

“Remember the days of yore, understand the years of generation after generation; ask your father and he will relate it to you; your elders and they will tell you.” (32:7)

argum Yonasan interprets this *pasuk* as a reference to listening to *daas Torah*, the Torah's perspective, as expounded by our *gedolei Yisrael*, Torah leaders. The answer to all of our questions is in the

Torah. A *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar, using his acutely "Torah- developed" mind, is able to render a response to our every issue, regardless of its mundane nature. Torah encompasses every aspect of our lives. We should look to it and its disseminators for guidance.

Nachlas Tzvi cites a powerful story that illustrates the incredible depth of *daas Torah*: The story is about a young man who was *chozer b'teshuvah*, one who returned to the faith of his ancestors, at the urging of his friend who had also recently become a *baal teshuvah*. One day, three months after he had become a *baal teshuvah*, he was riding a bus when an Arab bomb went off on the bus, killing him instantly. His friend, who was instrumental in bringing him back to *Yiddishkeit*, was doubly distraught: first about his tragic death; and also about what he should tell the parents of the deceased. A tragedy of such magnitude is difficult enough for the believer to confront, let alone a secular Jew who surely had not agreed with his son's recent discovery of Torah Judaism.

He decided to go to *Horav Chaim Kanievski, Shlita*, one of the pre- eminent sages of our generation, whose encyclopedic knowledge of every area of Torah made him a prime expositor of *daas Torah*. "What should I tell the parents?" asked the young man of *Rav Chaim*. The sage responded, "Tell them that in truth their son was actually supposed to die three months earlier. It was only in order to give him the chance to return to Torah that his life was extended."

While this may have been a solid response, the young man feared that this answer would not be adequate for his friend's secular parents. When he came to be "*menachem aveil*," comfort the mourners, he was immediately accosted by the father, "Why did this happen to my son? I thought that by becoming observant, he would be rewarded. Truly his premature death is far from rewarding." The young man gathered together his courage and said, "Sensing your question, I took the liberty of speaking to *Horav Chaim Kanievski*, who told me that your son had been granted three more months of life only to give him the opportunity to be *chozer b'teshuvah*." Expecting to be showered with abuse, he was shocked when the father stood up and said, "It is true. It is true. Three months ago when my son was still in the Israeli army, his platoon decided to make a surprise military strike into Lebanon. My son wanted to go on this mission. The sergeant, however, was adamant for some reason that he not go. My son begged and pleaded, to no avail. Because of his rejection, he decided to leave the Army, a decision which was the beginning of his three-month odyssey to Torah observance. Everyone who went on that ill-fated mission was killed. Had my son gone, he probably would have been among the fatalities. Yes, indeed, I believe that he was saved

so that he could perform *teshuvah*. Blessed be Hashem's Name!"

There is nothing to be added to such a poignant story other than to say that it is but one of a myriad of instances that illustrate the depth of insight of our *gedolei Yisrael*.