

The Dee

Pirkei Avot Project

רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל בֶּן־רַבִּי יְהוּדָה הַנָּשִׂיא אָמַר, יִפֶּה תִּלְמוּד תּוֹרָה עִם דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ, שְׂגִיעַת שְׂנֵיהֶם מְשַׁכַּח עוֹן. וְכָל תּוֹרָה שְׂאִין עִמָּה מְלָאכָה, סוֹפָה בְּטִלָּה וְגוֹרֶרֶת עוֹן. וְכָל הָעֹמְלִים עִם הַצְּבוּר, יִהְיוּ עֹמְלִים עִמָּהֶם לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם, שְׂזוֹכוֹת אָבוֹתָם מְסִיעֶתָן וְצַדִּיקְתָּם עוֹמֶדֶת לְעַד. וְאַתֶּם, מַעֲלָה אֲנִי עֲלֵיכֶם שֶׁכָּר הִרְבֵּה כְּאִלּוּ עֲשִׂיתֶם:

Rabban Gamaliel the son of Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi said: excellent is the study of the Torah when combined with a worldly occupation, for toil in them both keeps sin out of one's mind; But Torah which is not combined with a worldly occupation, in the end comes to be neglected and becomes the cause of sin. And all who labour with the community, should labour with them for the sake of Heaven, for the merit of their forefathers sustains them (the community), and their (the forefather's) righteousness endures forever. And as for you, I credit you with a rich reward, as if you had accomplished it.

The first section of this Mishna discusses the importance of self-sufficiency and earning a living. In spite of the importance of Torah study in Jewish life, we are also obligated to pursue "*derech erez*" the "ways of the land."

Torah study combined with work causes us to "forget" sin. The simple meaning is that if one holds down a full-time job and studies Torah in his remaining time, he will be too busy to think about sinning.

So the combination of Torah study and self-sufficiency will safeguard a person from temptation. If we earn enough to make ends meet, we will have no overpowering need to steal from others. If at the same time we study Torah, we will have the moral bearings to protect ourselves from temptation. We will develop a stronger sense of right and wrong, and we will incorporate the Torah's dictate of being happy with one's lot.

Finally, the mere fact that we are not pursuing our careers relentlessly but are dividing our time between that and Torah study will reduce the often-insatiable drive for money and prestige. Leaving financial considerations aside, we should work because we must have "*derech erez*:" we should see value in positive interaction with others. We should strive to be productive human beings, and that is ideally done through our involvement with others and the world around us. It is not sufficient to merely study Torah, we need to apply it.

Discussion Points:

How can we strike the balance between prioritising Torah study and earning a living, even when the pressure of one feels much greater than another?

Rabban Gamliel warns that studying Torah without having a worldly occupation too, will cause one to sin. Why do you think that is?

Can you think of somebody who is dedicated to their Torah studies but also is involved with the world around them? Do you feel that they are happier with their lot, '*sameach b'chelko*'?

Idea by Richard Marks

לעילוי נשמת:

לאה בת רפאל הכהן וציפורה

מאיה אסתר בת הרב אריה מרדכי ולאה

רינה מרים בת הרב אריה מרדכי ולאה



The Dee

Pirkei Avot Project

רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל בֶּן־שֵׁל רַבִּי יְהוּדָה הַנָּשִׂיא אָמַר, יִפֶּה תִּלְמוּד תּוֹרָה עִם דְּרוֹךְ אֶרֶץ,
שִׁיגִיעַת שְׁנֵיהֶם מְשַׁכַּח עוֹן. וְכָל תּוֹרָה שֶׁאֵין עִמָּה מְלָאכָה, סוֹפָה בְּטִלָּה וְגוֹרֶרֶת עוֹן.
וְכָל הָעֹמְלִים עִם הַצְּבוּר, יִהְיוּ עִמָּלִים עִמָּהֶם לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם, שְׂזוֹכֹת אֲבוֹתָם מְסִיעֶתָן
וְצִדְקָתָם עוֹמֶדֶת לְעַד. וְאַתֶּם, מַעֲלָה אֲנִי עֲלֵיכֶם שְׂכָר הַרְּבֵה כְּאִלּוּ עָשִׂיתֶם:

Rabban Gamaliel the son of Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi said: excellent is the study of the Torah when combined with a worldly occupation, for toil in them both keeps sin out of one's mind; But Torah which is not combined with a worldly occupation, in the end comes to be neglected and becomes the cause of sin. And all who labour with the community, should labour with them for the sake of Heaven, for the merit of their forefathers sustains them (the community), and their (the forefather's) righteousness endures forever. And as for you, I credit you with a rich reward, as if you had accomplished it.

The first section of this Mishna discusses the importance of self-sufficiency and earning a living. In spite of the importance of Torah study in Jewish life, we are also obligated to pursue "*derech erez*" the "ways of the land."

Torah study combined with work causes us to "forget" sin. The simple meaning is that if one holds down a full-time job and studies Torah in his remaining time, he will be too busy to think about sinning. So the combination of Torah study and self-sufficiency will safeguard a person from temptation. If we earn enough to make ends meet, we will have no overpowering need to steal from others. If at the same time we study Torah, we will have the moral bearings to protect ourselves from temptation. We will develop a stronger sense of right and wrong, and we will incorporate the Torah's dictate of being happy with one's lot. Finally, the mere fact that we are not pursuing our careers relentlessly but are dividing our time between that and Torah study will reduce the often-insatiable drive for money and prestige. Leaving financial considerations aside, we should work because we must have "*derech erez*:" we should see value in positive interaction with others. We should strive to be productive human beings, and that is ideally done through our involvement with others and the world around us. It is not sufficient to merely study Torah, we need to apply it.

Discussion Points:

How can we strike the balance between prioritising Torah study and earning a living, even when the pressure of one feels much greater than another?

Rabban Gamliel warns that studying Torah without having a worldly occupation too, will cause one to sin. Why do you think that is?

Can you think of somebody who is dedicated to their Torah studies but also is involved with the world around them? Do you feel that they are happier with their lot, '*sameach b'chelko*'?

Idea by Richard Marks

לעילוי נשמת:

לאה בת רפאל הכהן וציפורה
מאיה אסתר בת הרב אריה מרדכי ולאה
רינה מרים בת הרב אריה מרדכי ולאה

