

בס"ד

PIRKEI AVOS OF THE WEEK

Perek V

26 Iyar, 5781 – May 8, 2021

Compiled from the works of
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The Lubavitcher Rebbe

by
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An Outline of the Rebbe's Explanation of Pirkei Avos

Chapter V

Likkutei Sichos, Volume 4, Page 1221

Chapter V

פרקה', משנה ו': עֲשֶׂרָה דְבָרִים נִבְרְאוּ בְעֶרְבַ שְׁבֻת בֵּין הַשְּׁמֶשׁוֹת, וְאֵלוֹ הֵן: פִּי הָאָרֶז, פִּי הַבְּאֵר, פִּי הָאֵתוֹן, הַקֶּשֶׁת, וְהַמָּן, וְהַמָּטָה, וְהַשְּׁמִיר, הַכֶּתֵב, וְהַמְּקֻתֵב, וְהַלְחֹת. וַיֵּשׂ אֲמָרִים: אֵף קִבְרוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ, וְאֵילוֹ שֶׁל אֲבָרָהָם אֲבִינוּ. וַיֵּשׂ אֲמָרִים: אֵף הַמְזִיקִין, וְאֵף צָבַת בְּצִבְתַּ עֲשׂוּיָהּ.

Chapter 5, Mishnah 6: Hashem created ten things at the twilight of Shabbos eve. These are the mouth of the earth (that swallowed Korach), the mouth of (Miriam's) well, the mouth of (Bilaam's) donkey, the rainbow, the manna, (Moshe's) staff, the Shamir, the writing, the inscription and the tablets (of the Ten Commandments). Some say that Moshe's burial place and the ram of our father Avrohom were created then. And some say that the spirits of destruction and the original tongs, for tongs are made with tongs then.

The Simple Explanation

This Mishnah lists those things which Hashem created on the sixth day of Creation at twilight, the time between sunset and nightfall. The Bartenura explains¹ that these things were created "on the eve of the Shabbos of creation before Hashem completed Creation." The Bartenura then goes on to explain each of the items in detail. The common denominator between them was that they were all miraculous.

Difficulties in Understanding the Mishnah

The beginning of our chapter lists items/generations in groups of ten. First, we learn of the ten utterances with which Hashem created the world². The Mishnah then tells us of the ten generations from Adam until Noach and the ten generations from Noach until Avrohom³. We then read of Avrohom's ten tests⁴. The following Mishnah teaches us the a.) ten miracles that took place

1. See the Bartenura's commentary to our Mishnah.
2. Pirkei Avos, Chapter 5, Mishnah 1.
3. Ibid, ibid. Mishnah 2.
4. Ibid, ibid. Mishnah 3.

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for our forefathers in Egypt and the ten on the sea, b.) the ten plagues that Hashem brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt and the ten on the sea, and c.) the ten tests with which our forefathers tested Hashem in the wilderness⁵. Next, we learn of the ten miracles which took place in the Bais Hamikdosh⁶. Finally, our Mishnah⁷ teaches us of the ten items which Hashem created on the first Friday during twilight.

The famous Maharal of Prague questions the order of these Mishnahs⁸. The first five Mishnahs are in chronological order. They begin with the Creation of the world and continue in order. Our Mishnah, which discusses things which we created⁹ "on the eve of the Shabbos of creation before the creation was completed," should have been the second Mishnah. It should have immediately followed the first Mishnah, which taught us of Creation.

The Answer

The items listed in our Mishnah are different than everything previously listed. The difference between our Mishnah 6, and Mishnah 1 – 5, is qualitative, not quantitative. Everything listed in the first five Mishnahs is a part of "Seder Hishtalshelus," the chain of developing the Creation of this world. They are all a part of Creation.

Even the miraculous things listed in the first five Mishnahs follow an orderly pattern related to this world. The Bais Hamikdosh, as lofty as it is, is the pinnacle of Creation. The miracles which occurred there are connected to Creation. G-d created this world to have a "dwelling place below," in a dark, physical world. The Holy Temple represents the ultimate "dwelling place."

Those things listed in Mishnah 6 are different in that they totally transcend this world. That is *why* they were created during twilight. Twilight is the bridge between day and night. Day and night are polar opposites. Despite that, twilight can connect them. To connect two things that are opposites, something must be greater than both. Being higher than both day and night means that twilight is entirely beyond the limitations of time.

5. Ibid, ibid. Mishnah 4.

6. Ibid, ibid. Mishnah 5.

7. Ibid, ibid. Mishnah 6.

8. Derech Chaim, Mishnah 2.

9. See footnote 1.

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Here we are discussing something even greater. It is not just a bridge between daytime and nighttime. Instead, it joins the weekday, Creation, with the holy Shabbos, which transcends Creation. That is why these items, which are not limited by order of Creation, are listed after the first five Mishnahs in this chapter.

Adapted from a talk given Shabbos Parshas Behar-Bechukosai, 5723)

I hope that you gained as much by reading this as I did by translating and adapting it.

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