

A שמחת תורה דבר תורה, a beautiful story which I'm sure you will appreciate. This is from Rav Kormornick's second sefer of A Short Vort. The Homiler rav was dancing in shul on שמחת תורה. He noticed a group of boys outside, watching through the window, envy obvious on their face. This sight distressed him because he knew that these boys had never received a Torah education because they came from extremely poor families. Their days were spent working in order to put food on their family table. [We said this before and I'll say it again, we don't know how lucky we are to live here. We take our ישיבה education for granted. We take our parents able to supply our needs for granted. אוי. We should only appreciate it for one moment.]

With joy, the רב came out of the shul to speak to the boys and he said, "Did you know that on שמחת תורה, there are two חתנים? There's a חתן תורה, and there's a חתן בראשית. The חתן תורה makes the last ברכה of the entire Torah because we're finishing it. The חתן בראשית makes the first ברכה on the Torah because we're starting the Torah again. We understand why we celebrate with the חתן תורה. He just finished the whole Torah, and we're joining him in his happiness after a year of learning. But what is the חתן בראשית celebrating? What is he happy about? The answer is, even though he has finished nothing, he has made a resolution to start, and that is worth celebrating just as joyously." The Homiler rav then asked these boys if they would be willing to start learning Torah and start their Torah journey. They said, "Yes!" Listen to this.

The rav learned with these boys every day from 3:00 a.m. until 7:00 a.m. Pause. Think about that. After which time they went off to work. And that was the beginning of a ישיבה known as תפארת בחורים.

As we approach שמחת תורה, we should certainly feel great delight over the Torah we have learned over the past year. But we too should be excited over what we are committing ourselves to learn for the year to come. Even if we know we could have achieved more with our time this past year, we can and should commit on this very special day to push ourselves harder. And with that determination, we will have even more reason to celebrate.

