



Videographer Mark Goldberg's self-described mission in life is to use technology to make the world a better place.

Another installment tackles the basics of *kasbrut*, Jewish dietary laws. What makes a kosher pickle ... kosher? Fair question from Mr. Bogart, and they are off to the races. Isn't kosher just about health concerns that no longer apply? What is the spiritual significance?

The rabbi gets the lion's share of camera time, but Bogart makes an able foil, posing earnest questions and intelligent concerns.

"It's not like we close the discussion like a Hollywood movie, with a happy ending," Rabbi Weisblum says.

The back-and-forth between rabbi and host is fundamental to the producer's vision. "The second person is there to bounce ideas off the rabbi. It's in the tradition of argument or debating that comes from the Talmud," Goldberg says.

"I feel that I am doing something that helps to bring value to the world."

— Mark Goldberg

The show has been drawing 50 to 200 views per episode, a satisfactory figure for Goldberg, who says for now he would be happy just to reach Kneseth Israel members. With the global reach of the Internet, though, he says he is eager to see whether "TorahTalk's" innovative format can eventually draw a larger audience.

In the meantime, each episode is helping to fulfill his personal ambition of making his profession as a videographer more than just a case of lights-camera-action.

"My mission in life," Goldberg says, "is to use video technology to make the world a better place." JT

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stands in striking contrast to Rabbi Weisblum, a 14th-generation rabbi in business attire. Yet the two share the screen in seven-minute installments, engaging lively discussion over the practical and spiritual significance of the week's Torah portion.

They don't quite spar, but neither do host and guest shy away from tough questions. In one installment, they take a hard look at *Parsha Ki Tetze* (Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19). If a man is being attacked and his wife defends him, and in defending him she grabs the opponent's genitals, her hand should be cut off.

The man with the tattoos seems skeptical about the severity of the rule. The rabbi responds that the Torah comes in two pieces, a written Torah handed down at Sinai, and an oral tradition evolved among the rabbis over centuries. You can't have one without the other, he explains.

The two bat it around, exploring in 4:48 minutes the significance of the combined traditions. "It was an avenue for us to have an argument or discussion about the written versus the oral Torah, so you see both the Orthodox and non-Orthodox views," says Rabbi Weisblum.

That approach, coming at a topic from two ends of a spectrum, is integral to the intention of "TorahTalk," the rabbi says.

"It's not intended for religious people, it's not intended to reach out only from the Orthodox perspective," he says. "It's for people who are not *shul*-goers, who may be unaffiliated, but who still want to have a real discussion about the Torah."

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