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# **Pathways in Torah**

***Learning, but also Learning How to Learn***

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***The first truly skills-based program for adults***

***seeking to deeply understand***

***and experience the wisdom,***

***beauty and joy of Torah learning.***

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# Pathways in Torah



A renaissance of Torah learning has blessed our generation! More Jews are learning Torah today than ever before: synagogue programs, community programs, one-year programs, school programs for parents, daf yomi programs, internet programs – all provide a plethora of opportunities for the spiritually hungry. More Jews are learning Torah today – but few are learning how to learn Torah!

The “Pathways in Torah” Program of Bonayich Educational Services has come to fill this need. In convenient learning packets which merge

traditional and internet modalities, “Pathways in Torah” is the first truly skills-based program for adults seeking to deeply understand and experience the wisdom, beauty and joy of Torah learning...

“Pathways in Torah” presents the various disciplines of Torah learning from a perspective of the specific skills required for independent study of the discipline. Study areas include:

- Mikra (Bible)
- Mishnah and Torat HaTannaim
- Talmud
- Halachah
- History
- Midrash and Aggada
- Jewish Thought and Faith

Step by step, skill by skill, through a defined and transparent scope and sequence, “Pathways in Torah” allows each learner to acquire the skills to feel at home in learning!



Each skills unit includes:

- primary sources which underpin the skill being studied
- thought and review questions for mastery of the material
- evaluations to enable learners to verify their accomplishment
- convenient answer keys to allow participants to check their own progress.

All this, and more: “Pathways in Torah” provides email access to program writers to enable participants from around the world to receive ready answers to the questions that always arise, and monthly internet broadcasts further augment the study.



On the following four pages, please find example pages from two of the booklets already available, and on the back page of this brochure, a full listing of the booklets for the study of Mishnah, Torat HaTannaim and Talmud.



“Pathways in Torah” is written, produced, distributed and managed by the master educators of Bonayich Educational Services, famous for their curricula in Mishnah and Talmud for schools and yeshivot. Now, every adult can benefit from their experience and expertise!

“Pathways in Torah” is published in series of booklets, each series dealing with one Torah discipline, which may be acquired individually or in full series, weekly, monthly or in whatever learning cycle fits the participant. The booklets are easy to read and absorb, and are equally appropriate for individual and chevruta learning, or for synagogue or community adult education group learning.

For more information, and for subscriptions, please contact:

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Clear markings of section divisions and numbering of sources for easy reference.

**E The Source of the Cantillation Marks**

After learning the types of the cantillation marks, and their various purposes, we will now clarify the source of the marks. From where were these marks derived?

We will learn two opinions about this among the Sages of Israel.

SOURCE 6

*Talmud Bavli, Massechet N'darim, page 37b*

אָמַר רַב אֵיקָא בְּרַ אָבִין אָמַר רַב חֲנַנְיָא אָמַר רַב:  
 מֵאֵי דְכִתְיִב: (נְחֻמְיָה ה) "וַיִּקְרָאוּ בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים מְפֹרָשׁ וְשׁוּם שְׁכָל וַיְבִינּוּ בְּמִקְרָא?"  
 "וַיִּקְרָאוּ בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים" - זֶה מִקְרָא,  
 "מְפֹרָשׁ" - זֶה תַּרְגּוּם,  
 "וְשׁוּם שְׁכָל" - אֵלּוּ הַפְּסוּקִים,  
 "וַיְבִינּוּ בְּמִקְרָא" - זֶה פְּסוּק טַעֲמִים.

Primary sources for study of skills

Questions for thought and review

26. Does this source give us the source of the cantillation marks?

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Relating to this discussion in the *Talmud*, several early Sages made the following remarks:

SOURCE 7

*Machazor Vitri<sup>2</sup>, Section 120*

וְשִׂאֲלֶתֶם אִם אָסוּר לְנַקֵּד סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה.  
 סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה שְׁנֵתָן לְמִשָּׁה בְּסִינֵי לֹא שְׁמַעְנּוּ בּוֹ נְקוּדָה, וְלֹא נָתַן נְקוּדָה בְּסִינֵי,  
 כִּי הַחֲכָמִים צִינּוּהוּ לְסִימָן, וְאָסוּר לָנוּ לְהוֹסִיף מִדְּעַתְנָנוּ, פֶּן נַעֲבֹר בְּ"בַל תוֹסִיף".  
 לְפִיכָךְ אֵין נוֹקְדִין סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה.  
 וְאִף עַל פִּי שְׁנֵתָנוּ פְּסוּקֵי טַעֲמִים וְנִגְיּוֹת הַקְּרִיאָה מִסִּינֵי בְּמִסְרַת,  
 כְּדִכְתִּיב (נְחֻמְיָה ה) "וְשׁוּם שְׁכָל" וְגו',  
 עַל פֶּה נְאֻמְרוּ, וְלֹא בְּסִימָנֵי נְקִידָה בְּסֵפֶר.

Identification of sources and their significance.

27. What is the question that was sent to Rabbi Simchah from Vitri?

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<sup>2</sup> This is a prayerbook with *halachot* and customs of prayer, written by Rabbi Simchah from Vitri, a student of Rashi. He lived in France, and died in the Jewish year 4865.

**Source Translations**

Sources #1- #5 are to be learned in their original text, since the point of their study here is the placement of the cantillation marks on the original Hebrew text.

Source #6

**Talmud Bavli, Massechet N'darim, Page 37b**

Rav Ikka bar Avin said in the name of Rav Chananel who said in the name of Rav:  
 What is the meaning of what is written: (Nechemiah 8):  
 "And they read from the book of the law of God, interpreted, explained, and they caused them to understand the Mikra"?  
 "And they read from the book of the law of God" – this means Mikra.  
 "Interpreted" – this means Targum (translation).  
 "Explained" – these are the individual verses.  
 "...caused them to understand the Mikra" – this means the cantillation marks.

Source #7

**Machazor Vitri, Paragraph 120**

Regarding your questions about vocalization of a *Sefer Torah*:  
 The Torah given to Moshe at Sinai was not vocalized, because it was the Sages that instructed us to mark the text, and we may not add to the Torah anything of our own, lest we transgress the prohibition of "*bal tosif*" – not to add to Torah. Therefore, we do not vocalize the *Sefer Torah*.  
 And even though the division into verses, the cantillation marks and the melodic inflection were given from Sinai on tradition, as it is written: (Nechemiah 5) "*v'sum sechel*," etc. - That was as oral tradition, and not with the markings in the book.

Full answers to all questions in a special answer booklet with each unit!

24. In verse 15, the *t'lisha k'tana* together with the *kadma v'azla* after it, together with the *shalshelet* at the beginning of verse 16, create the feeling that Lot is hesitating in his departure from the cities, and that he was really not so happy to leave. In distinction to Lot, the messengers are pushing him to hurry up, since the destruction is imminent, and if he doesn't run he may perish with the cities. These marks give us a live rendition of what's going on.

25. The words "וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׂתּוּ וַיִּקְמוּ וַיִּלְכוּ וַיִּבְזוּ" are all verbs. The cantillation marks used here give us a feeling of quick rhythm, without hesitations with marks with a long melody. This is an expression of the coarse behaviors of Esav, as he tramples anything in his path without regard or sensitivity. Coarse eating, drinking, then getting up and leaving without regard for the values of the first born rights he has sold.

26. Yes, from the verse in Nechemiah we learn that the cantillation marks are from the Torah, from Sinai.

27. They asked him if it is permitted to vocalize a *Sefer Torah*, or perhaps it must be left without vocalization.

28. In his opinion, the marks are from Sinai.

Clear markings of section divisions and numbering of sources for easy reference.

Full translations of sources

## B The Ongoing Revelation of Torah Sheb'al Peh

Already in the days of Moshe Rabenu, the process of *Torah Sheb'al Peh* was anchored in Divine command:

Primary sources for study of skills

Questions for thought and review

SOURCE 1

*Deuteronomy, Chapter 17, Verses 8-11*

(ח) כי יפלא מִמְךָ דְבַר לְמוֹשֵׁפֶט בֵּין דָם לְדָם בֵּין דִין לְדִין וּבֵין נָגַע לְנָגַע  
 דְּבַר רִיבַת בְּשַׁעֲרֶיךָ  
 וּמִקְמֹת וְעֵלִית אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה' אֱ-לֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ:  
 (ט) וּבָאתָ אֶל הַפְּהִנִים הַלְוִיִּים וְאֶל הַשֹּׁפֵט אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בְּיָמֵיכֶם הֵמָּה  
 וְדַרְשֶׁתָּ וְהִגִּידוּ לְךָ אֶת דְּבַר הַמִּשְׁפָּט:  
 (י) וְעָשִׂיתָ עַל פִּי הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר יִגִּידוּ  
 (יא) עַל פִּי הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר יִרְוֹךְ וְעַל הַמִּשְׁפָּט אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרוּ לְךָ תַעֲשֶׂה  
 לֹא תִסּוּר מִן הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר יִגִּידוּ לְךָ יְמִין וּשְׂמָאל:

### Source Translations

#### Source #1

- (8) When you have a legal problem, whether in capital, monetary or ritual matters, a dispute in your communities, you should go up to the place that *HaShem* your God shall choose.
- (9) And you should come to the *Kohanim*, the *Levi'im*, and to the judge that will be in your day, and ask your question, and they will tell you what the law is.
- (10) And you shall do what they tell you, from the place which *HaShem* shall choose, be very careful to do whatever they teach you.
- (11) You shall do what they will teach you, and judgement they gave you. Do not turn aside from what they tell, to the right or to the left.

Full answers to all questions in a special answer booklet with each unit!

### Answers for unit 2.5

1. Decisions in halachah in the High Court in Jerusalem
2. This shows the authority of the judges, and the backing of *HaShem* for the process of law by them. The judges are acting to connect and implement the eternal Torah to the reality which changes here on earth. This is a divinely mandated process.
3. The judges would decide on their own. This is why the verses repeat the admonition to listen to whatever the judges say.
4. To emphasize that the foundation of social stability is trust in the legal system and its authority.
5. The legal system would collapse, and with it, all of society. The *Torah* hints at this by saying to go to the judge "that will be in your own day."
6. Mount Sinai. This shows that the continuity of *Torah Sheb'al Peh* was already part of the original revelation at Mount Sinai.
7. The crowns symbolize that the processes of *Torah Sheb'al Peh* are rooted in the *Torah Shebichtav*.
8. From Moshe's time to Rabbi Akiva's time, the *Torah Sheb'al Peh* developed to such an extent that it was already very different from what was in the time of Moshe.
9. Rabbi Akiva's words were based on all the stages of the development of *Torah Sheb'al Peh*, which is based on what was given at Sinai. All of his innovations were based on the methods of the *Torah Sheb'al Peh* in the interpretation of *Torah Shebichtav*.
10. Moshe realized that everything had evolved from what he received at Sinai.
11. The processes of *Torah Sheb'al Peh* are rooted in the original revelation from Mount Sinai, and constitute an unbroken chain of tradition.
12. The answer depends on the student, but should include the thought that the main principles and values don't change.

## Skills for Mishnah, Torat HaTannaim and Talmud

### Series 1 – Introductory Skills in Torah Shebichtav:

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- 1.4 Torah Shebichtav: Cantillation Marks and their Significance
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- 5.4 Three Functions of Shakla V'Tarya in Amoraic Sugyot
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