

כן צוברות

OUR CONVERSATION

A Journal of Women's תורה Insights

Introduction

We are all familiar with the structure of the רש"י שיחות רבי: a number of questions on רש"י's commentary are posed and then the רבי brilliantly resolves every difficulty. However, what if the שיחה ended with the questions and you had to come up with the answers? On שבת פרשת וישב תשמ"ד, the רבי asked a number of questions on a רש"י at the farbrengen, but he gave no answers. When no one sent in any answers the following week, he made an announcement that the weekly שבת farbrengens would pause for three weeks until שבת מברכים פרשת וירא when he repeated the questions again. That week, hundreds of people submitted answers: men, women and children.

The רבי's intention was clear. When you are responsible to uncover something new in תורה it is the most powerful motivation to learn— and it makes it your own. As חסידים of the רבי, we were not meant to be passive recipients of his תורה, but rather to learn from the רבי to see the תורה the way he does. The inclusion of women in this process was initiated already by the רבי פריערדיקער in his instruction to the Riga women's group, אחות התמימים, that they should develop תורה essays reflecting on their learning in their own voice with their own thoughts. Thus, when establishing נשי חב"ד, ובנות חב"ד, the רבי noted that the women should produce publications on תורה topics to inspire fellow Chabad women, their own sons and daughters, and the broader Jewish People.

Alongside the practical motivation and excitement of developing your own exposition of ideas in התורה פנימיות, there is a spiritual significance to this process. Revealing something new in תורה through your own efforts reveals the "בלי גבול" nature of the תורה— that it can be unfolded infinitely. In addition, when a person innovates something new, this is a revelation of their own unique essence. It allows a person to reach beyond their conscious powers and tap into a deeper, more essential connection to the נשמה. When we do this, we tap into the state of גאולה, when the "ומלאה הארץ דעה את ה'." Therefore, the רבי taught that in this auspicious time preceding the גאולה, every איד has a חיוב to produce תורה חידושי.

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Batsheva Learning Center invites you to contribute to our inaugural journal of women's תורה scholarship. This publication aims to showcase original insights that demonstrate how פנימיות התורה—the inner dimension of תורה—illuminates and enriches our understanding of Jewish texts and tradition.

We seek essays that combine rigorous scholarship with creative insight, demonstrating the unique relationship between the mystical and philosophical dimensions of תורה and its revealed, legal dimensions.

Selected submissions will undergo multiple rounds of editorial review and refinement before publication.

Submission Guidelines

Length:

1,000-3,000 words

Sources:

Include at least 5 primary sources

- Minimum of 2 sources from נגלה (e.g. גמרא, מדרש, ראשונים, אחרונים, פרשנות)
- Minimum of 1 source from חסידות
- Additional sources as needed from any תורה tradition

Methodology:

Incorporate explanations from at least two dimensions of תורה interpretation (such as דרוש, רמז, פשט, or סוד) in addition to the mystical/chassidic perspective and showcase the added value and synthesis the חסידות insight provides.

Submit a full list of sources and citations along with your essay.

What We're Looking For

Original תורה scholarship that:

- Identifies a meaningful question or issue in any area of תורה study
- Brings classic sources and explanations from חז"ל
- Demonstrates how חסידות adds an essential dimension to our understanding of תורה, as explored in the Four Principles below

Your essay should reveal how the teachings of חסידות don't merely add another layer of interpretation, but illuminate what was always present in the revealed תורה, creating a unified understanding that transforms both comprehension and practice.



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Four Principles of פנימיות התורה

This year's journal theme is inspired by the Lubavitcher רבי's essay קונטרס ענינה של תורת החסידות, which explores the unique contribution חסידות brings to all facets and explanations of תורה, using מודה אני as a case study. Over the course of the essay, four principles about the unique value and contribution of חסידות emerge. We envision the essays published in our journal as showcasing additional examples of how these same four qualities of חסידות are revealed in diverse areas of תורה.

In addition to looking over the four principles below, we highly recommend learning קונטרס ענינה של תורת החסידות for both a deeper understanding of these principles as well as an example of this methodology at play.

Principle 1: Transcending Categorical Limitations

Classical תורה interpretations typically fit into one of the following four categories:

- פשט: Plain textual meaning
- רמז: Symbolic interpretation and allusions
- דרוש: Homiletical narrative and analysis
- סוד: Kabbalistic and mystical explanation

חסידות reveals essential principles that transcend these categorical boundaries.

In your essay:

Identify the interpretive framework(s) within which your traditional sources operate, and demonstrate how your insight from חסידות transcends these methodological limitations.



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Principle 2: Revealing Underlying Unity

Traditional sources addressing the same topic may appear disconnected or even contradictory when viewed through their respective frameworks. חסידות reveals the essential unity underlying diverse interpretations.

In your essay:

Demonstrate how your insight from חסידות provides the unifying principle that integrates disparate sources into a cohesive whole.

Principle 3: Illuminating Latent Depth

חסידות does not introduce foreign ideas into תורה—it reveals dimensions that were always implicit within the revealed תורה. Traditional sources are illuminated when their deeper essence comes to light.

In your essay:

Demonstrate how your insight from חסידות was already implicit in the traditional sources, showing how the same texts are transformed when their essential depth is perceived.

Principle 4: Practical Application as Ultimate Revelation

Torah wisdom is not merely an intellectual pursuit—its essence is revealed through its transformative impact on lived experience. The deepest understanding of any teaching from חסידות manifests in concrete behavioral and experiential transformation.

In your essay:

Articulate the specific practical implications of your insight. How does this understanding address real spiritual or ethical challenges? What concrete changes in consciousness, behavior, or spiritual practice does this insight necessitate?

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Evaluation Criteria

Essays will be evaluated on:

Content & Scholarship

- Mastery and accurate representation of sources
- Depth of understanding of both נגלה and פנימיות התורה
- Originality of insight—offering new connections or addressing questions in fresh ways

Practical Impact & Relevance

- Addressing authentic questions or challenges
- Concrete rather than abstract applications
- Demonstrating genuine transformation of understanding or practice
- Natural integration of concept and application

Demonstration of Principles

- Successfully showing how פנימיות התורה permeates while remaining distinct
- Identifying formal limitations and demonstrating transcendence
- Linking traditional sources through essential insight
- Illuminating revealed תורה without contradiction
- Revealing essence through practical application

Structure & Clarity

- Logical organization and flow
- Clarity in explaining complex ideas
- Quality of writing: grammatically correct, engaging, accessible to educated readers

Selection Process

- Initial review by the editorial board for fit with journal vision and basic requirements
- Content consultation for selected submissions
- Development and revision process
- Copyediting and final polish
- Publication

Selected authors will work with our editorial team through multiple drafts to ensure the highest quality final product.

Questions & submissions should be emailed to:
journal@batshevalearningcenter.com

Timeline

Submissions accepted on a rolling basis through August 17, 2026

Notifications regarding initial selection:

September 7 2026

Development & revision:

October - November, 2026

Final publication:

י"ט כסלו תשפ"ז