



# La'asok be'divrei Torah - Customary Blessing before Torah Study

נִדְהָאֲתַבְּתִי תוֹרַתְךָ כָּל־הַיּוֹם הִיא שִׂיחָתִי:

*Oh how I love your Torah! It is my meditation all the day. - Psalm 119:97*

IT IS CUSTOMARY to recite a blessing before engaging in *Talmud Torah* - the study of the Torah. In the following blessing, note that the word *la'asok* means to engage, or to immerse oneself (it comes from the Hebrew root which means “busy”). This blessing, then is about 'busying' ourselves with the study of Torah, taking heed of God's instruction for our lives:



**Transliterated:**

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר

a-sher ha-'o-lam me-lekh e-lo-hey-nu Adonai at-tah ba-rukh  
who the universe king (of) our God Lord are you Blessed

קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ, וְצִוָּנוּ לְעַסּוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה.

to-rah be-div-rei la-'a-sok ve-tsi-va-nu be-mits-votav ki-de-sha-nu  
of in the to engross and in His has sanctified  
Torah words ourselves commanded us commandments us

***Blessed art thou, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who sanctifies us with Thy commandments and commanded us to engross ourselves in the words of the Torah.***

*Barukh attah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher kiddeshanu be'mitzvotav, ve'tzivanu la'asok be'divrei Torah.*

**Note:** The sages ask why the word *la'asok* (לְעַסּוֹק) is used rather than *lomed* (to learn, to study) in this blessing. Why not say, ... *ve'tzivanu lomed be'divrei Torah*? They answer that while not everyone has the time or energy to study the Torah as implied by the word *lomed* (לִוְמַד), everyone can attend to, be engaged in, be immersed with, and otherwise be busy in matters of practicing the Torah... Hence, *la'asok*!