



Kinyan Torah

This week we started the last chapter of *Masechet Avot*. *Rashi* explains that the contents of this chapter are not from the *Mishnah* and actually *Beriatot* (other *Tanaic* texts) that were added to *Pirkei Avot*. It was done so due to the custom of learning *Pirkei Avot* on the *Shabbatot* between *Pesach* and *Shavout* so that on each *Shabbat*, one chapter would be learnt. The *Yaavetz* explains that this chapter, whose focus is on the study and “acquisition” of *Torah*, was added since the previous chapters that deal with refining one’s character traits and actions are necessary for *Torah* to dwell amongst a person. The chapter is referred to as *Kinyan Torah* – acquisition of *Torah*. Perhaps we can derive an understanding of the title’s meaning from the fifth *Beraita*.

The *Beraita* (6:5) teaches:

Torah is greater than priesthood and kingship, because kingship is acquired with thirty attributes, priesthood with twenty-eight and *Torah* is acquired with forty-eight...

The *Beraita* then continues by listing them. Why is *Torah* greater?

The *Nachalat Avot* explains simply that the greater preparation required, the greater the achievement.

The *Mefarshim* note that the *Beraita* only lists those attributes that apply to acquiring *Torah*. For kingship, the *Kala Rabiti* lists possessions that a king requires, e.g. gold, silver, etc. *Rashi* directs us to the section in *Sefer Shmuel* (I 8:11) where *Shmuel* lists the rights of a king after *Am Yisrael* request one. The *Gra* explains that these correspond to the thirty laws that apply to a king listed in *Sanherdin* (2:2-5). For a *kohen*, the *mefarshim* explain that the number refers to the twenty-eight gifts that are given to the *kohanim* (e.g. *terumah*).

The *Beit Avot* notes that the attributes listed for both kingship and priesthood apply *after* they are already a king or priest respectively – they are not prerequisites. The *Beit Avot* therefore explains that the meaning of an acquisition is

that that which is acquired remains yours. The attributes of a king are necessary for his honour and cement his rulership. For a priest, the *matanot* are necessary so that he need not be concerned with looking for other work to support himself and can engage in his duties. It follows therefore that the *kinyanei Torah* are necessary to preserve and retain *Torah*.

The *Midrash Shmuel* notes that the attributes of kingship and priesthood are referred to as attributes (*maalot*) whereas for *Torah* it is referred to as things (*devarim*). He explains that the different terminology is necessary since for kingship and priesthood, those things listed are external (money, gifts, etc). For *Torah*, the attributes apply to the person – to his body and soul.

Similarly, the *Tifferet Yisrael* notes that both kingship and priesthood is bequeathed. For *Torah* on the other hand, those things listed are required for its acquisition. With that in mind, it is interesting to note that there are versions of the *Beraita* that does not use the term “acquire” when referring to kingship and priesthood, but only for *Torah*. The *Yaavetz* explains that this is because the term can only truly apply to *Torah*.

The *Maharal* elaborates on this point. He explains that the *Beraita* later (9) teaches that when a person passes away, neither his gold nor silver escort him, only his *Torah* and good deeds. One of the proofs is from the *pasuk*, “Mine is the silver and Mine is the Gold, these are the words of *Hashem*” (*Chaggai* 2:8). He explains the proof from the *pasuk* is that really all possessions are *Hashem*’s. *Torah* on the other hand, belongs to the person and is ultimately referred to as his – “*u’vatorato yehege*”. In other words, it truly belongs to him. It is his acquisition.

With this in mind we can suggest the *Torah* is greater than kingship and priesthood, not necessary because of the quantity of attributes it requires, but because *Torah* and *Torah* alone can truly be yours.

Yisrael Yitzchak Bankier

Revision Questions

אבות ה' י"ז ח' י'

- What is the difference between a debate that is and is not for the sake of Heaven and what examples are brought for each? (ה' י"ז)
- What is the promise of one that guides the masses on the straight and narrow and who is brought as an example? (ה' י"ח)
- What is the promise of one that causes the masses to sin and who is brought as an example? (ה' י"ח)
- What three attributes characterises: (ה' ט"ט)
 - A student of *Aharon*?
 - A student of *Bilam*?
- Complete the following statement of *Yehuda ben Teima*: (ה' כ"י)

"הווי עז _____ קל _____
 _____ וגיבור _____
 לעשות רצון אביך שבשמים"
- According to *Yehuda ben Teima* a person with which character trait is "to *Gehinom*"? Is "to *Gan Eden*"? (ה' כ"ב)
- What is expected at, or characterises the following ages: 5, 10, 13, 15, 18, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100? (ה' כ"א)
- Complete the statement of *ben Bag Bag*: (ה' כ"ב)

"הפך בה והפך בה _____,
 ובה _____, ומנה לא _____
 שאין לך מדה טובה הימנה"
- Who stated the following: "לפום צרה אגרא" (ה' כ"ג)
- According to *R' Meir*, regarding one that engages in *Torah*: (ה' א')
 - What does he merit?
 - What does it "cloth" him in?
 - What four things does it enable him to be?
 - What four things do people benefit from him?
 - What three things are given to him?
 - What is revealed to him?
 - In comparison to things in nature, what does he become?
 - What three traits characterise him?
- According to *R' Yehoshua ben Levi*: (ה' ב')
 - What does the heavenly voice announce on a daily basis and from where does it originate?
 - Who is truly free?
 - What happens to one that is constantly engaged in *Torah*?
- From where does the *Tana* learn that even if one learns one letter of *Torah* from another does he need to treat him with *kavod*? (ה' ג')
- What is "the way of *Torah*"? (ה' ד')
- What should be in excess of one's learning? (ה' ד')
- What two reasons are given for why one should not desire the "table of Kings"? (ה' ד')
- Through how many qualities is Kingship acquired? (ה' ה')
- Through how many qualities is *Torah* acquired? (Can you list them?) (ה' ה')
- What is an effect if one says something in the name of the person who originally said it? (ה' ו')
- What reason is give for why *Torah* is "great"? (ה' ו')
- According to *R' Shimon ben Menasya* what seven things are fitting for *tzadikim* and who had all seven? (ה' ז')

Local Shiurim

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
 Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Beit Ha'Roeh
 Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

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

ONLINE SHIURIM

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rav Meir Pogrow
613.org/mishnah.html

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
Rabbi C. Brown
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendar/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
 In US dial: 718 906 6400
 Then select: 1 – 2 – 4

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
12 th January י"א שבט	13 th January י"ב שבט	14 th January י"ג שבט	15 th January י"ד שבט	16 th January ט"ו שבט	17 th January ט"ז שבט	18 th January י"ז שבט
Avot 6:9-10	Avot 6:11- Horayot 1:1	Horayot 1:2-3	Horayot 1:4-5	Horayot 2:1-2	Horayot 2:3-4	Horayot 2:5-6

