

Torah On One Foot

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Take This To Heart

Sometimes the Torah uses language that is beautiful, poetic and profound. Most would agree that Moses' explanation of the laws of Judaism in Deuteronomy 30:12-14 is inspiring: "Surely this teaching is not in the heavens, that you should say, 'Who among us can go up to the heavens and bring it to us, that we may do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who among us can cross to the other side of the sea and get it to us, that we may observe it?' No, the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart."

While at the other times, the language of the Torah is stark, matter of fact, even blunt. Take this week's Torah reading, *M'tzarah* (Leper), for example. Here we learn in no uncertain terms about who or what is considered pure or impure. These ancient rules can seem jarring, harsh and less than compassionate. At that time, healing was more of an art than a science. But the desire to heal was as clear then as it is now.

Sometimes we just need to shift our focus and pay more attention to the positive. Blu Greenberg writes that we need to "restore that element of holiness to our bodies and ourselves." The Torah portion speaks about people who are suffering and in need. All of us are vulnerable at times and everyone faces adversity. How we accept our challenges speaks to who we are as individuals. And how we embrace those who are in need defines who we are as a community. May our actions be a source of inspiration as well as pride.