



# Pirkei Avot

Living with Jewish Values and Ethics

Learning Campaign Source Sheet

## CHAPTER 4

### Wisdom for Moderns, Young and Old

#### Pirkei Avot 4:1

בן זומא אומר, איזהו חכם, הלומד מכל אדם

Ben Zoma said: Who is wise? He who learns from every man

#### Pirkei Avot 4:20

אלישע בן אבויא אומר, הלומד ילד למה הוא דומה, לדיו כתובה על גיר חדש.  
והלומד זקן למה הוא דומה, לדיו כתובה על גיר מחוק. רבי יוסי בר יהודה איש  
כפר הבבלי אומר, הלומד מן הקטנים למה הוא דומה, לאכל ענבים קהות ושו-  
תה יין מגתו. והלומד מן הזקנים למה הוא דומה, לאכל ענבים בשלות ושותה יין  
ישן. רבי אומר, אל תסתכל בקנקו, אלא במה שיש בו. יש קנקו חדש מלא ישן,  
וישן שאפלו חדש אין בו:

Elisha ben Abuyah said: He who learns when a child, to what is he compared? To ink written upon a new writing sheet. And he who learns when an old man, to what is he compared? To ink written on a rubbed writing sheet. Rabbi Yose ben Judah a man of Kfar Ha-babli said: He who learns from the young, to what is he compared? To one who eats unripe grapes, and drinks wine from his vat; And he who learns from the old, to what is he compared? To one who eats ripe grapes, and drinks old wine. Rabbi said: don't look at the container but at that which is in it: there is a new container full of old wine, and an old [container] in which there is .not even new [wine]

>  
LEARN WITH  
Rabbi Mark Gottlieb



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Learning Campaign Discussion Questions:

## CHAPTER 4

### Wisdom for Moderns, Young and Old

- 01 Are you more likely to take seriously knowledge or information from the present era or from a previous generation? Why?
- 02 Would your answer to the above question be different if you were asked about “wisdom” instead of “knowledge or information”?
- 03 Do the two mishnayot (plural of Mishna) mentioned in the lesson (Chapter 4, Mishna 25 & 26) favor the young over the old or the old over the young?