

So now, write this song for yourselves. (31:19)

Chazal derive from the above *pasuk* that each Jew is commanded to write a *Sefer Torah* – or, at least, participate in the writing of a communal *Sefer Torah*. As this is the last of the 613 *mitzvos*, we glean from here that the entire Torah must be recorded for the purpose of knowing and understanding its *mitzvos*. Without learning, there can be no knowledge; and, without knowledge, there can be no observance; and, without personal observance, we have nothing to transmit to the next generation. Why is the *mitzvah* to write a *Sefer Torah* enjoined to the individual as if to say that each and every Jew must write his own personal Torah scroll? This is ostensibly not a simple undertaking.

The **Melitzer Rebbe, Shlita**, explains the underlying lesson to be derived from this *mitzvah*. It is quite common in *frum*, observant, circles that a boy/son who is born into an observant home will usually go to the right day school/*cheder*, followed by *yeshivah/kollel*, thus allowing him to follow the prescribed path delineated for the Torah Jew. From the cradle throughout his life, this young man complacently follows the pattern set forth for him by his parents, *rebbeim*, community. Born *frum* – lives *frum* – it should be sufficient. No. Hashem wants effort, excitement, enthusiasm in *frumkeit*. Complacency means that one acts by rote, without meaning. Furthermore, posits the *Rebbe*, such observance will not ensure that the tradition will be transmitted to the next generation. When parents carry out their religious observance because “that is the way I was raised,” it is quite possible that their children will not feel it necessary to raise their children in a similar manner, because they themselves have had little to no feeling *vis-à-vis* observance. When a son sees his father go to *shul* as if it were a funeral which he has to attend: entering late; barely *davening*; remaining long enough so that he can have breakfast with the *kiddush* club – is it any wonder that the son does not value *davening*?

Each and every Jew is enjoined to write his own *Sefer Torah*, to add to what his parents taught him, to innovate, to do more, act better, achieve greater heights in *Yiddishkeit*. Which father does not want to see his son overtake him spiritually? To write one’s own *Sefer Torah* requires commitment and money. One must be willing to spend. In order to have this attitude, one must appreciate the value of the *mitzvah*. This can only occur if he observes his parents’ willingness to spend for Torah. If a son grows up in a home where education takes precedence over the mundane and material expenditures which are currently the vogue, then he will follow suit and commit to a life of Torah values. Otherwise, his life will be one long cruise, in which glorifying the physical and venerating material excess is the new value system for determining success – and *frumkeit*.

Only one who appreciates and loves Torah to the point that it becomes the centerpiece of his life will write his own Torah, act in a manner that demonstrates that his religious observance is not something he inherited, but a life that he has chosen for himself.