

Ben Zoma said, “Who is wise? The one who learns from everyone, as it is said [in Psalms 119:99], ‘From all who would teach me, I have gained understanding.’”

Pirkei Avot 4:1 (2nd Century CE)

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ  
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְעֶסֶק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה**

### Alternatives

Blessed are You, God,  
Ruler of all, Whose  
mitzvot add holiness  
to our lives and Who  
gave us the mitzvah to  
study Torah.

Brucha Aht Shechinah,  
Ruach HaOlam, who  
makes us holy through  
Your commandments  
and commands us to  
engage in the study of  
Torah.

***Baruch atah Adonai, eloheynu melech ha'olam,  
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vetzivanu la'asok  
bedivrey Torah.***

***Blessed are you Adonai, our God Sovereign of the  
universe, who makes us holy through mitzvot, and  
instructs us to engage in the words of Torah.***

### Translation is about making meaning

“... the artistry of the Hebrew Bible, whose full colors and intricate patterns and designs we can never see in full, especially as they have faded under the accumulations of theological and historical readings. And the task of restoring those original colors and shadings — their nuances — is, I believe, still incomplete.”

–Robert Alter



### We make our own meaning

“When we understand the meaning of a religious text in and for its time, we are freer to take the text and apply it to our own time. Seeing how particular sources answered the religious needs of some people in the period in which they were written allows us to look at contemporary needs and to interpret for today.”

–Judith Plaskow