoyed learning, and they did not.

I liked what I was doing in the beis medrash, and even though I was also drawn to all sorts of stupid things I was willing to try to make the beis medrash come out on top. They didn't particularly care for learning, and so there was no competing pull stopping them from being

pulled after all the fascinations in the world.

That enjoyment of learning is a total gift from Hashem. It's not something I worked on or cultivated, just a natural inclination. But it's something I have to be very grateful for, because I know where'd I'd be without it.

And, scarily, I'm seeing now what is happening to my friends who don't particularly have an interest in learning. They made it through yeshiva frum, but don't spend a whole lot of time (if any) learning. They spend it on netflix, probably. That's a totally different life with a totally different trajectory.

My relevant point is this. Torah tavlin isn't a silver bullet to the yetzer hara. Torah has that aspect too - mushchuhu l'bais hamedrash chi chi wa wa etc. But generally Torah is a way of life. Torah is the key to a life connected to Hashem, and connecting to Hashem is the way to be free of the yetzer hara. Attach yourself to it and you'll escape the yetzer hara. But it's not guaranteed to be a quick an easy process. It's one step forward and then perhaps many steps back.

No one said climbing the etz hachaim is simple. But it's the way out of the pit.

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by frank.lee - 08 Jun 2025 09:00

May I suggest for those who are not learning, and did not get a geshmak from learning, to try MDY, Daf Yomi with Reb Eli Stefansky? Sign up for the new mesechta and you can get a free Gemara! I signed up to them from someone here in GYE who mentioned it. And it changed my life.

Go to joindafyomi.com

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by upanddown - 09 Jun 2025 23:54

@eerie - Thank you for this important topic.

@chosemyshe - Your post is spot on!!

Just to share a few thoughts I've had on this topic:

1. Many of us are begeder ???? ???.

The degree of temptation and shmutz that we are exposed to nowadays is not the "normal" YH that has been lingering around for the past many years. It is on a level where a) we are brainwashed with false ideas and b) we so easily become addicts to some extent. See the Rambam (???? ????? ?-?) where he compares mental health to physical health. The Torah teaches us "the golden middle way", how to live and maintain a balanced lifestyle. This only works for healthy-minded people who live in a healthy society. In our generation we often need some extra help to get out of our bad traits, just like we take medicine for a physical illness.

2. We are simply not learning the way we are meant to.

a) Many people don't learn in a way that suits them. When a person truly connects to his learning, it occupies his mind, satisfies his Neshomo and subdues the YH. (Both natural and Segulah)

b) Learning just a few blatt Gemara in an entire winter Zman does not do the job. Learning 30+ Dafim does. One feels a tremendous ????? and has less interest in what the the YH has to offer.

Just a little 'hack'... : Of course there is so much good that one gains from the Yeshiva years; however, the Yeshiva system is a "one size fits all" system. Not many Magidei Shiur actually try to guide each and every talmid individually to discover the style of learning that suits him. There is an emphasis on Iyun, Imdes, Shiurim etc., but not so much on being ???? ????? with ??? ??????. I personally discovered my way of learning only after the Yeshiva years and have ??? been able to feel the ?????? ????? and to feel a tremendous ?????. As Chosemyshe said: it's a gift from Hashem.

It is so upsetting though, to see how many people have completely left learning just because they didn't feel the ?????? of learning Torah. If only they knew that they can also feel it; it is not

their problem – they simply did not fit in to the mainstream learning style. If only they had been guided to learn with a Hespek, or Halachah orientated, they would be Torah-dik Balabatim.

3. We are actively pursuing the free life... ??????? ?????

I know it's wrong. I know it's assur. I know I shouldn't be doing this behind closed doors... I am aware it's not befitting a Ben-Torah... But still.... I want the free life. Billions of people are doing what they like... so why can't I?? I want to be ????? ???... I am not interested in what the Torah has to offer.

When this is what drives me, then I am not even allowing the Torah to enter the picture, so how should the Torah affect my life??

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by yitzchokm - 10 Jun 2025 17:03

I was learning Torah earnestly the right way with a lot of Hasmada and possibly even Lishma but it didn't help because I was dealing with negative moods due to bipolar disorder. At least in my case Torah wasn't the solution.

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by someone123 - 10 Jun 2025 19:15

I'm adding a quote from ??? ? of the Mesilat Yesharim:

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?????? ?? ?????? ([????? ??? ?, ?](#)): ????? ?????? ????? ???????, ??????? ?? ????? ????? ??, ????? ??
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[?, ?](#)): ?????? ??? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????....

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I emphasized the part which I think is most important for this topic. According to the Ramchal, Torah tavlin doesn't mean that it's some time of magic that as long as you learn Torah you won't have any YH and won't have any battles. Rather, learning Torah is what gives you the motivation to want to be on a better path, it's what gives you the motivation to want to make changes. You learn the way that we're supposed to act according to the Torah based on the positive commandments, negative commandments and also in general the Hashkafa of the Torah and based on that we know what's allowed, what's forbidden and that's what build our drives in life, based off of the Torah.

According to that I think for all of us the Torah really is the tavlin. It 's what makes us get up in the first place and want to make a change.

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by chancyhk - 10 Jun 2025 19:25

Thankyou Reb Eerie for opening this important discussion.

Einiyim came out with a wonderful kuntres for Chanuka.

They discuss this question at length. Its well worth a read or two.

In my extremely humble opinion, and ive seen a few people say the same thing. Its about learning with your whole mind and body. Sweating, yelling, getting lost in it, if you do that, Torah will slowly take over a bigger and bigger part of your brain. Ive seen it happen many times with people i know closely.

Get into a serious chabura, make a commitment, learn and chazer, and fill yourself with the Hieliga Torah

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Re: Torah Tavlin

Posted by yitzchokm - 03 Jul 2025 15:31

??? ??? ??? ????? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ?????? ?????? ??? ????? ?? ?????? ????? ?????? ?? ?????

Rashi is going according to Rav Yosef who holds that a Mitzvah is ???? ?????, but I quote it to explain that ???? means from the Yetzer Horah. According to the Gemara learning Torah only protects a person from the Yetzer Horah while he is learning but not afterwards.

This option is mentioned in the distraction tool in the toolbox. The sefer [???? ??????](#) in the library says that if you can't learn then distracting yourself through something else will also work and in the distraction tool many other options are given aside for learning Torah. There might still be reasons why Torah learning works better like for instance that Torah purifies the heart. I think this Gemara is the answer to why many of us haven't found the Torah to protect us because we were sinning while we weren't in the process of learning. The distraction tool says that we have to give learning our full attention and we must enjoy learning for it to work.

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