

מִסְכֵּת אָבוֹת • פֶּרֶק חֲמִישִׁי

Learned like the daf, the literal words in bold, flowing with the elucidation

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this beautiful chapter of Pirkei Avos, we learn about the deep patterns of Hashem's creation and His hashgachah (divine providence) in the world. The Mishnah begins by showing us how Hashem structured history and nature around the number ten, starting from the ten utterances of creation, through the ten generations from Adam to Noah and Noah to Avraham, and the ten trials of Avraham Avinu. We are also reminded of the ten miracles in Mitzrayim and at the Yam Suf, the ten trials in the Wilderness, the ten wonders in the Beis HaMikdash, and the ten special things created at twilight on Erev Shabbos.

As the chapter continues, the focus shifts to the number seven and the number four, teaching us how to refine our middos and understand the spiritual consequences of our actions. The Mishnah contrasts the seven traits of a wise man with those of a clod, and details the seven types of punishments that come to the world for specific transgressions. Finally, we learn to analyze ourselves through various fourfold categories, including types of temperaments, types of disciples, and types of charity givers, guiding us on how to become truly pious in our service of Hashem.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

מִשְׁנָה א

Mishna 1 · The Creation of the World with Ten Utterances and the Reward of the Righteous

בְּעֶשְׂרֵה מְאֻמֹּת נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם.

With **ten utterances** was the world **created** by Hashem.

וּמָה תִּלְמוּד לומר,

And **what** does this **teaching** come to say to us?

וְהֲלֹא בְּמֵאֶמֶר אֶחָד יָכוֹל לְהִבְרָאוֹת,

And **is it not** so that **with just one utterance** the world **could be created**?

אֶלָּא לְהַפְרֵעַ מִן הָרָשָׁעִים

But rather, it was done this way **to exact punishment** from the wicked

שֶׁמֵאַבְדִּין אֶת הָעוֹלָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּעֶשְׂרֵה מְאֻמֹּת,

who destroy — the world that was created with **ten utterances**, showing how great their sin is by ruining something so precious,

וּלְתֵן שָׂכָר טוֹב לְצַדִּיקִים

and to give a good reward to the righteous

שְׁמִימִין אֶת הָעוֹלָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּעֶשְׂרֵה מֵאֲמֵרוֹת:

who sustain — the world that was created with ten utterances, showing how great their merit is for preserving Hashem's grand creation.

משנה ב

Mishna 2 · Ten Generations from Adam to Noah and from Noah to Avraham

עֶשְׂרֵה דוֹרוֹת מֵאָדָם וְעַד נֹחַ,

There were ten generations from Adam until Noah,

לְהוֹדִיעַ כַּמָּה אַרְהָ אִפִּים לְפָנָיו,

to make known how much patience and withholding of anger is before Him, in the way Hashem conducts the world,

שָׁכַל הַדּוֹרוֹת הָיוּ מְכַעֲסִין וּבָאִין

for all of those generations were continuously provoking Him and continuing in their rebellion,

עַד שֶׁהֵבִיא עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת מִי הַמַּבּוּל.

until He brought upon them the waters of the flood.

עֶשְׂרֵה דוֹרוֹת מִנֹּחַ וְעַד אַבְרָהָם,

There were ten generations from Noah until Avraham,

לְהוֹדִיעַ כַּמָּה אַרְהָ אִפִּים לְפָנָיו,

to make known how much patience and withholding of anger is before Him,

שָׁכַל הַדּוֹרוֹת הָיוּ מְכַעֲסִין וּבָאִין,

for all of those generations were continuously provoking Him and continuing in their sins,

עַד שֶׁבָּא אַבְרָהָם וְקִבֵּל עָלָיו שְׂכָר כָּלָם:

until Avraham came and received the reward of all of them, because he alone served Hashem and sustained the world.

משנה ג

Mishna 3 · The Ten Trials of Avraham Our Father

עֶשְׂרֵה נִסְיוֹנוֹת נִתְּנָסָה אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם

With ten trials was tested Avraham our father, upon him be peace,

וְעָמַד בְּכָלָם,

and he stood in all of them, remaining steadfast in his emunah and avodah,

לְהוֹדִיעַ כַּמָּה חֲבָתוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם:

to make known how great is the belovedness of Avraham our father, upon him be peace, before Hashem.

משנה ד

Mishna 4 · Ten Miracles and Ten Trials in Mitzrayim and the Wilderness

עשרה נסים נעשו לאבותינו במצרים

Ten miracles were performed for our ancestors in Mitzrayim

ועשרה על הים.

and ten more miracles were performed for them at the sea of Reeds.

עשר מכות הביא הקדוש ברוך הוא על המצריים במצרים

Ten plagues brought the Holy One, blessed is He, upon the Egyptians in Mitzrayim

ועשר על הים.

and ten plagues He brought upon them at the sea.

עשרה נסיונות נסו אבותינו את המקום ברוך הוא במדבר,

Ten trials with which our ancestors tested the Omnipresent, blessed is He, in the wilderness,

שנאמר

as it is said in the Torah regarding their complaints:

וינסו אתי זה עשר פעמים

"And they tested Me these ten times,

ולא שמעו בקולי:

and they did not listen to My voice."

משנה ה

Mishna 5 · Ten Wonders Wrought for Our Ancestors in the Beis HaMikdash

עשרה נסים נעשו לאבותינו בבית המקדש.

Ten wonders were done for our ancestors in the House of the Sanctuary:

לא הפילה אשה מיריח בשר הקדש,

not miscarried a woman from the odor of the meat of the holy offerings, which she might have craved while pregnant,

ולא הסריח בשר הקדש מעולם,

and not became putrid the meat of the holy ever, even when left out in the heat,

וְלֹא נִרְאָה זָבוּב בְּבֵית הַמִּטְבָּחִים,

and not was seen a fly in the house of the slaughterhouse, despite all the blood and meat there,

וְלֹא אָרַע קָרִי לְכַהֵן גָּדוֹל בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים,

and not occurred an impurity to a Kohen Gadol on the Day of the Atonements which would disqualify him from performing the avodah,

וְלֹא כָבוּ גְשָׁמִים אֵשׁ שֶׁל עֵצֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ,

and not extinguished rains the fire of the wood of the altar pile, even though the Mizbe'ach stood under the open sky,

וְלֹא נִצְחָה הַרוּחַ אֶת עַמּוּד הָעָשָׁן,

and not prevailed the wind over the column of the smoke to bend it sideways,

וְלֹא נִמְצָא פְסוּל בְּעֹמֶר וּבִשְׁתֵּי הַלֶּחֶם וּבִלְחֶם הַפָּנִים,

and not was found an invalidation in the Omer and in the two loaves and in the bread of the Face,

עוֹמְדִים צְפוּפִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים רְחוּכִים,

the people would be standing crowded yet bowing with ample space, as a miracle allowed everyone enough room to prostrate themselves fully,

וְלֹא הִזִּיק נָחָשׁ וְעַקְרָב בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם מֵעוֹלָם,

and not harmed a serpent or a scorpion in Yerushalayim ever,

וְלֹא אָמַר אָדָם לְחֵבְרוֹ צַר לִי הַמָּקוֹם שֶׁאֵלֵּין בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם:

and not said a man to his fellow narrow for me is the place that I should lodge in Yerushalayim during the festivals.

משנה ו

Mishna 6 · Ten Miraculous Things Created on the Eve of Shabbos at Twilight

עֲשָׂרָה דְּבָרִים נִבְרְאוּ בְּעֶרֶב שַׁבָּת בֵּין הַשְּׁמָשׁוֹת,

Ten things were created on the eve of Shabbos during twilight, between the suns, right before the very first Shabbos of creation:

וְאֵלוֹ הֵן,

and these are they:

פִּי הָאָרֶץ,

the mouth of the earth which swallowed Korach;

וּפִי הַבְּאֵר,

and the mouth of the well of Miriam that provided water in the desert;

ופי הָאֶתוֹן,

and the mouth of the donkey of Bilaam;

וְהַקָּשָׁת,

and the rainbow shown to Noach;

וְהַמָּן,

and the manna which fell for Bnei Yisrael;

וְהַמָּטָה,

and the staff of Moshe Rabbeinu;

וְהַשָּׁמִיר,

and the shamir worm used to split the stones of the Beis HaMikdash;

וְהַכָּתָב,

and the writing, the shape of the Hebrew letters;

וְהַמְּכָתָב,

and the inscription engraved on the Luchos;

וְהַלְיוֹחוֹת.

and the tablets themselves.

וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים, אִף הַמְּזִיקִין,

And some say that also the demons, the harmful spiritual forces, were created then;

וְקְבוּרָתוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה,

and the burial place of Moshe Rabbeinu;

וְאֵילֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ.

and the ram of Avraham our father which he offered as a sacrifice in place of Yitzchak.

וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים, אִף צֶבֶת בְּצֶבֶת עֲשׂוּיָהּ:

And some say also the first tongs, which had to be made with other tongs by the hands of Heaven, since a blacksmith cannot forge tongs without a tool to hold the hot metal.

שִׁבְעָה דְּבָרִים בְּגֵלָם וְשִׁבְעָה בְּחָכָם.

There are **seven things**, seven traits, found **in an unformed person**, a boor who has potential but lacks refinement, and **seven** opposite traits found **in a wise man**.

חָכָם אֵינוֹ מְדַבֵּר בְּפָנָיו מִי שֶׁהוּא גָּדוֹל מִמֶּנּוּ בְּחָכְמָה וּבְמִנְיָן.

A wise man does not speak before, or ahead of, one who is greater than he in wisdom and in years of age.

וְאֵינוֹ נִכְנָס לְתוֹךְ דְּבָרֵי חֲבֵרוֹ,

And he does not interrupt into the words of his fellow while his fellow is still speaking.

וְאֵינוֹ נִבְהָל לְהַשִּׁיב,

And he is not hasty to answer without thinking first.

שׂוֹאֵל כְּעֶנְיָן וּמַשִּׁיב כְּהֶלְכָּה,

He asks questions that are **to the point**, and answers **correctly** and relevantly.

וְאוֹמֵר עַל רִאשׁוֹן רִאשׁוֹן וְעַל אַחֲרוֹן אַחֲרוֹן,

And he speaks of the **first point first**, and of the **last point last**, keeping his thoughts in proper order.

וְעַל מֶה שֶׁלֹּא שָׁמַע, אוֹמֵר לֹא שָׁמַעְתִּי,

And concerning what he has **not heard** from his teachers, he says, "I have **not heard** a tradition on this," rather than making up an answer.

וּמוֹדָה עַל הָאֱמֶת.

And he **admits to the truth** when he is proven wrong, for his only desire is to find Hashem's truth.

וְחֵלּוּפִיהֶן בְּגֵלָם:

And the **reverse** of all **these** seven traits is found **in an unformed person**.

שִׁבְעָה מִיַּי פְּרָעָנוּת בָּאִין לָעוֹלָם

Seven kinds of punishments come to the world

עַל שִׁבְעָה גּוּפֵי עֲבָרָה.

for seven categories of transgression.

מִקְצָתוֹ מַעֲשָׂרִין וּמִקְצָתוֹ אֵין מַעֲשָׂרִין.

When some of them tithe and some of them do not tithe,

רָעַב שֶׁל בְּצֻרַת בָּאָה,

a famine of drought comes, where

מִקְצָתָן רָעֵבִים וּמִקְצָתָן שְׂבֻעִים.

some of them are hungry and some of them are satisfied.

גָּמְרוּ שֶׁלֹּא לְעֹשֶׂר,

If they decided not to tithe at all,

רָעַב שֶׁל מְהוּמָה וְשֶׁל בְּצֻרַת בָּאָה.

a famine of tumult and of drought comes.

וְשֶׁלֹּא לְטַל אֶת הַחֻלָּה,

And for not separating the challah,

רָעַב שֶׁל כְּלִיָּה בָּאָה.

a famine of destruction comes.

דָּבָר בָּא לְעוֹלָם

Pestilence comes to the world

עַל מִיתוֹת הָאֲמוּרוֹת בַּתּוֹרָה שֶׁלֹּא נִמְסְרוּ לְבֵית דִּין,

for death penalties stated in the Torah that were not handed over to the court of law to be executed,

וְעַל פְּרוֹת שְׁבִיעִית.

and for misusing the fruits of the seventh year.

חֶרֶב בָּאָה לְעוֹלָם

A sword comes to the world

עַל עֲנּוּי הַדִּין,

for delay of justice,

וְעַל עִוּוֹת הַדִּין,

and for perversion of justice,

וְעַל הַמּוֹרִים בַּתּוֹרָה שֶׁלֹּא כְּהֻלָּכָה:

and for those who teach the Torah not according to halacha.

חֲתִיהָ רָעָה בָּאָה לָעוֹלָם

An evil beast comes to the world

עַל שְׁבוּעַת שָׁוְא,

for the sin of swearing in vain,

וְעַל חִלּוּל הַשֵּׁם.

and for the terrible sin of profanation of the Name of Hashem.

גָּלוּת בָּאָה לָעוֹלָם

The suffering of exile comes to the world

עַל עֹבְדֵי עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה,

for those who are worshipers of foreign worship (idolatry),

וְעַל גְּלוּי עֲרִיּוֹת,

and for the sin of uncovering of nakedness (forbidden relationships),

וְעַל שְׁפִיכוֹת דָּמִים,

and for spilling of blood (murder),

וְעַל הַשְׁמַטַּת הָאָרֶץ.

and for neglecting the release of the land during the Shemittah year.

בְּאַרְבָּעָה פְּרָקִים הַדִּבֵּר מִתְרַבֶּה,

At four periods of the Shemittah cycle, the pestilence increases:

בְּרַבִּיעִית,

in the fourth year,

וּבְשִׁבְעִית,

and in the seventh year,

וּבְמוֹצָאֵי שְׁבִיעִית,

and at the departure of the seventh year (the eighth year),

וּבְמוֹצָאֵי הַחֹג שֶׁבְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה.

and at the departure of the Festival of Sukkos which is in every year and year.

בְּרִבְעִית, מִפְּנֵי מַעֲשֵׂר עֲנִי שֶׁבִּשְׁלִישִׁית.

The pestilence increases **in the fourth year because of** withholding the **tithe of the poor** which is supposed to be given **in the third year**.

בְּשִׁבְעִית, מִפְּנֵי מַעֲשֵׂר עֲנִי שֶׁבִּשְׁשִׁית.

It increases **in the seventh year because of** withholding the **tithe of the poor** which is supposed to be given **in the sixth year**.

וּבְמוֹצְאֵי שְׁבִיעִית, מִפְּנֵי פְרוֹת שְׁבִיעִית.

And at the departure of the seventh year, it increases because of people illegally trading in the **holy fruits of the seventh year**.

וּבְמוֹצְאֵי הַחֵג שֶׁבְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה, מִפְּנֵי גֵזֵל מִתְּנוּת עֲנִיִּים:

And at the departure of the Festival which is in every year and year, it increases because of the theft of gifts of the poor (such as Leket, Shichcha, and Pe'ah) that should have been left for them during the harvest season.

מִשְׁנָה י

Mishna 10 · Four Character Traits Regarding Giving and Taking

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בְּאָדָם.

There are **four character traits in man**:

הָאוֹמֵר שְׁלִי שְׁלִי וְשְׁלָה שְׁלָה, זֶה מְדָה בִּינוּנִית.

one who says, "mine is mine and yours is yours," this is an average trait, as he simply wants to avoid any involvement with others;

וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים, זֶה מִדַּת סְדוֹם.

and some say, this is the trait of Sedom, because preventing others from benefiting when it costs him nothing is the very attitude that led to the wickedness of Sedom.

שְׁלִי שְׁלָה וְשְׁלָה שְׁלִי, עִם הָאֶרֶץ.

One who says, **"mine is yours and yours is mine,"** is an **am ha'aretz**, an unlearned person who thinks this kind of social sharing is beneficial, though it disrupts proper boundaries;

שְׁלִי שְׁלָה וְשְׁלָה שְׁלָה, חֲסִיד.

one who says, **"mine is yours and yours is yours,"** is a **pious person**, acting with true generosity and selflessness;

שְׁלִי שְׁלִי וְשְׁלָה שְׁלִי, רָשָׁע:

and one who says, **"mine is mine and yours is mine,"** is a **wicked person**, who wants to keep everything for himself and take from others.

ארבע מדות בדעות.

There are **four temperaments** in human **dispositions**:

נוח לכעס ונוח לרצות,

One who is **easy to become angry** and **easy to be appeased**,

יצא שכרו בהפסדו.

goes out his reward in his loss, because the damage of his quick anger outweighs the benefit of his quick forgiveness.

קשה לכעס וקשה לרצות,

One who is **hard to become angry** and **hard to be appeased**,

יצא הפסדו בשכרו.

goes out his loss in his reward, because the benefit of his rare anger outweighs the drawback of his holding a grudge.

קשה לכעס ונוח לרצות,

One who is **hard to become angry** and **easy to be appeased** is

חסיד.

a **pious person**.

נוח לכעס וקשה לרצות,

One who is **easy to become angry** and **hard to be appeased** is

רשע:

a **wicked person**.

ארבע מדות בתלמידים.

There are **four character traits** among **students** who sit before the Sages to learn Torah:

מהר לשמע ומהר לאבד,

One who is **quick to understand** and grasp the lesson, and **quick to lose** and forget it,

יצא שכרו בהפסדו.

his reward for understanding quickly **goes out in his loss** of forgetting it quickly, for he is left with nothing.

קִשָּׁה לְשִׁמְעַ וְקִשָּׁה לְאַבֵּד,

One who is **slow to understand** and struggles to grasp the lesson, **and slow to lose** and forget it because he reviewed it well,

יֵצֵא הַפֶּסֶדוֹ בְּשִׂכְרוֹ.

his loss of struggling to understand **goes out in his reward** of retaining it, for in the end he knows the Torah.

מֵהֵר לְשִׁמְעַ וְקִשָּׁה לְאַבֵּד,

One who is **quick to understand and slow to lose** and forget,

חֶכֶם.

this is the portion of a **wise person**.

קִשָּׁה לְשִׁמְעַ וּמֵהֵר לְאַבֵּד,

One who is **slow to understand and quick to lose** and forget,

זֶה חֵלְקָרַע:

this is a **bad portion**.

משנה יג

Mishna 13 · Four Attributes Among Givers of Charity

אַרְבַּע מִדּוֹת בְּנוֹתֵי צְדָקָה.

There are **four attributes** among givers of charity:

הַרוֹצֶה שִׁיתֵּן וְלֹא יִתְּנוּ אֲחֵרִים,

One who wants that he should give and others should not give,

עֵינָיו רָעָה בְּשָׁל אֲחֵרִים.

his eye is evil towards that of others, because he begrudges them the merit of the mitzvah.

יִתְּנוּ אֲחֵרִים וְהוּא לֹא יִתֵּן,

One who wants that **others should give** and he should not give,

עֵינָיו רָעָה בְּשָׁלוֹ.

his eye is evil towards his own wealth, as he is stingy with his money.

יִתֵּן וְיִתְּנוּ אֲחֵרִים, חֲסִיד.

One who wants that **he should give** and others should give is a **pious person**.

לֹא יִתֵּן וְלֹא יִתְּנוּ אֲחֵרִים, רָשָׁע:

One who wants that he should not give and others should not give is a wicked person.

משנה יד

Mishna 14 · Four Character Traits Among Those Who Frequent the House of Study

אַרבע מדות בְּהוֹלְכֵי לְבֵית הַמְדְּרָשׁ.

There are **four character traits** among those who go to the house of study:

הוֹלֵךְ וְאֵינוֹ עוֹשֶׂה,

One who **goes and does not practice** what he learns there, **the reward of his going is in his hand.**

עוֹשֶׂה וְאֵינוֹ הוֹלֵךְ,

One who **practices** and learns at home **and does not go** to the Beis Medrash, **the reward of his practice is in his hand.**

הוֹלֵךְ וְעוֹשֶׂה, חָסִיד.

One who both **goes and practices** is a **pious man.**

לֹא הוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא עוֹשֶׂה, רָשָׁע:

One who does **not go** and does **not practice** is a **wicked man.**

משנה טו

Mishna 15 · Four Types of Students Who Sit Before the Sages

אַרבע מדות בְּיוֹשְׁבֵי לִפְנֵי חֲכָמִים.

There are **four traits** among those who sit before Sages to learn Torah.

סָפֹג, וּמִשְׁפָּה, מְשַׁמֶּרֶת, וְנֶפֶחַ.

They are compared to: **a sponge, and a funnel, a strainer, and a sieve.**

סָפֹג, שֶׁהוּא סוֹפֵג אֶת הַכֹּל.

The first is **a sponge, which absorbs everything**, both the good and the bad, without distinguishing between them.

מִשְׁפָּה, שֶׁמְכַנֵּס בָּזוּ וּמוֹצִיא בָּזוּ.

The second is **a funnel, that takes in at this side and lets out at this** other side, retaining nothing of the Torah he hears.

מְשַׁמֶּרֶת, שֶׁמוֹצִיאָה אֶת הַיַּיִן וְקוֹלְטָה אֶת הַשְּׂמֶרִים.

The third is **a strainer, that lets out the wine** which is good, **and retains the dregs** which are worthless; so too, this student forgets the main teachings and remembers only the errors.

וְנֶפֶחַ, שֶׁמוֹצִיאָה אֶת הַקֶּמַח וְקוֹלְטָה אֶת הַפִּלֹת:

And the fourth, the finest student, is like a sieve, that lets out the coarse flour and retains the fine flour, keeping only the true and precious teachings.

משנה טז

Mishna 16 · Love Dependent on a Thing and Love Not Dependent on a Thing

כָּל אֲהָבָה שֶׁהִיא תְּלוּיָה בְּדָבָר,

Every love that is dependent on a selfish thing,

בְּטֵל דָּבָר, בְּטֵלָה אֲהָבָה.

once that thing ceases, then the love ceases as well.

וְשֵׂאִינָהּ תְּלוּיָה בְּדָבָר,

And a love that is not dependent on a selfish thing, but is based on true spiritual connection,

אֵינָהּ בְּטֵלָה לְעוֹלָם.

is not ceasing forever.

אִיזוֹ הִיא אֲהָבָה הַתְּלוּיָה בְּדָבָר,

Which is an example of a love that is dependent on a thing?

זוֹ אֲהָבַת אֲמִנוֹן וְתָמָר.

This is the love of Amnon and Tamar, which was driven purely by physical desire.

וְשֵׂאִינָהּ תְּלוּיָה בְּדָבָר,

And which is a love that is not dependent on a thing?

זוֹ אֲהָבַת דָּוִד וְיְהוֹנָסָן:

This is the love of Dovid and Yehonasan, which was a holy bond for the sake of Heaven.

משנה יז

Mishna 17 · Disputes for the Sake of Heaven and Those That Are Not

כָּל מַחְלָקַת שֶׁהִיא לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם,

Every dispute that is for the sake of Heaven, meaning its purpose is to clarify the truth of Hashem's Torah,

סוֹפָהּ לְהִתְקַיֵּם.

its end is to endure, as the arguments and conclusions will remain as lasting Torah teachings.

וְשֵׂאִינָהּ לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם,

And a dispute that is not for the sake of Heaven, but is driven by honor or personal gain,

אין סופָה לְהִתְקַיֵּם.

is **not its end to endure**, and it will ultimately fade away.

אִיזוֹ הִיא מַחְלָקֶת שֶׁהִיא לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם,

Which is an example of a dispute that is for the sake of Heaven?

זוֹ מַחְלָקֶת הֵלֵל וְשַׁמַּי.

This is the dispute of Hillel and Shammai, who argued purely to find the true halacha.

וְשֵׁאִינָהּ לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם,

And which is the dispute that is not for the sake of Heaven?

זוֹ מַחְלָקֶת קִרַּח וְכָל עֲדָתוֹ:

This is the dispute of Korach and all his congregation, who rebelled against Moshe Rabbeinu out of jealousy and pride.

מִשְׁנֵה יח

Mishna 18: One Who Leads the Multitudes to Merit or to Sin

כָּל הַמְזַכֶּה אֶת הָרַבִּים,

Anyone who causes the multitudes to be meritorious by leading them to do mitzvos,

אִין חֲטָא בָּא עַל יָדוֹ.

no sin is allowed to come through his hand, so that he will not be in Gehinnom while his students are in Gan Eden.

וְכָל הַמַּחֲטִיא אֶת הָרַבִּים,

And anyone who causes the multitudes to sin,

אִין מִסְפִּיקִין בְּיָדוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת תְּשׁוּבָה.

Heaven does not provide him the opportunity to do repentance, so that he does not end up in Gan Eden while his victims are in Gehinnom.

מֹשֶׁה זָכָה וְזָכָה אֶת הָרַבִּים,

Our teacher Moshe was meritorious himself and caused the multitudes to be meritorious,

זְכוּת הָרַבִּים תְּלוּי בּוֹ,

therefore the merit of the multitudes is hung on him, as if he performed all their mitzvos himself,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דְּבָרִים לֵג צְדִקְתָּהּ עָשָׂה וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל.

as it is said in the Torah: "He executed the righteousness of Hashem, and His ordinances with Yisrael."

יִרְבְּעָם חָטָא וְהִחָטִיא אֶת הָרַבִּים,

In contrast, Yaravam ben Nevat sinned and caused the multitudes to sin,

חָטָא הָרַבִּים תְּלוּי בּוֹ,

therefore the sin of the multitudes is hung on him,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר מַלְכִּים אֵין עַל חַטֹּאות יִרְבְּעָם בֶּן נִבְט אֲשֶׁר חָטָא וְאֲשֶׁר הִחָטִיא אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל:

as it is said in the Navi: "For the sins of Yaravam son of Nevat which he sinned and which he caused Yisrael to sin."

מִשְׁנֵה יֵט

Mishna 19 · The Traits of the Disciples of Avraham and the Disciples of Bilaam

כָּל מִי שֵׁישׁ בְּיָדוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הֵלָלוּ,

Anyone who has in his hand these three traits

מִתְלַמִּידוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ.

is counted from the disciples of Avraham our father.

וְשְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים אֲחֵרִים,

And anyone who has three other traits

מִתְלַמִּידוֹ שֶׁל בְּלָעָם הָרָשָׁע.

is counted from the disciples of Bilaam the wicked.

עֵין טוֹבָה, וְרוּחַ נְמוּכָה, וְנֶפֶשׁ שְׂפֵלָה,

A generous eye, and a humble spirit, and a meek soul—these are the traits of those who are

מִתְלַמִּידוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ.

from the disciples of Avraham our father.

עֵין רָעָה, וְרוּחַ גְּבוּהָה, וְנֶפֶשׁ רְחֻכָּה,

A grudging eye, and a haughty spirit, and a greedy soul—these are the traits of those who are

מִתְלַמִּידוֹ שֶׁל בְּלָעָם הָרָשָׁע.

from the disciples of Bilaam the wicked.

מַה בֵּין תְּלַמִּידוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ לְתַלְמִידוֹ שֶׁל בְּלָעָם הָרָשָׁע.

What is the difference between the disciples of Avraham our father and the disciples of Bilaam the wicked?

תְּלַמִּידוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ, אוֹכְלִין בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְנוֹחִין לֵין בָּעוֹלָם הַבָּא,

The disciples of Avraham our father enjoy the fruits in this world and inherit the World to Come,

שְׁנֵאֲמַר מִשְׁלֵי ח לְהַנְחִיל אֶהְבִּי יֵשׁ, וְאַצְרֵתֵיהֶם אֲמֵלָא.

as it is said in Mishlei, "To cause those who love Me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasuries."

אָבָל תִּלְמִידָיו שֶׁל בִּלְעָם הָרָשָׁע יוֹרְשִׁין גִּיהֵנוֹם וְיוֹרְדִין לְבֵאֵר שַׁחַת,

But the disciples of Bilaam the wicked inherit Gehinnom and descend to the pit of destruction,

שְׁנֵאֲמַר תהלים נה וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהִים תוֹרִידֵם לְבֵאֵר שַׁחַת,

as it is said in Tehillim, "And You, G-d, will bring them down to the pit of destruction,

אֲנָשִׁי דָמִים וּמְרָמָה לֹא יִחְצוּ יְמֵיהֶם, וְאֲנִי אֶבְטַח בָּךְ:

men of bloodshed and deceit shall not live out half their days; but as for me, I will trust in You."

משנה כ

Mishna 20 · Alacrity in Serving the Creator and the Virtue of Shamefacedness

יהודה בן תימא אומר,

Yehudah son of Tema says:

הָיִי עֹז כְּנֶמֶר,

Be bold as the leopard to stand strong against those who mock you for serving Hashem,

וְקַל כְּנֶשֶׁר,

and swift as the eagle to close your eyes to evil and turn to good,

וְרַץ כְּצִבִּי,

and fleet as the gazelle to run to do a mitzvah,

וְגִבּוֹר כְּאֵרִי,

and strong as the lion to conquer your yetzer hara,

לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹן אֲבִיךָ שְׂבִשְׂמִים.

all of this in order to do the will of your Father Who is in Heaven.

הוא היה אומר,

He used to say:

עֹז פָּנִים לְגִיהֵנוֹם,

The brazen-faced who is insolent and lacks shame is destined for Gehinnom,

ובִּשְׁת פָּנִים לְגַן עֵדֶן.

and the shame-faced who possesses the holy trait of bushah is destined for the Garden of Eden.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ

May it be the will from before You, Hashem our God and God of our fathers,

שֶׁתְּבַנֶּה עִירָךְ בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ

that You rebuild Your city Yerushalayim speedily in our days,

וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ:

and grant our portion in Your Torah so we may fulfill Your mitzvos with a perfect heart.

מִשְׁנָה כֹּא

Mishna 21 · The Stages of a Person's Life from Youth to Old Age

הוא הָיָה אוֹמֵר,

He, Yehudah ben Teima, used to say:

בֶּן חֲמִשׁ שָׁנִים לְמִקְרָא,

A child at five years of age is ready for the study of Scripture;

בֶּן עָשָׂר לְמִשְׁנָה,

at ten years of age, he is ready for the study of Mishnah;

בֶּן שְׁלֹשׁ עָשָׂר לְמִצְוֹת,

at thirteen years of age, he is obligated for the mitzvos;

בֶּן חֲמִשׁ עָשָׂר לְתַלְמוּד,

at fifteen years of age, he is ready for the deeper analysis of Talmud;

בֶּן שְׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂר לְחָפָה,

at eighteen years of age, he is ready for the bridal canopy and marriage;

בֶּן עֶשְׂרִים לְרֵדָה,

at twenty years of age, he is to pursue a livelihood, or he is pursued by Heaven for his actions;

בֶּן שְׁלֹשִׁים לְכֹחַ,

at thirty years of age, a person reaches his peak for strength;

בֶּן אַרְבָּעִים לְבִינָה,

at **forty** years of age, he attains the capacity **for understanding**;

בְּיָמֵי חֹמֶשֶׁת לְעֵצָה,

at **fifty** years of age, he is fit **for** giving **counsel**;

בְּיָמֵי שִׁשִּׁים לְיָקִינָה,

at **sixty** years of age, he enters **for old age**;

בְּיָמֵי שִׁבְעִים לְשִׁיבָה,

at **seventy** years of age, he reaches **for fullness of years** with a hoary head;

בְּיָמֵי שְׁמֹנִים לְגִבּוֹרָה,

at **eighty** years of age, he reaches survival **for special strength**;

בְּיָמֵי תִשְׁעִים לְשׁוֹחַ,

at **ninety** years of age, he is bent over, fit only **for a bent body**;

בְּיָמֵי מֵאָה כְּאִלּוּ יָמִית וְעָבַר וּבָטַל מִן הָעוֹלָם:

and at **one hundred** years of age, it is **as if he is** already dead, and has passed away, and is ceased from the world, having lost his connection to worldly affairs.

מִשְׁנָה כב

Mishna 22 · The Supreme Value of Torah and Constant Study of It

בֶּן בַּגְּבָג אָמַר,

Ben Bag Bag says regarding the Torah:

הִפְךָ בָּהּ וְהִפְךָ בָּהּ,

Turn it and turn it over, analyzing it from every angle,

דְּכֻלָּא בָּהּ.

for all is in it—all wisdom and truth are contained within the Torah.

וּבָהּ תִּחְיֶה,

And in it gaze to gain deep understanding,

וְסִיב וּבָלָה בָּהּ,

and grow old and wear out in it by dedicating your entire life to its study,

וּמִמֶּנָּה לֹא תִזְוַע,

and from it do not budge,

שֶׁאֵין לְךָ מַדָּה טוֹבָה הַיָּמֵנָה:

for there is not for you a portion or path in life that is better than it.

מִשְׁנָה כג

Mishna 23 · The Reward of a Mitzvah is According to the Difficulty

בֶּן הֵה הָא אוֹמֵר,

Ben He He says in his teaching:

לְפֻם צַעֲרָא אֲגָרָא:

According to the pain and effort a person invests in Torah and mitzvos, so is the reward that Hashem gives him.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter flows beautifully from cosmic history to personal avodah. It begins by establishing how Hashem created the world with ten utterances to reward the righteous and punish the wicked, tracing the ten generations of His long-suffering patience until Avraham Avinu withstood his ten trials. After detailing the miracles of the Exodus, the Beis HaMikdash, and the twilight creations of Erev Shabbos, the Mishnah transitions to the seven traits of a wise person versus a clod, and the seven spiritual punishments, like famine and pestilence, that come from neglecting mitzvos like tithes, shemittah, and justice. It concludes with a practical breakdown of human nature into four types of character, temperaments, disciples, and charity givers, showing us the path of the chassid (pious person) who strives to be slow to anger, quick to learn, and generous with his own possessions.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

My dear talmid, look at the beautiful picture our Mishnah paints of the Beis HaMikdash. When the Yidden stood in the Azarah, they were packed together so tightly that there was no room to move. Yet, when the time came to bow down before the Ribono shel Olam, a miracle occurred: "ovdim tzfufim umishtachavim revachim", they stood pressed together, but when they bowed, they had ample, spacious room.

This is not just a historical miracle of the past; it is a profound blueprint for our daily avodah. When we stand stiffly, holding onto our own space, our own ego, and our own demands, saying "mine is mine and yours is yours", the world feels incredibly tight, crowded, and full of friction. But the moment a Yid learns to bend, to humble himself, and to bow before Hashem and before his fellow Jew, Hashem creates a miracle of expansion. Suddenly, there is room for everyone. Humility does not diminish us; it is the very thing that creates space in our lives and in our homes.

Think about your interactions today. When we insist on being right, we crowd others out. But when we are "modeh al ha'emes", when we acknowledge the truth and yield our pride, just like the wise man described in our Mishnah, we bring the peace and spaciousness of the Beis HaMikdash into our very own lives.

Today, when you find yourself in a situation of tension or disagreement, consciously choose to "bow", yield on a small point of pride or let someone else have the last word, and watch how Hashem opens up the room around you.

