



Golem and Chacham

The *Mishnah* teaches that there are seven attributes found in a “*Golem*” and seven in a *Chacham*. The *Mishnah* then continues by listing those attributes of a *Chacham*. The *Chacham* does not speak before one that is wiser. He does not interrupt. He is not quick to respond. The *Bartenura* explains that the next trait is that he will ask questions that are relevant to the discussion at hand which results in his *Rav* answering according to *halacha*. He would respond when asked several questions in the order they were asked. The *Bartenura* explains that next trait is that if he rules based on logic, he will not say that he heard it from his teachers. Finally, when in a debate, if he hears the truth, he will admit to it despite have further arguments that may support his position.

The *Rambam* explains that the *Chachamim* use different terminology when referring to people. A *Bor* refers to one who lacks both intellectual or moral qualities. He is empty. The *Am Haaretz* on the other hand has ethical grounding but lacks knowledge. He is a “person of the land” because he is beneficial to society. The *Golem* in our *Mishnah* is an individual with both these qualities, but they are not organised, rather confused.

Indeed, the *Tifferet Yisrael* notes that the *Mishnah* does not refer to this individual as a fool or stupid. This implies that we are referring to a *talmid* that has learnt a lot of *Torah* but he has not yet refined himself based on that learning.

The *Rambam* continues, that by referring to him as a *Golem*, he is compared to a “*golmei kli*”, a utensil that the craftsman has formed, but requires smoothing, finishing or sharpening. It is as if all the raw material is there, but it has not yet taken its final form. The individual is unrefined. The *Chacham* is one who is attained these two

qualities fully and they are well-integrated. Next is the *Chassid* who is a *Chacham* but does more than that is required of him – his actions exceed his wisdom.

The *Tosfot Yom Tov* explains that that is why the *Mishnah* introduced the *Golem* prior to the *Chacham*, despite the fact that the *Mishnah* focuses on the qualities of the *Chacham*. That is because the *Golem* always precedes the stage of becoming a *Chacham* and is a necessary part of his development.

The *Rambam* continues by explaining that the four of the traits lists related to character traits – he has respect, will not interrupt, will not be stubborn but rather admit to the truth. The other three related to intellectual qualities – being quick to respond, questions being relevant, and responding to questions in an orderly fashion.

The *Derech Chaim* however explains that what is common to all the attributes in the *Mishnah* is order. He understands that *chochma* is the ability to define, structure and organise concepts. This too would translate to one’s behaviour. A *Chacham* whose thoughts are organised would certainly be manifested in his orderly behaviour.

One might suggest that there is another common theme among all the attributes listed in the *Mishnah*: they all relate to speech. Building on the *Derech Chaim*, it is not just that the organised wisdom is evident in one’s appreciation for organised behaviour – for that can also be a product of good *middot*. Rather it is it specifically through speech, which is the means through which one’s wisdom is revealed to others, the *chochma* is evident. The *Mishnah* is teaching that it is not in the content of one’s speech that testify to one’s wisdom, but the context and manner in which it is conveyed to others.

Yisrael Bankier

Revision Questions

אבות ה' נ' – ה' י"ט

- What ten things were created on *erev Shabbat bein ha'shmashot*? (ה' י:י)
- What seven traits are found in a *Chacham*? (ה' י:ז)
- What calamities are a result of the following public sins:
 - Some people stop separating *ma'asrot*?
 - Everyone stops separating *ma'asrot*?
 - People stop separating *challah*?
 - *Chayavei kritut* or *mitah bidei shamayim*?
 - Trading with *shmittah* produce?
 - Corruption in the courts and *halacha*? (ד' י:ח)
 - *Chilul Hashem*?
 - The three cardinal sins? (ה' י:ט)
- At what four times is there an increase in *dever* and why? (ה' י:ט)
- Considering the four traits of man, what is considered that trait of: (ה' י:י)
 - An average person?
 - An *am ha'aretz*?
 - A *Chasid*?
 - A *Rasha*?
- Which of the above traits do some consider the trait of a person from *Sdom*? (ה' י:י)
- What are the four different character traits regarding anger and appeasement and the *Tana's* assessment of each? (ה' י:יא)
- What are assessed in the same manner as the previous question? (ה' י:יב)
- What are the four types of people that:
 - Give *tz'daka*? (ה' י:יג)
 - "Go" to the *Beit Midrash*? (ה' י:יד)
- Describe the meaning of these types of people that sit before *Chachamim*: (ה' י:טו)
 - *Sofeg*?
 - *Mashpech*?
 - *Mashmeret*?
 - *Nafah*?
- What is the definition of "eternal love" and what case is brought as an example? (ה' י:טז)
- 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:יז)
- What is the promise of one that guides the masses on the straight and narrow and who is brought as an example? (ה' י:יח)
- What is the promise of one that causes the masses to sin and who is brought as an example? (ה' י:יח)
- What three attributes characterises: (ה' י:יט)
 - A student of *Aharon*?
 - A student of *Bilam*?

Shiurim

ONLINE SHIURIM

Yisrael Bankier
mishnahyomit.com/shiurim

Rabbi Reuven Spolter
mishnah.co

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

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

APPS

Mishnah Yomit
mishnahyomit.com

All Mishnah
Orthodox Union

Mishna Yomi
Our Somayach, South Africa

Kehati

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
29 June ג' תמוז	30 June ד' תמוז	1 July ה' תמוז	2 July ו' תמוז	3 July ז' תמוז	4 July ח' תמוז	5 July ט' תמוז
Avot 5:20-21	Avot 5:22-23	Avot 6:1-2	Avot 6:3-4	Avot 6:5-6	Avot 6:7-8	Avot 6:9-10

