

A BRIDGE TO OUR TRADITION: PIRKEI AVOT



Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz
Illustrated by Joseph Cooper

BEN ZOMA ASKS, “WHO?”

Ben Zoma said,
“Who is wise?”

בֶּן זֹמָא אוֹמֵר
אֵיזָהוּ הַחֶכֶם?

The one who learns from
everyone, as it says,
‘From all who would teach me,
have I gained understanding...’

[PSALM 119:99]



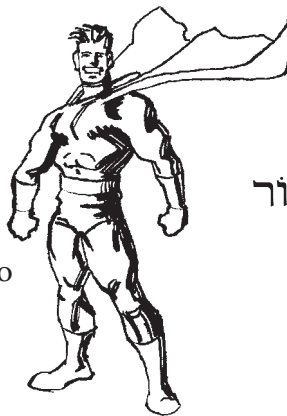
הַלּוֹמֵד מִכָּל אָדָם
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
מִכָּל מְלַמְדֵי הַשִּׁבְלֵתִי...

Who is mighty?

אֵיזָהוּ גִבּוֹר?

One who controls one’s
[natural] urges, as it says,
‘One who is slow to anger is
better than the mighty and one
who rules one’s spirit than one who
conquers a city.’

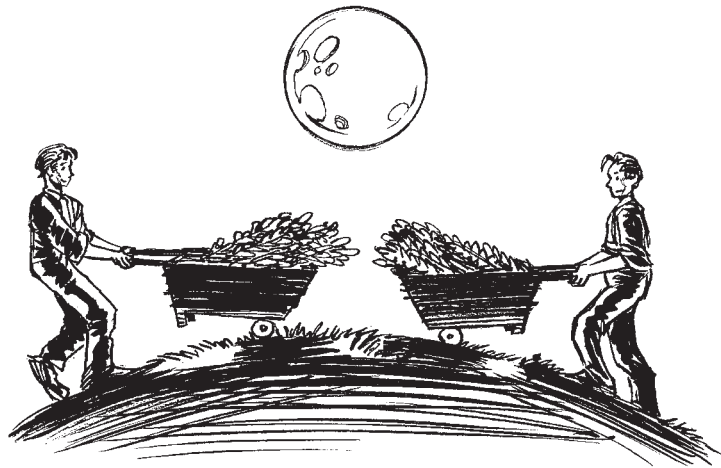
[PROVERBS 16:32]



הַכּוֹבֵשׁ אֶת יָצְרוֹ
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
טוֹב אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם מִגִּבּוֹר
וּמוֹשֵׁל בְּרוּחוֹ מִלְכָּד
עִיר.

UNIT II

IF I AM FOR
MYSELF ALONE,
WHAT AM I?



Who is rich?

איזהו עשיר?

One who is happy with what one has, as it says, 'When you eat what your hands have provided, you shall be happy and good will be yours....'



השִׂמַח בְּחֻלְקוֹ
שֵׁנֵי אִמֵּר יִגִּיעַ כַּפְיָךְ
כִּי תֹאכַל אֲשֶׁר יָדְךָ
וְטוֹב לָךְ....

despise

To think of something as worthless; to scorn.

lightly esteemed

Not valued; held in low regard.

[PSALM 128:2]

Who is honored?

איזהו מְכַבֵּד?

One who honors others, as it says, 'Those who honor Me, I will honor, and those who **despise** Me, will be **lightly esteemed**.'



הַמְכַבֵּד אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת
שֵׁנֵי אִמֵּר כִּי מְכַבְּדִי
אֶכְבֵּד וּבְזֵי יִקְלוּ.

[I SAMUEL 2:30]

A Beginning Thought: When a person acts with respect to others, he or she earns respect in return.

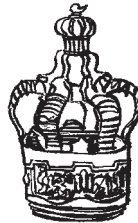
In the last lesson, you considered Rabbi Shimon's opinion that it is important to earn "the crown of a **שֵׁם טוֹב**." Take a moment and think about the reason others might crown you with a **שֵׁם טוֹב**.

THE CROWN OF A GOOD NAME

Rabbi Shimon said,
“There are three crowns:

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אוֹמֵר
שְׁלֹשָׁה כְּתָרִים הֵן:

the crown of Torah;



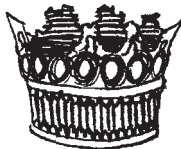
כְּתֵר תּוֹרָה

the crown of **priesthood**;



וְכֵתֵר כְּהֹנָה

and the crown of royalty.



וְכֵתֵר מַלְכוּת.

However, the crown of a
good name is greater than
all of them.”



וְכֵתֵר שֵׁם טוֹב
עוֹלָה עַל גְּבִיהוֹן.

priesthood

In the Torah, God commands Aaron and his family to serve as the **כֹּהֲנִים** (*kohanim*), or priests, taking care of the rituals in the desert Tabernacle, and later at the Temple in Jerusalem. This service is called the priesthood.