



Beloved Friend

The last *perek* of *Pirkei Avot* begins (6:1): "R' Meir said, all that study *Torah* for its sake (*lishmah*), merits many things..." The *Beraita* then continues listing the qualities and attributes of such a person. The list begins with, "he is called a friend, beloved". We shall try to understand the beginning of this list.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that these are two separate qualities both relating to his relationship with other people. Firstly, he is called a friend. This individual is worth befriending given the sound council he could provide. Secondly, he is surely beloved given the sterling character traits adopted by one that learns *lishmah*.

Others explain that these qualities relate to his relationship with *Hashem*. In this context the term "friend" is to be understood in the sense of acting as a partner. For example, the *Ruach Chaim* explains that since the study of *Torah* ensures the continued existence of the world, those that study the *Torah* effectively partner with *Hashem* in the creation. Similarly, the *Midrash Shmuel* comments that these qualities follow from the previous comment that "the entire world is worthwhile for him". In other words, since the entire world's existence is worthwhile just for this individual, then certainly he can be considered as partnering in the creation.

The *Ruach Chaim* however provides another explanation that these attributes are to be understood with respect to the *Torah* itself. He explains by citing one of the seven *berachot* that are recited at a wedding: "*sameach tisamach, re'im ha'ahuvim*" – "may you gladden the friends who are beloved to each other". Note that the language in that blessing, "*re'im ha'ahuvim*" is used in our *Mishnah* "*re'ah ahuv*". In other words, these are not two attributes, but rather a single description – a beloved friend. The relationship of *re'im ha'ahuvim*", where they are loved by one another, is more than just a regular friendship.

The *Ruach Chaim* continues that the relationship between a husband and wife is different to a normal friendship. The *pasuk* in *Mishlei* (25:17) warns "Let your feet be scarce from you friend's home, lest he be satiated with you and come hate you." Contrast this with a marriage where they are not just friends (*re'im*), but also beloved (*ahuvim*), such that the relationship is only strengthened the more time they spend with one another.

The *Ruach Chaim* explains that there is another context where we find this phenomenon – one's relationship with the *Torah*. "The more one immerses himself in *Torah* study, the more will *Torah* cling to him." However, this affection is only if one studies without any ulterior motive; he studies *Torah* for its own sake.

Yisrael Bankier

Revision Questions

אבות ה' י"ב – ו' ב'

- What are assessed in the same manner as the previous question? (ה' י"ב)
- What are the four types of people that:
 - Give *tz'daka*? (ה' י"ג)
 - "Go" to the *Beit Midrash*? (ה' י"ד)
- Describe the meaning of these types of people that sit before *Chachamim*: (ה' ט"ו)
 - *Sofeg*?
 - *Mashpech*?
 - *Mashmeret*?
 - *Nafah*?
- What is the definition of "eternal love" and what case is brought as an example? (ה' ט"ז)
- 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')

"הוי 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')
- 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 _____, _____
 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*?

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
6 October ז' תשרי	7 October ח' תשרי	8 October ט' תשרי	9 October י' תשרי	10 October יא' תשרי	11 October י"ב תשרי	12 October י"ג תשרי
Avot 6:3-4	Avot 6:5-6	Avot 6:7-8	Avot 6:9-10	Avot 6:11 - Horayot 1:1	Horayot 1:2-3	Horayot 1:4-5

