


# Limitless: Möbius Torah 2.0

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## Möbius Torah Directions:

1. Print this page out on Ledger (11x17) sized paper. This will ensure it is big enough to read.
2. Cut out the table below.
3. Fold along the dotted line with the writing facing outwards.
4. Bend Paper into a circular shaped cuff.
5. Tape the ends to create a möbius strip as in this picture to the right.
6. As you learn it turn it and turn it again because there is no beginning and no end to learning Torah.
7. Alternatively you can just learn the text without the arts and crafts project, but that would not be as much fun.



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<p><b>בְּרֵאשִׁית, בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים, אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ.</b>  <i>B'reshit Bara-</i> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)</p> <p>☞ With these words we begin the Bible, and in the instructions for the yearly <i>Bikurim</i> ceremony of the first fruits offerings the Torah also uses the term <i>reshit</i> which does not mean beginning but rather “first of a yearly cycle” (Exodus 34:26 &amp; Deuteronomy 26:2)            ☞ Perhaps this is a way of re-reading Rashi’s first question, “Why begin with <i>B'reshit</i>”...and not B'Chatchala- at the start. Rashi’s answer “God wanted to show the strength of his ways”- <i>Reshit</i> is <i>Ein Sof</i>, timeless -a cycle without beginning or end.</p>	<p>And the Lord God commanded the man, saying: 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it; for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.' (Genesis 2:16-17)</p> <p>☞ In the Garden of Eden, the man had no limits, except for not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It seems that our nature to strive to be limitless, but it is this very innate drive that brings death.            ☞ The definition of our humanity is our being limited by our mortality. What are the implications of this for our morality?            ☞ How do limits, both mortal and moral, help us create meaning in our lives?</p>	<p>“<i>Atem nitzavim</i>- You are all standing this day before the Lord...” (Deuteronomy 29:9)</p> <p>☞ Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch understands <i>nitzavim</i> - standing to come from the word <i>matzevaha</i> - headstone or everlasting memorial. Here at the end of the Torah Moshe is explaining that he was about to die, Joshua who will succeed him will also die, but the people of Israel will last forever. The end of the Torah invites us as its beneficiaries to start the cycle anew.            ☞ Rabbi Hillel said, “Do not say when I free myself of my concerns, I will study,” for perhaps you will never free yourself.” (<i>Avot</i> 2:4)            ☞ What is the connection between our own headstone and our connecting with the everlasting learning of the Torah?</p>	<p>That which has been is that which shall be, and that which has been done is that which shall be done; and there is nothing new under the sun. (<i>Kohelet</i> 1:9)</p> <p>☞ The <i>Sfat Emet</i> suggests that while there may not be anything new below the sun, there are constantly new things above the sun in heaven, in the spiritual realm.            ☞ In what ways have we experienced any things new or spiritual?            ☞ Albert Einstein said, “Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former”            ☞ What are the connections between our limitations, our experience of the infinite, and our spiritual experiences?</p>
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<p>The <i>Ari z"l</i> understood that God’s being was <i>Ein Sof</i> without end or limit. God filled everything, hence for creation to happen there needed to be <i>Zimzum</i>- an act of God contracting, diminishing as it were God’s presence, to make room for the world to come into existence. In order to “create” God had to limit God’s presence.            ☞ Is the world Godless?            ☞ Did God contract to allow us to be Godly in our creating in the world?            ☞ In what ways do we create by doing <i>Zimzum</i>?</p> 	<p>These are the things that have no measure: <i>Peah</i> [corner of the field left for the poor], <i>Bikurim</i> [First-fruits offerings], the Pilgrimage appearance-sacrifice, acts of kindness, and the study of the Torah... (<i>Mishna Pe'ah</i> 1:1 )</p> <p>☞ Some commentators link the <i>reishit</i> of first fruits and the <i>reishit</i> of Bereishit. In some ways, it was for this Reishit moment of bringing first fruits was the Bereishit, the creation of the world            ☞ It what ways might these actions help us continue the work of creation?            ☞ God is described as being <i>Ein Sof</i>- without end. Might doing these these actions that have “no measure” help us emulate the <i>Ein Sof</i>?</p>	<p>...Alone is God, there is no second, Without division or ally; Without beginning, without end, To him is the power and sovereignty. The Lord is my God, my living redeemer. Rock of my affliction in time of trouble. God is my banner and refuge. Filling my cup the day I call Into God’s hand I place my soul. (Solomon ibn Gabirol)</p> <p>☞ This poem is called “<i>Adon Olam</i>- Master of the world”. <i>Olam</i>- world is connected to the word <i>Ne’elam</i> -that which is absent . How do these two words and the poem itself capture the essence of the <i>Ein Sof</i>-God’s limitlessness ?            ☞ The poem refers to our <i>sof</i>- end/mortality being in the “hands” of the <i>Ein Sof</i>- immortality of God .            ☞ What is the connection between faith, trust, belief, and sacrifice?</p>	<p>Ben Bag Bag would say: <i>hafuch bah v hafuch bah, d’kulah bah</i>- Turn it and turn it, for all is in it; see with it; grow old and worn in it; do not budge from it, for there is nothing better. (<i>Avot</i> 5:21)</p> <p>☞ Just as we do on Simchat Torah, we turn this very page and start again. This möbius strip insures that the Torah has no end or no beginning. The Torah is the Tree of Life and learning it helps us reach beyond our mortality to something beyond limit, our morality.            ☞ Every year we read the Torah and we find that it is immutable, but we most certainly do change. As we go through the Torah this year we should pay attention to how our reading of the Torah evolves with us.</p> <p><b>חזק חזק ונתחזק</b>            Be strong, be strong and let us summon our strength-</p>
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