

# Luach & Lumud

PERSONAL  
TORAH STUDY

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AUGUST 1995



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ה' אב - ה' אלול תשנ"ה

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תורה ומצוות

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לעילוי נשמות

*Luach & Limud Personal Torah Study*  
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of its founder and first chairman

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**TUES./AUGUST 1/5 AV**

יום ג' לַפְּרָשֶׁת דְּבָרִים, ה' אָב

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:6*

אבות ה:ו

עֲשָׂרָה דְּבָרִים נִבְרָאוּ בְּעֶרֶב שַׁבָּת בֵּין הַשְּׁמָשׁוֹת, וְאֵלוֹ הֵן:  
פִּי הָאָרֶץ, וּפִי הַבְּאֵר, וּפִי הָאֶתוֹן, וְהַקֶּשֶׁת, וְהַמָּן, וְהַמָּטָה,  
וְהַשְּׁמִיר, וְהַכְּתָב, וְהַמִּכְתָּב, וְהַלּוּחֹת. וַיֵּשׂ אֹמְרִים: אֵף  
הַמְּזִיקִין, וְקְבוּרָתוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה, וְאֵילוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ,  
וַיֵּשׂ אֹמְרִים: אֵף צֶבֶת בְּצֶבֶת עֲשׂוּיָהּ.

Ten things were created on Sabbath eve at twilight, and they are: The mouth of the earth; the mouth of the well; the mouth of the she-ass; the rainbow; the manna; the staff; the *shamir*; the letters; the writing; and the tablets. And some say: Also the harmful spirits, and the burial place of Moses, and the ram of our father Abraham. And some say: Also the tongs made with tongs.

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

**Ten things were created on Sabbath eve at twilight** – on the first Friday, at the completion of the Creation of the world, **and they are:** 1. פִּי הָאָרֶץ **The mouth of the earth** – that swallowed Korah and his congregation (*Num. 16:32*); 2. וּפִי הַבְּאֵר **the mouth of the well** – which supplied Israel with water in the wilderness (*Ex. 17:6*), being the well of Miriam that accompanied Israel throughout all their wanderings in the desert (see *Num. 21:16-18*); 3. וּפִי הָאֶתוֹן **the mouth of the she-ass** – of Balaam; it was then decreed that it would speak to him (*Num.*

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לזכר נשמת

צביה בת נפתלי זאב, ע"ה

**CELIA DWORKEN, A"H**

**In Memory of our Beloved  
Mother and Grandmother**

— *Rabbi and Mrs. Steven M. Dworken  
Nomi, Aliza and Arye*



## TUES./AUGUST 1/אב' ה'

22:28); 4. והקשת **the rainbow** – in the cloud, as a sign of the Covenant that there would not be another flood (*Gen. 9:13*); 5. והמן **the manna** – that came down to the Israelites for forty years in the wilderness (*Ex. 16:15*); 6. והמטה **the staff** – of Moses with which he performed the wonders (*Ex. 4:17*). 7. והשמיר **the shamir** – (a miraculously endowed worm – tr.) used for cutting the building stones of the Temple and for engraving the precious stones of the High Priests's breastplate and *ephod* (vest-like garment) as noted in the *Baraita (Sotah 48b)*: "These stones (that were in the breastplate and *ephod*) are not to be inscribed with ink, as it is written (*Ex. 28:11*): 'the engravings of a signet,' and they are not to be carved with a chisel, as it is written (*ibid. 28:20*): 'in their (full) settings,' but they are inscribed with ink and displayed to the *shamir*, and they split of their own accord, like a fig that splits open in the summer without suffering any loss, or like a valley that splits apart during the rainy season without sustaining a loss; 8. והכתב **the letters** the characters inscribed upon the tablets (*Bartenura*); 9. והמכתב **the writing** – i.e., the text, as recorded (*Ex. 32:16*): "and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tablets." *Bartenura* explains that this could be read from all four directions. Others maintain that *mikhtav* refers to the stylus with which the commandments were engraved on the tablets. According to *Rambam*, *hak'tav (the letters)* refers to the Torah, written by God, whereas *hamikhtav (the writing)* refers to the shape of the characters written on the tablets; 10. והלווחות **and the tablets** – the first set of tablets of which it is written (*Ex. 32:16*): "And the tablets were the work of God." Our Sages explain (*Avot de Rabbi Natan Chapt. 2*): "This means that the tablets were inscribed and set aside as from the six days of Creation; but the second tablets were hewn by Moses, as it is written (*Ex. 34:1*): 'And the Lord said unto Moses: Carve yourself two tablets of stone like the first.'"

## TUES./AUGUST 1/ אב' 1

ויש אומרים **And some say: Also the harmful spirits** – the ghosts and demons were created on the first Friday at dusk; **and the burial-place of Moses** – as it is written (*Deut. 34:6*): "and no man knows of his sepulchre;" **and the ram of our father, Abraham** – which was destined to be caught by its horns in the thicket at the Binding of Isaac at dusk on Friday (*Gen. 22:13*).

ויש אומרים **And some say: Also the tongs made with tongs** – seeing that tongs can only be made with the aid of an already existing tool, for holding the white-hot iron and beating it with a hammer into the required shape, who then made the first pair of tongs? It must have been made by Heaven (see *Pes. 54a*), and that took place on Friday at dusk. *Rambam*, in his commentary on the Mishnah, writes "All miracles were integrated into the nature of the elements from the six days of Creation; and why were these ten (miracles) singled out (in the Mishnah)? Know, that in specifying these ten, the Mishnah does not intend to tell us that the other miracles were not introduced into the constitution of the elements during the six days of Creation; rather it tells us that these (ten) alone were made at dusk on Friday, while the other miracles and wonders became part of the nature of the elements at the very time of their creation. Thus, on the second day, when the waters were divided, nature was so conditioned that the Sea of Reeds would split for the sake of Moses, and the Jordan for Joshua and thus for Elijah (*II Kings. 2:8*) and for Elisha (*ibid. 14*); and on the fourth day, when the sun was created, its nature was so conditioned that it would stand still at the appointed time at the behest of Joshua ("Sun, stand still upon Gibeon; and you Moon, in the valley of Ayalon" – *Josh. 10:12-13*). And the same applies to the other miracles, except for these ten, which were assimilated by the nature of the elements at dusk." This notion is intimated in the words of Rabbi Yehonatan (*Bereshit Rabba 5:4*): "At creation, God

## TUES./AUGUST 1/אב' ה'

stipulated with the sea that it would split apart before Israel, and thus it is written (*Ex. 14:27*): "and the sea reverted לאיתנו *le'aitano* – to its strength" i.e., לתנאו *litna'o* – to the (Divine) stipulation placed upon it. Rabbi Yirmiyah ben Eleazar said: Not with the sea alone did God set such terms, but with everything that was created in the six days of Creation, as it is written (*Is. 45:12*): "I, even My hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I *commanded*" – I *commanded* the sea to be sundered before Israel; I *commanded* the sun and the moon to stand still before Joshua. I *commanded* the fire not to harm Hananyah, Mishael, and Azariyah (*Dan. 3*), and the lions not to hurt Daniel (*ibid. 6*), and the fish to spew out Jonah (*Jonah. 2:11*).

*Hameiri* comments: The ten things enumerated in the Mishnah are crucial to the national existence and prosperity of the Jewish people and the integrity of its faith; but for these, there would be no basis for this creed, which is the ultimate goal of Creation and the Universe. The term *twilight* denotes that our traditional faith is anchored in the very act of Divine Creation. Thus, the reference to *the mouth of the earth* signifies belief in the punishment of the wicked; *the mouth of the well* expresses belief in the reward of virtue, these being fundamental doctrines of our Torah; *the mouth of the she-ass* illustrates the full story of Balaam wherein, were it not for Divine providence, Israel would have perished, as it is written (*Micah 6:5*): "O My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised... that you may know the righteous acts of the Lord," i.e., that you may recognize God's saving grace throughout Jewish history; *the rainbow* symbolizes the impending doom of mankind in the generation of the Flood but for the intervention of Divine Providence, *the manna* represents Israel's evident dependence on God for the uninterrupted supply of food in the wilderness during forty years of wandering; *the staff* recalls the signs and wonders which God

## TUES./AUGUST 1/אב' 1

performed in Egypt, without which Israel would never have been rescued from Egypt, but would have assimilated and absorbed their (pagan) culture; *the shamir* represents the whole building of the Temple, which served as the focal institution of our faith; *the letters* and *the writing* refer to the alphabet and the language which are essential to the national community, without which no communication or action would be possible; *the tablets* represent the giving of the Torah, which harbors the totality of the Divine purpose. *And some say: Also the harmful spirits* symbolizing the evil inclination which, in its proper context, is essential to the survival of the world, as our Rabbis noted (*Bereshit Rabba* 9:2): "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good – this points to the evil inclination without which the world could not exist; *and the burial-place of Moses* which was kept hidden to avoid dangerous consequences, as explained in the Midrash; *and the ram of Isaac* – this recalls the saving of Isaac, so that Israel may survive as a blessing upon the earth. Finally, the author of this Mishnah reflects upon the subject of the crafts that serve mankind, wherein the tongs represent the basic equipment without which it would be difficult to produce any kind of iron ware.

**O**ne year when the second day of Rosh Hashanah fell on Friday, the *gabbaim* of R' Yisrael Salanter's *shul* came to him and asked, "Rabbi, which of the *piyutim* may be skipped so that the people can prepare for Shabbos?"

"They may all be skipped," replied R' Yisrael, "including *U'nesaneh tokef*. The only exceptions are the *piyutim* in *Malchuyos*, *Zichronos*, and *Shofaros*." The *gabbaim* wondered why those *piyutim* were different. "Because they are said silently," explained R' Yisrael, "and give the *chazan* time to rest."



**WED./AUGUST 2/6 AV**  
**יוֹם ד' לַפְּרָשַׁת דְּבָרִים, ו' אָב**

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:7*

אבות ה:ז

שְׁבַע דְּבָרִים בְּגֵלָם וְשִׁבְעָה בְּחָכְמָם. הַחֲכָם אֵינוֹ מְדַבֵּר בְּפָנָיו מִי שֶׁהוּא גָדוֹל מִמֶּנּוּ בְּחָכְמָה; וְאֵינוֹ נִכְנָס לְתוֹךְ דְּבָרֵי חֲבֵרוֹ; וְאֵינוֹ נִבְהַל לְהִשְׁיב; שׁוֹאֵל כְּעֵינָן וּמְשִׁיב כְּהִלְכָה; וְאוֹמֵר עַל רֵאשׁוֹן רֵאשׁוֹן וְעַל אַחֲרוֹן אַחֲרוֹן; וְעַל מָה שֶׁלֹּא שָׁמַע אוֹמֵר: לֹא שָׁמַעְתִּי; וּמוֹדָה עַל הָאֲמָת. וְחִלּוּפֵיהֶן בְּגֵלָם.

Seven things characterize a boor, and seven a wise man. The wise man does not speak before one who is greater than he is in wisdom; he does not interrupt the words of his fellow; he is not hasty to answer; he asks what is relevant and answers according to *Halakhah*; he speaks on the first point first and the last point last; concerning that which he has not heard, he says: I have not heard; and he confesses to the truth. And the opposite of these is the mark of the boor.

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

*There are four types of defective characters: the ignoramus – bur, the empty – rek, the unlearned – am ha-aretz, and the boor – golem. (1) The bur has no redeeming virtues, is devoid of intellectual and moral qualities, and potentially he is like a s'deh bur, a wasteland that cannot produce a crop even when sown, in the absence of prior cultivation. This is the meaning of the statement: "An ignoramus cannot fear sin" (above Chapt. 2:5). (2) The rek, whilst inherently capable of moral attainment, has not learned nor been trained, just like a ploughed field which, had it been sown, would yield a harvest. (3) The am ha-aretz's main preoccupation is with the needs of society, in the realm of trade and commerce, etc. whereby he acquires the conventional norms of behavior and social intercourse, but he lacks Torah and general intellectual refinement. (4) The golem has studied, and has undergone moral and intellectual training, though imperfectly and unsystematically. Hence, he is unable to apply these correctly. He is thus called a golem, a term applied to a vessel which, whilst fully formed, lacks the finishing touch to be properly useful (Hameiri, Rambam). Our Mishnah defines the difference between a hakham and a golem.*

**Seven things characterize a boor, and seven a wise man** – "Since the state of boorishness precedes that of wisdom chronologically, the Mishnah

opens with *Seven things which characterize a boor*. However, when listing the distinct qualities of each it begins with the wise, since he represents the goal, wherefore it is proper to enumerate his characteristics first" (*Tosefot Yom Tov*).

1. החכם **The wise man does not speak before one who is greater than he in wisdom** – thus Eleazar and Itamar (*Lev. 10:16-19*), did not speak before their father when Moses reprimanded them (*Bartenura; Biurei Hagra*); 2. ואינו נכנס **He does not interrupt the words of his fellow** – but listens patiently to his words without butting in, as it is written (*Sifrei, Beha'alotkha*): "What do we learn from the exclamation 'Hear now My words' (*Num. 12:6*)? That they wanted to break in upon the words of God, whereupon the Lord said to them. Wait until I have spoken! From this we learn that a man should not interrupt the words of his fellow"; 3. ואינו נבהל **He is not hasty to answer** – but first considers the words of the questioner, so as to know what to answer him, as Elihu ben Barakhel the Buzite said (*Job. 32:11*): "Behold, I waited for your words, I listened for your reasons"; 4. שואל כענין **He asks what is relevant and answers according to Halakhah** – he asks concerning the subject under discussion, whereupon he receives a pertinent reply from the master (*Bartenura*). Thus Rabbi Hiyyah said to Rav: "When Rabbi (the compiler of the Mishnah – tr.) deals with the present tractate, do not ask him concerning another tractate" (*Shab. 3b*). Others comment: the wise man answers correctly and does not stubbornly uphold mistaken theories for the sake of argument (*Hameiri*); 5. ואומר על ראשון **He speaks on the first point first and the last point last** – if asked two or more questions, he answers them in their consecutive order. Thus when Eliezer asked Rivkah: "Whose daughter are you? Tell me, I pray, is there room in your father's house for us to lodge in?" (*Gen. 24:23*), she answered him in the proper order: "I am the daughter of Betuel... We have both straw and

provender enough, and room to lodge in" (*ibid.*); 6. ועל מה שלא שמע **Concerning that which he has not heard** – (by tradition – tr.), **he says: I have not heard** – when advancing his own solution to a problem, he does not claim to have received it from his masters so that it might gain acceptance, but admits saying: "This is my own viewpoint and reasoning; I did not receive it from my masters" (*Hameiri*); 7. ומודה **And he confesses to the truth** – if his friend disagrees with him, he does not insist on his opinion by quibbles and fallacious arguments in order to score a point. Rather he acknowledges the truth and is not ashamed to admit: I erred! Thus, when Moses took issue with Aaron on a point of ritual, he accepted the latter's pleading, as it is written (*Lev. 10:20*): "And when Moses heard that, it was well-pleasing in his sight." Our Sages comment: He admitted his error, and instead of pleading: 'I had not heard it,' he was not ashamed to admit: 'I heard it, and forgot' (*Zev. 101b*).

*Tiferet Yisrael* explains the logical order in which our Mishnah arranges the qualities of the wise man. 1. Prior to being addressed, *he does not speak before one greater than himself*; 2. In the course of being addressed, *he does not interrupt the words of his fellow*; 3. At the end of the address, *he is not hasty to answer*; 4. But when he, in turn, opens his mouth *he asks what is relevant and answers according to Halakhah*; 5. When he expands upon his ideas, *he speaks on the first point first, etc.*; 6. When unsure of his ground, he says: *I have not heard*; 7. When at the close of his deliberation his companions disagree with him, *he agrees to what is true*.

וחלופיהו **And the opposite of these is the mark of the boor** – who parades his thoughts before one who is superior to him in wisdom; interrupts the words of his fellow; is hasty to answer; etc.

**THURS./AUGUST 3/7 AV**

יום ה' לַפָּרָשֶׁת דְּבָרִים, ז' אָב

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Devarim

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

*Avot 5:8*

אבות ה:ח

שְׁבַע מִיַּגֵּי פְרַעֲנוּיֹת בָּאִין לְעוֹלָם עַל שְׁבַעָה גּוֹפֵי עֲבָרָה: מִקְצָתָן מְעַשְׂרִין וּמִקְצָתָן אֵינָן מְעַשְׂרִין – רָעַב שֶׁל בְּצֻרַת בָּא; מִקְצָתָן רָעִבִים וּמִקְצָתָן שְׁבַעִים. גָּמְרוּ שְׁלֵא לְעֵשֶׂר – רָעַב שֶׁל מְהוּמָה וְשֶׁל בְּצֻרַת בָּא. וְשְׁלֵא לְטוֹל אֶת הַחֲלָה – רָעַב שֶׁל כְּלָיָה בָּא. דְּבַר בָּא לְעוֹלָם – עַל מִיתוֹת הָאֲמוֹרוֹת בְּתוֹרָה, שְׁלֵא נִמְסְרוּ לְבֵית דִּין; וְעַל פְּרוֹת שְׁבִיעִית. חָרַב בָּאָה לְעוֹלָם – עַל עֲנוּי הַדִּין, וְעַל עוֹת הַדִּין, וְעַל הַמּוֹרִים בְּתוֹרָה שְׁלֵא כְהִלְכָה.

Seven kinds of punishment come upon the world for seven categories of transgressions: When some give tithe and some do not give tithe, a famine due to drought ensues: some suffer hunger, while others have their fill. When all resolve to withhold the tithes, famine due to turmoil and drought ensues. When all resolve not to separate *hallah*, an all-consuming famine ensues. Pestilence comes upon the world for death penalties pronounced by the Torah, whose execution, however, is beyond the competency of a human court; and for the abuse of the produce of the Seventh year. The sword comes upon the world for the delay of justice, and for the perversion of justice, and because of those who interpret the Torah not according to *Halakhah*.

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*Our Mishnah enumerates various kinds of grave calamities,*

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לזכר נשמת

צבי הערש בן הלל בודק, ע"ה

**HARRY BODEK, A"H**

הלל בן צבי בודק, ע"ה

**HILLEL BODEK, A"H**

— מאת המשפחה —



## THURS./AUGUST 3/ז' אב

*which come upon the world as Divine retribution for severe transgressions, on the lines of measure for measure.*

שבעה מיני **Seven kinds of punishment come upon the world for seven categories of transgressions** – according to *Midrash Sh'muel*, *goofei averah* means cardinal and grave transgressions. Others maintain that our Mishnah deals with sins of the community, which are more severe than those of the individual: for unlike personal error, the established trespasses of the community assume tangible form, that of *goofei averah* (*Be'er Avot*).

מקצתן מעשרין **When some give tithe and some do not give tithe** – on their produce in order to render to the Levites and priests the portions due to them, **a famine due to drought ensues** – when rains are rare, and the scanty produce is available only at exorbitant prices, **some suffer hunger, while others have their fill** – measure for measure. In the words of our Sages (*Shabbat* 32b): "Through the sinful neglect of *terumot* and tithes, the heavens are restrained from pouring down dew and rain, high prices prevail, wages are lost and people seek a living but fail to attain it."

גמרו שלא לעשר **When all resolve to withhold the tithes** – as ordained in the Torah; **famine due to turmoil and drought ensues** – in addition to drought, the upheaval or war is also inflicted and, in the resultant panic, agricultural activity ceases and all are stricken with hunger. Alternatively, *mehuma*, "turmoil", denotes that those who eat fail to be satisfied (*Rashi*). The Midrash comments (*Bereshit Rabba* 40): In the time of Elijah there was famine due to drought; but in the time of Elisha there was famine due to turmoil.

ושלא לטול **When all resolve not to separate hallah** – a portion of the dough due to the priest, **an all-consuming famine ensues** – an acute drought which ruins the inhabitants of the land and many die. Some commentators claim that this refusal to offer the *hallah* is in addition to the withholding of tithes (*Tosefot*

## THURS./AUGUST 3/ז' אב

*Yom Tov*). Others hold that the Mishnah refers to *hallah* separately, the disregard of *hallah* being more severe than that of tithes, seeing that one can refrain from offering *hallah* by kneading less than the liable minimum amount of dough (see *Eduyot* Chapter 1:2). Failure to respect this requirement, indicates a brazen denial of a Divine commandment, and punishment therefore, is all the harsher (*Midrash Sh'muel*).

**ז' אב** **Pestilence comes upon the world** – sudden epidemics which cause many deaths; **for death penalties pronounced by the Torah, whose execution, however, is beyond the competency of a human court** – this includes sins punishable by *karet* ("cutting off"), or *mitah bey'dei shamayim* (death at the hands of Heaven), or *mitat bet din* (death by a human court), which the court could not execute for lack of the prescribed warning to the criminal; because of these sins pestilence comes as a Divine retribution measure for measure.

**ז' אב** **And for the abuse of the produce of the Seventh Year** – fruit which grew during the Sabbatical Year of Rest for the land, was sold as a commodity, and not treated with the sanctity required by the Torah (*Lev. 25:6*): "But you may eat whatever the land during its sabbath will produce," which the Rabbis interpreted: "you may *eat* but not *sell*." By not abandoning ownership of this produce (*hefker*), to be freely drawn upon by the poor, he causes death by starvation; therefore, pestilence comes upon the world as a measure of Divine retribution (*Hameiri*). *Tiferet Yisrael* comments that the failure to *abandon* the Sabbatical produce, as required by the Torah, leads to the *abandonment* of the sinners' lives to the angel of death, as a Divine infliction, measure for measure.

**ז' אב** **The sword** – of war, **comes upon the world for the delay of justice** – even when the verdict is clear to the judges and the case requires no further deliberation; **and for the perversion of justice** –

acquitting the guilty and punishing the innocent; **and because of those who interpret the Torah not according to Halakhah** – to forbid the permitted and permit the forbidden. The infliction of the *sword* also reflects poetic justice, since the victim of perverted justice naturally resents his plight and consequently seeks to eliminate his oppressor.

Thus, perversion of justice, the delay in executing justice, and interpreting contrary to Halakhah, all fall into the same category of transgression (*Hameiri*). In the Gemara we read (*Shab. 32b*): "If you see a generation which suffers many troubles, go and investigate the judges of Israel; for all punishment comes upon society solely because of the judges of Israel... God does not allow His presence to rest upon Israel until the wicked judges and court officers have been eliminated, as it is written (*Is. 1:26*): "And I will restore your judges as of old, and your counsellors as at the beginning; afterward you will be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city."

The *Chazon Ish* and his *talmid*, R' Shlomo Cohen, once entered an apartment building. As they stood in the stairwell, they heard a loud argument between a husband and wife. The *Chazon Ish* rushed out of the building, and R' Shlomo Cohen dashed after him. When the two had gone some distance, R' Shlomo asked the *Chazon Ish* why he had run out so fast. "I was afraid that the couple might see us and realize that I knew about their quarrel. That would certainly have embarrassed them terribly."

**FRI./AUGUST 4/8 AV**  
**יוֹם ו' לַפָּרָשֶׁת דְּבָרִים, ח' אָב**

**LIGHT CANDLES**

Atlanta	8:18	Hartford	7:48	Montreal	8:01	San Fran.	7:58
Brookline	7:43	Houston	7:54	New York	7:51	Seattle	8:22
Chicago	7:48	Los Ang.	7:33	Oak Park	8:31	Silver Spr.	7:58
Cleveland	8:23	Memphis	7:43	Philadel.	7:53	St. Louis	7:51
Denver	7:52	Miami	7:47	Pitts.	8:14	Toronto	8:19

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:9*

אבות ה:ט

חַיָּה רָעָה בָּאָה לְעוֹלָם – עַל שְׁבוּעַת שְׁוֹא, וְעַל חִלּוּל הַשֵּׁם. גְּלוּת בָּא לְעוֹלָם – עַל עוֹבְדֵי עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, וְעַל גְּלוֹי עַרְוֹת, וְעַל שְׁפִיכַת דָּמִים, וְעַל הַשְּׁמַטַּת הָאָרֶץ. בְּאַרְבַּעַּה פְּרָקִים הַדָּבָר מִתְּרַבֵּה: בְּרַבִּיעִית וּבִשְׁבִיעִית, וּבְמוֹצָאֵי שְׁבִיעִית, וּבְמוֹצָאֵי הַחֹג שֶׁבְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה. בְּרַבִּיעִית – מִפְּנֵי מַעֲשֵׂר עֲנִי שְׁבַשְׁלִישִׁית; בְּשְׁבִיעִית – מִפְּנֵי מַעֲשֵׂר עֲנִי שְׁבַשְׁשִׁית; וּבְמוֹצָאֵי שְׁבִיעִית – מִפְּנֵי פְרוֹת שְׁבִיעִית; וּבְמוֹצָאֵי הַחֹג שֶׁבְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה – מִפְּנֵי גִזּוּל מִתְּנוּת עֲנִיִּים.

Wild beasts come upon the world because of false oaths, and for the desecration of the Divine Name. Exile comes upon the world because of idolaters, for incest, for bloodshed, and because of (neglect of) the (Sabbatical) release of the land. Pestilence increases at four periods: In the fourth year; in the seventh year; in the year after the seventh year; and at the conclusion of the Feast each year. In the fourth year, because of the Poor man's Tithes in the third year; in the seventh year, because of the Poor man's Tithes in the sixth year; in the year after the seventh year, because of the seventh year produce; and at the end of the Feast each year, for robbing the gifts of the poor.

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

*This Mishnah amplifies the theme broached in the previous Mishnah.*

חיה רעה **Wild beasts come upon the world because of false oaths** – this includes gratuitous and vain swearing as well as outright perjury; **and for the desecration of the Divine Name** – by sinning blatantly in public (*Bartenura*); or by the careless behavior of a



## FRI./AUGUST 4/ח' אב

prominent personality who serves as a bad example to others, whereupon lesser men proceed to belittle the Torah, saying: This person is surely convinced that there is no substance to the Torah and its *Mitzvot* and thereby the Divine Name is desecrated by him (*Rashi, Shab. 33a*). These two transgressions – vain oaths and blasphemy – signify a degradation of God's name, as it is written (*Lev. 19:12*) "You shall not swear by My name falsely, profaning the name of your God; I am the Lord," which refers equally to vain swearing; and concerning blasphemy it is written (*Lev. 22:32*): "You shall not profane My holy name, that I may be sanctified among the children of Israel." The Sages said (*Shab. 33a*): "For the sin of vain oaths, false oaths, the desecration of the Divine Name, and the desecration of the Shabbat – wild beasts increase, domestic animals die out, the population decreases, and the roads become desolate, as it is written (*Lev. 26:23*): 'And if by these things (*be-eleh*), you will not be reformed unto Me,' do not read *be-eleh*, but *be-alah*" i.e. concerning (false or vain) oaths. And it is written: (*ibid. 22*): "I will loose wild beasts against you, and they shall bereave you of your children, and wipe out your cattle. They shall decimate you, and your roads shall be deserted." This is extended to the desecration of Shabbat and blasphemy where the same term of profanation appears. This punishment, too, follows the principle of measure for measure, since by tarnishing God's Name through vain oaths and profanation, man descends to the level of the beasts which thereupon become the executors of Divine justice (*Hameiri*).

גלות בא **Exile comes upon the world because of idolaters** – as it is written (*Lev. 26:30-33*): "I will destroy your cult places ... and I will heap your carcasses upon your lifeless fetishes ... and I will make your sanctuaries desolate ... And you I will scatter among the nations." God said: Since you desire idol-worship, I shall, indeed, banish you to a place where idol-worship is prevalent (*Avot de Rabbi Natan 38*);

## FRI./AUGUST 4/ח' אב

**for incest** – as it is written in the Biblical section on incest (*Lev. 18:27-28*): "For all those abominations were perpetrated by the people who were in the land before you ... So let not the land spew you out for defiling it, as it spewed out the nation that came before you;" **for bloodshed** – as it is written (*Num. 35:33-34*): "You shall not pollute the land in which you live, in which I Myself abide." Hence, if you do pollute it, you will not inhabit it and I shall not dwell in its midst (*Shab. 33a*).

ועל השמטת **And because of** – the neglect of **the (Sabbatical) release of the land** – by plowing and sowing in the Sabbatical year, as it is written (*Lev. 26:34*): "Then shall the land make up for its Sabbath Years, throughout the time that it is desolate, and you are in the land of your enemies." God said to them: Since you do not release your hold on the land, it will release its hold on you; and for as many months as you did not allow it to rest, it will do so of its own accord, as it is written (*ibid. 35*): "Throughout the time that it is desolate, it shall observe the rest that it did not observe in your Sabbath Year while you were dwelling upon it" (*Avot de Rabbi Natan 38*).

בארבעה פרקים **Pestilence increases at four periods** – if pestilence has come upon the land because of the sins listed in the previous Mishnah, it spreads out at these four junctures because of the plunder of the obligatory donations to the poor (*Tosefot Yom Tov* quoting *Midrash Sh'muel*). **In the fourth year** – of the Sabbatical cycle, **in the seventh year** – the Sabbatical year, **in the year after the seventh year** – which is the beginning of another cycle, **and at the conclusion of the Feast** – of Sukkot, **each year**.

ברביעית **In the fourth year** – the pestilence spreads, **because of the Poor man's Tithes in the third year** – and in the sixth year, substituting the 'Second Tithe' due in the remaining years of the sabbatical cycle. Failure to comply with this precept may spell total starvation to the poor, wherefore pestilence takes its

toll of the perpetrators of this crime; **in the seventh year, because of the Poor man's Tithes in the sixth year** – withheld from the needy, as explained above; **in the year after the seventh year, because of the seventh year produce** – which was not abandoned and left freely available to all, so that the poor might preserve their lives as specified in the Torah; **and at the end of the Feast** – of Sukkot, **each year, for robbing the poor of their gifts** – set aside by the Torah for the poor from the cereal and grape-harvests: the *leket* (gleanings of the cereal harvest), *shikhehah* (forgotten sheaves), *pe'ah* (the corner of the field), the *peret* and the *olelot* (gleanings and gathering of fallen fruit from the grape harvest), of which it is written (*Lev. 19:10*): "You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger;" and it is written (*Prov. 22:22-23*): "Rob not the weak, because he is weak, neither crush the poor in the gate; for the Lord will plead their cause, and despoil of life those that despoil them." This punishment is due after Sukkot, since by then all the obligatory donations ought to have been transferred to the poor, "for the agricultural season is at an end by now, and whoever contributed (to the poor) these mandatory grants, has already done so; and he who has not, is guilty of robbery" (*Rambam*).

**W**hen R' Yisrael Salanter lived in Koenigsberg, he shared a room with his student, R' Yitzchak Maltzman. Each had his own key to the room. One night the student went out to an important meeting and forgot to take his key with him. R' Yisrael saw that his student had forgotten his key and was sure that his student would not wake him by ringing the bell late at night. In order to ensure that the student would not spend the night outdoors, R' Yisrael remained outside, walking about, until R' Yitzchak returned home.

# EREV TISHA B'AV

## SAT./AUGUST 5/9 AV

שַׁבַּת פְּרָשַׁת דְּבָרִים, ט' אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Mincha – Tzidkascha Tzedek is not recited, Pirkei Avos is not recited; Maariv – Kinot; V'Hi Noam and V'Yiten Lecha are not recited.

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Parshas Devarim, Haftorah – Isaiah 1:1-27; Mincha – beginning of Parshas Ve'eschanan; Maariv – Megillas Eichah

**Halachah:** One may drink wine and eat meat during the Seudah Shlishis. However, we must stop eating before sunset (about 15 minutes past yesterday's Light Candles Time).

The Public Fast of Tisha B'Av officially begins at nightfall (see Sabbath Ends chart). In addition to refraining from eating and drinking (which we began earlier at sunset) we are prohibited from washing ourselves (even with cold water), applying oils to ourselves for pleasurable purposes, having marital relations, and wearing shoes made from leather. We do not sit on regular height chairs or benches until midday tomorrow.

Havdalah on Motzei Shabbos Tisha B'Av consists of only making the Brachah Borei M'Orei Ha'Aish. The remainder of Havdalah is done at the completion of the fast.

### SABBATH ENDS

Atlanta 9:20 9:47	Hartford 8:50 9:17	Montreal 9:02 9:29	San Fran. 8:59 9:26
Brookline 8:44 9:11	Houston 8:56 9:23	New York 8:52 9:19	Seattle 9:23 9:50
Chicago 8:50 9:17	Los Ang. 8:36 9:03	Oak Park 9:32 9:59	Silver Spr. 9:00 9:27
Cleveland 9:25 9:52	Memphis 8:45 9:12	Philadel. 8:55 9:22	St. Louis 8:52 9:19
Denver 8:54 9:21	Miami 8:49 9:16	Pitts. 9:16 9:43	Toronto 9:21 9:48

1st zman is shitas Ha'Gaonim, 2nd is shitas Rabbeinu Tam

### DEVAR TORAH / PARSHAS DEVARIM

*"Provide for yourselves distinguished men who are wise, understanding and well known to your tribes..."*

Deuteronomy 1:13

*Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch* comments:

It was necessary that the judges recommended by the various tribes be well known. *Moshe* indicated thereby that he could identify wisdom and understanding in the candidates for judges but their ethical standards and conduct are best known to those who are in everyday contact with them. And while the people are inclined to select judges based on their learning and wisdom, both *Moshe*

and *Yisro* listed as primary qualifications that the judges must fear G-d, love truth and despise self-interest. These character traits in people are best known to their fellow man and hence the requirement that they be "well known to your tribes."

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

*Avot 5:10*

אבות ה'י

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בְּאָדָם: הָאוֹמֵר: שְׁלִי שְׁלִי וְשֶׁלְךָ שֶׁלְךָ – זוּ מִדָּה בִּינּוֹנִית, וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים: זוּ מִדַּת סְדוֹם; שְׁלִי שֶׁלְךָ וְשֶׁלְךָ שְׁלִי – עִם הָאֶרֶץ; שְׁלִי שְׁלִי וְשֶׁלְךָ שֶׁלְךָ – חָסִיד; שְׁלִי וְשֶׁלְךָ שְׁלִי – רָשָׁע.

There are four types of people. He who says: 'Mine is mine and yours is yours' – this is the average type; and some say, this typifies Sodom; (He who says) 'Mine is yours and yours is mine' is an *am ha-aretz*; (He who says) 'Mine is yours and yours is yours' is a pious man; (And he who says) 'Mine is mine and yours is mine' is a wicked man.

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

**There are four types of people** – varieties of social attitudes expressed in personal or material relations.

1) **He who says: 'Mine is mine and yours is yours'** – you are not to benefit from me, any more than I should benefit from you, **this is the average type** – of person who, though hardly a saint, can neither be called wicked, since he limits his gains to his own domain and does not reach out for what belongs to others; **and some say, this typifies Sodom**

Today's Torah study is dedicated

In Loving Memory of

זיסל בן אשר הלוי, ע"ה

**SIEGFRIED PRETSFELDER, A"H**

— *Otto Pretsfelder*



– the refusal to share an advantage with others was a vice practiced by the Sodomites, who thereby ruled out the practice of hospitality. Moreover, they were heartless towards the poor and the stricken, as it is written (*Ezek. 16:49*); "Behold, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: pride, fullness of bread, and careless ease was in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." According to *Bartenura*, this typifies Sodom means that such *average* behavior is dangerously close to that of Sodom because out of sheer habit he will begrudge all advantage to others, even when it does not entail any loss to his own person. This was the standard of Sodom where strangers were spurned even though Sodom was spacious and well provided. *Midrash Sh'muel* regards the Mishnah's twofold evaluation as alternative, depending upon the intentions of the person in question. If his primary motive is not to draw on what belongs to others, in accordance with the verse (*Prov. 15:27*): "and he who hates gifts shall live," but in order to strengthen his resolve he adds: *Mine is mine*, then his attitude is defined as *average*. But if, driven by avarice, his primary motive is to begrudge others, and his statement *yours is yours* merely serves to cover *mine is mine*, then this corresponds to the character of *Sodom*.

2. (He who says) שלי שלך 'Mine is yours and yours is mine' – allowing others to benefit from what is his, so that eventually he may benefit from what belongs to others, is an **am ha-aretz** – i.e. he is one of the "people of the land," for this is a positive trait which serves the needs of society, and represents the common desire of most people to give and to receive in equal measure. Others interpret *am ha-aretz* in the derogatory sense, as an ignoramus who is unable to distinguish between what is his and what belongs to others (*Rashi*).

3. (He who says) שלי שלך 'Mine is yours and yours is yours' – refusing to benefit from others, but eager

to let others profit from what is his, and is ever ready to assist all men, **is a pious man** – who goes beyond the requirements of the law.

4. (And he who says) שלי שלי 'Mine is mine and yours is mine' – deriving profit from others, but unwilling to repay in kind, **is a wicked man** – who covets the property of others and does not deal kindly with any person.

*A righteous person eats to satisfy his soul.*

(Proverbs 13:25)

When children have poor table manners, their parents will likely reprimand them and say: "You're eating like an animal."

While animals lack the finesse of Emily Post, we can say this much for them: they eat only for their bodily needs. Animals do not overeat, nor do they indulge in the pleasures of eating the way that humans do. Titillating the palate is a uniquely human obsession.

People who sincerely believe they were put on earth solely in order to serve God will eat in order to sustain life and to have the energy to carry out their assignment on earth. While they may enjoy eating, they neither indulge themselves nor constantly seek ways to enhance their food. These people are unlikely to develop obesity, because they would not consume more food than is necessary to maintain optimum bodily function.

In the thirteenth century, Maimonides stated that the majority of human ills come from unhealthy eating practices. Modern medical science substantiates his assertion. However, modern people, instead of developing more body-conscious eating habits, apply their genius to seeking ways to stuff themselves without becoming overweight.

It is a humbling thought that if humans did eat like animals, they would live longer and be healthier.

# FAST OF TISHA B'AV – POSTPONED SUN./AUGUST 6/10 AV

יום א' לפְּרֻשֶׁת וְאֶת־חֲנֻן, י' אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – Kinot are recited; Tachanun and Lamnatzeach are not, we omit the verse V'Ani Zos Brisi in U'Va L'Tzion, the reciting of the Psalm Of The Day is postponed to Mincha; Mincha – The Psalm Of The Day is recited. Nacheim and Aneinu are inserted in Shemona Esrai (If forgotten, Shemona Esrai need not be repeated); Maariv – we sanctify the new moon (preferably after eating something)

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Deuteronomy 4:25-40, Haftorah – Jeremiah 8:13-9:23; Mincha – Exodus 32:11-14, 34:1-10, Haftorah – Isaiah 55:6-56:9

**Halachah:** We wash our hands only until the knuckles. We may rub our moist fingertips across our eyes to remove any sediment there. We postpone the wearing of our Tallis and Tefillin until Mincha. We do wear our Tallis Koton without making a Bracha.

After midday, we are permitted to sit on regular height chairs and benches. At nightfall, (use 1st zman of Sabbath Ends charts from yesterday) with the conclusion of the fast, the Havdalah postponed from Motzei Shabbos is now made without candles or spice.

## TISHA B'AV / HAFTORAH SHACHARIS

*"Thus says Hashem: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom nor let the mighty man glory in his might. Let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me..."*

Jeremiah 9:22,23

The *Birkas Chaim* quotes the *Tosefeta Bracha's* explanation:

In these matters man has no reason for self-glorification. For wisdom, might and wealth are gifts from heaven, as our sages tell that these blessings are announced in heaven prior to one's birth. Whether he be "mighty or weak, wise or foolish, rich or poor." On the other hand, one may glory in understanding and knowledge of *Hashem*, for this one achieves with one's own effort, as our sages say: "Everything is in the hands of heaven except fear of heaven."



**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:11*

אבות ה:יא

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בִּדְעוֹת: נוֹחַ לְכַעוֹס וְנוֹחַ לְרִצּוֹת – יִצָּא שְׂכָרוֹ בְּהַפְסָדוֹ; קָשָׁה לְכַעוֹס וְקָשָׁה לְרִצּוֹת – יִצָּא הַפְסָדוֹ בְּשְׂכָרוֹ; קָשָׁה לְכַעוֹס וְנוֹחַ לְרִצּוֹת – הַסִּיד; נוֹחַ לְכַעוֹס וְקָשָׁה לְרִצּוֹת – רָשָׁע.

There are four types of temperament: Easily angered and easily appeased – his gain is cancelled by his loss. Difficult to anger and difficult to appease – his loss is cancelled by his gain. Difficult to anger and easily appeased – he is a pious man. Easily angered and difficult to appease – he is a wicked man.

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

**There are four types of temperament** – varieties of disposition in man:

1. **Easily angered** – losing his temper over the slightest irritation, **and easily appeased** – requiring little effort to restore his calm, **his gain is cancelled by his loss** – i.e. he strikes a negative balance, there being little advantage in his readiness to be pacified, if at any moment he might fly into a rage. Spending most of his life in anger and agitation, he induces people to avoid his company. Thus we read (*Ned. 22a*): "He who loses his temper lays himself open to all the torments of *gehinnom* (hell)."

2. **Difficult to anger and difficult to appease** – his anger is slow to rise, but once stirred, it is difficult to conciliate him, **his loss is cancelled by his gain** – the effort needed to placate him is offset by his generally placid disposition and reasonable conduct; hence, the balance is positive.

3. **Difficult to anger and easily appeased** – although angry at times, which is human, and even necessary at times, as with Pinhas ben Eleazar whose anger denoted jealous zeal for the sake of God; yet since loss of temper is contrary to his nature and, when angered he is easily conciliated, **he is a pious**

**man** – who rules his spirit and acts beyond the requirement of the law.

4. נוח לכעוס **Easily angered and difficult to appease** – one who is readily provoked and then stubbornly refuses to be placated, **he is a wicked man** – as they said (*Ned. 22a*): "Whoever is incensed, reveals that his sins outnumber his merits, as it is written (*Prov. 29:22*): "An angry man stirs up strife, and a wrathful man abounds in transgression." Hence our Sages said (*Ber. 29b*): "Do not seethe (with anger) and you shall not sin."

*Praise G-d, O my soul. I will praise G-d while I live. I will sing to G-d while I exist.*

(Psalms 146:1,2, daily morning service)

When we feel alive and are pleased with the way our lives are progressing, prayer comes quite easily. It is no difficult to express gratitude when we feel we are productive and are appreciated.

There are unfortunately times when we are less than euphoric about life. Circumstances may be such that we find life to be burdensome, and we hardly consider ourselves to be living. At best, we can say that we exist. At such moments it is difficult to sing praises to G-d, because our logical thought sees no reason for being grateful.

Where logic ends, faith begins. We must be aware that unless there were a Divine purpose to our lives, we would not be here. We may have to seek out that purpose, but it is certainly there.

The Psalmist says, "I will praise G-d when I feel alive, and I will sing to Him even though all I feel is that I am merely existing." Our faith should carry us over the periods of distress and confusion.

**MON./AUGUST 7/11 AV**

**יוֹם ב' לַפָּרָשֶׁת וְאֶתְחַנֵּן, י"א אָב**

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Va'eschanan

## **MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:12*

אבות ה:יב

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בִּתְלִמִּידִים: מֵהָר לְשִׁמוּעַ וּמֵהָר לְאַבֵּד – יֵצֵא שְׂכָרוֹ בְּהִפְסָדוֹ; קָשָׁה לְשִׁמוּעַ וְקָשָׁה לְאַבֵּד – יֵצֵא הַפְּסָדוֹ בְּשְׂכָרוֹ; מֵהָר לְשִׁמוּעַ וְקָשָׁה לְאַבֵּד – חָכָם; קָשָׁה לְשִׁמוּעַ וּמֵהָר לְאַבֵּד – זֶה חֶלֶק רַע.

There are four types of students: Quick to grasp and quick to forget – his gain is cancelled by his loss. Slow to grasp and slow to forget – his loss is cancelled by his gain. Quick to grasp and slow to forget – he is wise. Slow to grasp and quick to forget – this is a bad portion.

## **MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

**There are four types of students** – with regard to their talents:

1. **Quick to grasp** – and assess the lessons taught, **and quick to forget** – his poor memory cannot retain the material studied, **his gain is cancelled by his loss** – since he forgets what he has learned and fails to profit from his rapid comprehension, his loss outweighs his gain.

2. **Slow to grasp and slow to forget** – his initial difficulty of assimilating what he studies is overcome by his steady application, whereupon the lessons remain in his memory, **his loss is cancelled by his gain** – since he retains what he has grasped, his reward compensates for the vast effort invested in his studies.

3. **Quick to grasp and slow to forget** – one blessed with instant comprehension and a superb memory, **he is wise** – i.e., such qualities provide an effective potential for wisdom.

4. קשה לשמוע **Slow to grasp and quick to forget** – his unreceptive mind is further impeded by a feeble memory, **this is a bad portion** – as he must ceaselessly recapitulate his lessons, so as to master the material and retain at least part of the information.

**W**hen God will again rejoice in His benevolence to you as He rejoiced with your ancestors. (Deuteronomy 30:9)

One young woman who had recovered from alcoholism wrote to me that after several years of sobriety, she had received a new car as a gift from her father. She added: "I am giving my father a chance to be a father."

During her years of drinking, her father had been forced to stop giving her things, because she used them in a self-destructive manner. It was clear from her letter that although she certainly enjoyed her new car, she had even greater pleasure from allowing her father to give it to her. It is most frustrating when a loving father must suppress his desire to give to his children, because of their improper behavior.

When we receive things from God and express our gratitude to Him, we should be aware how much He enjoys giving to us, and we should rejoice in His happiness even more than in our own gratification. Conversely, we should realize that when we transgress His will, we deprive our loving Father from being kind to us, and that we are causing God much grief when we make Him suppress His infinite kindness.

The Psalmist says, "The righteous rejoice in God" (*Psalms 97:12*), meaning that they rejoice in the Divine gladness, when they give God the opportunity to exercise His kindness.

**TUES./AUGUST 8/12 AV**

יום ג' לפְּרָשֶׁת וַאֲתַחֲנֶן, י"ב אָב

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

*Avot 5:13*

אבות ה:יג

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בְּנוֹתַי צְדָקָה: הַרוּצָה שִׁיתֵן וְלֹא יִתְּנוּ אַחֲרִים – עֵינָיו רָעָה בְּשָׁל אַחֲרִים; יִתְּנוּ אַחֲרִים וְהוּא לֹא יִתֵּן – עֵינָיו רָעָה בְּשָׁלוֹ; יִתֵּן וְיִתְּנוּ אַחֲרִים – חֲסִיד; לֹא יִתֵּן וְלֹא יִתְּנוּ אַחֲרִים – רָשָׁע.

There are four types of almsgivers: He who agrees to give, but wishes that others should not give – his eye is evil towards that which concerns others. He who agrees that others should give, but he will not give – his eye is evil towards that which concerns himself. He who agrees to give, and also wishes that others should give – he is pious. He who will not give and wishes that others should not give either – he is wicked.

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

**There are four kinds of almsgivers** – in their attitude towards charity:

1. **He who agrees to give, but wishes that others should not give** – desiring to limit charity to his own purse **his eye is evil towards that which concerns others** – wishing to be the sole target of praise and receive all the applause for his generosity. Others comment that he prefers that others withhold and acquire the stigma of greed, so that he may profit by their degradation; or that their fortunes might dwindle in retribution of their avarice (*Hameiri*).

*Tiferet Yisrael* however, interprets *towards that which concerns others* as referring to the poor whom he begrudges a more ample relief.

2. **He who agrees that others should give but he will not give** – he enlists the generosity of others but refuses to donate of his own property; **his eye is evil towards that which concerns himself** – being overly concerned about his own material requirements (*Hameiri*). According to *Tiferet Yisrael*: he does not begrudge the poor their material relief as long as it

does not affect his own possessions.

3. יתן ויתנו **He who agrees to give and also wishes that others should give** – having freely given of his own, he appeals to others that they might follow his example, **he is pious** – in acting beyond the requirements of the law; of him the prophet says (*Is. 32:8*): "But the man of noble mind forms noble designs and stands firm in his nobility," the first part of the verse referring to his own generosity, and the second to his call upon others to act likewise.

4. לא יתן **He who will not give, and wishes that others should not give either** – jealously guarding his own property, and also advising others not to give **he is wicked** – governed by a cruel attitude towards society and unconcerned about the fate of the poor. Of him Scripture declares (*ibid. 7*): "The vile man's ways are vile and he devises plots to ruin the poor with lies." At consultations concerned with the regulation of charity, he contrives villainous schemes to annul their good intentions (*Magen Avot*). *Midrash David* (a commentary on *Pirkei Avot* written by the grandson of *Rambam*) notes: "According to the Sages, charity may be compared to three things, viz. gold, silver and brass. *Goldlike charity* is the one given secretly, without causing embarrassment to the needy; of this King Solomon said (*Prov. 21:14*): 'A gift in secret pacifies an angry man.' (The initials of the phrase *Zeh Hanoten Beseter* – 'he who gives in secret,' spell זֶהב *zahav*, gold). *Silverlike charity* is less than creditable to the giver, given, as it is, during illness, or when in danger, out of fear and despair. (The initials of the phrase: *Kesheroeh Sakanah Potae'ah* – 'when he sees danger, he opens up,' spell כֶּסֶף *kesev*, silver). *Brasslike charity* represents that given before imminent death by one whose avarice left no room for pity on the poor. Only now, when his end is near, and he is about to leave his fortune to others, he orders his household to act charitably. (The initials of the phrase *Ne'um Holeh Sheyomar: Tenu* – 'the words of a sick man who says: Give,' spell נְחוֹשֶׁת *nehoshet*, brass).

WED./AUGUST 9/13 AV

יום ד' לַפָּרָשֶׁת וְאֶתְחַנֵּן, י"ג אָב

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Avot 5:14

אבות ה:יד

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בְּהוֹלְכֵי לְבֵית הַמִּדְרָשׁ: הוֹלֵךְ וְאִינוֹ עוֹשֶׂה – שֹׁכֵר הַלִּיכָה בְּיָדוֹ; עוֹשֶׂה וְאִינוֹ הוֹלֵךְ – שֹׁכֵר מַעֲשֵׂה בְּיָדוֹ; הוֹלֵךְ וְעוֹשֶׂה – חָסִיד; לֹא הוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא עוֹשֶׂה – רָשָׁע.

There are four types of people who attend the House of Study: He who attends but does not practise – has the reward for attending; he who practises but does not attend – has the reward for practising; he who attends and practises – he is a pious man. He who does not attend and does not practise – he is a wicked man.

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

**There are four types of people who attend the House of Study** – to hear the Torah lessons of the Sages:

1. **He who attends but does not practise** – though he goes to the School, he does not engage in study; or he studies, but fails to progress in learning for lack of serious attention, **has the reward for attending** – even though he does not practise, he is rewarded for his very presence there, since attending the *Bet haMidrash* with its atmosphere of learning, is a *mitzvah* in itself.

2. **He who practises but does not attend** – he masters his Torah lessons at home, without attending the *Bet haMidrash*, **has the reward for practising** – since he devotes himself to Torah-study; however, he forfeits the reward of attendance at the *Bet haMidrash*.

3. **He who attends and practises** – although he learns at home, and does not require instruction at the *Bet haMidrash*, he nevertheless appears there in the humble guise of one in need of coaching (*Midrash Sh'muel*), **he is a pious man** –

whose efforts go beyond the requirements of the law.

4. לא הולך **He who does not attend and does not practise** – failing to study Torah and avoiding the *Bet haMidrash* altogether, **he is a wicked man** – who totally disregards the Torah. *Hameiri* explains: *He who attends* – who migrates to a place of Torah learning, *but does not practice* – he fails to progress in his studies, nevertheless *has the reward for going*; *he who practises but does not go* – he does not seek out a center of Torah scholarship, but masters his Torah lessons at home, *has the reward of practise* – even though he would have improved by going to a place of learning; *he who goes and practises, he is a pious man* – who labors incessantly for the love of Torah; *he who does not go and does not practise, he is a wicked man* – who slights the Torah and neglects to study it.

**R**' Rafael of Barshad made great efforts to make peace between quarreling parties – husbands and wives, business partners, friends who had a falling-out. On *Tishah B'Av*, he came to the home of a man who had been involved in a quarrel with another man to try to patch things up.

"Rebbe," said the man, "must this be done today? Can't it wait for tomorrow?"

"On the contrary," said R' Rafael, "the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed on this day because of *sinas chinam* – baseless hatred. It is therefore particularly important to work toward bringing peace between Jews today."



## THURS./AUGUST 10/14 AV

יום ה' לַפָּרָשֶׁת וְאֶתְחַנֵּן, י"ד אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Mincha – Tachanun is not recited

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Va'eschanan

**Halachah:** The last opportunity to recite Kiddush Halevanah for the month of Av is 1:39 AM EST provided the moon is visible.

### MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

*Avot 5:15*

אבות ה:טו

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בְּיוֹשְׁבֵי לְפָנֵי חֲכָמִים: סְפוּגָה, וּמְשַׁפֵּךְ, מְשַׁמֶּרֶת, וְנֹפֶה. סְפוּגָה, שֶׁהוּא סוֹפֵג אֶת הַכֹּל; מְשַׁפֵּךְ, שֶׁמְכַנֵּס בָּזוּ וּמוֹצִיא בָּזוּ; מְשַׁמֶּרֶת, שֶׁמוֹצִיָּא אֶת הַיַּיִן וְקוֹלְטָה אֶת הַשְּׂמֵרִים; וְנֹפֶה שֶׁמוֹצִיָּא אֶת הַקֶּמַח וְקוֹלְטָה אֶת הַסֵּלֶת.

There are four types among those who sit before the Sages: The sponge, the funnel, the strainer and the sieve. The sponge which soaks up everything; the funnel which absorbs at one end and lets out at the other; the strainer which lets out the wine and retains the dregs; and the sieve which lets the coarse flour pass out and retains the choice flour.

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*Whereas Mishnah XII, above, listed four types of disciples in accordance with their powers of comprehension and memory, this Mishnah enumerates four types in "relation to common-sense and the power of judgment" (Bartenura). Hence the introductory phrase who sit before the Sages, referring to distinguished disciples who wait upon their masters regularly.*

**There are four types among those who sit before the Sages** – students who listen to the lessons of their mentors: **The sponge, the funnel, the strainer and the sieve** – which the author of the Mishnah now proceeds to explain.

**The sponge which soaks up everything** – it sucks in any kind of liquid, whether pure or impure, so is the student who accepts everything without using his critical faculty to distinguish between the rationally sound and the fallacious.

**The funnel which absorbs at one end and lets**

**out at the other** – so is the student who swallows up whatever the master says, but releases the contents from his memory no sooner than he has done so.

משמרת **The strainer which lets out the wine and retains the dregs** – so is this type of student who ignores the essential points while retaining the irrelevant.

ונפה **And the sieve which lets the coarse flour pass out and retains the choice flour** – *Bartenura* explains: "*The sieve* – After the wheat is ground and the bran is removed, there remains a powder-like flour and a coarser meal, of which the latter is of superior value. These are passed through a very fine sieve, removing all the finer particles, a kind of white dust, so that the coarser and more valuable meal remains; and this is how the meal-offerings were prepared. So is the student who has the capacity to evaluate his lessons, and to sort out the genuine from what is false and irrelevant."

*Avot de Rabbi Natan* (Chapt. 40) amplifies: "There are four types among those who sit before the Sages: Those who resemble a sponge, those who resemble a sieve, those who resemble a funnel and those who resemble a strainer. Who is like a *sponge*? This is a scholar who sits before the Sages and learns Bible, Mishnah, Midrash, *halakhot* (law) and *aggadot* (lore); and like a sponge he absorbs everything. Who is like the *sieve*? This is the intelligent scholar who sits before the Sages and listens to Bible, Mishnah, Midrash, *halakhot* and *aggadot*; just as the sieve lets out the low-grade, and retains the high-grade flour, so he rejects the inferior and holds on to the superior. Who represents the *funnel*? This is a foolish student who sits before the Sages and hears Bible, Mishnah, Midrash, *halakhot* and *aggadot*; just as the funnel takes in at one end and lets out at the other, so is this student, whose ears absorb at one end and release at the other; hence the first points to enter his mind are the first to escape his memory. Who is like the *strain-*

er? This is a wicked disciple who sits before the Sages and hears Bible, Mishnah, Midrash, *halakhot* and *aggadot*; just as the strainer allows the wine to escape while retaining the dregs, so he discards what is useful and retains what is harmful."

*God called unto man (Adam) and said to him,  
"Where are you?"* (Genesis 3:9)

We read in *Genesis* that after Adam sinned, he tried to hide in the Garden of Eden. Was Adam so foolish to think that he could hide from God? Certainly not! He was hiding from himself, because it was himself that he could no longer confront. God's question to him was very pertinent: "I am here. I am always here, but where are *you*?"

Adam's answer to God describes man's most common defense: "I was afraid because I was exposed, and I therefore tried to hide" (*Genesis* 3:10). Since people cannot possibly conceal themselves from God, they try to hide from themselves. This effort results in a multitude of problems.

We hear a great deal about people's search for God, and much has been written about ways that we can "find" God. The above verse throws a different light on the subject. It is not necessary for people to find God, because He was never lost, but has been there all the time, everywhere. *We* are the ones who may be lost.

When an infant closes its eyes, it thinks that because it cannot see others, they cannot see it either. Adults may indulge in the same infantile notion – if they hide from themselves, they think they are hiding from God as well. If we find ourselves by getting to know who we are, we will have little difficulty in finding God, and in letting Him find us.

**TU B'AV**  
**FRI./AUGUST 11/15 AV**  
 יום ו' לַפָּרָשַׁת וְאֶתְחַנֵּן, ט"ו אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – Tachanun is not recited

**LIGHT CANDLES**

Atlanta	8:11	Hartford	7:39	Montreal	7:51	San Fran.	7:50
Brookline	7:34	Houston	7:48	New York	7:42	Seattle	8:11
Chicago	7:39	Los Ang.	7:27	Oak Park	8:21	Silver Spr.	7:50
Cleveland	8:14	Memphis	7:36	Philadel.	7:45	St. Louis	7:42
Denver	7:44	Miami	7:42	Pitts.	8:05	Toronto	8:10

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:16*

אבות ה:טז

כָּל אֶהְבָּה שֶׁהִיא תְלוּיָה בְדָבָר – בְּטֵל דְבָר, בְּטֵלָה אֶהְבָּה; וְשֵׂאִינָה תְלוּיָה בְדָבָר – אֵינָה בְטֵלָה לְעוֹלָם. אִיזוּ הִיא אֶהְבָּה הַתְלוּיָה בְדָבָר? זוֹ אֶהְבַּת אֲמִנוֹן וְתָמָר. וְשֵׂאִינָה תְלוּיָה בְדָבָר? זוֹ אֶהְבַּת דָּוִד וַיהוֹנָתָן.

All love which depends on some thing, when the thing vanishes, the love also ceases; but if it does not depend on any thing, it will never cease. Which love depended upon some thing? The love of Amnon and Tamar. And which did not depend on any thing? The love of David and Jonathan.

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

*Our Mishnah differentiates between two kinds of love: 1. Love which is prompted by external factors, and 2. love which flows from a spiritual affinity, independent of external causes.*

**All love which depends on some thing** – of which it is a function e.g., material advantage or physical gratification, **when the thing vanishes, the love**

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— Rachel Ritchie



FRI./AUGUST 11/ט"ו אב

**also ceases** – once the motive power has lapsed, there is nothing to sustain it; **but if it does not depend on any thing** – when love is not generated by an external source, but flows from an inner well of mutual appreciation, **it will never cease.**

Another version reads: כל אהבה שהיא תלויה בדבר בטל בטל דבר בטלה, *All love which depends upon some transient thing, when that thing vanishes the love also ceases; but if it does not depend upon a transient thing (but rests upon a solid basis, like the love of the righteous and the wise) it never ceases (Rambam, Bartenura).*

Which love depended upon some thing? **The love of Amnon and Tamar** – once the source of Amnon's love for Tamar declined, we read that (*II Samuel 13:15*): "Then Amnon hated her with exceeding great hatred." **And which did not depend on any thing? The love of David and Jonathan** – which was spiritual in character, like the love of a father for his son, as it is written (*I Samuel. 18:1*): "The *soul* of Jonathan was knit with the *soul* of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."

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— Martin B. Mark



# SAT./AUGUST 12/16 AV

שַׁבַּת פְּרָשַׁת וְאֶתְחַנֵּן, ט"ז אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Mincha – Pirkei Avos 3

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Parshas Va'eschanan; Haftorah – Isaiah 40:1-26; Mincha – beginning of Parshas Eikev

## SABBATH ENDS

Atlanta 9:13 9:40	Hartford 8:40 9:07	Montreal 8:52 9:19	San Fran. 8:51 9:18
Brookline 8:35 9:02	Houston 8:50 9:17	New York 8:44 9:11	Seattle 9:12 9:39
Chicago 8:40 9:07	Los Ang. 8:28 8:55	Oak Park 9:23 9:50	Silver Spr. 8:52 9:19
Cleveland 9:16 9:43	Memphis 8:38 9:05	Philadel. 8:47 9:14	St. Louis 8:44 9:11
Denver 8:46 9:13	Miami 8:44 9:11	Pitts. 9:07 9:34	Toronto 9:11 9:38

1st zman is shitas Ha'Gaonim, 2nd is shitas Rabbeinu Tam

## DEVAR TORAH / PARSHAS VA-ESCHANAN

*"And lest you raise your eyes to the heaven and you see the sun and the moon and the stars – the entire legion of heaven – and you be drawn astray and bow to them..."*

Deuteronomy 4:19

The *Otzar Chaim* quotes the *Alshich* who asks:

Why does the Torah take such a strong stance against bowing to the heavenly legions, the sun, moon and stars? Is it not an honor to the king if his servants are honored?

He answers:

It is only an honor to the king when his servants are honored, but not when the king himself is constrained to bow to them. That would constitute rebellion. And since every Jew has in him a spark of Godliness, bowing to the heavenly bodies is as though he constrains that spark of Godliness in him to bow to them also. The repeated admonitions against worshipping the heavenly bodies serve as a reminder to man that he has a spark of Godliness in him.

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

*Avot 5:17*

אבות ה'יז

כָּל מַחְלֶקֶת שֶׁהִיא לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם – סוּפָה לְהִתְקַיֵּם; וְשֶׁאֵינָה לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם – אֵין סוּפָה לְהִתְקַיֵּם. אִיזוּ הִיא מַחְלֶקֶת שֶׁהִיא לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם? זוּ מַחְלֶקֶת הַלֵּל וְשֶׁמַּאי; וְשֶׁאֵינָה לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם? זוּ מַחְלֶקֶת קָרַח וְכָל עֲדָתוֹ.

Any dispute which is for the sake of Heaven, shall in the end be of lasting worth; but that which is not for the sake of Heaven, shall not in the end be of lasting worth. Which dispute was for the sake of Heaven? That of Hillel and Shammai. And which was not for the sake of Heaven? That of Korah and all his company.

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*Whereas the previous Mishnah enumerated two kinds of love, the present Mishnah teaches us regarding two types of controversy.*

כל מחלקת **Any dispute which is for the sake of heaven** – whose participants are motivated by an honest search for truth and do not merely plead for the sake of argument and provocation, **shall in the end be of lasting worth** – such disputation is destined to produce positive insights and permanent solutions of the issues under investigation; ושאינה לשם שמים **but that which is not for the sake of Heaven** – where the basic motive is the achievement of power, or mere obstinate self-assertion, **shall not in the end be of lasting worth** – such disputes fail to yield substantive results.

איזו היא מחלקת **Which dispute was for the sake of Heaven? That of Hillel and Shammai** – whose debates clarified each problem and determined the *Halakhah* for the subsequent generations. **And which was not for the sake of Heaven? That of Korah and all his company** – who challenged Moses and Aaron to gain personal glory and power; but their schemes were foiled, as it is written (*Num. 16:32-33*): "And the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who joined Korah ... and they went down alive into *Sheol*; and the earth closed upon them, and they disappeared from the midst of the congregation." No mention is here made of the opposite party in this confrontation, i.e., Moses and Aaron, whereas in the previous instance the Mishnah mentioned both sides *in the dispute of Hillel and Shammai*. However, in the case of Hillel and

## SAT./AUGUST 12/ט"ז אב

Shammai, both sides pursued equally positive goals, whereas here (in the negative example) they did not, seeing that Moses strove entirely for the sake of Heaven, without harboring any ulterior motives whatsoever (*Tosefot Yom Tov* quoting *Midrash Sh'muel*).

Others explain: We often witness disputants who proudly and contemptuously rise up against their teachers. How are we to determine whether they plead for the sake of Heaven, as they often claim, or whether their arguments merely serve to embarrass their mentors? The criterion is provided by the relationship of the pleaders. If they display a unity of purpose and an intense personal attachment toward one another, this is evidence that their statements are genuine, and that their efforts are for the sake of Heaven. But if, apart from the opposition that unites them, they are divided amongst themselves, and there is jealousy and hatred in their hearts, this proves that they are not genuine, and only their evil hearts provided a common denominator for this dispute. Hence, the Mishnah states: *And which dispute was not for the sake of Heaven? The dispute of Korah and all his company* – for they were two hundred and fifty men, each one seeking the office of High Priest for himself. Thus their own ranks were riven by dissention, i.e. *the dispute of Korah and all his company* – and only in their rebellion against Moses did they find a common cause (*Noam Elimelekh*, based on *Matnat Avot*).

Money was completely without importance to R' Chaim of Brisk. He was once at the wedding of the children of two wealthy men. The next day the two fathers came to him and handed him a sealed envelope filled with money. As soon as they left, a worthy, poor man came in and told R' Chaim of his desperate plight. Without another word, R' Chaim handed the man the still-sealed envelope.



**SUN./AUGUST 13/17 AV**

יום א' לפַרְשֵׁת עֵקֶב, י"ז אָב

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:18*

אבות ה:יח

כָּל הַמְזִכֶּה אֶת הָרַבִּים – אֵין חָטָא בָּא עַל יָדוֹ; כָּל  
הַמְחַטֵּיא אֶת הָרַבִּים – אֵין מְסַפִּיקִין בְּיָדוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת תְּשׁוּבָה.  
מֹשֶׁה זָכָה וְזָכָה אֶת הָרַבִּים, זְכוּת הָרַבִּים תְּלוּיָהּ בּוֹ,  
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דְּבָרִים ל"ג, כ"א): צְדָקַת ה' עָשָׂה וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו עִם־  
יִשְׂרָאֵל. יִרְבְּעַם חָטָא וְהַחַטִּיא אֶת הָרַבִּים, חָטָא הָרַבִּים  
תְּלוּי בּוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (מְלָכִים א טו, ל): עַל־חַטָּאוֹת יִרְבְּעַם  
בְּיָנְבֹט; אֲשֶׁר חָטָא וְאֲשֶׁר הֶחְטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל.

He who leads the multitude to virtue, no sin shall come to pass through him; but he who leads the many to sin, shall not be granted the means to repent. Moses was virtuous and he led the many to virtue; the virtue of the many is attributed to him, as it is written (*Deut. 33:21*): "He executed the Lord's judgments and His ordinances with Israel." Jeroboam sinned and led the many to sin; the sin of the many is attributed to him, as it is written (*I Kings. 15:30*): "For the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and wherewith he caused Israel to sin."

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

*This Mishnah teaches us how great is the reward of one who prompts others to choose the path of righteousness and how great the punishment of one who lures people to sin.*

כל המזכה **He who leads the multitude to virtue** – by teaching them Torah and morality and thereby sets them on the right course in life, **no sin shall come to**

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## SUN./AUGUST 13/י"ז אב

**pass through him** – Providence prevents him from stumbling into sin, "lest he find himself in *Gehinnom* (Hell) while his disciples reach *Gan Eden* (Paradise)" (*Yoma* 87a); **but he who leads the many to sin** – enticing them to flout the Divine precepts and leading them astray, **shall not be granted the means to repent** – he is not assisted by Providence to repent, "lest he reach *Gan Eden* while his disciples are consigned to *Gehinnom*" (*ibid.*). According to *Rambam* the privilege of free will is withdrawn from him and he is thus prevented from repenting, so that he might receive due punishment. Thus in *Avot de Rabbi Natan* (Chapt. 40): He who leads the multitude to virtue no sin is allowed to occur through him, lest his disciples inherit the world-to-come while he descends to *Sheol*, as it is written (*Ps.* 16:10): "For You will not abandon my soul to the nether-world, neither will You suffer Your faithful servants to see the pit;" meaning, God will not allow me to fall into sin, and thus be doomed to Hell, and will not allow the "faithful servants" i.e., my disciples whom I enabled to reach paradise, to see me in the abode of the damned (*Tosefot Yom Tov*). And he who leads the people to sin, is not granted the opportunity to repent, lest his disciples descend to the nether-world while he inherits the life everlasting, as it is written (*Prov.* 28:17): "A man that is laden with the blood of any person, shall hasten his steps into the pit; none will support him;" meaning, whoever is guilty of ruining another man's soul, *none will support him* to prevent his fall; rather, he will be allowed to sink into the pit of hell (*Rashi, Yoma* 87a).

משה זכה **Moses was virtuous** – he achieved the highest degree of human perfection in both the intellectual and executive spheres, **and led the many to virtue** – by teaching Israel the Torah and its precepts, whereby they attained the rank of a chosen people; therefore, **the virtue of the many** – who fulfill the Divine commandments, **is attributed to him** – as if he himself took part in the fulfillment of all these *mitzvot*, **as it is**

**written: "He executed the Lord's judgments and His ordinances with Israel"** – meaning that he completed and fulfilled the whole Torah, he and all Israel with him (*Hameiri*). **Jeroboam sinned** – by making the golden calves and addressing the children of Israel: "You have gone up long enough to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt" (*I Kings*. 12:28), **and led the many to sin** – that of bowing down to the calves and worshipping idols, **the sin of the many is attributed to him** – as if he himself had perpetrated all their vices, **as it is written: "For the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and wherewith he caused Israel to sin"** – it is not written: *For the sins of Jeroboam and Israel*, but rather, *For the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned and wherewith he made...* to teach us that all these evils were attributed to Jeroboam (*Bartenura*).

**R**' Yisrael Salanter railed against those who awakened their servant girls to prepare a hot drink for them before going to *Selichos* early in the morning.

In those days, the women who worked as maids were generally widows or orphans, who were forced to do so in order to survive. "If you waken your maid to prepare a glass of tea for you," he said, "you are transgressing the law against oppressing the widow and orphan."

**MON./AUGUST 14/18 AV**

**יום ב' לפַּרְשַׁת עֵקֶב, י"ח אָב**

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Eikev

## **MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:19*

אבות ה:יט

כָּל מִי שֵׁישׁ בְּיָדוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הֵלְלוּ – מִתְלַמְּדֵי דִּי שְׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ; וְשְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים אַחֲרֵים – מִתְלַמְּדֵי דִּי שְׁל בַּלְעָם הָרָשָׁע. עֵין טוֹבָה, וְרוּחַ נְמוּכָה, וְנֶפֶשׁ שְׂפֹלָה – מִתְלַמְּדֵי דִּי שְׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ; עֵין רָעָה, וְרוּחַ גְּבוּהָה, וְנֶפֶשׁ רַחְבָּה – מִתְלַמְּדֵי דִּי שְׁל בַּלְעָם הָרָשָׁע. מַה בֵּין תְּלַמְּדֵי דִּי שְׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ לְתַלְמִידֵי דִּי שְׁל בַּלְעָם הָרָשָׁע? תְּלַמְּדֵי דִּי שְׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ אוֹכְלִין בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְנוֹחְלִין בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (משלי ח, כא): לְהַנְחִיל אֶהְבִּי יֵשׁ וְאַצְרַתִּיהֶם אֲמַלֵּא; אָבֵל תְּלַמְּדֵי דִּי שְׁל בַּלְעָם הָרָשָׁע יוֹרְשִׁין גִּיהֶנֶם וְיוֹרְדִין לְבְּאֵר שַׁחַת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (תהלים נה, כד): וְאַתָּה אֱ-לֹהִים תּוֹרְדֵם לְבְּאֵר שַׁחַת, אֲנָשֵׁי דָמִים וּמְרֵמָה לֹא-יִחַצּוּ יְמֵיהֶם, וְאֲנִי אֲבַטַח-בָּךְ.

He who has the following three attributes is of the disciples of our father Abraham; but he who has three other attributes is of the disciples of Balaam the wicked. A good eye, and a humble spirit, and a lowly soul, mark the disciples of our father, Abraham. An evil eye, a haughty spirit, and a proud soul, mark the disciples of Balaam the wicked. How do the disciples of our father Abraham differ from the disciples of Balaam the wicked? The disciples of our father Abraham partake of this world and inherit the world-to-come, as it is written (*Prov. 8:21*): "That I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance, and that I may fill their treasures;" but the disciples of Balaam the wicked inherit *Gehinnom* and descend into the pit of destruction, as it is said (*Ps. 55,24*): "But You, O God, will bring them down into the nethermost pit; men of blood and deceit shall not live out half their days, but as for me, I will trust in You."

## **MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

**He who has the following three attributes** – specified below, **is of the disciples of our father Abraham** – who emulate his qualities and follow in

his footsteps; **but he who has three other attributes** – listed below, which are the reverse of the previously listed characteristics, **is of the disciples of Balaam the wicked** – who appropriate his pernicious ways. He who has a **good eye** – is satisfied with his portion and happy with his lot; **and a humble spirit** – full of humility, **and a lowly soul** – that avoids the enticements and luxuries of this world, **mark the disciples of our father, Abraham** – who excelled in all these qualities: *a good eye* – as is evident in his statement to the king of Sodom (*Gen. 14:23*): "That I will not take a thread, nor a shoelatchet, nor anything that is yours;" *a humble spirit* – as reflected in (*Gen. 18:27*): "for I am but dust and ashes;" and *a lowly soul* – as shown in what he said to his wife, Sarah (*Gen. 12:11*): "Behold, now I know you are a fair woman to look upon," which meant, according to the *Midrash*, that until that time he had not looked upon her. There are several other verses testifying to Abraham's moral superiority, as outlined above. The three qualities enumerated are the reverse of *envy*, *lust* and *honor* which, according to Rabbi Eliezer HaKappar, take a man out of the world (see above, Chapt. 4:21). Thus, one who has *a good eye* is happy with his portion, and free of envy; one who has *a humble spirit* does not seek honor; and he who has *a lowly soul* will not be ruled by his physical passions (*Hida* quoting *Minhat Avot*). On the other hand, one who has עין רעה **an evil eye** – that lusts after gain, he is full of greed and he begrudges the possessions of others, **a haughty spirit** – full of arrogance, **and a proud soul** – enslaved by lust. These characteristics **mark the disciples of Balaam the wicked** – who possessed these evil qualities: *An evil eye* – overflowing with greed prompted him to curse Israel, as *Rashi* explains the verse (*Num. 22:18*): "if Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold," – this reveals an arrogant soul, coveting the riches of others; *a haughty spirit* – as borne out by the reference to himself (*Num. 24:16*): "The saying of him who hears the words of God, and the knowledge

of the Most High;" *and a proud soul* – filled with lust, hence his suggestion that the daughters of Moav resort to harlotry, which revealed his own corrupt character; for a man always directs and counsels others on the basis of his own character and mentality, for the virtuous do not propagate evil, they rather warn against it; but the Scripture says (*Num. 31:16*): "Behold, these caused the children of Israel (to rebel) through the counsel of Balaam" i.e., it was at the prompting and advice of Balaam that they (the Moabites) surrendered their daughters to sin (*Rambam*).

**מה בין תלמידי אברהם, אברהם, אינם שונים מן תלמידי בלעם?** – what is the reward gained by the disciples of Abraham and the punishment meted out to the disciples of Balaam? תלמידי אברהם של אברהם **The disciples of our father, Abraham, partake of this world** – they enjoy the fruits of their charitable deeds upon earth, **and inherit the world-to-come** – where they gain their full reward, **as it is written: "That I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance, and that I may fill their treasuries."** – *Those that love me* refers to the disciples of Abraham, who was called a lover, as in (*Is. 41:8*): "the seed of Abraham, who loves me;" and Scripture states: To cause them to inherit *substance (yesh)* in the world-to-come (*yesh* denotes something permanent), from which our Sages learned that God will present each righteous person with three hundred and ten (the numerical equivalent of *yesh*) worlds. This means that the joy and bliss reserved for each righteous person in heaven outweighs the value of earthly life 310 times. (*Bartenura*); the closing phrase of this verse *and that I may fill their treasures* refers to life in this world. אבל תלמידי בלעם של בלעם **but the disciples of Balaam the wicked inherit Gehinnom** – in this life (*Tosefot Yom Tov*), **and descend into the pit of destruction** – in the world-to-come, **as it is said: "But You O God, will bring them down into the nethermost pit; men**

of blood and deceit shall not live out half their days, but as for me, I will trust in You" – Balaam is called *a man of blood* because his counsel caused the destruction of twenty-four thousand Israelites, and *a man of deceit* for devising evil schemes (*Rambam*). Hence, his disciples are also called *men of blood and deceit*, concerning whom it is written: *bring them down into the nethermost pit* – in the world-to-come, and they shall not live out half their days – upon earth.

**R**' Yisrael Salanter made *Kiddush* as soon as possible on Friday night, in order not to keep the Jewish servant girl waiting any longer than necessary. After all, she had worked the whole day and was no doubt hungry.

One Shabbos night, as R' Yisrael was preparing to make *Kiddush*, there was a knock on the door. A man rushed in and told him that one of the local merchants had been imprisoned by the authorities, and unless quick action was taken, the man's life was in danger. R' Yisrael left the table immediately and made his way to certain officials with whom he was acquainted. After much effort, he succeeded in obtaining the merchant's release, and only close to midnight did he manage to return home and make *Kiddush* for everyone.

When he was asked why he had not been concerned about the maid that particular week, he replied, " Generally, I make *Kiddush* as soon as possible, because there is no reason why I should take my time at the maid's expense. In this case, however, where a man's life was in danger, it was the responsibility of all Jews, including the maid, to do whatever they could to save him."

TUES./AUGUST 15/19 AV

יום ג' לפ'רשת עקב, י"ט אב

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Avot 5:20

אבות ה:כ

יהודה בן תימא אומר: הוי עז כנמר, וקל כנשר, ורץ כצב, וגבור כארי לעשות רצון אביך שבשמים. הוא היה אומר: עז פנים לגיהנם, ובשת פנים לגן עדן. יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו שתבנה עירך במהרה בימינו ויתן חלקנו בתורתך.

Yehudah ben Tema said: Be bold as a leopard, light as the eagle, swift as the deer, and mighty as the lion, to do the will of your Father in heaven. He used to say: The shameless are for *Gehinnom* and the bashful are for *Gan Eden*. May it be Your will, O Lord our God, that Your City be rebuilt speedily in our days, and grant us our portion in Your Torah.

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*Our Mishnah, which ends with the prayer "May it be Your will" appears to mark the conclusion of this Tractate; the following Mishnayot may be later additions. Yehudah ben Tema is not mentioned anywhere else in the Mishnah. In the Gemara (Hag. 14a) the Sages expounded Isaiah's expression "prop and staff" (Is. 3:1) thus: prop, this refers to the masters of Scripture; staff, this refers to the masters of Mishnah, such as Rabbi Yehudah ben Tema and his colleagues. The tractate Avot de Rabbi Natan (Chapt. 41) contains additional statements in his name: "You should love Heaven, and revere Heaven; tremble and rejoice in all the mitzvot. If you commit a slight wrong against your fellow, let it be great in your sight; but if you do a great favor to your fellow, let it be insignificant in your sight. Similarly, if your fellow-man does you a small favor, let it be great in your sight; but if he does you a grievous wrong, let it be slight in your eyes. A sponge, and a tarred vessel (which does not lose a drop) these are the Torah scholars. A funnel and a tube (into which liquid pours in at one end only to escape at the other) – these are the wicked. Train yourself to accept suffering and be forgiving when insulted."*

יהודה בן תימא **Yehudah ben Tema said: Be bold as a leopard** – do not be shy to ask your teacher whatever you fail to understand (*Bartenura*). Alternatively, **bold as the leopard** – to repel those who ridicule your performance of the *mitzvot* (*Baal Haturim*); **light as the eagle** – to review your lessons tirelessly



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(*Bartenura*) and according to *Baal Haturim* to distance yourself from evil; **Swift as the deer** – in pursuit of *mitzvot*, both light and weighty; **and mighty as the lion, to do the will of your Father in heaven** – to conquer your passions.

הוא היה אומר **He** – Yehudah ben Tema, **used to say: The shameless to Gehinnom** – though we are urged to be *עז כנמר bold as the leopard*, this is confined to action undertaken in emergencies, for the sake of heaven; but boldness (shamelessness) as such is rejected, since boldness induces man to resent those who reprove him, and to renounce the right path (*Hameiri*); hence, paves the road to hell; **and the bashful to Gan Eden** – as the Gemara (*Ned. 20a*) notes: Whoever is bashful does not readily fall prey to sin, as it is written (*Ex. 20:17*): "that the fear of Him may be with you and keep you from sin." Indeed, bashfulness draws man to associate with virtuous and honest people, for he would be ashamed of himself and of others, were he to acquire a bad reputation for any reason (*Hameiri*).

יהי רצון **May it be Your will, O Lord our God, that Your City be rebuilt speedily in our days, and grant us our portion in Your Torah** – *Rambam* comments: Having praised the quality of bashfulness, our *Tanna* now prays: O Lord, our God, just as You bestowed upon us this quality, so also grant us that Your City be rebuilt speedily in our days. *Tosefot Rabbi Akiva Eiger*, citing the Radak, explains the prayer at the end of our Mishnah in the following way: In study, one requires boldness, as we have learned: *nor can the bashful learn*; but in the time to come, the earth will be filled with true knowledge, and we will have no need of boldness even in the study of Torah. Now, since our *Tanna* said: *the shameless to hell*, and yet Torah calls for boldness (shamelessness), therefore he prayed: *May it be Your will that Your city be rebuilt, and that You restore the Temple service to its place*, and then boldness could be entirely eliminat-

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ed. *Tiferet Yisrael* notes: Throughout the entire Mishnah we find no prayer except this one, and the explanation may be found in the Rabbinic statement (*Sotah* 49b): "In the footsteps of the Messiah, insolence will increase." Hence the *Tanna* prayed: May it be Your will that You *Yourself* rebuild Your City in Your great loving-kindness, and let it not rise by the insolence of the shameless. And likewise grant us that our portion, i.e., that part of boldness which resides in our souls, be employed by us solely for the enhancement of Your Torah..."

**R**' Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev found out that the local *matzah* bakers forced the women who kneaded the dough for *matzah* to work from early morning until late into the night.

He thereupon summoned the entire town and cried out: "Jews, the gentiles falsely accuse us of using gentile blood when we bake our *matzos*. That isn't true. Instead, we bake our *matzos* with the blood of Jewish women who are forced to work impossibly long hours."

WED./AUGUST 16/20 AV

יום ד' לפְּרָשֶׁת יַעֲקֹב, כ' אָב

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Avot 5:21

אבות ה:כא

הוא הָיָה אוֹמֵר: בֶּן חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים לְמִקְרָא, בֶּן עֶשֶׂר לְמִשְׁנָה, בֶּן שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה לְמִצְוֹת, בֶּן חָמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה לְתַלְמוּד, בֶּן שְׁמוֹנֵה עֶשְׂרֵה לְחַפָּה, בֶּן עֶשְׂרִים לְרְדוּף, בֶּן שְׁלֹשִׁים לְכַח, בֶּן אַרְבָּעִים לְבִינָה, בֶּן חֲמִשִּׁים לְעֵצָה, בֶּן שִׁשִּׁים לְזִקְנָה, בֶּן שִׁבְעִים לְשִׁיבָה, בֶּן שְׁמוֹנִים לְגְבוּרָה, בֶּן תְּשָׁעִים לְשׁוּחַ, בֶּן מֵאָה כְּאִלוֹ מֵת וְעֵבֶר וּבָטַל מִן הָעוֹלָם.

He used to say: At the age of five, (one is ripe) for Bible; at ten, for Mishnah, at thirteen, for *mitzvot*; at fifteen, for Talmud; at eighteen for the marriage canopy; at twenty, for pursuit; at thirty, for vigor; at forty, for understanding; at fifty, for counsel; at sixty, to be an elder; at seventy, for grey hair; at eighty, for strength; at ninety, to bend over; at one hundred, as if he had died and passed away and disappeared from the world.

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*In this Mishnah man's years are divided into periods, so as to urge fathers to teach their children at the appropriate times. Incidentally, we are also told of the natural developments which occur with the passage of time. (Hameiri).*

**He used to say** – according to *Tosefot Yom Tov*, citing *Midrash Sh'muel*, the source of these statements is not Rabbi Yehudah ben Tema, but Shmuel HaKatan. Accordingly, the entire Mishnah does not belong to this tractate, but constitutes a later Rabbinic addition. Some versions place at this point the Mishnah cited above (Chapt. 4, Mishnah 19):

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**REV. LEO MORDKOFF, A"H**



## כ' אב / WED./AUGUST 16

Shmuel HaKatan said: *Rejoice not when your enemy falls, etc.*

חמש **At the age of five, (one is ripe) for Bible** – according to some commentaries this means that at this age the child is ready to enter school and learn the alphabet and how to read (the Heb. *mikra* denotes both *Bible* and *reading* – tr.), but others hold that this should be done at the age of three, drawing on a Midrashic interpretation (*Tanhuma Kedoshim, Vayikra Rabba*) of the verse (*Lev. 19:23*): "And when you shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees ... then you shall count the fruit thereof as forbidden; three years shall it be as forbidden unto you; it shall not be eaten." This is interpreted as a symbolic reference to the fruits of Torah, as it is written (*Prov. 27:18*): "Whoso keeps the fig-tree shall eat its *fruit*." Here the *tree* represents the child, and the *coming into the land* his emergence into the world. The Torah then says that for three full years it shall be counted as *orlah* (lit. "closed" – tr.), and in the fourth year it shall be *holy, for giving praise*, i.e., when the child completes his first three years of *orlah* and enters into his fourth year, sanctify him to the Lord by teaching him the alphabet; *And in the fifth year ... it may yield unto you more richly the increase thereof* – meaning that at this point it is necessary to "increase" his training and introduce the pupil into the domain of the Bible (*Hameiri*).

עשר **At ten, for Mishnah** – having studied Bible for five years, the child should now begin to learn *Mishnah*. And why did the *Tanna* determine a period of five years? As our Rabbis noted (*Hul. 24a*): "A pupil who does not succeed in his studies within five years, will never succeed."

בן שלש עשרה **At thirteen, for mitzvot** – he is considered an adult, and bound to keep the Divine commandments. Intimation of this is found in the Prophets (*Is. 43:21*): "This people which (*am zu*) I formed for myself, that they might tell of my praise" – the numer-

ical value of *zu* is thirteen. Others claim that this is a *Halakhah* given to Moses at Sinai (*Teshuvot Harosh*).

בן חמש עשרה **At fifteen, for Talmud** – the study of Gemara. This Mishnah is referring to the analysis and explanations by which the later *Tannaim* (Mishnaic Sages) endeavored to clarify the statements of their predecessors, since in those days the Gemara in its present format did not exist (*Rambam, Sefer Hama'or*).

בן שמונה עשרה **At eighteen, for the marriage canopy** – a hint of this is found by the Midrash in the verse (*Lev. 21:13*): "And he (*vehu*) shall take a wife in her virginity" – the numerical value of *vehu* equals eighteen. *Rashi* notes that in the account of Creation up to the statement: "because she (Eve) was taken out of man" the word "man" (*adam*) appears eighteen times.

בן עשרים **At twenty, for pursuit** – if unmarried by then, he should seek a match without delay, lest he be caught up in sinful thoughts (*Hameiri*). Alternatively, this statement refers to the *pursuit* of a livelihood – having studied Bible, Mishnah and Gemara, having married and fathered children, he must now strive to earn a living (*Bartenura*). Some interpret *pursuit* as that of the enemy, since at twenty a man is obliged to enlist into the army (*Mahzor Vitri*) as it is written (*Num. 1:3*): "From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel."

בן שלושים **At thirty, for vigor** – thus, the Levites entered the service in the Tabernacle at the age of thirty, as it is written (*Num. 4:47*): "From thirty years old and upward ... every one that entered in to do the work of service, and the work of bearing burdens in the tent of meeting."

בן ארבעים **At forty, for understanding** – by then he is intellectually mature and able to make logical deductions. Thus, after forty years in the wilderness, Moses said to the children of Israel (*Deut. 29:3*): "But

## כ' אב / WED./AUGUST 16

the Lord has not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, until this day." (See *Av. Zar.* 5b). A hint of this is also found in the phrase "and his heart shall understand" (*ulevavo yavin*) – the numerical value of *levavo* is forty (*Melekheth Shelomo*).

בן חמישים **At fifty, for counsel** – this involves two elements: 1. intelligence, and 2. experience. By the age of fifty, a person has had ample experience, while his intelligence is still vibrant and as a result, his counsel is distilled by the two vital components (*Hameiri*). Thus it is said of the Levites (*Num.* 8:25): "And from the age of fifty years they shall return from the service of the work, and shall serve no more; but shall minister with their brethren." What kind of ministration does the Levite render to his brethren? He advises and trains them how to perform their duty (*Rashi*).

בן ששים **At sixty, to be an elder** – as it is written (*Job* 5:26): "You shall come to your graves in ripe age (*bekhelah*) whose numerical value is sixty. Others interpret: "an elder" to be a wise man who knows how to season his wisdom with reason and good sense, as it is written (*Job.* 12:12): "Wisdom is with aged men" (the Hebrew for 'aged men' *yeshishim* contains *shishim* 'sixty' – tr.).

בן שבעים **At seventy, for grey hair** (*la-sevah*) – as it is written of King David (*I Chron.* 29:28): "And he died (*be-sevah*) in a good old age," and David lived for seventy years.

בן שמונים **At eighty, for strength** – as it is written (*Ps.* 90:10): "Seventy years is our life's span, eighty if our strength suffice."

בן תשעים **At ninety, to bend over** – by then a person's posture droops. *Rabbenu Yonah* reads instead of *lashuah* 'bend over', *lasuah* 'to speak', as in 'to pour forth his speech (*siho*)'. Thus, upon reaching ninety, it is proper to devote oneself entirely to prayer and praise of God – extolling His wonders, to perfect one's

character, and to the pursuit of Torah and *mitzvot*.

בן מאה **At one hundred, as if he had died and passed away and disappeared from the world** – by then his eyes have dimmed, his appearance has deteriorated, his source of intelligence has dried up, and he grows more and more foolish (*Rashi*). And if his mind remains clear, he has all the more reason to limit his activity to prayer, supplication and invocation (*Hameiri*).

*Hear the voice of my prayer, O my King and my G-d, for it is to You that I pray. (Psalms 5:3)*

According to the Jerusalem Talmud, G-d says, "Let them not pray to the angel Michael or to Gabriel. Let them pray to Me, and I will answer them promptly" (*Berachos 9:1*).

Why, then, do so many of our prayers appear to go unanswered, even though we pray directly to G-d?

A person is indeed required to take certain actions, such as to work for a living or to avail himself of medical treatment when sick. But he should believe that it is G-d that provides for him, and that it is G-d that heals him. Man is required to "go through the motions," as it were, but the immediate source of his sustenance and healing is G-d.

Angels are not the only intermediaries whose help we are not permitted to seek. Man should relate directly to G-d for all his needs. If man thinks that it is his work that is earning for him, that he can control his fate and earn more money by more work, he is essentially trusting in an intermediary rather than in G-d.

Perhaps we pray *verbally* directly to G-d, but our actions too often consist of the use of various "intermediaries." A sincere trust and faith in G-d and G-d alone will indeed merit prompt reward.

**THURS./AUGUST 17/21 AV**

יום ה' לַפָּרָשֶׁת עֵקֶב, כ"א אָב

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Eikev

## **MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 5:22*

אבות ה:כב

בֵּן בַּג בַּג אֹמֵר: הִפֵּךְ בֵּה וְהִפֵּךְ בֵּה, דְּכֻלָּהּ בֵּה; וּבֵה תִּחְזִי,  
וְסִיב וּבִלָּה בֵּה, וּמִנָּה לָא תִּזְוַע, שְׂאִין לָךְ מִדָּה טוֹבָה  
הַיְמָנָה.

Ben Bag-Bag said: Turn it, and turn it again, for everything is in it; And contemplate it, and grow old and grey over it, and stir not from it, for you have no better principle than it.

## **MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

*Ben Bag-Bag appears to have been a contemporary of Hillel. According to Tosafot (Hag. 9b), he was a convert. Similarly, Midrash Sh'muel claims that Ben Bag-Bag and Ben Heh-Heh (the author of the following Mishnah) were converts, and were called by these names to conceal their identity from informers. Like all proselytes, they were the "offspring" of the archetypal 'converts,' Abraham and Sarah, both of whom had the letter heh added to their names by God. Hence Bag-Bag is a disguised variant of Heh-Heh (the numerical value of both being five). Thus both names are identical in origin, the two forms serving merely to distinguish between two Tannaim. Others claim that Ben Bag-Bag and Ben Heh-Heh are two different names for one and the same Tanna. Accordingly the initials BaG-BaG denote Ben Ger, Ben Gioret (son of a male and a female convert, respectively) while Ben Heh-Heh means 'Son of Abraham and Sarah', the prototypes of the proselyte, to whose names the letter heh was added, as explained above (see Hag. 9b): Tosafot s.v. ("Bar Heh-Heh"). Their teachings appear in Aramaic, the language of the converts (Tosefot Yom Tov quoting Derekh Hayyim). It is further explained that since Torah comments have the widest popular application, these sayings were disseminated in Aramaic, the vernacular of the returning exiles from Babylon. Accordingly, the statement of Hillel the Elder (Chapt. One, Mishnah 13) concerning Torah-study is likewise coined in Aramaic. In the previous Mishnah we have learned concerning the ages of man in relation to Torah-study. Here, Ben Bag-Bag declares that having studied Bible and Mishnah and Gemara, man has not yet attained a total grasp of the Torah, since Torah study has no limit, as it is written (Ps. 119:96): "I have seen an end to every purpose; but Your commandment is exceedingly broad" (Midrash Sh'muel).*



## THURS./AUGUST 17/כ"א אב

בג בג בן **Ben Bag-Bag said: Turn it, and turn it again** – engage in the study of Torah continuously, **for everything is in it** – all the wisdom of the world is contained in it (*Mahzor Vitri*). Others explain that one who studied the Torah should not do so superficially, but should turn its pages constantly and study its message thoughtfully, for in doing so he will find in it the answers to all his uncertainties (*Hameiri*). Thus, *for everything is in it* means that all may be clarified by a persevering study of the text. According to *Rashi* it means that whenever you delve into the Torah, you will discover in it new aspects and insights; in the words of our Sages (*Eruv. 54b*): "Why are the words of the Torah compared to the fig tree? As it is written (*Prov. 27:18*): 'Whoso keeps the fig tree shall eat its fruit.' Just like the fig tree, the more one searches through it, the more figs one finds in it (since they do not ripen at once, but gradually, thus yielding fruit at all times – *Rashi*), so it is with the words of the Torah; the more one consults them the more insights does one find in them."

ובה תחזי **And contemplate it** – you will perceive the truth through your mind's eye (*Rambam*); **and grow old and grey over it** – even when gripped by old age and weariness, study the Torah, **and stir not from it** – saying, I have studied sufficiently, and need not devote myself to it any more, but shall now turn to other disciplines, **for you have no better principle than it** – than adhering to the Torah and engage in it ceaselessly, as it is written (*Josh. 1:8*): "This book of the Torah shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night."

## FRI./AUGUST 18/22 AV

יום ו' לַפָּרָשֶׁת עֵקֶב, כ"ב אָב

### LIGHT CANDLES

Atlanta	8:03	Hartford	7:29	Montreal	7:40	San Fran.	7:41
Brookline	7:23	Houston	7:42	New York	7:32	Seattle	7:59
Chicago	7:29	Los Ang.	7:19	Oak Park	8:11	Silver Spr.	7:41
Cleveland	8:04	Memphis	7:28	Philadel.	7:35	St. Louis	7:34
Denver	7:35	Miami	7:36	Pitts.	7:56	Toronto	7:59

### MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

*Avot* 5:23

אבות ה:כג

בֶּן הֵהָהָה אָמַר: לְפֹמִים צִעָרָא אֲגָרָא.

Ben Heh-Heh said: According to the exertion is the reward.

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*This short maxim, which concludes the chapter, supplements the previous Mishnah, wherein systematic and persistent Torah study is extolled as a means of gaining enlightenment and discovering the deeper layers of the Divine message. Our present Mishnah adds that the more a man exerts himself and labors in Torah study, the profounder the depths he will attain, the more wondrous his discoveries, and the greater his reward will be. Ben Heh-Heh's identity is dealt with in the introduction to the previous Mishnah.*

**Ben Heh-Heh said: According to the exertion is the reward** – Rambam comments: "The more you grapple to meet the demands of the Torah, the greater will be your compensation" (in attaining its Divine truth), as the Gemara (*Ber.* 63b) notes: "The words of Torah endure only with the one who kills himself for it." Furthermore (*ibid.*): "With whom do

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— *Kenneth and Jenny Michael*



## FRI./AUGUST 18/כ"ב אב

you find the cream of the Torah? With him who spurts out over it the milk which he sucked from his mother's breasts." According to *Midrash Sh'muel*, our author consoles the person who must labor and torment himself to grasp his Torah lessons, that even he must not slacken in Torah study since it is pain and effort, rather than achievement, which determine the reward. Thus, one who labors and toils to gain familiarity with the Torah, even though advancing but slightly, receives from Heaven an equal reward with that of the outstanding scholar of the generation, since *according to the labor is the reward*.

*Avot de Rabbi Natan* (Chapt. 12) quotes this saying in the name of Hillel the Elder, and adds: Hillel the Elder traveled on the road and met two people carrying wheat, and asked them: How much is a *Se'ah* (a measure of volume)? They answered: Two *Dinarim*. As he went on, he met other people carrying wheat, and said to them: How much is a *Se'ah*? And they answered; Three *Dinarim*. Said Hillel: But the other merchants asked only two! And they answered him: Don't you know that the reward is according to the effort (meaning that they had brought their wheat from a more distant place)? Thereupon, Hillel said to them: You have responded to me in kind, for I have also said: *According to the exertion is the reward* (*Binyan Yehoshua*).

**A** stranger once walked into the *beis midrash* of R' Yechiel Michel of Gustinin early in the morning. The *shammash* went over to the man and asked him whether he had prayed yet. R' Yechiel Michel became angry at the *shammash* and told him: "When a Jew who has come from afar walks into the *beis midrash* early in the morning, one doesn't ask him if he has prayed yet, but whether he has eaten."

# SAT./AUGUST 19/23 AV

שַׁבַּת פְּרָשַׁת עֵקֶב, כ"ג אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Mussaf – We bless the new moon of Elul (Molad: Shabbos morning 1 minute, 13 chalakim after 3); Av Ha-rachamim is not recited; Mincha – Pirkei Avos 4

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Parshas Eikev; Haftorah – Isaiah 49:14-51:3; Mincha – beginning of Parshas Re'eh

## SABBATH ENDS

Atlanta 9:05 9:32	Hartford 8:30 8:57	Montreal 8:41 9:08	San Fran. 8:43 9:10
Brookline 8:25 8:52	Houston 8:44 9:11	New York 8:34 9:01	Seattle 9:00 9:27
Chicago 8:30 8:57	Los Ang. 8:21 8:48	Oak Park 9:13 9:40	Silver Spr. 8:43 9:10
Cleveland 9:06 9:33	Memphis 8:29 8:56	Philadel. 8:37 9:04	St. Louis 8:35 9:02
Denver 8:36 9:03	Miami 8:38 9:05	Pitts. 8:57 9:24	Toronto 9:01 9:28

1st zman is shitas Ha'Gaonim, 2nd is shitas Rabbeinu Tam

## DEVAR TORAH / PARSHAS EKEV

*"This shall be the reward when you hearken to these laws and you observe and perform them, Hashem your G-d will safeguard you the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your forefathers."* Deuteronomy 7:12

The *Sifsei Kohen* notes that the first part of the verse is in the plural form (when you hearken, you observe) but the second part is in the singular (*Hashem* will safeguard you). He explains:

The transition from "you" plural when referring to the observance of *mitzvos* to "you" singular is when referring to the reward.

The observance and performance is best carried out in large groups, multitudes. There, the principle is *B'rov am hadras melech* (*Proverbs*, 14:28), "in the multitude the glory of the King is readily seen." The greater the assembly performing a *mitzvah*, the greater is the glory of *Hashem*.

Not so in the case of reward. The reward is determined by the intentions (*kavanah*) of the individual, which varies from person to person. The reward is different for each individual and, therefore, when referring to reward the Torah speaks in the singular.

כ"ג אב/19 AUGUST/SAT.

## INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 6

### MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

שָׁנוּ חֲכָמִים בְּלִשׁוֹן הַמִּשְׁנָה. בְּרוּךְ שֶׁבָּחַר בָּהֶם וּבַמִּשְׁנָתָם.

(The following lessons, too) the Sages taught in the language of the Mishnah. Blessed be He, who chose them and their Mishnah.

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*This chapter contains baraitot (from the root בראה bara'ah, "external," i.e., tannaitic statements not included in the Mishnah – tr.) in praise of the Torah and those who study it. Hence, the chapter is called Kinyan Torah (The Acquisition of Torah), or Perek de Rabbi Meir (The Chapter of Rabbi Meir), since it opens with Rabbi Meir said. As mentioned in our introduction to this Tractate, the present chapter was added to Pirkei Avot at a later time, when it became customary to study a chapter of Avot on Shabbatot between Pesah and Shavuot, that it might be studied on the Shabbat before Shavuot which celebrates the Giving of the Torah. The introductory statement at the beginning of the chapter informs us that the following lessons, though baraitot, are couched in the style of the Mishnah. According to Midrash Sh'muel, the opening statement informs us that the baraitot have equal status with the Mishnayot, the difference being that the Mishnayot were taught in the academy of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi, whereas the Baraitot were taught beyond its confines by his disciples, Rabbi Hiyya, Rabbi Oshayah, and Bar Kappara (Hul. 141b). This chapter is found almost in its entirety in the Seder Eliyahu Zutta, Chapt. 17, and in Tractate Kallah Rabbati, Chapt. 8.*

שָׁנוּ חֲכָמִים (The following lessons, too) the Sages taught in the language of the Mishnah – שָׁנוּ חֲכָמִים  
*Shanu Hakhamim* "The Sages taught" is a Hebrew rendering of the Aramaic תנו רבנן *Tanu Rabbanan*

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— Scott Leader



recurring throughout the Talmud seeing that the following teachings are couched in the (Neo-Hebrew – tr.) style of the Mishnah: **Blessed be He who chose them** – the Sages, **and their Mishnah** – the doctrines which they expounded, as it is written (*Deut.* 17:11): "According to the law which they shall teach you, and according to the judgement which they shall tell you, shall you do. You shall not turn aside from the sentence which they shall declare unto you, to the right or to the left." Our Sages (*Av. Zar.* 35a) said that the verse "for thy love (*dodekha*) is better than wine" (*Cant.* 1:2) signifies that the words of your beloved ones (the exponents of the Oral Torah) are more pleasant to God than the wine of the Torah (the written source of the Torah – *Rashi*). *Tiferet Yisrael* explains *and their Mishnah* – "that God approved also the teachings of the Sages, because they did not pursue scholarship for the sake of self-glorification; and we are herein admonished not to suspect the Rabbis of having extolled Torah study in this chapter solely because it happened to be their profession."

**T**he Sadigerer Rebbe once reprimanded a merchant who dealt very harshly with his debtors. "Rebbe," said the man, "you should have followed the ways of the Baal Shem Tov, who lived in the forests, rather than living in the city and bothering merchants like me."

"On the contrary," said the Sadigerer, "the Baal Shem Tov lived in the forests because in his days there were brigands in the forests, and he wished to protect the innocent people from them. Nowadays, when the brigands live in the cities, I need to be here, and do what I can to help those who are defenseless."

**SUN./AUGUST 20/24 AV**

יום א' לפַרְשַׁת רֵאָה, כ"ד אָב

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:1*

אבות ו:א

רבי מאיר אומר: כל העוסק בתורה לשמה - זוכה לדברים הרבה; ולא עוד, אלא שכל העולם כלו כְּדִי הוא לו. נקרא רע, אהוב, אוהב את המקום, אוהב את הבריות, משמח את המקום, משמח את הבריות; ומלבשתו ענוה ויראה, ומכשרתו להיות צדיק וחסיד וישר ונאמן, ומרחקתו מן החטא, ומקרבתו לידי זכות; ונהנין ממנו עצה ותושיה, בינה וגבורה, שנאמר (משלי ח, יד): לִי-עֵצָה וְתוֹשִׁיָה אֲנִי בִינָה לִי גְבוּרָה; וְנוֹתַנְתּוּ לִי מְלָכוֹת וּמִמְשָׁלָה וְחִקּוֹר דִּין; וּמִגְלִין לִי רְזִי תוֹרָה, וְנִעְשָׂה כְּמַעֲשֵׂי הַמִּתְגַּבֵּר וּכְנֹהֵר שְׁאִינוּ פוֹסֵק; וְהוּי צְנוּעַ, וְאָרֶךְ רוּחַ, וּמוֹחַל עַל עֲלֻבוֹנוֹ; וּמְגַדְלָתוֹ וּמְרוֹמְמָתוֹ עַל כָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים.

Rabbi Meir said: He who occupies himself with Torah for its own sake, merits many things; moreover, he is deserving of the whole world – He is called: friend, beloved (of God), a lover of God, a lover of mankind, one who gladdens God, one who gladdens mankind; and it clothes him in humility and reverence, and trains him to be righteous and pious, upright and faithful. It keeps him far from sin, and draws him near to virtue. From him men enjoy good counsel and sound knowledge, understanding and fortitude, as it is written (*Prov. 8:14*): "Counsel is mine, and sound knowledge; I am understanding and power is mine." It gives him sovereignty and dominion and discernment in judgement. The mysteries of the Torah are revealed to him; he is made like an ever-increasing spring, and like a river that never fails. He becomes modest and

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ברוך שאול בן

אלטר חיים אהרן הלוי, ע"ה

**SIDNEY RABINOWITZ, A"H**

— *Isaac A. Rabinowitz*



forbearing, and forgiving of insults. It magnifies and elevates him above all things.

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

רבי מאיר **Rabbi Meir said: He who occupies himself with Torah for its own sake** – to learn its message and practice its tenets, **merits many things** – which are specified below. (*Mahzor Vitri*). Alternatively, the *many things* are in addition to those enumerated below, and refer to the enjoyment of the advantages of this world, whereas the praises listed below denote spiritual attainments associated with the perfection of the soul (*Midrash Sh'muel*); ולא עוד **moreover, he is deserving of the whole world** – the world was created and is sustained for his sake, since the entire universe came into being for the sake of the Torah. Thus, our Sages (*Bereshit Rabba*, Chapt. 1) rendered the opening phrase of the Bible: "*Be-reshit*, for the sake of Reshit *bara Elokim*, God created heaven and earth," and *Reshit* beginning, refers to the Torah, as in (*Prov. 8:22*): "The Lord has made me as the beginning (*Reshit*) of His way." Accordingly, he who studies Torah for its own sake fulfills the will of his Creator. The Talmud (*Ber. 6b*) comments on the verse (*Eccl. 12:13*): "'The end of the matter, all having been heard: fear God, and keep His commandments; *for this is the whole man'* – all of creation has no other purpose but this."

And these are the *things* which he merits: נקרא רע **He is called: friend** – of God, as it is written (*Ps. 139:17*): "and to me, how valuable is Your friendship, O God," **beloved (of God)** – as it is written (*Prov. 8:17*): "I love them that love me." *Tiferet Yisrael* comments: *He is called friend* – worthwhile to befriend and to be consulted on every matter; *beloved* – by all because of his superb qualities and noble character. Others comment that there are *friends* who are not *beloved*, while there are *friends* who are also *beloved*; but he who is devoted to the Torah for its own sake is a *beloved friend* to all; i.e. to God and men alike (*J.*



*Yavetz*);

אֹהֵב אֶת הַמְּקוֹם **a lover of God** – who studies the Divine Torah out of love; **a lover of mankind** – drawing them close to the Torah and guiding them on the right path, that they, too, might derive the maximum benefit. According to *Tiferet Yisrael* the *lover of mankind* loves even the depraved, who do not deserve to be loved except that they too are the creatures of God, **one who gladdens God** – by his intellect and conduct. *Midrash Sh'muel* explains that because of his qualities, God is favorable to the world, and this gladdens the Almighty, who desires to benefit His creatures, and He rejoices in the act; **one who gladdens mankind** – by his wise observations and exemplary deeds. According to the *Midrash Sh'muel* it is through his merit that the whole world derives happiness and contentment;

וּמִלֵּב שָׂתוּ **and it clothes him in humility and reverence** – the Torah bestows upon him these qualities: humility and reverent fear of Heaven, as our Sages (*Vayikra Rabba* 37) noted on the verse: "'You did pluck up a vine out of Egypt' (*Ps.* 80:9) – just as the grapevine bears large and small clusters, and the larger cluster seems lower than the one next to it, so too Israel: the more a Jew labors in the Torah, and surpasses his neighbor in learning, the more humble he appears;" and it is written (*Deut.* 17:19): "that he may learn to fear the Lord his God" – this tells us that study leads to reverence of God (*Sifrei, Shoftim*); וּמִכְשָׂרְתוֹ **and trains him to be righteous** – in his faith, **and pious** – in his deeds, which go beyond the letter of the law, **upright** – in his heart, **and faithful** – in his speech. According to *Tiferet Yisrael*, a person is *righteous* in his relation to God, *pious* in his attitude towards his fellow-man, *honest* with himself, i.e., guarding his character against deterioration through indolence, gluttony, etc. and *faithful* – steadfast in his way of life, unyielding to his passions or random circumstances.

ומרחקתו **It keeps him far from sin** – even in his thoughts and yearnings, because he masters his spirit and restrains his impulse, **and draws him near to virtue** – to the performance of *mitzvot* and charitable deeds. Alternatively, *keeping far from sin* means that others will not stumble into sin on his account, *and drawing near to virtue* means that others gain merit by his example. ונהנין ממנו **From him men enjoy good counsel and sound knowledge** – contained in the Torah which men learn from him; **understanding** – the gateway to knowledge, **and fortitude** – of putting this knowledge into practice (*Midrash Sh'muel*). **As it is written: "Counsel is mine, and sound knowledge** (this statement is made by *wisdom*, i.e. the *Torah*), **I am understanding, and power is mine"** – he who devotes himself to the Torah for its own sake is graced with all of these qualities. **It gives him sovereignty** – as they said (*Git. 62a*): "How do we know that the Sages are called kings? Because it is written (*Prov. 8:15*): "By me (wisdom – Torah) kings reign," **and dominion** – as the Gemara observes (*Ber. 6b*): "Whoever has fear of heaven, his words are heard," **and discernment in judgement** – the power of unravelling the intricacies of a case so as to dispense a fair verdict.

ומגלין לו **The mysteries of the Torah are revealed to him** – as it is written (*Ps. 25:14*): "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," **he is made like an ever-increasing spring, and like a river that never fails** – a variant version reverses the order: "like a spring that never ceases and like an overflowing river," i.e., his knowledge constantly grows, and whoever draws near to him may quench his thirst by the wellspring of his Torah and wisdom (*Emunat Sh'muel*), as it is written (*Prov. 5:16*): "Let your springs be dispersed abroad, and courses of water in the streets." והוי צנוע **He becomes modest** – though he gains fame for his intellect and personality, he retains his modest character, **and forbearing** – and

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tolerant; some commentators distinguish between 'for-bearing' (*erekh ruah*) and 'long suffering' (*erekh appayim*); the latter, though susceptible to anger contains his wrath and delays his retribution, whereas the former is inaccessible to anger altogether, even when subject to objectionable treatment (*Midrash Sh'muel*), **and forgiving of insults** – he will rather be offended than hurt others and count among those who hear themselves abused, yet do not counter (*Shab. 88b*); moreover, he forgives those who have assailed him, that they should not incur punishment on his account.

ומגדלתו **It magnifies and elevates him above all things** – having attained all these qualities, the Torah raises him above all the works of creation, as it is written (*Ps. 8:7*): "You have granted (man) dominion over the works of Your hands" (*Minhat Shabbat*) Alternatively, *above all things* (*ma'asim*) refers to *ma'asei hamitzvot* – the performance of the Divine precepts. Accordingly, such is the character attained by the person who devotes himself to the Torah for its own sake, that the *mitzvot* glory in him rather than him glorying in the *mitzvot*, as though he towered above them and his own rank transcended that of the *mitzvot* (*Midrash Sh'muel*).

**MON./AUGUST 21/25 AV**

**יום ב' לפַּרְשַׁת רֵאָה, כ"ה אָב**

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Re'eh

### **MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:2*

אבות ו:ב

אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי: בְּכָל יוֹם וְיוֹם בֵּית קוֹל יוֹצֵאת מִהַר חוֹרֵב וּמִכְרֹזֹת וְאוֹמְרֶת: אוֹי לָהֶם לְבָרִיּוֹת מֵעֲלֻבוֹנָה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה שֶׁכָּל מִי שְׁאִינוֹ עוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה נִקְרָא נְזוּף, שְׂנֵאֲמַר (משלי יא, כב): גָּזֵם זָהָב בְּאֶף חֲזִיר אִשָּׁה יִפֶּה וְסָרַת טָעַם. וְאוֹמֵר (שמות לב, טז): וְהִלַּחַת מַעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹהִים הֵמָּה וְהַמִּכְתָּב מִכְתָּב אֱלֹהִים הוּא חָרוֹת עַל־הַלַּחַת, אֶל תִּקְרָא חָרוֹת אֶלָּא חָרוֹת, שְׁאִין לָךְ בֶּן חָרִין אֶלָּא מִי שְׁעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה תְּדִיר, הֵרִי זֶה מִתְעַלֶּה, שְׂנֵאֲמַר (במדבר כא, יט): וּמִמַּתָּנָה נְחֻלִּיאֵל, וּמִנְחֻלִּיאֵל בָּמוֹת.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Every day a heavenly voice goes forth from Mount Horev proclaiming and saying: 'Woe to mankind for their disdain of the Torah!' For he who does not occupy himself with the Torah is called "rebuked," as it is written (*Prov.* 11:22): "As a golden ring in the snout of a swine, so is a fair woman without discretion." And it says (*Ex.* 32:16): "And the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tablets." Read not "graven" (*harut*), but "freedom" (*herut*); for no man is free but he who occupies himself with the study of Torah, and he who devotes himself regularly to the study of Torah shall be exalted, as it is written (*Num.* 21:19): "And from Mattanah to Nahaliel and from Nahaliel to Bamot."

### **MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

*Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi was a foremost scholar of the first*

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לזכר נשמת

אהרון בן יואב צבי, ז"ל

**ERNEST TAUB, A"H**

— *Shloime Taub*



## כ"ה אב / MON./AUGUST 21

generation of amoraim in Eretz Yisrael. He learned Torah from Bar Kappara, a disciple of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi, but his specific teacher was Rabbi Yehudah ben P'dayah, the nephew of Bar Kappara (Bereshit Rabba 94:5). He resided and taught in the city of Lod, and in his ebbing years he moved to Tiberias. Involved in communal work, he complained that because of the ceaseless public calls, he had forgotten many of the halakhot he had learned from Rabbi Yehudah ben P'dayah (Tanhuma, Va'era). Renowned for his piety, he attained in his visions the privilege of meeting the prophet Elijah. He is also said to have entered Paradise while still alive (Ket. 77b). Spreading Torah was his ideal occupation, and he taught it even to those suffering from contagious diseases. He refused to part from them, even when they crowded around him, declaring that "the Torah protects those who study it" (ibid.). Moreover, he extolled the Torah as the best cure from illness, thus "he who suffers from headaches, let him study Torah;" and even "if one's whole body was ailing, let him study Torah" (Eruv. 54b).

**אמר רבי יהושע Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said:** Every day a heavenly voice goes forth from Mount Horev – i.e., Mount Sinai, where the Torah was given, **proclaiming and saying: Woe to a mankind for their disdain of the Torah!** – when they fail to study it, the Torah is greatly offended; hence, "Woe to mankind!" The term *bat kol* ("heavenly voice"), has several interpretations. According to *Tosefot Yom Tov* (Yev. 16:6): "the *bat kol*, frequently mentioned in Rabbinic literature, was the *voice* consulted once prophecy had ceased; it is a *voice* created by God for that very moment to impart His mysteries to those who revere Him." *Midrash Sh'muel*, however, comments on our Mishnah: "It is worth noting, since this *voice* warns men to devote themselves to the study of the Torah regularly, it should be heard throughout the whole world. Hence, we may conclude that this statement should be understood metaphorically. The Torah was given on Mount Horev – Sinai, where all Israel swore to engage in its study day and night; when they fail to do so, they should imagine *as if* Mount Horev itself was proclaiming and declaring: "Woe to mankind for their disdain of the Torah!"

**שכל מי שאינו For he who does not occupy himself with the Torah – as he should, is called rebuked – he**

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deserves to be reprimanded for his objectionable conduct. According to *Rashi*, *rebuked* means excommunicated (a stage preceding that of the formal ban, the *herem* – tr.). Similarly, in *Mahzor Vitri*: "He is like one who is excommunicated by Heaven, as it is written (*Deut. 27:26*): 'Cursed be he who does not establish the words of this Torah,' and if he does not study them, how can he establish them? Surely, 'the ignorant cannot be sin-fearing, nor can the unlettered be pious.'" Our Sages note (*Shevu. 36a*): "*Arur* (cursed) connotes both excommunication and curse; this proves that he is excommunicated by Heaven,"

שנאמר נזם זהב as it is written: "**As a golden ring in the snout of a swine, so is a fair woman without discretion**" – this alludes to a man who knows Torah, but neglects its study; he is like the swine which soils the golden ring hung on its snout, and like the woman whose lack of discernment mars her beauty and renders it loathsome. It is likewise pointed out that *nazuf* (rebuked) is an abbreviation (*notarikon*) of *ring of gold in a snout* (*Nezem Zahav be-aF*).

ואומר והלוחות And it – the Bible, says: "**And the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tablets.**" Read not "**graven**" (*harut*) but "**freedom**" (*herut*) for no man is free – from domination by his evil inclinations and passions, but he who occupies himself with the study of Torah – as noted in the previous Mishnah, that the Torah "clothes him in humility and reverence, and keeps him far from sin, and draws him near to virtue, and magnifies and elevates him above all things."

שעוסק And he who devotes himself regularly to the study of Torah, shall be exalted – will rise to greatness by virtue of his Torah knowledge and the noble character traits which he thereby acquired, as it is written: "**And from Mattanah – gift i.e., Torah to Nahaliel – Divine heritage and from Nahaliel to Bamot**" – high places. The opening words of this

verse: "And from the wilderness to Mattanah," our Sages expounded thus (*Eruv*. 54a): "If a man renders himself as the wilderness upon which everyone treads, his learning is retained by him, and the Torah is given to him as a gift (*Mattanah*); once it is given to him as a gift, 'his heritage is God (*Nahalo El*),' as it is written: 'And from Mattanah to Nahaliel...' And once his heritage is God, he rises to greatness (*Bamot* – high places), as it is written: 'And from Nahaliel to Bamot.'"

*Man became a living soul* (Genesis 2:7).

Rabbi Leib, the son of the Chassidic master Rabbi Mordechai of Nesh'chiz, related that he remembered being a small child sitting on his father's lap. His father told him, "The Targum (Aramaic translation of the Torah) interprets *living soul* as a *speaking spirit*. In other words, people acquire the capacity to speak by virtue of the Divine soul that is instilled within them. Inasmuch as God is truth, the Divine soul, which is part of God, is also truth. Since people's souls are linked with this ability to speak, speech can only be truth. That is why," the Rabbi continued, "if someone lies, that is not speech, only meaningless noise."

"Ever since then," Rabbi Leib said, "whenever someone lies to me, all I hear is undistinguishable sounds, just noise. I cannot make out words, and I cannot understand what the person is saying."

How wonderful it would be if we too could so refine our hearing that our ears could perceive only truth, and that untruths would be just scrambled sounds! Still, if we cannot rise to the spiritual heights of Rabbi Leib, we may nevertheless understand that if we lie, we are not really speaking, but only making noise. To lie is to distort the God-given gift of speech into meaningless sounds that cannot possibly achieve anything truly beneficial to us.

Think of yourself as a concert pianist who, instead of playing melodious music, bangs indiscriminately on the keys, producing an annoying cacophony. When you are not speaking the truth, you are making the same noise.

**TUES./AUGUST 22/26 AV**

יום ג' לַפְּרָשַׁת רְאֵה, כ"ו אָב

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:3*

אבות ו:ג

הַלּוֹמֵד מִחֲבֵרו פֶּרֶק אֶחָד, או הֶלְכָה אֶחָת, או פְּסוּק אֶחָד, או דְּבוּר אֶחָד, אֶפִּילוּ אוֹת אֶחָת – צָרִיךְ לְנַהוֹג בּוֹ כְּבוֹד, שֶׁכֵּן מְצִינּוּ בְּדוֹד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁלֹּא לָמַד מֵאֲחִיתַּפֵּל אֶלֶּא שְׁנֵי דְּבָרִים בְּלִבָּד, וּקְרָאוּ רַבּוֹ, אֱלוֹפוֹ וּמִידְעוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (תהלים נה, יד): וְאַתָּה אֲנוֹשׁ כְּעַרְכִּי אֱלוֹפִי וּמִידְעִי. וְהֵלֵךְ דְּבָרִים קָל וְחֹמֶר: וּמָה דְּוֹד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁלֹּא לָמַד מֵאֲחִיתַּפֵּל אֶלֶּא שְׁנֵי דְּבָרִים בְּלִבָּד, קְרָאוּ רַבּוֹ אֱלוֹפוֹ וּמִידְעוֹ – הַלּוֹמֵד מִחֲבֵרו פֶּרֶק אֶחָד, או הֶלְכָה אֶחָת, או פְּסוּק אֶחָד, או דְּבוּר אֶחָד, אֶפִּילוּ אוֹת אֶחָת; עַל אֶחָת כְּמָה וְכְמָה שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לְנַהוֹג בּוֹ כְּבוֹד וְאִין כְּבוֹד אֶלֶּא תוֹרָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (משלי ג, לה): כְּבוֹד חֲכָמִים יִנְחָלוּ; וְתַמִּימִים יִנְחָלוּ-טוֹב (משלי כח, י); וְאִין טוֹב אֶלֶּא תוֹרָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שם ד, ב): כִּי לֶקַח טוֹב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם תוֹרַתִּי אֶל-תַּעֲזוּבוּ.

He who learns from his fellow a single chapter, or a single law, or a single verse, or a single utterance, or even a single letter – must treat him with honor; for thus we find with David, King of Israel, who learned only two things from Ahitofel, yet he called him his teacher, his guide and his familiar friend, as it is said (*Ps. 55:14*): "But it was you, a man mine equal, my guide and my dear friend." Surely this contains an inference from minor to major; if David, the King of Israel, who learned from Ahitofel only two things, called him his teacher, his guide, and his dear friend; how much more then must one who learns from his fellow a single chapter or a single law, or a single verse, or a single utterance, or even a single letter treat him with honor! And honor means nothing else but 'Torah' as it is written (*Prov. 3:35*): "The wise shall inherit honor," (*ibid. 28:10*): "And the perfect shall inherit good," and 'good' means nothing else but 'Torah' as it is written (*ibid. 4:2*): "For I give you good doctrine; forsake not my Torah."

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

הַלּוֹמֵד מִחֲבֵרו **He who learns from his fellow a single chapter, or a single law, or a single verse, or a single utterance** – an expression of discernment and



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good sense (*Rashi*), concerning a statement of the Torah which requires clarification, **or even a single letter** – like the letter *vav* (meaning, 'and' or 'but' – tr.), indicating that the following words are meant to amplify the foregoing, etc. (*Tiferet Yisrael*). Similarly, the Gemara asks (*Ber. 53b*) whether the expression *omemot* (dying) in the statement: "One does not say the blessing 'Who created the lights of fire' over dying (*omemot*) coals" opens with an *ayin* or an *alef*, this deals with a lesson concerning a single letter (*Kallah Rabbati*, Chapt. 8); **must treat him with honor** – out of respect for the Torah; שכן מצינו **for thus we find with David, King of Israel, who learned only two things from Ahitofel** – 1. Not to study Torah by oneself and 2. That one should go to the house of worship with feeling. i.e., of fear and trembling (*ibid.*), **yet he called him** – David called Ahitofel, **his teacher, his guide and his familiar friend, as it is said: "But it was you, a man mine equal, my guide, and my dear friend"** – thus in the Aramaic translation: "and you, Ahitofel, whom I consider as my teacher, who taught me and imparted to me wisdom."

והלוא דברים Surely **this contains an inference from minor to major; if David, the King of Israel, who learned from Ahitofel only two things** – as explained above, **called him his teacher, his guide, and his dear friend** – on account of these two things **how much more then must one who learns from his fellow a single chapter or a single law, or a single verse, or a single utterance, or even a single letter** – as explained above, **treat him with honor!** – an ordinary man, whose companion enlightens him, even with a single letter, must respect him all the more since a single letter in the Torah or in the Mishnah may provide the basis for cardinal lessons and far-reaching rules (*Emunat Sh'muel*).

ואין כבוד **And honor means nothing else but 'Torah'** – a man gains sincere respect only on the basis of his occupation with the Torah (*Rashi*), **as it is**

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written: "The wise shall inherit honor," – referring to those whose wisdom is anchored in the Torah, as it is written: "And the perfect – i.e. the disciples of the Torah shall inherit good," and 'good' means nothing else but 'Torah' as it is written: "For I give you good doctrine; forsake not my Torah." – seeing that the disciples receive *good doctrine*, i.e. the Torah, which accords them honor, they, too, must treat their teachers with honor (*Tiferet Yisrael*).

*May there not be anguish nor grief nor sighing on the day of our rest.* (Siddur)

It is noteworthy that the Hebrew words for these types of distress are all in the singular: *an* anguish, *a* grief, *a* sighing.

Many years ago, when my brother was gravely ill, I visited a rabbi in Israel and asked for a *berachah* (blessing) for his recovery. As I left, the rabbi said to me, "May you have many worries."

Noting my astonishment at this unusual *berachah*, the rabbi said, "When you have many worries, then things are in order. It is when you have only one worry that things are bad.

"You see," he explained, "life is never free of worries. Ever since Adam was expelled from *Gan Eden* (paradise), life has never been without problems, but these are the normal stresses of everyday life.

"If something extremely bad occurs, people forget all their usual daily worries and become totally preoccupied with this single, truly serious problem. For example, your worry about your brother's serious illness is pre-eminent and has displaced all other worries, because they all pale in comparison.

"My wish for you is that you have many worries, so that none be of such magnitude as to obscure all others."

WED./AUGUST 23/27 AV

יום ד' לפַּרְשַׁת רֵאָה, כ"ז אָב

## MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Avot 6:4

אבות ו:ד

כָּךְ הִיא דְרָכָהּ שֶׁל תּוֹרָה: פֶּת בַּמֶּלֶח תֹּאכַל, וּמִים בַּמְשׁוּרָה תִּשְׁתֶּה, וְעַל הָאָרֶץ תִּישָׁן, וְחֵזִי צֶעַר תַּחֲיָה וּבַתּוֹרָה אַתָּה עֹמֵל; וְאִם אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה כֵן, אֲשֶׁרִיךְ וְטוֹב לָךְ (תְּהִלִּים קכח, ב): אֲשֶׁרִיךְ – בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וְטוֹב לָךְ – לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא. אַל תִּבְקֶשׁ גְּדֻלָּה לְעִצְמְךָ וְאַל תַּחְמַד כְּבוֹד. יוֹתֵר מִלְמוּדְךָ עֲשֵׂה; וְאַל תִּתְאַוֶּה לְשִׁלְחָנִים שֶׁל מְלָכִים, שֶׁשִּׁלְחָנְךָ גְּדוֹל מִשִּׁלְחָנֵם, וְכִתְרְךָ גְּדוֹל מִכִּתְרֵם; וְנֶאֱמַן הוּא בְּעַל מְלֹאכְתְּךָ, שִׁישָׁלֵם לָךְ שְׂכָר פְּעֻלָּתְךָ.

This is the way of the Torah: You shall eat bread and salt; you shall drink water by the measure; you shall sleep upon the ground; and live a life of privation while you labor in the Torah. And if you do so, "happy shall you be, and it shall be well with you" (*Ps.* 128:2), *happy shall you be* – in this world, *and it shall be well with you* – in the world-to-come. Do not seek greatness for yourself, and do not covet honor. Let your practice exceed your learning. And do not yearn for the table of kings, for your table is greater than their table, and your crown is greater than their crown; and your Employer is trustworthy to pay you the reward of your labor.

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

**This is the way of** – one who labors in the field of **the Torah: You shall eat bread and salt; you shall drink water by the measure** – as in *Ezekiel* (4:11), where *mesurah* denotes a small liquid measure; **you shall sleep upon the ground** – without a pillow to rest your head on, **and live a life of privation** – and hardship caused by the harsh conditions of life; **while you labor in the Torah** – in spite of all the misery, you must devote yourself to the Torah. *Rashi* comments: "Even if you have nothing to eat but bread and salt do not cease from studying the Torah." Others comment, that this is also a warning to the rich, who have the means to enjoy life, not to pursue pleasure and comfort, as these are likely to interfere with the

study and appropriation of the Torah. Furthermore, once addicted to luxury, the affluent will neglect the study of Torah, to earn the means for his excessive expenses. Hence, the Mishnah's general exhortation, to both rich and poor, that self-indulgence, as is noted in the Gemara (*Ber. 63b*): "The Torah does not endure, save in the person who sacrifices himself for it" (*Midrash Sh'muel*).

ואם אתה עושה **And if you do so** – and devote your life to Torah, though harassed by deprivation, "**happy shall you be, and it shall be well with you**" **happy shall you be – in this world, and it shall be well with you – in the world-to-come** – for the pleasure seeker, forever preoccupied with the gratification of his senses, is never at ease. Moreover, overindulgence may be the cause of sickness and premature death. But, he who accepts whatever God has bestowed upon him, and also imparts to his household the fear of the Lord and restraint, that he be free to study and practice the Torah, *happy will he be in this world and it shall be well with him in the world-to-come.*

אל תבקש גדלה **Do not seek greatness for yourself** – once you have dedicated yourself to the Torah and gained familiarity with it, do not solicit power, **and do not covet honor** in your mastery of the Torah, for it would then appear that you studied for ulterior motives (*Rashi*). **Let your practice exceed your learning** – lest your actions lag behind your erudition, as we learned (above, Chapt. 3:9): "He whose deeds exceed his wisdom – his wisdom endures." According to *Midrash Sh'muel* this means that even in doubtful cases, one should adopt the stricter course, as a safeguard against the trespass of a Torah prohibition. **And do not yearn for the table of kings** – with their choice delicacies, **for your table** – concerning which it is written: "This is the table which is before the Lord," **is greater than their table.** Alternatively, *your table* in the world-to-come, *is greater than their* – royal – *table* in this world, **and your crown is greater**

**than their crown** – for the crown of Torah transcends that of all earthly kingship (see above, Chapt. 4:13); **and your Employer is trustworthy** – God, who bids you to labor in the Torah, may be depended upon **to pay you the reward of your labor** – according to the effort you devote to the Torah, so that honor and compensation too, will eventually be attained by you.

**Y***ou simpletons, understand cleverness; you fools, understand with the heart. Listen, for my words merit serious attention.* (Proverbs 8:5-6)

The simpletons and fools to whom Solomon refers repeatedly in *Proverbs* are not people born without intellect. Why would he demand understanding from those who cannot understand? Solomon is calling out to people who do have the capacity for wisdom, but who choose to behave foolishly.

People who have a limited amount of money, yet squander it on unnecessary incidentals and leave themselves without the means to buy food and clothing, are not necessarily feeble-minded. Rather, they place the pleasures of the moment above the more important things in life. These people allow themselves to be dominated by their desires rather than using their judgment. They do not lack the ability to make a proper judgment, but are lax in applying that ability.

Solomon is speaking to everyone. Few people are as wise as they can be. How often have we regretted doing something, yet we fail to learn from the experience and end up repeating the regrettable behavior?

We would be deeply insulted if someone called us fools or simpletons. We should have sufficient pride not to insult ourselves by behaving in a manner that would warrant such epithets.

## THURS./AUGUST 24/28 AV

יום ה' לַפָּרָשֶׁת רֵאָה, כ"ח אָב

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Re'eh

### MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

*Avot 6:5*

אבות ו:ה

גְּדוּלָה תוֹרָה יוֹתֵר מִן הַכֹּהֲנָה וּמִן הַמְּלָכוֹת, שֶׁהַמְּלָכוֹת נִקְנִית בְּשָׁלְשִׁים מַעֲלוֹת, וְהַכֹּהֲנָה – בְּעֶשְׂרִים וָאַרְבַּע, וְהַתּוֹרָה נִקְנִית בְּאַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁמוֹנָה דְבָרִים: בְּתַלְמוּד, בְּשִׁמְיַעַת הָאֵזֶן, בְּעִרְיַכַת שְׁפָתַיִם, בְּבִינַת הַלֵּב, בְּשִׁכְלוֹת הַלֵּב, בְּאִימָה, בְּיִרְאָה, בְּעִנּוּהַ, בְּשִׁמְחָה, בְּשִׁמוּשׁ חֻכְמַיִם, בְּדִקְדוּק חֻבְרִים, וּבְפִלְפּוּל הַתְּלַמִּידִים, בְּיִשׁוּב, בְּמִקְרָא, בְּמִשְׁנָה, בְּמַעוֹט שְׁנָה, בְּמַעוֹט שִׁיחָה, בְּמַעוֹט תַּעֲנוּג, בְּמַעוֹט שְׁחוּק, בְּמַעוֹט דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ, בְּאֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם, בְּלֵב טוֹב, בְּאַמוּנַת חֻכְמַיִם, וּבְקַבְּלַת הַיְסוּרִין.

Greater is the Torah than the priesthood and the kingship: for the kingship is acquired by thirty qualities, and the priesthood by twenty-four; but the Torah is acquired by forty-eight things: By study, by the hearing of the ear, by the ordering of the lips, by the consideration of the heart, by the perception of the heart, by awe, by reverence, by humility, by joy, by attendance on the Sages, by careful research with fellow students, by the argumentation of the disciples, by being settled, by Bible and Mishnah, by moderation in sleep, moderation in conversation, moderation in pleasure, moderation in jesting, and moderation in worldly affairs, by being long-suffering, by a good heart, by faith in the Sages, and by submission to sorrows.

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

גְּדוּלָה תוֹרָה **Greater is the Torah than the priesthood and the kingship, for the kingship is acquired by thirty qualities** – i.e. royalty has thirty prerogatives on account of holding the reins of power; and these are enumerated in *Samuel I* (Chapt. 8): "This will be the manner of the king: 1. Who will reign over you; 2. he will take your sons; 3. and appoint them unto him for his chariots; 4. and to be his horsemen; 5. and they shall run before his chariots; 6. and he will appoint them unto him for captains of thousands; 7.

## THURS./AUGUST 24/כ"ח אב

and captains of fifties; 8. and to plow his ground; 9. and to reap his harvest; 10. and to make his instruments of war; 11. and the instruments of his chariots. 12. And he will take your daughters; 13. to be perfumers; 14. and to be cooks; 15. and to be bakers 16. And he will take your fields; 17. and your vineyard; 18. and your olive-yards, even the best of them; 19. and give them to his servants; 20. And he will take the tenth of your seed; 21. and of your vineyards; 22. and give to his officers; 23. and to his servants. 24. And he will take your men-servants; 25. and your maid-servants; 26. and your goodliest young men; 27. and your asses; 28. and put them to his work. 29. He will take the tenth of your flocks; 30. and you shall be his servants."

Corresponding to these are thirty regulations of royalty enumerated in the Mishnah (*Sanhedrin* Chapt. 2): 1. The king may not judge; 2. and he may not be judged. 3. He may not testify; 4. and none may bear witness against him. 5. He may not perform *halitzah* (the ceremony releasing a woman from a levirate marriage – tr.); 6. and *halitzah* may not be performed for his wife. 7. He may not take a woman in levirate marriage. 8. They may not contract levirate marriage with his (widowed) wife. 9. No one may marry his widow. 10. When a member of his family dies, he does not cross the gate of his palace to attend the funeral. 11. When he is given the funeral meal, all the people sit on the ground and he sits on a couch. 12. He may call forth (the people) to an optional war (not commanded by the Torah – tr.) when authorized by the Great Sanhedrin. 13. He may force his way to cut a road through the property of others. 14. And none may object. 15. All the people who take spoils must set them before him. 16. And he takes the first choice. 17. "And he shall not have many wives" (*Deut.* 17:17) – only eighteen. 18. "He shall not keep many horses (*ibid.*, :16), only sufficing for his chariot. 19. "He shall not amass silver and gold excessively" (*ibid.*, :17),

## THURS./AUGUST 24/כ"ח אב

more than required for the maintenance of his troops. 20. He must write a Torah scroll for himself. 21. When he goes to war – he takes it with him. 22. When he returns – he brings it back with him. 23. When he sits in judgment – it must be with him. 24. When he sits down to eat – it is before him. 25. No one may ride on his horse. 26. No one may sit on his throne. 27. No one may use his sceptre. 28. No one may see him when his hair is cut. 29. Nor when he is naked. 30. Nor when he is in the bath-house (*Biurei Hagra*).

והכהנה **And the priesthood by twenty four** – this refers to the priestly endowments enumerated in the Gemara (*B.K.* 110b; *Hul.* 133b): Ten to be consumed within the confines of the Temple, four in Jerusalem, and ten within the borders of Eretz Yisrael.

*The ten within the confines of the Temple are:* 1. An animal offered as a sin-offering. 2. A fowl offered as a sin-offering. 3. A trespass offering for a known transgression. 4. A trespass offering for a doubtful transgression. 5. The peace-offering of the congregation. 6. The *log* (liquid measure – tr.) of oil in the leper's meal-offering. 7. The residue of the Omer. 8. The two loaves. 9. The shew-bread. 10. The remnant of the meal-offerings.

*The four consumed in Jerusalem are:* 1. The first-born. 2. The first of the first-fruits. 3. The parts separated from the thank-offering (the breast, the thigh, and the four loaves baked from the four kinds of grain) and those from the ram of the Nazirite (the shoulder, the unleavened cake, and the unleavened wafer). 4. The skins of the *kodashim* (sacrifices of utmost holiness).

*The ten consumed within the borders of Eretz Yisrael are:* 1. *Terumah* (the heave-offering due to the priest – tr.). 2. *Terumat Ma'aser* (the priest's portion of the Levite's tithe – tr.). 3. *Hallah* (the priest's portion of the dough – tr.). 4. The first of shorn wool. 5. The (gift) portions (the shoulder, two cheeks and stomach



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of certain offerings). 6. The redemption (money) of the (first born) son. 7. The redemption of the firstling of an ass. 8. The inherited field (whose owners donated it to the Temple and did not redeem it, and the Temple treasurer sold it; when the purchaser returns it to the Temple at the Jubilee year, it is divided among the priests). 9. A field consecrated for Temple use. 10. The restitution for robbing a proselyte.

והתורה נקנית **But the Torah is acquired by forty-eight things** – as follows: 1. בתלמוד **By study** – with diligent application; 2. בשמיעת האזן **by the hearing of the ear** – proper attention to the instructions of his teachers. Others comment: Reviewing his lessons aloud, and not in whisper, 3. בעריכת שפתים **by ordering of the lips** – rehearsing the lessons time and again until he can readily and flawlessly reiterate them, as the Gemara comments: "For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; let them be established altogether upon your lips' (*Prov. 22:18*); when are the words of Torah pleasant? *When you keep them within you* (when they are well-preserved in your mind and you do not forget them – *Rashi*). And when shall you keep them within you? *When they are established altogether upon your lips* (when you reduce them to a system and pronounce them audibly, rather than learning unsystematically, in a whisper – *Rashi*);" 4. בבינת הלב **by the consideration of the heart** – by applying the mind and effectively concentrating on the lessons to be mastered; 5. בשכלות הלב **by the perception of the heart** – exercising his intellect to penetrate to the essence of the subject; 6. באימה **by awe** – and veneration for his teacher; 7. ביראה **by reverence** – he who studies Torah must be imbued with the fear of Heaven, as it is written (*Ps. 111:10*): "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"; 8. בענוה **by humility** – he should be humble and of a lowly spirit – and unabashed to learn from anyone, even from a person of lesser stature. Thus, our Sages note (*Ta'an. 7a*): "Why are the words of Torah compared to water?"

## כ"ח אב/THURS./AUGUST 24

To teach you that just as water flows from a higher to a lower level, so also the words of the Torah endure only with one whose mind is lowly;" 9. בשמחה **by joy** – which broadens the mind, sharpens the intellect, and unlocks the memory; moreover, whoever does not enjoy his studies and finds the Torah burdensome will eventually cease his learning; 10. בשמוש חכמים **by attendance on the Sages** – one learns from their comments and actions, as we read (*Ber. 7b*): "Serving the Torah is greater than studying it." Thus, Joshua who served Moses and never left his tent, merited to inherit Moses' position and to receive from him the traditions of the Torah (*Sifrei, Pinhas*); 11. בדקדוק חברים **by careful research with fellow-students** – learning from one's colleagues to discriminate the finer points presented by his master. Alternatively, *dikduk haverim* signifies a discriminating choice of friends by the criterion of positive character and sound logic (*Emumat Sh'muel*); 12. ובפלפול התלמידים **by the argumentation of the disciples** – whose queries and responses sharpen his mind and clarify the subject under study, as the Gemara notes (*Ta'an. 7a*): "It is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon it" (*Prov. 3:18*). Why is Torah compared to (the wood of) a tree? To teach you that just as a small (chip of a) tree may kindle the larger tree (plank), so the younger scholars sharpen the minds of the older; 13. בישוב **by being settled** – and cultivating a tranquil disposition. According to *Tiferet Yisrael* the term *yishuv* – "settlement" denotes familiarity with the needs of society (*yishuvo shel olam*) in social, intellectual and scientific realms; 14. במקרא **by Bible** – mastery of the twenty-four books comprising the Holy Scriptures; 15. במשנה **and Mishnah** – proficiency in the Mishnah as the bedrock of the *Halakhah* (law) and of the oral Torah; 16. במעוט שנה **by moderation in sleep** – excess of which causes loss of valuable time as well as sluggishness. However, lack of sleep too depletes a person's physical and mental resources. Our Sages provide the following clue: "I should have slept, then (*az*) had I been at rest" (*Job*

## THURS./AUGUST 24/כ"ח אב

3:13); *az* having the numerical value of eight, indicates that man should sleep eight hours a day; 17. שיחה במעוט שיחה **moderation in conversation** – limiting the time spent in discussing everyday matters, as our Sages observe (*Yoma* 19b): "'and you shall speak of them' (the words of Torah) and not of other things"; 18. במעוט תענוג **moderation in pleasure** – limiting his indulgence in sense gratification, such as eating, drinking, etc. which are wholesome only in measured quantities; 19. במעוט שחוק **moderation in jesting** – as we learned above (Chapt. 3:13): "Jesting and light-headedness accustom a man to lewdness." However, occasional humor is welcome; thus we find our Sages resorting to anecdotes to stimulate the minds of their disciples; 20. במעוט דרך ארץ **and moderation in worldly affairs** – limiting one's business dealings and social intercourse; 21. בארך אפים **by being long-suffering** – avoiding anger, as the Sages said (*Pes.* 66b): "Whoever loses his temper, if a Sage – his wisdom departs from him." Moreover (*Ned.* 22b): "he forgets his learning and grows ever more foolish." 22. בלב טוב **by a good heart** – unencumbered by jealousy and hatred, his heart and mind open up to receive the message of the Torah; 23. באמונת חכמים **by faith in the Sages** – accepting their pronouncements, even when they are beyond his intellectual grasp; 24. ובקבלת היסורין **and by submission to sorrows** – accepting misfortune with love, without questioning the ways of God, as our Sages said (*Ber.* 5a): "God presented three gifts to Israel, but all three were granted only through sufferings, and they are: Torah, the Land of Israel, and the World-to-Come." Alternatively, *submission to sorrows* signifies that even when overcome with grief, a person should not be deterred from Torah-study, because of his overriding attachment to it, as it is written (*Ps.* 94:12): "Happy is the man whom You chastise, O Lord, and teach him out of Your Torah."

**EREV ROSH CHODESH**  
**FRI./AUGUST 25/29 AV**  
 יום ו' לַפָּרָשֶׁת רֵאָה, כ"ט אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Maariv – Yaaleh V'yovo; evening Bircas Hamazon – Yaaleh V'yovo

**LIGHT CANDLES**

Atlanta	7:55	Hartford	7:18	Montreal	7:27	San Fran.	7:31
Brookline	7:13	Houston	7:34	New York	7:22	Seattle	7:46
Chicago	7:18	Los Ang.	7:10	Oak Park	8:00	Silver Spr.	7:31
Cleveland	7:54	Memphis	7:19	Philadel.	7:25	St. Louis	7:24
Denver	7:24	Miami	7:29	Pitts.	7:45	Toronto	7:48

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:6*

אבות ו:ו

הַמְכִיר אֶת מְקוֹמוֹ, וְהִשְׁמַח בְּחֻלְקוֹ, וְהִעֹשֶׂה סִיג לְדַבְרָיו, וְאִינוֹ מַחְזִיק טוֹבָה לְעַצְמוֹ, אָהוּב, אֹהֵב אֶת הַמְּקוֹם, אֹהֵב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת, אֹהֵב אֶת הַצְּדָקוֹת, אֹהֵב אֶת הַתּוֹכְחוֹת, אֹהֵב אֶת הַמִּישָׁרִים, מִתְּרַחֵק מִן הַכְּבוֹד, וְלֹא מִגִּיס לְבוֹ בְּתַלְמוּדוֹ, וְאִינוֹ שֹׂמֵחַ בְּהוֹרָאָה, נוֹשֵׂא בְעַל עִם חִבְרוֹ, מְכַרְיָעוֹ לְכַף זְכוּת, מַעֲמִידוֹ עַל הָאֲמֶת, מַעֲמִידוֹ עַל הַשְּׁלוֹם, מִתְיָשֵׁב לְבוֹ בְּתַלְמוּדוֹ, שׂוֹאֵל וּמְשִׁיב, שׂוֹמֵעַ וּמוֹסִיף, הַלּוֹמֵד עַל מְנַת לְלַמֵּד, וְהַלּוֹמֵד עַל מְנַת לַעֲשׂוֹת, הַמְּחַכִּים אֶת רַבּוֹ, וְהַמְּכַוֵּן אֶת שְׂמוּעָתוֹ, וְהַאֹמֵר דָּבָר בְּשֵׁם אוֹמְרוֹ. הָא לְמַדְתָּ, שְׁכָל הָאֹמֵר דָּבָר בְּשֵׁם אוֹמְרוֹ מִבֵּיא גְּאֻלָּה לְעוֹלָם, שְׁנַאֲמַר (אֶסְתֵּר ב, כב): וְתֹאמַר אֶסְתֵּר לְמַלְךְ בְּשֵׁם מְרַדְכֵי.

(The Torah is acquired by one) who recognizes his place; who rejoices in his portion; who makes a fence about his words; who claims no merit for himself; who is beloved; who loves God; who loves mankind; who loves justice; who loves reproof; who loves rectitude; who shuns honor; who does not boast of his learning; who does not delight in rendering decisions; who shares in the burden of his colleague, and tips his friend's scales to the side of merit; who establishes him in the truth, and establishes him in peace; whose mind is settled in his study; who asks and answers; hearkens and adds; who learns in order to teach, and learns in order to practice; who enlightens his teacher; who notes with precision his lesson, and conveys a thing in the name of its author. Thus, you learn, that whoever conveys a teaching in the name of its author, brings

deliverance to the world, as it is written (*Est.* 2:22): "and Esther told the king thereof in Mordecai's name."

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*Our Mishnah continues listing the qualities by which the Torah is acquired. Some commentators note the difference in style between this and the preceding Mishnah. Whereas in the opening half of the list (Mishnah 5), all items presented complete the phrase: "The Torah is acquired by..." ("by study, by the hearing of the ear, by the ordering of the lips" etc.), the present roll records the qualities of the person who merits to acquire Torah. Midrash Sh'muel explains that while the elements enumerated in the earlier part constitute tools for acquiring the Torah, the qualities incorporated in the present Mishnah, are principally means by which the Torah is preserved and fortified in one's mind.*

**(The Torah is acquired by one)** 25. המכיר את מקומו **who recognizes his place** – who properly assesses his own worth and does not push himself beyond his station. According to *Derekh Hayim* this refers to a person who, knowing his qualities as well as his shortcomings, will not present his theories before his superiors in wisdom; 26. והשמח בחלקו **who rejoices in his portion** – is satisfied with what he has and does not neglect his studies out of greed. Alternatively: he joyously praises God for setting his portion among the occupants of the *bet hamidrash*; 27. והעושה סיג **who makes a fence about his words** – expressing his thoughts with caution, so as not to stumble and fall into error; 28. ואינו מחזיק טובה **who claims no merit for himself** – on account of his diligent study of the Torah (see above Chapt. 2:8); 29. אהוב **who is beloved** – by people for his virtuous conduct and manners; 30. אוהב את המקום **who**

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 מורינו הרב משה יהודה  
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— *Gustave Jacobs*



**loves God** – as a result he studies God's Torah for the sheer love of it, whereupon the mysteries of the Torah are revealed to him; 31. אוהב את הבריות **who loves mankind** – and therefore attracts people to the Torah, thereby enhancing his own achievements in the realm of Torah study; הצדקות את **who loves justice** – i.e. to act in a just manner, (*Rashi* and the *Gaon of Vilna* delete this phrase); 32. אוהב את התוכחות **who loves reproof** – he gratefully accepts the remarks of his critics; 33. אוהב את המישרים **who loves rectitude** – consistently opting for the straight course in life; 34. מתרחק מן הכבוד **who shuns honor** – avoiding all praise for his scholarship, since it is not for the sake of his reputation that he studies, but for love of the Torah alone; 35. ולא מגיס לבו בתלמודו **who does not boast of his learning** – even in his own inner heart, considering his attainments of minor significance; 36. ואינו שמח בהוראה **who does not delight in rendering decisions** – when faced by the necessity to render a halakhic decision, he does not rejoice, but dreads the possibility of an erroneous judgement. Thus, the Gemara states (*Yev. 109b*): "Let the judge always consider himself as if a sword lay between his thighs and the gates of hell are open beneath him." Moreover (see above Chapt. 4:7): "He who is forward in rendering legal decisions, is foolish, wicked and arrogant;" 37. נושא בעול עם חברו **who shares the burden of his colleague** – ever moved by the suffering of a friend, he extends to him both personal and material assistance, as well as sound advice and proper guidance. 38. מכריעו לכף זכות **and tips his friend's scales to the side of merit** – when his companion vacillates between sin and virtue, he prevails upon him to take a positive choice. Alternatively, he consistently accords his friend the benefit of his doubts; 39. מעמידו על האמת **who establishes him in the truth** – if his friend fails to meet the requirements of a *Halakhah*, he corrects his error and puts him right; 40. מעמידו על השלום **and establishes him in peace** – if a discussion develops into an argument, he reminds his fellow of

## FRI./AUGUST 25/כ"ט אב

their amicable relations, and convinces him that it is not wilfull harassment, but love of the Torah and the search for truth that motivated his dissent; 41. שואל **whose mind is settled in his study** – his studies display a calm and regular rather than impulsive and sporadic disposition; 42. ומשיב **who asks and answers** – rather than posing mere riddles, his questions are designed to facilitate comprehension, moreover he attempts to find his own answers; 43. שומע ומוסיף **hearkens and adds** – carefully sifting the opinions advanced by others, he adds useful notes of his own to illustrate the subject at hand, as it is said (*Prov. 9:9*): "Instruct a wise man, and he will grow (and make others) yet wiser"; 44. והלומד על מנת לעשות **who learns in order to teach** – by rehearsing his lessons so as to teach others, he fortifies his own knowledge; 45. והלומד על מנת לעשות **and learns in order to practise** – which requires study in depth, and thorough familiarity with the subject; 46. והמחכים את רבו **who enlightens his teacher** – by asking relevant questions, the teacher is induced to delve into the core of the subject in search of a correct answer, and this enhances the teacher's own understanding; 47. והמכון את שמועתו **who notes with precision his lesson** – probing the essence of the various doctrines advanced by his masters, he searches for a common denominator; 48. והאומר דבר בשם אומרו **and conveys a thing in the name of its author** – thus (*Kohelet Rabba 2*): "Unless a disciple quotes the teaching in the name of his master, his Torah is consigned to oblivion the following day." Furthermore (*Tanhuma, Bamidbar 27*): "Whoever fails to cite a Torah lesson in the name of its author, of him Scripture says (*Prov. 22:22*): 'Rob not the helpless, because he is helpless.'"

הא למדת **Thus you learn that whoever conveys a teaching in the name of its author, brings deliverance to the world, as it is written: "and Esther told the king thereof in Mordecai's name"** – whereupon Divine relief came to Israel.

# ROSH CHODESH – 1st DAY

SAT./AUGUST 26/30 AV

שַׁבַּת פְּרָשַׁת רֵאָה, ל' אָב

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – Yaaleh V'yovo, Half Hallel; Mussaf – Shabbos Rosh Chodesh, Borchy Nafshi, Av Ha-rachamim is not recited; Mincha – Yaaleh V'yovo, Tzidkascha Tzedek is not recited, Pirkei Avos 5; Maariv – Yaaleh V'yovo, L'Dovid Ori; morning, afternoon, and evening Bircas Hamazon – Yaaleh V'yovo,

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Parshas Re'eh, Numbers 28:9-15; Haftorah – Isaiah 66:1-24; Mincha – beginning of Parshas Shoftim

**Halachah:** We begin to recite L'Dovid Ori after Maariv (Nusach Sefard: after Mincha) and Shacharis through Shemini Atzeres

## SABBATH ENDS

Atlanta 8:56 9:23	Hartford 8:20 8:47	Montreal 8:29 8:56	San Fran. 8:33 9:00
Brookline 8:14 8:41	Houston 8:36 9:03	New York 8:23 8:50	Seattle 8:47 9:14
Chicago 8:19 8:46	Los Ang. 8:12 8:39	Oak Park 9:02 9:29	Silver Spr. 8:33 9:00
Cleveland 8:55 9:22	Memphis 8:21 8:48	Philadel. 8:27 8:54	St. Louis 8:25 8:52
Denver 8:26 8:53	Miami 8:32 8:59	Pitts. 8:47 9:14	Toronto 8:49 9:16

1st zman is shitas Ha'Gaonim, 2nd is shitas Rabbeinu Tam

## DEVAR TORAH / PARSHAS RE'EH

*"See, I put before you today a blessing and a curse."*

Deuteronomy 11:26

The *Gaon of Vilna* notes:

Verse 26 begins with the word *Re-eh*, "See," in the singular form and the rest of the passage is in the plural. This is to teach us an important lesson. One may say that since many follow a certain path and approach, then it indeed must be the right way, and I will follow them. To this the Torah says "no!" Each person must seek for himself or herself the right and just path in life in accordance with the Torah and tradition. For we have seen those who have followed the many and erred, and misled others thereby. *Re'eh*, see, you the individual, must not follow the path or fashion of others, simply because they are many. But you must make your own judgment in the light of *Torah* and tradition to receive the blessings of *Hashem*.



MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Avot 6:7

אבות ו:ז

גְּדוּלָהּ תּוֹרָה, שֶׁהִיא נוֹתֶנֶת חַיִּים לְעוֹשֶׂיהָ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וּבְעוֹלָם הַבָּא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (משלי ד, כב): כִּי־חַיִּים הֵם לְמַצְאֵיהֶם וּלְכָל־בְּשָׂרוֹ מִרְפָּא; וְאוֹמֵר (שם ג, ח): רַפְאוֹת תְּהִי לְשָׂרְךָ וְשִׁקּוּי לְעַצְמוֹתֶיךָ; וְאוֹמֵר (שם, ג, יח): עֵץ־חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ וְתַמְכִּיחָהּ מֵאֲשֶׁר; וְאוֹמֵר (שם א, ט): כִּי לֹוִית חֵן הֵם לְרֵאשֶׁךְ וְעִנְקִים לְגִרְגְּרֹתֶיךָ; וְאוֹמֵר (שם, ד, ט): תִּתֵּן לְרֵאשֶׁךְ לֹוִית־חֵן עֶטְרַת תְּפָאֶרֶת תִּמְגְּנֶנְךָ; וְאוֹמֵר (שם ג, טז): אֶרֶךְ יָמִים בִּימִינָהּ בְּשִׂמְאוּלָהּ עֵשֶׂר וְכְבוֹד; וְאוֹמֵר (שם ג, ב): כִּי אֶרֶךְ יָמִים וְשָׁנוֹת חַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם יוֹסִיפוּ לָךְ.

Great is the Torah, for it gives life to those who practise it in this world and in the world-to-come, as it is written (*Prov. 4:22*): "For they are life to him who finds them, and healing for all of his body." And it says (*ibid. 3:8*): "Let it be a cure for your flesh, and a tonic for your limbs." And it says (*ibid. 3:18*): "She is a tree of life to those who grasp her, and those who hold on to her are safe." And it says (*ibid. 1:9*): "For they are a garland of grace upon your head, and a chain of honor around your neck." And it says (*ibid. 4:9*): "She will place a garland of grace upon your head; bestow upon you a crown of glory." And it says (*ibid. 3:16*): "Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor." And it says (*ibid. 3:2*): "For long days, and years of life, and peace, will they add to you."

MISHNAH COMMENTARY

גְּדוּלָהּ תּוֹרָה **Great is the Torah for it gives life to those who practise it** – who study it and also fulfill its precepts, **in this world and in the world-to-come** – for they enjoy the premium in this world, while the principal is theirs to draw upon in the afterlife. *Tiferet Yisrael* observes that "whereas other distinctions, such as wealth, power, and honor, may be acquired also by means of other disciplines and skills, life in this world and in the next, can be attained only through the Torah, as it is written: "For they are life to him who finds them, and healing for all of his body" – this

refers to life upon earth. Our Sages note (*Eruv. 54a*): "Come and see, the difference between the qualities of the Holy One, blessed be He, and those of flesh and blood. In the latter case, if a man gives his friend a drug, it may cure one part of his body but cause harm to another, whereas God gave Torah to Israel, an elixir of life for the whole body, as it is written: *and healing to all their flesh.*

ואומר רפאות **And it says: "Let it be a cure for your flesh, and a tonic for your limbs** – this refers to the world-to-come, where alone the human frame is fully invigorated (*Midrash Sh'muel*). ואומר עץ חיים היא

**And it says: "She is a tree of life to those who grasp her, and those who hold on to her are safe"** – quoting a *Baraita*, the Gemara explains (*Ta'an. 7a*): "Whoever denotes himself to the Torah for its own sake, for him the Torah becomes a medicine of life, as it is written: *It is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon it.*" ואומר כי לויית חן

**And it says: "For they are a garland of grace upon your head, and a chain of honor around your neck"** – the Torah is acquired by study and articulation. Of study, the Bible says: *For they shall be a chaplet of grace unto your head;* and of articulation – *and necklace about your throat.* *Tiferet Yisrael* discerns a twofold honor: 1. For the intellect – seated in the *head*, and 2. for its methodical and stimulating expression that issues from the *throat*.

ואומר תתן לראשך **And it says: "She will place a garland of grace upon your head; bestow upon you a crown of glory"** – the *chaplet of grace* represents the earthly reward, whereas the *crown of glory* denotes the life everlasting, of which we are told: "The righteous sit with their crowns on their heads, and enjoy the radiance of the Divine Presence" (*Ber. 17a*). ואומר ארך ימים **And it says: "Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor** – as expounded in the Gemara (*Shab. 63a*): *Length of days is in its right hand* – to those who treat the Torah in the 'right' spirit (who learn Torah for its

own sake, for the love of it) is granted length of days and all the more so, riches and honor; *in her left hand are riches and honor* – this refers to those who treat the Torah 'left-handedly', (i.e. who study for ulterior motives), who are granted riches and honor, but not length of days.

ואומר כי ארך ימים **And it says: "For long days, and years of life, and peace, will they add to you"** – lest you contend that the Torah student, though he merits life, riches and honor, yet fails to attain peace, therefore, it is said: *and peace will they add to you (Rashi).*

**A**n orphan who suffered from a severe limp was caught stealing in the village of Piltz. The men who caught him began beating him.

R' Pinchas Elye, one of the disciples of R' Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, happened to come by. He turned to the leader of the group and asked him:

"Were you ever an orphan?"

"No."

"Did you ever have a limp?"

"No."

"Have you ever been starving?"

"No."

"Have you ever been without a home?"

"No."

"If so," said R' Pinchas Elye, "by your actions you have violated the rule of *Chazal* that 'one may not judge another unless one is in his situation.'"

**ROSH CHODESH – 2nd DAY**  
**SUN./AUGUST 27/1 ELUL**  
 יום א' לפְּרֶשֶׁת שׁוֹפְטִים, א' אֶלוּל

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – Yaaleh V'yovo, Half Hallel; Mussaf – Rosh Chodesh, Borchy Nafshi, L'Dovid Ori, Lamnatzeach is not recited; Mincha – Yaaleh V'yovo; Maariv – L'Dovid Ori; morning and afternoon Bircas Hamazon – Yaaleh V'yovo.

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Numbers 28:1-15

**Halachah:** It is customary to blow Shofar at the conclusion of Shacharis during the month of Elul. On the last day of Elul, Erev Rosh Hashana, this customary Shofar blowing is omitted.

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:8*

אבות ו:ח

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן מִנְסִיאַ אֹמֵר מִשׁוּם רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָאי:  
 הַנּוֹי, וְהַכֶּחַ, וְהָעֶשֶׂר, וְהַכְּבוֹד, וְהַחֲכָמָה, וְהַזְקָנָה, וְהַשִּׁיבָה,  
 וְהַבָּנִים – נֶאֱדָה לְצַדִּיקִים וְנֶאֱדָה לְעוֹלָם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שם טז,  
 לא): עֶטְרַת תְּפָאֶרֶת שִׁיבָה, בְּדֶרֶךְ צְדָקָה תִּמְצָא; וְאֹמֵר  
 (שם יד, כד): עֶטְרַת חֲכָמִים עֶשְׂרָם; וְאֹמֵר (שם יז, ו):  
 עֶטְרַת זְקָנִים בְּנֵי בָנִים, וְתִפְאֶרֶת בָּנִים אֲבוֹתָם; וְאֹמֵר  
 (שם כ, כט): תְּפָאֶרֶת בַּחוּרִים כָּחֵם, וְהַדָּר זְקָנִים שִׁיבָה;  
 וְאֹמֵר (ישעיה כד, כג): וְחִפְרָה הַלְּבָנָה וּבוֹשָׁה הַחֲמָה,  
 כִּי־מֶלֶךְ ה' צְבָאוֹת בָּהֵר צִיּוֹן וּבִירוּשָׁלַיִם וְנִגְדַּד זְקָנָיו כְּבוֹד.  
 רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן מִנְסִיאַ אֹמֵר: אֵלוּ שֶׁבַע מִדּוֹת, שֶׁמִּנּוּ  
 חֲכָמִים לְצַדִּיקִים, כֻּלָּם נִתְקַיְמוּ בְּרַבִּי וּבְבָנָיו.

Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai: Beauty, strength, wealth, honor, wisdom, old age, grey hair, and children befit the righteous and befit the world, as it is written (*Prov.* 16:31): "Grey hair is a crown of glory; and it is won by a righteous way of life." And it says (*ibid.* 14:24): "The crown of the wise is their wealth." And it says (*ibid.* 17:6): "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers." And it says (*ibid.* 20:29): "The glory of young men is their strength; and the beauty of old men is the grey hair." And it says (*Is.* 24:23): "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His elders shall be glory." Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya said: These seven qualities, which the Sages

attributed to the righteous, were all realized in Rabbi and in his sons.

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya, a contemporary of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi and his friend, Rabbi Yose ben Meshulam, were the leaders of a group called edah kedoshah ("holy congregation") (T.J. Ma'aser Sheni 2:4), because they divided the day into three parts: One-third for the study of Torah, one-third for prayer, and one-third for work. Some say because they would study Torah all through the winter, and work during the summer.*

רבי שמעון **Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai: Beauty, strength, wealth, honor, wisdom, old age, grey hair, and children befit the righteous and befit the world** – when all these qualities are combined in the righteous, it is fortunate for them and for society at large, because *beauty* endears the righteous in the eyes of the gentile rulers and allows them to promote the welfare of the Jewish people; their *strength* can be utilized to rescue the oppressed from his oppressor; their *wealth* serves to support the poor and needy; their position of *honor* draws a ready response in the furtherance of religious causes; their *wisdom* enables them to disseminate the knowledge of God; their *old age* lends added relevance to their observations. With their *grey hair* they are able to confirm the persistent harassment experienced by God-fearing Jews, and how the Almighty came to their aid; and also recount the tale of many a wicked, whose early life spelled serenity, but ended in torment; Their numerous *sons* constituted a proud array of saplings rooted in the soil of Israel, bearing fruit and spreading the knowledge of God throughout the world (*Tiferet Yisrael*). *Emunat Sh'muel* explains: *Beauty* denotes the glory and grandeur of holiness that ought to typify the bearing of the righteous; *Strength* enables him to persist in Torah-study, whereas the weak person suffers many distractions. *Wealth* enables him to avoid flattery of the wicked; it facilitates the pronouncement of fair judgement, in compliance with his instructions. The

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*honor* accorded to the scholars enhances the value of the Torah in the eyes of the multitude: *Old age* and *grey hair* represent the growing maturity attained by the scholar in his advanced years. *Sons* whom the virtuous guide to follow in the ways of the Lord, *befit the righteous* who thus raise a generation devoted to Torah and good deeds ... **as it is written: "Grey hair is a crown of glory; and it is won by a righteous way of life"** – he who chooses to follow in this way of life, is rewarded by a hoary head and a crown of glory.

ואומר עטרת חכמים **And it says: "The crown of the wise is their wealth"** – this teaches that affluence befits the wise. **And it says: "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers"** – here it is hinted that the *glory* and handsome features in the offspring reflect the paternal roots, as our Sages note (*Eduyot* 2:9): "The father bestows comeliness on his son" (*Midrash Sh'muel*). **And it says: "The glory of young men is their strength; and the beauty of old men is the grey hair"** – the vigor which the young are able to harness to the service of God is their true glory (*ibid.*).

ואומר וחפרה **And it says: "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His elders shall be glory"** – this verse refers to the Messianic era, when the glory of God shining on Israel will eclipse the light of the sun and the moon; and the verse concludes: "and before His elders shall be glory" meaning that honor (glory) is due to the righteous, called the *elders* of God, who will then be treated with proper respect. **Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya said** – in addition to the aforesaid (some versions read at the beginning of the Mishnah *Rabbi Shimon ben Yehudah* i.e. of Kefar Acco, an outstanding disciple of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai). **These seven qualities which the Sages attributed to the righteous** – beauty, strength, wealth, etc., enumerated above **were all realized in**

**Rabbi** – Yehudah HaNasi **and in his sons** – this shows that the perfectly righteous may gain all the seven blessings at one and the same time (*ibid.*). To be sure, the Mishnah lists eight qualities, hence some commentators consider *beauty* to denote a general term comprising the seven qualities which follow. Thus read, the Mishnah concludes, נאה לצדיקים *befits* (in the singular rather than in the plural) *the righteous*, with *beauty* as the subject. Accordingly, we must read the Mishnah as follows: *Beauty* – i.e., *strength, wealth, honor, etc.* – *befits the righteous and befits the world* (*Siddur Avodat Israel*, quoting *Heidenheim*).

**W**hich is the proper path that one should choose for oneself? That which is honorable to the one who adopts it and also merits the admiration of others.

(Ethics of the Fathers 2:1)

At first glance, this statement is bothersome. Right and wrong are, we know, absolute and not subject to public opinion. "The admiration of others" should have no place in determining morality.

The statement is not referring here to what is right versus what is wrong. Rather, it is discussing the mode of conduct within the realm of what is right.

The Midrash relates that Rabbi Shimon ben Shatach bought a mule from an Arab, and when his students discovered a precious gem in the saddlepack, they congratulated him on his good fortune. Rabbi Shimon responded, "I bought a mule, not a precious gem." He sought out the Arab and he returned the gem to him. The Arab said, "Blessed be the God of Rabbi Shimon ben Shatach."

Ethical behavior elicits admiration and serves as an example for others.

**MON./AUGUST 28/2 ELUL**  
יום ב' לפך־שת שופטים, ב' אלול

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – L'Dovid Ori; Maariv – L'Dovid Ori

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Shoftim

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:9*

אבות ו:ט

אמר רבי יוסי בן קסמא: פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בדרך, ופגע בי אדם אחד, ונתן לי שלום והחזרתני לו שלום. אמר לי: רבי, מאיזה מקום אתה? אמרתני לו: מעיר גדולה של חכמים ושל סופרים אני. אמר לי: רבי, רצונך שתדור עמנו במקומנו? ואני אתן לך אלף אלפים דינרי זהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות. אמרתני לו: בני, אם אתה נותן לי כל כסף וזהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות שבעולם, איני דר אלא במקום תורה, לפי שבשעת פטירתו של אדם אין מלוין לו לאדם לא כסף ולא זהב ולא אבנים טובות ומרגליות, אלא תורה ומעשים טובים בלבד, שנאמר (משלי ו, כב): בהתהלךך תנחה אתך, בשכבך תשמר עליך, והקיצות היא תשיחה. בהתהלךך תנחה אתך – בעולם הזה; בשכבך תשמר עליך – בקבר; והקיצות היא תשיחה – לעולם הבא. וכן כתוב בספר תהלים על ידי דוד מלך ישראל (תהלים קיט, עב): טוב לי תורת־פיה מאלפי זהב וכסף, ואומר (חגי ב, ח): לי הכסף ולי הזהב, אמר ה' צבאות.

Rabbi Yose ben Kisma said: Once I was walking along the way, when a man met me, and greeted me 'Shalom'. I answered him 'Shalom'. He said to me: Rabbi, where do you come from? I said to him: I come from a great city of sages and scholars. Said he to me: Rabbi, do you wish to dwell with us in our place? I will give you a million golden dinars and precious stones and pearls. I said to him: My son, if you gave me all the silver and gold and precious stones and pearls in the world, I would not dwell anywhere except in a place of Torah; for in the hour of man's departure, neither silver nor gold nor precious stones and pearls accompany him, but Torah and good deeds alone, as it is written (*Prov. 6:22*): "When you walk, it shall lead you; when you lie down, it shall watch over you; and when you awaken, it shall be your talk." *When you walk, it shall lead you* – in this world; *when*



*you lie down, it shall watch over you – in the grave; and when you awaken, it shall be your talk – in the hereafter. And likewise it is written in the book of Psalms by David, King of Israel (Ps. 119:72): "The Torah of Your mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver." And it says (Hag. 2:8): "Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold, says the Lord of Hosts."*

## MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*Rabbi Yose ben Kisma was a contemporary of Rabbi Hanina ben Tradyon. Although he was one of the outstanding scholars of his generation and taught Torah at Kesarin, in the north of Eretz Israel, little has been recorded of his teachings and wisdom. During the Bar Kochba revolt, he was among the moderates – advocating not to rebel against Rome in her prime hour (Avodah Zorah 18a – his confrontation with Rabbi Haninah ben Tradyon).*

**אמר רבי יוסי בן קסמא Rabbi Yose ben Kisma said: Once I was walking along the way, when a man met me –** It does not say: 'I met a man,' because Rabbi Yose did not notice that person until the latter called out 'Shalom'; for had he seen him, he would have greeted him first, as is the custom of the learned and pious, to greet everyone first (*Midrash Sh'muel*); **and greeted me 'Shalom'. I answered him 'Shalom'. He said to me: Rabbi, where do you come from? I said to him: I come from a great city of sages and scholars. Said he to me: Rabbi, do you wish to dwell with us in our place? – to serve as our rabbi and teacher. I will give you a million golden dinars and precious stones and pearls – i.e., whatever terms you request shall be granted to you.**

**אמרתי לו, בני I said to him: My son, if you gave me all the silver and gold and precious stones and pearls in the world, I would not dwell anywhere except in a place of Torah –** as Rabbi Nehorai said (above, Chapt. 4:14): "Go into voluntary exile to a place of Torah, and do not say that it will come after you;" **for in the hour of man's departure, neither silver nor gold nor precious stones and pearls accompany him, but Torah and good deeds alone,**

ב' אלול / MON./AUGUST 28

as it is written: "When you walk, it shall lead you; when you lie down, it shall watch over you; and when you awaken, it shall be your talk." When you walk, it shall lead you" – in this world – because the Torah guides and illuminates a man, that he might not go astray and endanger himself in his wanderings throughout life; "when you lie down, it shall watch over you" – in the grave – it will protect you from worms and maggots; and when you awaken, it shall be your talk – in the hereafter – i.e. at the time of the Resurrection of the Dead it will reveal to you all its mysteries as though in a conversation.

וכן כתוב And likewise it is written in the Book of Psalms by David King of Israel – who was fully aware of the value of silver and gold: "The Torah of Your mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver." And it says: "Mine is the silver, and Mine is the gold, says the Lord of Hosts" – therefore, if God wills it, He will grant me of His gold and silver in my present location, and I need not depart from a place of Torah for the sake of material gain.

**I**t had been a long and hot fast day, and R' Yechiel Meir of Gustinin's whole family was gathered to break the fast, except for R' Yechiel Meir himself.

A short while later he came home, accompanied by a wandering beggar. R' Yechiel Meir's family was eager to know where he had been. He explained, "Just like you, I felt a need to still my hunger after the long fast. You no doubt hungered for food, but I hungered to do the *mitzvah* of welcoming a guest."

**TUES./AUGUST 29/3 ELUL**  
 יום ג' לפַּרְשַׁת שׁוֹפְטִים, ג' אֶלוּל

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – L'Dovid Ori; Maariv – L'Dovid Ori

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:10*

אבות ו:י

חֲמִשָּׁה קְנִינִים קָנָה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּעוֹלָמוֹ, וְאֵלוּ הֵן: תּוֹרָה – קְנִינָא אֶחָד, שָׁמַיִם וְאָרֶץ – קְנִינָא אֶחָד, אַבְרָהָם – קְנִינָא אֶחָד, יִשְׂרָאֵל – קְנִינָא אֶחָד, בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ – קְנִינָא אֶחָד. תּוֹרָה קְנִינָא אֶחָד מִנֵּינָא דְכְּתִיב (משלי ח, כב): ה' קָנָה רִאשִׁית דְּרִכּוֹ, קֶדֶם מִפְּעֻלָּיו מֵאֲזוּ. שָׁמַיִם וְאָרֶץ קְנִינָא אֶחָד מִנֵּינָא שְׁנַאֲמַר (ישעיה סו, א): כֹּה אָמַר ה' הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּסֵאֵי וְהָאָרֶץ הַדָּם רִגְלֵי, אֵיזָה בֵּית אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנוּ-לִי וְאֵיזָה מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי; וְאוֹמֵר (תהלים קד, כד): מִהֲרַבּוּ מֵעֲשִׂיף ה', כֹּלֵם בְּחֻכְמָה עֲשִׂיתָ מְלֶאכֶה הָאָרֶץ קְנִינָא. אַבְרָהָם קְנִינָא אֶחָד מִנֵּינָא דְכְּתִיב (בראשית יד, יט): וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן קָנָה שָׁמַיִם וְאָרֶץ. יִשְׂרָאֵל קְנִינָא אֶחָד מִנֵּינָא דְכְּתִיב (שמות טו, טז): עַד-יַעֲבֹר עִמָּךְ ה' עַד-יַעֲבֹר עִמָּךְ; וְאוֹמֵר (תהלים טו, ג): לְקַדוּשֵׁים אֲשֶׁר-בָּאָרֶץ הַמָּה וְאֲדִירֵי כָּל-הַפְּצִי-בָם. בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ קְנִינָא אֶחָד מִנֵּינָא שְׁנַאֲמַר (שמות טו, יז): מִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כּוֹנֵנּוּ יְדִיף; וְאוֹמֵר (תהלים עח, נד): וַיְבִיאֵם אֶל-גְּבוּל קְדָשׁוֹ הַרְזָה קְנִיתָה יְמִינוֹ.

Five possession did the Holy One, blessed be He, adopt in His world, and these are they: The Torah is one possession; heaven and earth, one possession; Abraham, one possession; Israel, one possession; the Temple, one possession. Whence do we know that the Torah is one possession? As it is written (*Prov. 8:22*): "The Lord adopted me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old." Whence do we know that heaven and earth are one possession? As it is written

**Today's Torah study is dedicated**

**In Loving Memory of**  
 נחמיה בן אברהם הלל ע"ה  
**NATHAN K. GROSS, A"H**

— Shirley M. Gross and Family



TUES./AUGUST 29/ג' אלול

(Is. 66:1): "Thus says the Lord: The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that you can build for me? And where is the place that can be My resting-place?" And it says (Ps. 104:24): "How manifold are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom have You made them all; the earth is full of Your possessions." Whence do we know that Abraham is one possession? As it is written (Gen. 14:19): "And he blessed him and said: Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth." Whence do we know that Israel is one possession? As it is written (Ex. 15:16): "...till Your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over that You have possessed." And it says (Ps. 16:3): "As for the holy people who are upon earth, they are the excellent ones in whom is all My delight." Whence do we know that the Temple is one possession? As it is said (Ex. 15:17): "The Sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established (lit. *possessed* – tr.)." And it says (Ps. 78:54): "And He brought them to the realm of His sanctuary; to the mountain, which His right hand had won (lit. *possessed* – tr.)"

#### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

חמשה קנינים **Five** – special possessions did the Holy One, blessed be He, adopt in His world – they are called *possessions*, i.e. valuable articles for which a man would pay a high price, and these are they: **The Torah is one possession; heaven and earth, one possession; Abraham, one possession; Israel, one possession; the Temple, one possession.** Whence do we know that the Torah is one possession? As it is written: "The Lord adopted (lit. *possessed* – tr.) me

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**BENZION EPHRAIM  
BEN HENOCH, A"H**

— Malcolm and Fraydie Hoenlein



TUES./AUGUST 29/ג' אלול

**in the beginning of His way, before His works of old**" – the Torah here declares itself to have been God's *possession* even before the world was created; thus also in *Avot de Rabbi Natan* (Chapt. 31): "Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Rabbi Yose the Galilean says: Nine hundred and seventy-four generations before the world was created, the Torah had already been written, and it lay in God's lap, singing hymns in the company of the ministering angels."

שמים וארץ **Whence do we know that heaven and earth are one possession? As it is written: "Thus says the Lord: The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that you can build for Me? And where is the place that can be My resting-place?"** – since God chose them to serve as His "throne" and "footstool," they are evidently His valued possessions.

ואומר מה רבו מעשיך **And it says: "How manifold are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom have You made them all; the earth is full of Your possessions"** – i.e., the earth, which is Your possession (*kinyanekha*) is full of Your works, all of which you have made in wisdom; and if the earth, referred to as God's *footstool*, constitutes a *possession*, then all the more so the heaven, which serves as the Divine throne (*Midrash Sh'muel*).

אברהם קנין אחד **Whence do we know that Abraham is one possession? As it is written: "And He blessed him and said: Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth"** – this verse recounts the praises of Abraham, for whose sake the heaven and the earth were created, as the Midrash notes (*Bereshit Rabba* 12): "These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created – בהבראם (*Gen. 2:4*); instead of בהבראם, *read* באברהם (for *Abraham*). Accordingly, "Possessor of heaven and earth" refers to Abraham, who *possesses* them, since they were created for his sake. Now, seeing that the heaven and earth are God's special posses-

sion, as explained above, then all the more so Abraham, for whose benefit they were created, must be a special possession of the Lord (*ibid.*).

ישראל קנין אחד **Whence do we know that Israel is one possession? As it is written: "Till Your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over that You have possessed"** – hence Israel denotes a special *possession*. **And it says: "As for the holy people who are upon earth, they are the excellent ones in whom is all My delight"** – this verse informs us that the Jews, even when not perfectly righteous, are still the *possession* of God, not on account of their own virtue and uprightness, but rather on account of their ancestors who are buried in the Land of Israel, in whom God delights, and for their sake He rejoices also in the Jewish people (*ibid.*).

בית מקדש קנין אחד **Whence do we know that the Temple is one possession? As it is said: "The Sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established (lit. possessed – tr.)"** – the *Mekhilta* relates that the Temple is especially valued in that it was created, symbolically speaking, with "both hands" of God, whereas the world was created with only "one hand," as it is written (*Is. 48:13*): "Yea, My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand has spread out the heavens." This is meant to convey that the world was designed to function solely on the basis of natural law, whereas in the Temple, God also treats us to miracles that are supernatural (*Emunat Sh'muel*). Moreover, since heaven and earth are called a *possession*, how much more so the Temple, whose value is greater than theirs.

ואומר ויביאם **And it says: "And He brought them to the realm of His sanctuary; to the mountain, which His right hand had won (lit. possessed – tr.)"** – this verse teaches us furthermore, that even when the Temple has ceased to exist and Mount Moriah is but a bleak and desolate mountain, even then it remains the *possession* of God.

**WED./AUGUST 30/4 ELUL**  
 יום ד' לַפָּרָשֶׁת שׁוֹפְטִים, ד' אָלוּל

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – L'Dovid Ori; Maariv – L'Dovid Ori

**MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION**

*Avot 6:11*

אבות ו:יא

כָּל מַה שֶּׁבָּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּעוֹלָמוֹ לֹא בָּרָא אֶלָּא לְכַבוֹדוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ישעיה מג, ז): כֹּל הַנִּקְרָא בְּשְׁמִי וְלְכַבוֹדִי בָּרָאתִיו, יִצְרַתִּיו אֶף־עֲשִׂיתִיו; וְאוֹמֵר (שמות טו, יח): ה' יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created in His world, He created it only for His glory, as it is said (*Is. 43:7*): "Everything that is called by My name, and which I have created for My glory, I have formed it, yea, I have made it." And it says (*Ex. 15:18*): "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever."

**MISHNAH COMMENTARY**

**Everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created in His world** – not only the five *possessions* listed in the previous Mishnah, but the entire Creation, **He created it only for His glory** – that everything may bear testimony to His majesty and grandeur, **as it is said: "Everything that is called by My name, and which I have created for My glory, I have formed it, yea, I have made it"** – this verse embraces the four worlds: Emanation, Creation, Formation and Action. Concerning the world of Emanation, which consists entirely of the Divine Names, the verse says: *Everything that is called by My name ... and for my glory...*; (the phrase) *have I created* – denotes the world of Creation; *I have formed it* – represents the world of Formation; and *yea I have made it* – refers to the world of Action (*Midrash Sh'muel*).

**And it says: "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever"** – this verse, with which the Mishnah concludes, harbors the following message: Indeed, the world of Action, i.e., that of human exis-

tence, does not reflect the glory of God, what with man's inclination toward evil from his early youth, so as to provoke his Creator; however, *The Lord shall reign for ever and ever*, and on that day, which is destined to come, all mankind will invoke the name of God, and then the whole universe will be filled with His glory (*ibid.*).

**A** non-religious man was eager to meet the Chazon Ish. He arrived at the latter's home just as the Chazon Ish was about to take a walk and received permission to accompany him.

The Chazon Ish walked along silently, the man at his side. Suddenly, the Chazon Ish slowed down for no apparent reason. The Chazon Ish then explained himself, "There is a man with a limp in front of us. It is not nice to pass him and remind him of his infirmity."



## THURS./AUGUST 31/5 ELUL

יום ה' לפַרְשַׁת שׁוֹפְטִים, ה' אֶלוּל

**Additional Prayers:** Shacharis – L'Dovid Ori; Maariv – L'Dovid Ori

**Torah Reading:** Shacharis – Beginning of Parshas Shoftim

### MISHNAH TEXT AND TRANSLATION

#### *Avot 6:Epilogue*

אָמַר רַבִּי חַנְנִיָּה בֶּן עֲקֵשְׁיָא: רָצָה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְזַכּוֹת אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְפִיכֵךְ הִרְבָּה לָהֶם תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ישעיה מב, כא): ה' חָפֵץ לְמַעַן צְדָקוֹ יַגְדִּיל תּוֹרָה וַיֵּאדִיר.

Rabbi Hananyah ben Akashya said: The Holy One, blessed be He, wished to grant merit to Israel; therefore, He gave them abundant Torah and *mitzvot*, as it is written (*Is. 42:21*): "The Lord was pleased for His righteousness' sake, to magnify the Torah and make it glorious."

### MISHNAH COMMENTARY

*This saying is not part of the Tractate Avot; it is the concluding Mishnah of the Tractate Makkot. It is customary to recite it as an appropriate epilogue at the end of each chapter of Pirkei Avot.*

**Rabbi Hananyah ben Akashya said: The Holy One, blessed be He, wished to grant merit to Israel – and thereby increase their reward, therefore, He gave them abundant Torah and mitzvot –** God issued numerous warnings and restrictions (negative commandments), even concerning matters which people naturally avoid. Now that they reject such options because the Torah forbade them, their merit is enhanced, **as it is written: "The Lord was pleased for His righteousness' sake – to render Israel righteous and meritorious, therefore He sought to magnify the Torah and make it glorious."**

*Rambam* writes in his commentary: "It is one of the principles of faith in the Torah that when a man per-

## THURS./AUGUST 31/ה' אלול

forms one of the 613 precepts properly, for its own sake and with love, without a trace of worldly motivation, he thereby merits life in the hereafter. It is to this lesson that Rabbi Hananyah refers: since the *mitzvot* are so numerous, it is inconceivable that during his lifetime a person will fail to fulfill at least one precept as fully required, and thereby gain life everlasting for his soul. This doctrine is reflected in the question posed by Rabbi Hananyah ben Tradyon to Rabbi Yose ben Kisma: What is my chance to enter the world-to-come? Rabbi Yose answered him: Did a good deed once come your way, and did you ever happen to perform a *mitzvah* properly? To which Rabbi Hananyah replied that he happened to fulfill the *mitzvah* of charity – צדקה – in utmost perfection (see *Av. Zar.* 18a), and thus he merited the life eternal – חיי העולם הבא. A further comment to this Mishnah notes that there was no need for the Torah to specify those commandments whose performance is essential for human survival. Thus, it is natural for man to desire marriage to a woman. A similar need underlies legislation in the civil and social spheres. However, were these *mitzvot* not written in the Torah, Israel would have not gained special distinction and its appropriate reward. But, now that they perform these precepts in the name of God, their effort will be duly compensated (cf. *Melekheth Shelomo*).

	Earliest Time Tallis & T'fillin	Sunrise	Latest Time Shema (M.A.)	Latest Time Shema (Grah)	Latest Time Shachris (Grah)	Earliest Time Mincha (Grah)	Plag Hamin- cha (Grah)	Sunset
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## Atlanta, Georgia

Aug. 1	5:49	6:49	9:40	10:16	11:25	2:18	7:12	8:38
Aug. 8	5:54	6:54	9:43	10:19	11:27	2:17	7:07	8:32
Aug. 15	5:59	6:59	9:44	10:20	11:27	2:15	7:00	8:24
Aug. 22	6:04	7:04	9:46	10:22	11:28	2:13	6:53	8:16
Aug. 29	6:09	7:09	9:48	10:24	11:29	2:11	6:47	8:08

## Brookline, Massachusetts

Aug. 1	4:36	5:36	8:37	9:13	10:25	1:26	6:34	8:04
Aug. 8	4:44	5:44	8:41	9:17	10:28	1:25	6:27	7:56
Aug. 15	4:51	5:51	8:44	9:20	10:29	1:23	6:19	7:46
Aug. 22	4:58	5:58	8:46	9:22	10:30	1:21	6:10	7:35
Aug. 29	5:06	6:06	8:50	9:26	10:32	1:18	6:01	7:24

## Chicago, Illinois

Aug. 1	4:44	5:44	8:44	9:20	10:32	1:33	6:39	8:09
Aug. 8	4:51	5:51	8:48	9:24	10:34	1:31	6:32	8:01
Aug. 15	4:58	5:58	8:50	9:26	10:36	1:29	6:24	7:51
Aug. 22	5:05	6:05	8:53	9:29	10:37	1:27	6:16	7:41
Aug. 29	5:13	6:13	8:56	9:32	10:39	1:25	6:07	7:30

## Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Aug. 1	5:21	6:21	9:21	9:57	11:09	2:08	7:14	8:44
Aug. 8	5:28	6:28	9:24	10:00	11:11	2:07	7:08	8:36
Aug. 15	5:35	6:35	9:27	10:03	11:12	2:05	7:00	8:27
Aug. 22	5:42	6:42	9:30	10:06	11:13	2:02	6:51	8:16
Aug. 29	5:49	6:49	9:32	10:08	11:14	2:00	6:42	8:05

## Denver, Colorado

Aug. 1	4:59	5:59	8:57	9:33	10:44	1:41	6:44	8:13
Aug. 8	5:05	6:05	8:59	9:35	10:45	1:41	6:38	8:06
Aug. 15	5:12	6:12	9:02	9:38	10:47	1:39	6:31	7:57
Aug. 22	5:18	6:18	9:04	9:40	10:48	1:36	6:23	7:47
Aug. 29	5:25	6:25	9:07	9:43	10:49	1:33	6:14	7:36

## Hartford, Connecticut

Aug. 1	4:44	5:44	8:44	9:20	10:32	1:33	6:39	8:09
Aug. 8	4:51	5:51	8:48	9:24	10:34	1:31	6:32	8:01
Aug. 15	4:59	5:59	8:51	9:27	10:36	1:29	6:24	7:51
Aug. 22	5:06	6:06	8:54	9:30	10:38	1:27	6:16	7:41
Aug. 29	5:13	6:13	8:56	9:32	10:39	1:25	6:07	7:30

## Houston, Texas

Aug. 1	5:41	6:41	9:29	10:05	11:12	2:01	6:50	8:15
Aug. 8	5:45	6:45	9:30	10:06	11:13	2:00	6:45	8:09
Aug. 15	5:49	6:49	9:32	10:08	11:14	1:59	6:40	8:03
Aug. 22	5:53	6:53	9:33	10:09	11:14	1:56	6:34	7:55
Aug. 29	5:57	6:57	9:34	10:10	11:14	1:55	6:28	7:48

	Earliest Time Tallis & T'fillin	Sunrise	Latest Time Shema (M.A.)	Latest Time Shema (Grah)	Latest Shachris (Grah)	Earliest Time Mincha (Grah)	Plag Hamin- cha (Grah)	Sunset
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## Los Angeles, California

Aug. 1	5:04	6:04	8:56	9:32	10:41	1:33	6:28	7:54
Aug. 8	5:09	6:09	8:58	9:34	10:42	1:33	6:23	7:48
Aug. 15	5:14	6:14	9:00	9:36	10:43	1:30	6:16	7:40
Aug. 22	5:19	6:19	9:01	9:37	10:43	1:29	6:09	7:32
Aug. 29	5:24	6:24	9:03	9:39	10:44	1:26	6:02	7:23

## Memphis, Tennessee

Aug. 1	5:09	6:09	9:02	9:38	10:47	1:41	6:37	8:04
Aug. 8	5:14	6:14	9:04	9:40	10:48	1:40	6:31	7:57
Aug. 15	5:20	6:20	9:06	9:42	10:50	1:38	6:25	7:49
Aug. 22	5:25	6:25	9:08	9:44	10:50	1:36	6:18	7:41
Aug. 29	5:30	6:30	9:10	9:46	10:51	1:33	6:11	7:32

## Miami Beach, Florida

Aug. 1	5:47	6:47	9:31	10:07	11:14	2:00	6:44	8:07
Aug. 8	5:50	6:50	9:32	10:08	11:14	1:59	6:39	8:02
Aug. 15	5:54	6:54	9:34	10:10	11:15	1:58	6:35	7:57
Aug. 22	5:57	6:57	9:34	10:10	11:15	1:56	6:29	7:50
Aug. 29	6:00	7:00	9:35	10:11	11:15	1:53	6:24	7:44

## Montreal, Canada

Aug. 1	4:38	5:38	8:43	9:19	10:33	1:37	6:51	8:23
Aug. 8	4:46	5:46	8:47	9:23	10:35	1:36	6:43	8:13
Aug. 15	4:54	5:54	8:50	9:26	10:37	1:33	6:34	8:02
Aug. 22	5:03	6:03	8:54	9:30	10:39	1:31	6:25	7:51
Aug. 29	5:11	6:11	8:57	9:33	10:40	1:28	6:14	7:38

## New York, New York

Aug. 1	4:52	5:52	8:51	9:27	10:39	1:37	6:42	8:12
Aug. 8	4:59	5:59	8:54	9:30	10:41	1:37	6:36	8:04
Aug. 15	5:06	6:06	8:57	9:33	10:42	1:35	6:29	7:55
Aug. 22	5:13	6:13	9:00	9:36	10:43	1:32	6:20	7:44
Aug. 29	5:20	6:20	9:03	9:39	10:45	1:30	6:11	7:34

## Oak Park, Michigan

Aug. 1	5:24	6:24	9:25	10:01	11:13	2:14	7:22	8:52
Aug. 8	5:32	6:32	9:29	10:05	11:16	2:13	7:14	8:43
Aug. 15	5:39	6:39	9:32	10:08	11:17	2:11	7:07	8:34
Aug. 22	5:46	6:46	9:34	10:10	11:18	2:09	6:58	8:23
Aug. 29	5:54	6:54	9:38	10:14	11:20	2:06	6:49	8:12

## Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Aug. 1	4:59	5:59	8:57	9:33	10:44	1:42	6:45	8:14
Aug. 8	5:05	6:05	9:00	9:36	10:46	1:41	6:39	8:07
Aug. 15	5:12	6:12	9:03	9:39	10:47	1:39	6:32	7:58
Aug. 22	5:18	6:18	9:05	9:41	10:48	1:36	6:24	7:48
Aug. 29	5:25	6:25	9:07	9:43	10:49	1:34	6:14	7:37

	Earliest Time Tallis & T'fillin	Sunrise	Latest Time Shema (M.A.)	Latest Time Shema (Grah)	Latest Time Shachris (Grah)	Earliest Time Mincha (Grah)	Plag Hamin- cha (Grah)	Sunset
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## Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Aug. 1	5:17	6:17	9:16	9:52	11:03	2:01	7:06	8:35
Aug. 8	5:24	6:24	9:19	9:55	11:05	2:01	6:59	8:27
Aug. 15	5:30	6:30	9:21	9:57	11:06	1:58	6:52	8:18
Aug. 22	5:37	6:37	9:24	10:00	11:07	1:56	6:44	8:08
Aug. 29	5:44	6:44	9:26	10:02	11:08	1:54	6:34	7:57

## San Francisco, California

Aug. 1	5:13	6:13	9:09	9:45	10:55	1:51	6:51	8:19
Aug. 8	5:19	6:19	9:11	9:47	10:56	1:49	6:44	8:11
Aug. 15	5:25	6:25	9:14	9:50	10:58	1:48	6:38	8:03
Aug. 22	5:31	6:31	9:16	9:52	10:59	1:46	6:30	7:54
Aug. 29	5:37	6:37	9:18	9:54	10:59	1:43	6:22	7:44

## Seattle, Washington

Aug. 1	4:46	5:46	8:55	9:31	10:45	1:52	7:10	8:44
Aug. 8	4:55	5:55	8:59	9:35	10:48	1:51	7:02	8:34
Aug. 15	5:05	6:05	9:03	9:39	10:51	1:49	6:53	8:22
Aug. 22	5:14	6:14	9:07	9:43	10:52	1:46	6:42	8:09
Aug. 29	5:23	6:23	9:10	9:46	10:54	1:43	6:31	7:56

## Silver Spring, Maryland

Aug. 1	5:09	6:09	9:06	9:42	10:53	1:50	6:51	8:20
Aug. 8	5:15	6:15	9:08	9:44	10:54	1:48	6:45	8:12
Aug. 15	5:21	6:21	9:11	9:47	10:55	1:46	6:37	8:03
Aug. 22	5:28	6:28	9:14	9:50	10:57	1:44	6:30	7:54
Aug. 29	5:34	6:34	9:16	9:52	10:57	1:41	6:22	7:44

## St. Louis, Missouri

Aug. 1	5:02	6:02	8:59	9:35	10:45	1:42	6:43	8:12
Aug. 8	5:08	6:08	9:01	9:37	10:47	1:40	6:37	8:04
Aug. 15	5:14	6:14	9:03	9:39	10:48	1:39	6:29	7:55
Aug. 22	5:21	6:21	9:06	9:42	10:49	1:37	6:22	7:46
Aug. 29	5:27	6:27	9:08	9:44	10:50	1:34	6:14	7:36

## Toronto, Canada

Aug. 1	5:06	6:06	9:09	9:45	10:58	2:00	7:10	8:41
Aug. 8	5:14	6:14	9:13	9:49	11:00	1:58	7:03	8:32
Aug. 15	5:22	6:22	9:16	9:52	11:02	1:57	6:54	8:22
Aug. 22	5:29	6:29	9:19	9:55	11:03	1:54	6:45	8:11
Aug. 29	5:37	6:37	9:22	9:58	11:04	1:51	6:35	7:59

September 1995

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 Labor Day	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Rosh HaShanah	26 Rosh HaShanah	27	28	29	30



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Av-Elul		August 1995					5755
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
		Av 5            1 <b>Sanhedrin 113</b>	Av 6            2 <b>Makos 2</b>	Av 7            3 <b>Makos 3</b>	Av 8            4 <b>Makos 4</b>	Av 9            5 <b>Makos 5</b>	
Av 10           6 <b>Makos 6</b> Fast - 9th of Av Postponed	Av 11           7 <b>Makos 7</b>	Av 12           8 <b>Makos 8</b>	Av 13           9 <b>Makos 9</b>	Av 14           10 <b>Makos 10</b>	Av 15           11 <b>Makos 11</b> Tu b'Av	Av 16           12 <b>Makos 12</b>	

Av 17 13 <b>Makos 13</b>	Av 18 14 <b>Makos 14</b>	Av 19 15 <b>Makos 15</b>	Av 20 16 <b>Makos 16</b>	Av 21 17 <b>Makos 17</b>	Av 22 18 <b>Makos 18</b>	Av 23 19 <b>Makos 19</b>
Av 24 20 <b>Makos 20</b>	Av 25 21 <b>Makos 21</b>	Av 26 22 <b>Makos 22</b>	Av 27 23 <b>Makos 23</b>	Av 28 24 <b>Makos 24</b>	Av 29 25 <b>Shavuos 2</b>	Av 30 26 <b>Shavuos 3</b> Rosh Chodesh
Elul 1 27 <b>Shavuos 4</b> Rosh Chodesh	Elul 2 28 <b>Shavuos 5</b>	Elul 3 29 <b>Shavuos 6</b>	Elul 4 30 <b>Shavuos 7</b>	Elul 5 31 <b>Shavuos 8</b>		