

Pirkei Avot

Rabbi Yosai ben Yoezer of Tziraidah says; "Make your house a meeting place for the Sages. Cling to the dust of their feet, and drink in their words thirstily." (Avot 1:4)

This means to always listen to what Torah scholars have to say!



Here is the Story:

Once there lived a great Sage named Shmuel. He taught his students that they must always be careful about their possessions.

If a person had fields or orchards, Shmuel said he should visit them every day to see that they were in good condition. If anything needed to be repaired, it should be taken care of right away. Shmuel also taught that if someone was not careful to check his property, he would suffer great losses. But if he was always careful to check his property, Shmuel said that he would surely find gold. Rav Assi was one of Shmuel's students. In order to follow Shmuel's teaching, he used to visit his fields every day to see if everything was in order. He always wondered if one day he would find gold, but he never did.

One day, when he went to look over his fields, he heard the sound of water gushing. He decided to check it out. Near his fields there was a dam. The water had burst through a hole, and was streaming out. If Rav Assi did not do something quickly, all his crops would be destroyed. Quickly, he took off his coat, and stuffed it into the hole. The water stopped for a while, but shortly it began dripping once more. Soon, the hole would again open up! Rav Assi began to shout and cry for help. Other farmers heard him and came running. They all worked hard, and soon succeeded in repairing the damage.

Everyone's harvest was saved from the flood. Then Rav Assi understood. "So this is the fortune of gold that Shmuel promised! If I had not visited my fields today, all the crops would have been ruined! I would have lost everything. How wise are the words of our Sages!" Others said that Shmuel's words were meant even for people who do not have fields and orchards. Every day a person should check himself, to see if he has behaved as he should. That way, if something is not correct we can set it right immediately.

That is the only way to truly improve our character.