Torah Repair Project

The Mitzvah

The last mitzvah of the Torah is that everyone shall write for themselves a sefer Torah, as it says in Deuteronomy 31:19, Kitvu lachem et haShira hazot. While this may not be practical for most people there are other ways that this mitzvah can be performed. By commissioning a sofer to write a Torah on one's behalf is one way, but this too may not be practical as it could be very expensive. However, through writing or fixing just one letter in a sefer Torah one has fulfilled their obligation of this mitzvah.

The History

In 1911, a new shul was established in Ottawa's centre town called Bnai Jacob. It was located at 54 James Street and the shul was affectionately called James. By 1969, the membership was dwindling and it was getting difficult for the shul to get a minyan. The future was looking bleak for the James Street shul. A group of families moved west to start a new shul. Originally in the founding member's basement, then in a pizza shop on Merivale road, Young Israel found its permanent home on Kirkwood Ave in 1967. By 1971, Bnai Jacob closed its doors and amalgamated with Beth Shalom. A sefer Torah was given to the young and thriving new shul. For many years the Young Israel enjoyed the use of this Torah. Unfortunately, over the years due to use and handling and even changes in room temperature the Torah became pasul, unfit for use. The Torah is estimated to be over 80 years old.

The Halacha

The halacha says that if a Torah cannot be fixed it should be buried. The halacha also says that a pasul Torah should be fixed within 30 days of finding an error or some other problem that has made it unfit for use.

The Opportunity

Fortunately, this Torah is fixable. Young Israel is currently going through some tough financial times. In order for the shul to continue with its new rabbi and offer weekly kiddushes and programs and pay its bills, the shul needs money. An opportunity has presented itself to fix this Torah and at the same time raise money for the shul. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate in this double mitzvah of writing a sefer Torah and helping the financial stability of the shul. Letters, words and verses can be purchased in honour or in memory of loved ones or to mark a special occasion. See the price list below.

Our Rabbi

Our Rabbi Tanger among his many talents is also a qualified scribe. He with a team of helpers will work diligently over the next few months to repair the Torah. Our goal is to complete all the necessary work on time for Shavuoth when we will have a dedication ceremony.

Trivia

There are approximately 340,000 letters in a Torah.
There are approximately 80,000 words in a Torah.
There are approximately 5845 verses in a Torah.
There are 669 Parshiot in the Torah. A Parsha is a section of the Torah that runs from one blank space of 9 letters to the next blank space of 9 letters. These blank spaces are usually represented by the letter peh or samech in a chumash.
There are 54 Sedrot in a Torah of which one is read every Shabbat.

The Price List

Letters $18.00
Words $36.00
Verses $50.00
Parshiot $100.00
Sedrot $250.00
The Shira $500.00
Aseret HaDibrot (Yitro) $500.00
Aseret HaDibrot (Vaetchanan) $500.00
Parshat haMan (Segula for Parnasa) $500.00
Mantel (for year round) $1200.00 Includes embroidered inscription
Mantel (white for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur) $1200.00 Includes embroidered inscription
Belt/Gartel $75.00 Includes inscription
Silver yad/pointer $300.00
Silver Breastplate $1000.00
Silver Crown $2000.00

Conclusion

Help us connect the past to the present and to the future. By participating in this project not only will you be fulfilling the 613th mitzvah of the Torah, you will also be preserving a piece of the past and helping the future of our shul