



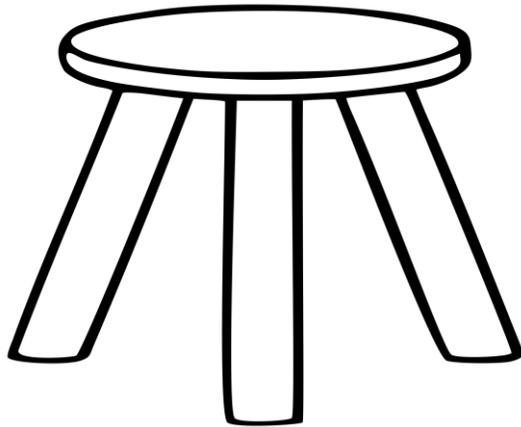
Pirkei Avot: Perek Alef

I. Learning:

- A. It is traditional to learn the mishnayot of Pirkei Avot on the Shabbatot between Pesach and Shavuot. Each Shabbat afternoon, between mincha and maariv, we read and learn one perek of this Mishna. In English it is called The Sayings of Our Fathers. The Mishna is part of the Oral Torah given to Moshe on Har Sinai.
- B. The Mishna is a collection of mishnayot from various rabbis that lived at the time of the Great Courts in Jerusalem. The Mishna starts out by describing how the Torah was handed down from generation to generation, starting from Moshe Rabbeinu, to Yehoshua, to the zekeinim (the elderly judges with knowledge) to the prophets, to the Men of the Great Assembly of Jerusalem. This is the Oral tradition that was handed down from generation to generation as well as the written Torah. The Mishna continues to describe the handing down of the tradition from rabbi to rabbi in each Mishna. Statements from these rabbis are found in many other tractates of the Mishna and Gemara.
- C. Pirkei Avot contains moral guidelines as to how we as Jews should live our lives. Many rabbis teach us that the reason we learn this book before Shavuot is because we need to learn how to properly conduct ourselves in order to prepare to receive the Torah.
- D. Some of the quotes from the Mishna that are most famous in Perek Alef are:
 - a. Shimon HaTzadik [...] would say: On 3 things the world stands: on the Torah, on avodah (tefillah), and on gemilut chasadim (deeds of kindness).
 - b. Yossei ben Yoezer of Tzreidah would say: Let your home be a meeting place for the wise; dust yourself in the soil of their feet, and drink thirstily of their words.
 - c. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Perachyah would say: Assume for yourself a teacher, acquire for yourself a friend, and judge every person favorably.
 - d. Hillel would say: Be like the students of Aharon - a lover of peace, a pursuer of peace, one who loves the creatures and draws them close to Torah.
 - e. Shammai would say: Make your Torah study a permanent fixture of your life. Say little and do much.

II. Craft:

“On Three Things the World Stands” out of Legos and felt



Supplies:

1 flat, wide lego (round if you have)

12 square lego pieces

1 ball (blue)

Markers to color ball

Felt

Scissors

Glue

Instructions:

1. Use 4 square legos to make a chair leg. Make 3 legs with 4 legos each.
2. Attach each leg to the flat, wide lego to make a 3-legged chair
3. Draw continents on the ball to make a globe
4. Glue the ball onto the top of the chair
5. Cut out a Torah, a siddur, and a tzedakah box from felt
6. Glue one felt piece to each leg of the chair