

“For he shall be like a tamarisk in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, a salt land and not inhabited.” But what does he resemble who can show more deeds than learning? A tree of few branches and many roots, —all the storms and winds may bear down and rage upon it, they cannot move it from its place. Thus it is also written (*Jeremiah 17:8*): “He shall be a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out his roots by the river, and shall not fear when heat cometh, but his leaf shall be green; he shall not be anxious in the years of drought, neither shall he cease from bearing fruit.”

CHAPTER IV.

1. Ben Zoma was in the habit of saying: Who is a wise man? He who learns from everybody. For thus it is written (*Psalms 119:99*): “From all, who could teach me, I have sought to learn.”—Who is a hero? He who conquers his passions; thus the Scriptures say (*Proverbs 16:32*): “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”—Who is a rich man? He who is satisfied with his lot; for thus it is said (*Psalms 128:2*): “For thou shalt eat the labor of thy hands; happy shalt thou be and it shall be well with thee!” Happy shalt thou be! in this world; it shall be well with thee! in the world to come.—Who is honored? He who honors his fellowmen; for thus it is written (*I. Samuel 2:30*): “Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.”

2. Ben Azai was in the habit of saying: Be zealous in the practice of the slightest virtue, and flee from all

manner of sin ; for one virtue brings another in its wake, and one iniquity is followed by others ; for the reward of virtue is virtue itself, and sin is requited with sin.—He likewise said : Despise no man, and consider nothing as too far-removed to come to pass ; for there is no man but hath his day, and no event that may not come.

3. Rabbi Zadok was in the habit of saying : Wear not the law of God as a crown to exalt thyself withal, nor use it as a spade to dig therewith for wealth. He who makes use of his learning in the Law to further his own selfish ends, loses all merit.

4. Rabbi Simeon was wont to say : There are three crowns—the crown of the Law, the crown of the priesthood, and the crown of royalty. But the crown of a fair name excelleth them all.

5. Rabbi Matithya ben Cheresch was in the habit of saying : Give every man a friendly greeting ! Be the lions' tail rather than the foxes' head !

6. Rabbi Jacob said : This world is, as it were, the antechamber of the world hereafter ; prepare thyself in the antechamber that thou mayest be admitted to the banqueting hall !

7. Rabbi Simeon ben Elazar was accustomed to say : Attempt not to soothe thy neighbor in the heat of his anger ; obtrude not thyself upon him when his grief is fresh ; keep him not too strictly to a hasty vow, and rush not to see him in the hour of his downfall.

8. Elisha ben Abuyah said : Learn early in life, for then memory is as a clean page whereon it is easy to write ; learning in later years is like writing on paper that is already covered with writing.

9. Rabbi Jose ben Jehudah, from the village of Babli, said . Whom does he resemble who learns from the young ? Him who eats unripe grapes and drinks the

wine fresh from the wine-press ! But whom does he resemble who learns from old men ? Him who eats ripe grapes and drinks old wine.

10. Rabbi Meir was in the habit of saying : Look not upon the pitcher, but upon what it contains. Many a new pitcher is full of old wine, and many an old one does not even hold new wine.

11. Rabbi Eliezer Hakkapor said : Envy, sensuality and ambition destroy life.

12. He likewise said : Those born into the world are doomed to die ; the dead, but to live on again, and those who enter the eternal life, to be judged. Therefore, let it be recognized, understood and remembered, that He, the Almighty, the Creator, the Architect, He is the counsellor ; He, the judge ; He, the witness ; He, the accuser. He is always ready to give judgment : blessed be He ! for, before Him, there is no injustice, no oversight, no regard for rank, no bribery. Know that all will appear in the account ! Accept not the assurance of thy passions, that the grave will be a place of refuge for thee. For without thy consent wert thou created ; wert born into the world without thy choice ; thou art now living without thine own volition, without thine approval thou wilt have to die ; so likewise, without thy consent thou wilt have to render account before the Supreme King, the Holy One, blessed be He !

CHAPTER V.

1. Seven things mark the ignorant and seven there are for the sage. The wise man does not speak before those who surpass him in wisdom and years ; he does not interrupt another in his speech ; he does not ask ques-

tions rashly; asks with propriety and to the point; speaks first upon the matter first in order and last upon the last; when he does not understand the matter under discussion, he confesses "I do not understand it"; and admits it when he has been convinced. The opposites of these things mark the ignoramus.

2. Four sets of views are held by men concerning property. He who says: "What belongs to me shall continue to be mine and thou shalt keep thine own," holds the common view. (Some consider this the view of the men of Sodom.) "Mine shall be thine and thine shall be mine," thus say the ignorant. "Mine shall be thine and thou shalt also keep thine own," thus say the magnanimous. "Thine shall be mine and mine shall continue to be mine," are the words of the godless.

3. There are four sorts of dispositions among man. Some are easily enraged, but as quickly soothed—there the fault is neutralized by the merit. Some are slow to anger, but are calmed only with difficulty—there the merit is counterbalanced by the fault. One is slow to anger and easily pacified,—he is of a gentle disposition. Another is easily irritated and hard to soothe,—he is a wicked man.

4. There are four kinds of pupils: The one understands readily but forgets soon;—there the advantage is swallowed by the failing. The other grasps but slowly and seldom forgets,—there the failing is outweighed by the talent. A third understands readily and is slow to forget—his is a happy talent. A fourth understands slowly and forgets quickly—his is an unfortunate lot.

5. The charitable are divided into four classes. He who gives but does not make others give, is unfriendly to the poor; he who makes others give but does not give himself, does not make the best of his own; he who

gives and makes others give, is called a pious man ; but he who neither gives nor will induce others to give, is a cruel man.

6. There are four classes among the disciples of the wise : Sponges, funnels, sieves, and fans. Sponges—sucking up all things. Funnels—allowing all that is received in the one end to flow out at the other. Sieves—letting the wine run through and retaining the dregs. Fans—blowing off the bran and keeping the flour.

7. Love inspired by ulterior motives, dies out when that motive disappears ; but love without such motives never fades.

8. Judah ben Tema was in the habit of saying : Be courageous as the panther, light-winged as the eagle, swift as the deer, and strong as the lion, to execute the will of thy heavenly Father !
