



In a Place Where There Are No People

This week we shall focus on an oft-misquoted statement of *Hillel* (2:5): "In a place where there are no men, endeavour to be a man."

Rashi explains that this means that in the absence of individuals that can take care of the needs of the community, you should stand up to fill that role. The *Bartenura* explains the *Mishnah* in a similar manner, explaining that if one is in a place where there is no one to teach and instruct, then you should endeavour to fill the void. Both these answers stress a sense of obligation to the serve community when a role needs to be filled.

Indeed, this is what people generally imply when they quote this *Mishnah*. When they do so, it is generally incorrectly quoted as, "*be'makom shein ish*" – in a place where there is no person. The *Mishnah* however reads "*be'mako shein anashim*" – in a place where there are no people. The true wording of the *Mishnah* allows for further interpretations of the *Mishnah*.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* also explains the *Mishnah* as directing one to the community, but with a broader focus than fulfilling specific roles. He explains that if one sees that the generation has spiritually declined, one must garner one's courage and faith in *Hashem* and take the lead in trying to turn the community around.

Irving Bunim (*Ethic from Sinai*) adds that this statement is critical considering *Hillel's* previous teaching of "do not separate from the community". That teaching is fine if the community is strong, but what if it is no longer living up the Torah standard? He explains, that "that situation calls for a *man*, for the individual who will stand up to the group, for the strong, adamant person who will say no!" He continues that we inherit that capacity to go against the tide from *Avraham*, the original *Ivri* – the one who could stand on one side (*ever*) of the religious battle. He continues: "If the Jewish People had always gone along with the majority, there would be no Jewry and no Israel today."

The *Tifferet Yisrael's* second explanation however turns the focus inward. He explains that if a person of average learning, is surrounded by uneducated peers there is a tendency to feel that they already a giant and become complacent. The *Mishnah* warns that one should not be satisfied, and instead continue to strive for true greatness.

The *Ruach Chaim* similarly focuses on the spiritual welfare of the individual. He explains that often there is a need for one to be in isolation. Nevertheless, despite the fact that there is no one to witness your actions, *Hashem* is watching at every moment. Consequently if in a place where there are no people, you should still strive to be an *Ish*.

Yisrael Bankier

Revision Questions

אבות א': ט"ז – ב': י"א

- What three things did *Rabban Gamliel* teach? (א': ט"ז)
- What three things did *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* teach regarding speech? (א': י"ז)
- According to *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel*, on what three things is the world sustained? (א': י"ח)
- According to *Rebbi*, what is the straight path in which one should lead his life? (ב': א')
- If one focuses on which three things will he be saved from sin? (ב': א')
- According to *Rabban Gamliel* the son of *Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi* with what should *Torah* be combined? What is the result if one does not do so? (ב': ב')
- What guidance does he give to one who will be involved in communal affairs? (ב': ב')
- What warning does he give to one who will be involved in affairs with the government? (ב': ג')
- Complete the following statement: (ב': ד')

עשה רצונו כרצונך, _____
 בטל רצונך מפני רצונו, _____

- What five statements did *Hillel* make beginning with *אל*? (ד': א')
- What did *Hillel* say regarding: (ב': ה')
- A boor?
- An *am ha'aretz*?
- A *bayshan*?
- A *kapdan*?
- One who increases in business?
- What did *Hillel* say when he saw a skull floating in the water? (ב': ו')
- Complete the following statements? (ב': ז')

מרבה בשר מרבה _____, מרבה נכסים מרבה _____;
 שפחות מרבה _____; מרבה עבדים מרבה _____, מרבה
 מרבה נשים מרבה _____. מרבה תורה מרבה _____,
 מרבה _____ מרבה ישיבה
 קנה שם טוב, קנה _____;
 קנה דברי תורה, קנה _____.

- Complete the following statement of *R' Yochanan ben Zakkai*: (ב': ח')
- אם למדת תורה הרבה _____, _____
- Who were the five student of *R' Yochanan ben Zakkai* and how did he describe each of them? (ה': א')
- What did each of them think is the "straight path" to which one should attach themselves and with who did *R' Yochanan ben Zakkai* agree? (ה': ט')
- What did each of them think is the "evil path" which one should avoid and with who did *R' Yochanan ben Zakkai* agree? (ה': ט')
- What were the "three" statements of *R' Eliezer ben Hurkanus*? (ב': י')
- According to *R' Yehoshua* what three things "remove a person from the world"? (ב': י"א)

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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Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

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

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
1 September א' אלול	2 September ב' אלול	3 September ג' אלול	4 September ד' אלול	5 September ה' אלול	6 September ו' אלול	7 September ז' אלול
Avot 2:12-13	Avot 2:14-15	Avot 2:16-3:1	Avot 3:2-3	Avot 3:4-5	Avot 3:6-7	Avot 3:8-9

