



Threefold String

The *Mishnah* (1:10) teaches that if someone has *Mikra*, *Mishnah* and *derech erez*, he will not readily sin. If however one does not have any of these, then they are not “*min ha'yishuv*”. We shall try to understand this *Mishnah*.

While the terms *mikra* and *Mishnah* are readily understood as referring to *Torah* and *Mishnah*, *derech erez* is debated. The *Bartenura* understands that it refers to a person's interpersonal dealings – that he is pleasant to deal with. If a person has none for these, then the *Bartenura* explains that he has no positive contribution to the world, so much so that he cannot be a valid witness. The *Tifferet Yisrael* goes one step further that that would be better if he dwelt away from the *yishuv* (settlements), in desolate places since such an individual poses a threat to others. What are these three things and why are they so important.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that these three things relate to the three basic obligations of a person. *Emunot* (faith), *Peulot* (actions) and *Middot* (positive character traits). The fundamentals of our faith, while not all expressly commanded, are easily gleaned from the *Torah*. For example, *berachot* and *klalot*, accounts of *hashgacha*, etc. They are not elaborated upon in the *Mishnah*, for the *Mishnah* is focused on explaining the *mitzvot*. It is necessary to elaborate on those expressed concisely in the *Torah* and those that require *halacha le'moshe misinai* to fully appreciate them.

Middot however are not expressly commanded in the *Torah* or *Mishnah*. The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that this because it not possible to codify them. Firstly, what is considered appropriate depend on place, time in history and context. Its “study” instead requires *shimush*, being in

close quarters for extending periods of time with a *talmid chacham*. It is particularly so, considering that *middot* themselves are not absolutely positive or negative and there are some contexts where those *middot* that are normally avoided, are employed (e.g. anger).

The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that this is what *Chazal* meant, “if one *kerah*, *veshana* (learnt) and did not *shimesh talmidei chachamim* – he is an *am Haaretz*.” Without the *shimush* ones misses the critical study of *middot*. Without the understanding of proper *middot* one is susceptible to readily being swept up by emotion into sin alongside the *Am Ha'aretz*.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* continues at length detailing incidents in the *Torah*, where the mistakes that were made stem from errors in *middot*, be it in anger or following material desires, etc. He explains that this further confirms that competency in all three areas is important to protect one from sinning as stressed by the *Mishnah*.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that this *Mishnah* is placed at the end of the *perek*, after the *Mishnah* explained the scope of the *mitzvot*, and how some *mitzvot* apply only to some people or only in *Eretz Yisrael*. It might leave a person feeling despondent with the missed opportunity. That is why this *Mishnah*, first begins by expressing the power of a single *mitzvah*. For *Hashem* wants us to appreciate the *mitzvah* and strive after their fulfilment. He cites the *Gemara* that even if one tries and for reasons beyond his control is unable, he is nonetheless credited. “*Rachmana liba ba'ye*” – *Hashem* desires our sincere yearning. In particular, our full effort in three fundamental domain – *emunot*, *pe'lot* and *middot*.

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Revision Questions

גיטין ט' ח'-י"י

- Can a *get* be written in Hebrew and the signatures be in Greek? (ט' ח': ט')
- Is a signature valid if it is just the person's name without the father's name (i.e. missing "*ben Ploni*")? (ט' ח': ט')
- What is a *get me'useh* and is it valid? (ט' ח': ט')
- What is an *amatlah* and how is important in the law of *gittin*? (ט' ח': ט')
- List the three opinions regarding what is considered adequate grounds for divorce. (ט' י': ט')

קידושין א' א' – ב' א'

- What are the three means of *kidushin*? (א' א': א')
- What are the two ways a woman leaves a marriage? (א' א': א')
- How is a Hebrew male slave acquired? How does he "acquire himself" (i.e. set himself free)? (א' ב': א')
- Is this the same for a female slave? What is extra? (א' ב': א')
- According to *Rabbi Meir* how is a Canaanite slave acquired? How does he acquire himself? (א' ג': א')
- According to the *Chachamim*, how is a Canaanite slave acquired? How does he acquire himself? (א' ג': א')
- How is a *behema gasa* and a *behema daka* acquired according to: (א' ד': א')
 - *Rabbi Meir* and *Rabbi Elazar*?
 - *Chachamim*?
- How is property that has *achrayut* acquired? How is property that does not have *achrayut* acquired? (א' ה': א')
- Is it ever possible to acquire property that has no *achrayut* with property that has *achrayut*? (א' ה': א')
- At what stage in the purchasing process does one have to go through with the deal? (א' ו': א')
- What types of *mitzvot* are noted in the *Mishnah* that men are *chayav*, but women are *patur* (two types)? What types of *mitzvot* do they both have a *chiyuv* (three types)? (א' ז': א')
- What eight things are customary for a man to do with *kodshim* that women are not? (א' ח': א')
- For which two *korbanot* do women perform the waving service? (א' ח': א')
- What types of *mitzvot* are customary to fulfill in *Eretz Yisrael*? (א' ט': א')
- What three things are promised to those who perform one *mitzvah*? (א' י': א')
- What three things keep a person away from sin? (א' י': א')
- Complete the following phrase: (א' י"א: א')

האיש מקדש __ ובשלו

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
21 July ט"ו תמוז	22 July ט"ז תמוז	23 July י"ז תמוז	24 July י"ח תמוז	25 July י"ט תמוז	26 July כ' תמוז	27 July כ"א תמוז
Kidushin 2:2-3	Kidushin 2:4-5	Kidushin 2:6-7	Kidushin 2:8-9	Kidushin 2:10-3:1	Kidushin 3:2-3	Kidushin 3:4-5

