

The start of the secular New Year is commonly a time for making resolutions for individual betterment in the year to come. Why not incorporate more Judaism into your New Year's resolutions?

One easy resolution that you can make is to Study Torah on Saturdays with the Rabbis. Studying Torah offers something for everyone.

Why study Torah?

1. "Torah study is regarded as the most important of all mitzvot, because it opens the door for observance of the other mitzvot. As the Talmud says: "The study of Torah is equal to the sum total of all other mitzvahs" (Shabbat 127a)."
2. "Study of Torah is a specific mitzvah in Deuteronomy 6:7 (which we recite daily in the Shema): "You shall teach them diligently to your children" - which directs us to transmit Torah to the next generation... "and you shall speak of them (words of Torah) while you sit at home, while you walk on the way, when you go to bed and when you get up" - which directs us to study the Torah ourselves. This need to devote ourselves to knowing the Torah, to work at it, to strive to comprehend it, to give it first priority - is repeated over and over again throughout the Bible..."
3. "Our history demonstrates that the moment study of Torah is neglected, assimilation of the Jewish people into its surroundings makes its inroad. Without fail, every Jewish community in history that did not teach and study Torah as its first priority gradually disappeared from the scene."
4. "Beyond all the good, rational reasons, Torah is the mysterious bridge which connects the Jew and God, across which they interact and communicate, and by means of which God fulfills His covenant with His people to sustain them and protect them."
5. "It is therefore no surprise that Torah study is so central with us. It is the first blessing a newborn child receives: "May he grow up to Torah, to the wedding canopy, and to good deeds." The prayer book is filled with petitions to God to help us understand His Torah. No wonder Rabbi Akiva in the Talmud states that to expect a Jew to live without Torah is like expecting a fish to live without water. That's because the fact is that the Torah is the essence of the Jewish people, our very life and soul, and without it we literally have no existence."
6. "When we study Torah, we are not studying an abstract and arcane text of the ancient world. We are studying the way in which God wants us to live on this earth... (We) are in fact engaged in discovering the essence of Judaism, which is to say, the essence of ourselves."
7. "Torah study is the single most satisfying endeavor that a Jew can undertake. Torah reveals to us 'the mind of God,' and contains the deepest secrets of the universe."

Please join us for a Torah study class and get yourself some of this awesome pleasure.

Shabbat Shalom and Happy Secular New Year!

Rabbi Koas