



מִסְכַּת אָבוֹת פָּרָק ב מִשְׁנֵה טז: "לֹא עָלֶיךָ הַמְּלָאכָה לְגַמֹּר"



**The Mishna:**

Avot, Chapter 2, Mishna 16

He [Rabbi Tarfon] used to say:  
It is not your duty to finish the work,  
but neither are you at liberty to neglect it;

**המשנה:**

אבות ב, טז

הוא היה אומר:  
לא עליך המלאכה לגמור,  
ולא אתה בן חורין לבטל ממנה...

**A short explanation on the Mishna:**

In continuation to the previous Mishna, Rabbi Tarfon adds:  
"It is not your duty to finish the work"

A person should not feel that he is the only one responsible for completing all the work (that all the tasks that are a person's responsibility during his lifetime: learning, good deeds, etc.). He has partners in his life and they are responsible to complete the work together.

On the other hand, "but neither are you at liberty to neglect it;"

A person should not shirk from taking responsibility for his role and mission in this world. A person must do his best, and he has no way of avoiding and "freeing" himself from doing this, and thinking that others will do it instead of him.

## Level 1

- **Memorize** the Mishna with hand movements.

(Click or scan the barcode)



- Tell the students the following story:

On Passover eve we have to clean the house and tidy all the rooms, scrub the kitchen, prepare food for the holiday, including the symbolic dishes that are eaten on Passover, and buy Matza (unleavened bread). There are so many chores to be done around the home. There are so many guests. What should we do?!

Grandma remembered the verse "It is not your duty to finish the work". She divided the work among the many members of the household, and even 4-year-old Yossi was given a task. He tried to avoid working by saying that he would rather read, but his mother related another verse from the Mishnah.

- ❖ What did the mother say to Yossi?



## Level 2

- The Mishna presents the idea of finding a balance between the responsibilities imposed on each person, and the fact that the world is constantly built by the actions of many people together.

Can you give examples of large projects/tasks that require the intensive work of one individual, but which also rely on the work of many people combining their efforts together?

- ❖ Another option –

A collection of small details together build up something big.

Give the students an assignment to make a mosaic for the class, where each student adds a few pieces and, in the end, together they create an impressive mosaic. If some students don't work, the mosaic won't be completed and if only one student works – it will take a long time and he possibly won't have time to finish it all.