



Make yourself a Rav

The *Mishnah* (1:6) teaches:

...*R Yehoshua ben Perachya* said, make for yourself a Rav, acquire a friend and judge every person favourably.

The *Bartenura* explains that the *Mishnah* begins by stressing the importance of having a Rav. First, citing the *Rambam*, he explains that even if the Rav is not worthy to be considered one's teacher (e.g. they are on the same level) it is important to have a Rav and not draw conclusions on one's own. The *Bartenura* however continues with a different explanation, that the *Mishnah* is stressing the importance of having one Rav to learn from to ensure a consistent approach to one's learning, which is especially important when considering an oral tradition.¹

The *Bartenura* continues by explaining the directive to "acquire a friend", that even if friendship will come at a great expense, it must nonetheless be pursued. This is not the case when it come to a Rav, since a Rav should not charge for teaching (*Nedarim* 37a). The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that one's learning is far more successful, despite having already found a Rav, when learning with a *chavrutah* (study partner).

The *R' Yonah* however expands the necessity for friendship beyond the world of learning. He adds that friendship is also need in the world of *mitzvot* and in particular, for *teshuva*. One needs a good friend that will let them know when they have done something wrong or what needs to be repaired. Finally, one needs a friend for advice or for help when needed. In a similar vein, in *Avot*

DeRebbi Natan (6:3) we find, "Acquire a study partner who will eat with you, drink with you, learn... with you... and reveal the secrets of the Torah and refined social behaviour." The *Ruach Chaim* writes that this advice applies to everyone and is not a function of intelligence. He continues:

Even the wisest person can be manipulated by his tailor-made evil inclination. A friend, whose personal evil inclination is of a different sort, can more readily spot flaws in logic.

Irving Bunim (Ethics from Sinai, p 79) however presents a novel approach to this *Mishnah*. He explains that when *R' Yehoshua ben Peracha* opens with "*aseh lecha rav*", it can be understood as meaning "make yourself a teacher". He writes:

Why always be a follower? Why resign yourself to a position of inferior status? Go to school. Study more. Rise in your profession, your business, your community. If you reside in a community where there are few Shabbat observers, few Jews who know Torah, take the lead yourself...

This novel interpretation is intimately connected to the next instruction of the *Mishnah*. Irving Bunim continues:

...[I]f you do that, if you show yourself to be an individual concerned with your fellowmen, interested in their welfare and prepared to spend time and energy in leading them, then you will 'acquire friends'. He who is ready to invest in the welfare of others will find his interest reciprocated.

Yisrael Bankier

¹ The *Bartenura* explains that this is despite the fact that when it comes to logical reasoning during learning, the *Gemara* (*Avodah Zara* 19a) stresses the importance of learning from many people.

Revision Questions

אבות א' ב'-ט"ו

- *Shimon Ha'Tzaddik* taught that the world stands on which three things? (א' ב') (א')
- According to *Antignos Ish Soco*, what is the proper method to serve *Hashem*? (Include both points.) (א' ג') (א')
- What three statements did *Yosi ben Yo'ezer* make with respect to dealings with *Chachamim*? (א' ד') (א')
- What three things did *Yosi ben Yochanan* teach? (א' ה') (א')
- What three things did *Yehoshua ben Perachya* teach regarding important relationships? (א' ו') (א')
- What did *Nitai Ha'Arbeli* teach and how does it relate to the previous question? (א' ז') (א')
- What did *Yehuda ben Tabai* teach regarding court cases and the debating parties? (א' ח') (א')
- What did *Shimon ben Shetach* teach regarding interrogating witnesses? (א' ט') (א')
- What three things did *Shema'ya* teach regarding work? (א' י') (א')
- What did *Avtalyon* teach regarding speech? (א' י"א') (א')
- According to *Hillel* what four traits characterise a "student of *Aharon*"? (א' י"ב') (א')
- What is different about the thirteenth *Mishnah*? (א' י"ג') (א')
- What did *Hillel* say regarding one who: (א' י"ד') (א')
 - Pursues honour?
 - Stops learning?
 - Does not learn?
 - Makes personal use of "keter Torah"?
- Complete the following statement made by *Hillel*: (א' י"ד') (א')

אם אין אני לי _____ ? וכשאני לעצמי _____ ?
אימת? _____
- Complete the following statement made by *Shammai*: (א' ט"ו') (א')

עשה תורתך _____ , אומר מעט _____ ,
והוי מקבל את כל אדם _____

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf
9:00am
Kollel Magen Avraham
Reemon Neighbourhood

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SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
In US dial: 718 906 6400
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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
25 August כ"ד אב	26 August כ"ה אב	27 August כ"ו אב	28 August כ"ז אב	29 August כ"ח אב	30 August כ"ט אב	31 August ל' אב
Avot 1:16-17	Avot 1:18-2:1	Avot 2:2-3	Avot 2:4-5	Avot 2:6-7	Avot 2:8-9	Avot 2:10-11

