

DAILY PRAYER BOOK

HA-SIDDUR HA-SHALEM

*Translated and Annotated
with an Introduction*

by

PHILIP BIRNBAUM



סידור התפילות
היומיות

תרגום ופירושים
לסידור

ע"י

פיליפ ברנבאום



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ניו יורק

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to the Memory of
DAVID WERBELOWSKY

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ETHICS OF THE FATHERS

Recited on the Sabbaths between Pesah and Rosh Hashanah

All Israel have a share in the world to come, as it is said: "Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever; they are a plant of my own, the work of my hands, wherein I may glory."¹

CHAPTER ONE

1. Moses received the Torah at Sinai and handed it down to Joshua; Joshua to the elders; the elders to the prophets; and the prophets handed it down to the men of the Great Assembly. The latter said three things: Be patient in the administration of justice; develop many students; and make a fence for the Torah.
2. Simon the Just was one of the last survivors of the Great Assembly. He used to say: The world is based on three principles: Torah, worship, and kindness.
3. Antigonus of Sokho received the oral tradition from Simeon the Just. He used to say: Be not like servants who serve the master for the sake of receiving a reward, but be like servants who serve the master without the expectation of receiving a reward; and let the fear of Heaven be upon you.

Torah ("The Acquisition of Torah"), was chosen to be read on the Sabbath preceding *Shanuah*, the anniversary of the giving of the Torah, because its subject-matter is almost exclusively in praise of the Torah. The liturgical use of *Avoth* on Sabbath afternoons is mentioned in the *Siddur* of Amram Gaon (ninth century).

Avoth introduces each chapter of *Avoth* in the Prayerbook. It is an excerpt from Mishnah Sanhedrin 11:1.

Torah consists of two parts: the written law and the oral law. The written law is contained in the Five Books of Moses, and the oral law consists of the traditional interpretations and amplifications handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation until finally embodied in the talmudic literature, *halakha* a legislative body of 120 men said to have functioned during and after the Persian period in Jewish history, about 500-300 before the common era.

Torah additional regulations, designed to preserve the biblical laws, *halakha* a Greek name. *Torah* reverence for God.

¹ *Isaiah* 60:21.

פרקי אבות

Recited on the Sabbaths between Pesah and Rosh Hashanah

כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא, שאמרו: ועמיהם צדיקים, לעולם יירשו ארץ; וציר מפעלי מעשה ידיו להתפאר.

פרק ראשון

א. משה קבל תורה מסיון, ונאמרה ליהושע, ויהושע לזקנים, וזקנים לנביאים, ונביאים לקהני כנסת הנהגה, הם אמרו שלשה דברים: יהיו מתונים בדין, ותעמידו תלמידים הרבה, ותעסיקו לתורה.

ב. שמעון הצדיק הנהגה נכסות הנהגה, הוא הנהגה אמר: על שלשה דברים העולם עומד: על התורה, ועל העבודה, ועל נמילות חסדים.

ג. אנטיגנוס איש שוכן קבל משמעון הצדיק. הוא הנהגה אמר: אל תהיו בעבדים המשמשים את הרב על מנת לקבל פרס, אלא יהיו בעבדים המשמשים את הרב שלא על מנת לקבל פרס, ויהי מורה שמנים עליכם.

Avoth one of the sixty-three tractates of the Mishnah, deals with the ethical principles given by the fathers of Jewish tradition who flourished over a period of nearly five centuries, from the time of the last prophet to the end of the second century. Having achieved a place in the Prayerbook, *Avoth* became the most popular of all the books of the Mishnah and its contents exercised a most salutary influence on the Jewish people. The custom of reading *Five Avoth* ("Chapters of the Fathers") on Sabbath afternoons was originally limited, it seems, to the period between *Pesah* and *Shanuah*. A sixth chapter, derived from a source other than the Mishnah, was added to the five chapters of *Avoth* in order to provide a separate chapter for each of the six Sabbaths between the two festivals. The sixth chapter, called *Kinyan*

4. Yosé ben Yo'ezer of Zeredah and Yosé ben Yohanan of Jerusalem received the oral tradition from the preceding. Yosé ben Yo'ezer of Zeredah said: Let your house be a meeting-place for scholars; sit at their feet in the dust, and drink in their words thirstingly.

5. Yosé ben Yohanan of Jerusalem said: Let your house be wide open [to strangers]; treat the poor as members of your own family; and do not gossip with women. This has been said even with regard to one's own wife, how much more does it apply to another man's wife. Hence the sages say: Whoever gossips with women brings harm to himself, for he neglects the study of the Torah and will in the end inherit *Gehinnom*.

6. Joshua ben Perahyah and Nittai of Arbel received the oral tradition from the preceding. Joshua ben Perahyah said: Provide yourself with a teacher; get yourself a companion; and judge all men favorably.

7. Nittai of Arbel said: Keep aloof from a bad neighbor; do not associate with an evil man; and do not give up the belief in retribution [wickedness will not succeed in the end].

8. Judah ben Tabbai and Simeon ben Shatah received the oral tradition from the preceding. Judah ben Tabbai said: Do not [as a judge] play the part of a counselor; when the parties in a lawsuit are standing before you, regard them both as guilty; but when they go away from you, after having submitted to the judgment, regard them both as innocent.

9. Simeon ben Shatah said: Examine the witnesses thoroughly; be careful with your words, lest through them they learn to tell lies.

10. Shemayah and Avtalyon received the oral tradition from the preceding. Shemayah said: Love work; hate the holding of public office; and do not be intimate with the ruling authorities.

Among the place of punishment in the hereafter. בדרגת יא is mentioned in Jeremiah 32:35 as the valley of Ben-Hinnom, near Jerusalem, where idolatry was used to sacrifice human lives. The valley of Hinnom became identified with woe and suffering as a result of the horrible crimes committed in it. כל שיעים לרשעים look upon either litigant with favor, but should regard both sides with equal suspicion.

שמעון בן שטח, brother of queen Salome Alexandra, laid the foundations of an elementary school system among the Jews in the beginning of the first century before the common era. שמעון בן אבטיהו are said to have been descendants of proselytes.

ד. יוסי בן יעזר, איש צְרֵדָה, ויוסי בן יוחנן, איש ירושלים, קבלו מרבות. יוסי בן יעזר, איש צְרֵדָה, אומר: ידך ביהמה נערך לתקומה, והיו מתקמים בעפר רגליהם, והיו שוחה בצמא את רגליהם.

ה. יוסי בן יוחנן, איש ירושלים, אומר: יהי ביתך פתוח לרחוקה, ויהיו ענייך בני ביתך, ואל תרבה שירה עם האשה. באשתו אמרה, קל וחמר באשת חברה. מקצת אמרו תקמים: כל המרבה שירה עם האשה גורם רעה לעצמו, וכטל מרבירי חורבה, וסופו יורש יגדלם.

ו. יהושע בן פרחיה ונחמי הארבל קבלו מרבות. יהושע בן פרחיה אומר: עשה לך רב, וקנה לך חברה, והיו דן את כל האדם לכהן זכות.

ז. נחמי הארבל אומר: הרחוק משכן רע, ואל תחמיר לרשע, ואל תתאשא מן הפרענות.

ח. יהודה בן שבי ושמעון בן שטח קבלו מרבות. יהודה בן שבי אומר: אל תעש עצמך פעור, ודיינים, ופשיריו בעלי חרין עומדים לפניך, והיו בעיניך פושעים, וכל שפוטריהו מלפניך, יהיו בעיניך פושעים, וכל שפוטריהו את הדין. שמעון בן שטח אומר: יהיו מרבה לחקר את העדים, ויהיו זדירי ברכייה, שפא מוחלבים ילמדו לשקר.

י. שמעיה ואבטיהו קבלו מרבות. שמעיה אומר: אהב את המלאכה, ושפא את הרפנות, ואל תהרבה לרשות.

101. In this and the following four paragraphs are given the names of the five Zugot, "pairs" of leading scholars, who were president and vice-president of the Sanhedrin in the course of 160 years, the period preceding the Tannaim.

11. Avtalyon said: Scholars, be careful with your words! You may incur the penalty of exile and be banished to a place of evil waters [heretical teachings], and the disciples who follow you into exile are likely to drink of them and die [a spiritual death], with the result that the name of Heaven would be profaned.

12. Hillel and Shammai received the oral tradition from the preceding: Hillel said: Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace; be one who loves his fellow men and draws them near to the Torah.

13. He used to say: He who seeks greater reputation loses his reputation; he who does not increase his knowledge decreases it; he who does not study deserves death; he who makes unworthy use of the crown [of learning] shall perish.

14. He used to say: If I am not for myself, who is for me? If I care only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?

15. Shammai said: Make your study of the Torah a regular habit; say little but do much; and receive all men cheerfully.

16. Rabban Gamaliel said: Provide yourself with a teacher and avoid doubt; and do not make a habit of giving tithes by guesswork.

17. Simeon his son said: All my life I have been brought up among the sages, and I have found nothing better for a person than silence; study is not the most important thing but practice; and whoever talks too much, brings about sin.

18. Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel said: The world is established on three principles: truth, justice, and peace, as it is said: "You shall administer truth, justice and peace within your gates."¹

famous for his meek and gentle disposition. They were the founders of the schools named after them: *Beit Hillel* and *Beit Shammai*.

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¹ Zechariah 8:16.

יא. אבטליון אומר: דבמנים, דתורהו פדגריבם, שקלא חתובי חובת גלות ותגלו למקום מנים הרעים, וישתו דתלמידיהם דפאים אחריהם וימותו, ונמצא שם שקנים מתחילא.

יב. הלל ושמי קבלו מהם, הלל אומר: היי מתלמידיי של אמור; אהב שקלים ורודף שקלים, אהב את חבריהו ומקרבן לחורה.

יג. הווא תורה אומר: עבר שקלא אבר שקמה, ודלא מוסיף יסר, ודלא ילה קפלא תרב, ודאשתמש בתלא חלה.

יד. הווא תורה אומר: אם אין אני לי, מי לי? וכשאני לעצמי, מה אני? ואם לא עבשתי, ארתי.

טו. שמי אומר: עשה חנהמה קבעי, אמר מעט ועשה הרבה, ודוי מקביל את כל האדם בסדר פנים יפות.

טז. רבן גמליאל אומר: עשה לך רב, והסתלק מן הספק, ואל תרבה לעשר אמדות.

יז. שקיעון פנו אומר: כל ימי גדלותי ביין הסמכים ולא מצאתי לגור טוב משריקה, ולא המדרך עקר אלא המעשה, וכל המרבה דברים דברים מביא חטא.

יח. רבן שקיעון פנו גמליאל אומר: על שקשה דברים, העולם קום; על האמת, ועל חרין, ועל השלום, שאומר:

אמת ומשפט שלום שפשו פשעייכם.

יבנים Teachers are cautioned against their use of inexact language which might bring their students under the influence of heresy.

The last of the five *Zugot*, they are regarded as the first of the *Tannaim* whose interpretations of biblical law and oral tradition are recorded in the Mishnah, Tosefa, and other works. In contrast to Shammai, Hillel was

Rabbi Hananyah ben Akashyah said: The Holy One, blessed be he, desired to purify Israel; hence he gave them a Torah rich in rules of conduct, as it is said: "The Lord was pleased, for the sake of [Israel's] righteousness, to render the Torah great and glorious."¹

CHAPTER TWO

All Israel have a share in the world to come, as it is said: "Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever; they are a plant of my own, the work of my hands, wherein I may glory."²

1. Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi said: Which is the right course that a man should choose for himself? One which is creditable to the person adopting it, and on account of which he gains respect from men. Be careful to perform a minor *mizvah* just as well as a major one, for you do not know the reward for each *mizvah*. Balance the loss sustained by the performance of a *mizvah* against the reward secured by its observance, and the profit of a sin against its injury. Consider three things and you will not come into the grip of sin—know what is above you: a seeing eye, a hearing ear, and a book in which all your deeds are recorded.

2. Rabban Gamaliel, the son of Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi, said: It is well to combine Torah study with some worldly occupation, for the energy taken up by both of them keeps sin out of one's mind; all Torah study which is not combined with some trade must at length fail and occasion sin. Let all who work for the community do so from a spiritual motive, for then the merit of their fathers will sustain them, and their righteousness will endure forever. "I credit you with great reward [God says] as if you accomplished it all."

and editor of the Mishnah, he was without a rival among his contemporaries in learning. He said: "I learned much from my teachers, more from my colleagues, and most of all from my pupils" (Makkoth 10a). He possessed great wealth of which he gave freely to poor scholars. The greatest scholar of the period, he was designated simply *Rabbi* ("Master") par excellence. A descendant of Hillel in the seventh generation, he is also known as Judah ha-Nasi (head of the Sanhedrin).

רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל the third, who belonged to the last generation of the *Tannaim*. He succeeded his father in the office of *Nasi* in the third century.

עַל מַדְרֵת עַל that is, one would be driven to dishonest means of obtaining a livelihood.

¹ *Tsarah* 42:21. ² *Tsarah* 60:21.

רַבִּי תַנְהוּא בֶּן עֲקִישָׁא אָמַר: רְצֵה הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְזַבּוֹת אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְפִינֵיךָ הִרְבֵּה לָהֶם תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת שְׁמֹאמְרָה: יִי חַסְדֵּךָ לְמַעַן צְדָקָתְךָ, יִגְדִיל תּוֹרָתְךָ וַיֵּאדָרֶיךָ.

פֶּרֶק שֵׁנִי

כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ לָהֶם חֵלֶק לְעוֹלָם רַבָּא שְׁמֹאמְרָה: וְעַמּוּנָה כָּלָם צְדִיקִים, לְעוֹלָם יִירָשׁוּ אֲרֵזֵי; וְצַר בַּשָּׁעֵי, מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי לְהַתְּפָאֵר.

א. רַבִּי אֲמַר: אֵיזוֹ הִיא דְרֵיךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁיִּבְנוֹר לֹא הָאָרֶם, כֹּל יִשְׂרָאֵל הַתְּפָאֵרַת לְעִלְיָה וְהַתְּפָאֵרַת לֹא מִן הָאָרֶם; וְהָיוּ יְדִירֵי בְּמִצְוֹת קִלְקָה כְּבַתְּמוּנָה, שְׂאִין אִתָּה יוֹדֵעַ כִּמֵּן שֶׁכָּרֵן שֶׁל מִצְוֹת; וְהָיוּ מְחֻשְׁבֵי הַפְּסֵד מִצְוֹת כְּגֵיזֵר שֶׁכָּרָה, וְשֶׁכֶר עֲבָרָה כְּגֵיזֵר הַפְּסֵדָה. הִסְתַּמְלֵל בְּשִׁלְשׁוֹת דְּכָרִים וְאִין אִתָּה כָּא לִידֵי עֲבָרָה: דַּע מַד לְקַמְעֵלָה הַמָּוֶה, עֵיזוֹ רֹלָאָה, וְאִין שׁוֹקֵמַת נְכָל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ בְּסַפֵּר נִכְתָּבִים.

ב. רַבִּן גַּמְלִיאֵל כִּנּוּ שֶׁל רַבִּי יְהוֹדָה הַנְּשִׂיא אָמַר: יָפָה תְּלַמּוּד תּוֹרָה עִם דְּרֵיךְ אֲרֵזֵי, שְׂוִינְיַת שְׂוִינְיָהּ מִשְׁכַּחַת עוֹזֵי; וְכָל תּוֹרָה שְׂאִין עֲמָה מְלַאכָה סוּפָה בְּשִׁלְדָה וְנוֹרְרָת עוֹזֵי; וְכָל תְּעוֹסְקִים עִם הַצְּבוּר יְהִיוּ עוֹסְקִים עִמָּהּ לְשֵׁם שְׂמִינִים, שְׂוִינְיָהּ אֲבֹתָם מְסִיעֵתָם וְצוֹקְדָתָם עוֹמְרָת לְעַד. וְאִתָּם, מַעֲלָה אֲתֵי עֲלֵיכֶם שֶׁכֶר הִרְבֵּה פֶּאֵלֵי עֲשִׂיתָם.

רַבִּי תַנְהוּא belonged to the third generation of the *Tannaim*, and flourished in the middle of the second century. His dictum, which is added in the Prayer-book at the end of each chapter of *Avoth*, is an excerpt from Mishnah Makkoth 3:16.

רַבִּי is sometimes called *Rabbanu ha-Kadosh* ("our saintly teacher"). All the best qualities were combined in him. He is said to have been born in 135, when Rabbi Akiba died. He lived to be 84 years old. Famous as the compiler

the secrets of the Torah are revealed; he is made like a fountain that ever gathers force, and like a never-failing stream. He becomes modest, patient, and forgiving of insults. The Torah makes him great and raises him above all creatures.

2. Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said: Every day a heavenly voice resounds from Mount Horeb, proclaiming these words: "Woe to the people for their disregard of the Torah!" For whoever does not occupy himself with the Torah is considered rebuked, as it is said: "Like a golden ring in the snout of a swine is a fair woman lacking in taste."¹ The Torah says: "The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets."² Read not here *haruḥ* [meaning 'engraved'] but *heruḥi* [which means 'freedom'], for none can be considered free except those who occupy themselves with the study of the Torah. Anyone who occupies himself with the study of the Torah shall be exalted, as it is said: "Through the [Torah] gift one attains the heritage of God; by the heritage of God [one is raised] to high places."³

3. He who learns from his fellow man a single section, a single rule, a single verse, a single expression, or even a single letter, ought to treat him with respect; for so we find with David, king of Israel, who learnt only two things from Ahitophel, and yet regarded him as his master, guide and intimate friend, as it is said: "You were my equal, my teacher and intimate friend."⁴ This certainly presents an argument from minor to major: if David, king of Israel, who learnt only two things from Ahitophel, regarded him as his

¹ *דבר* a traditional opinion, a legal decision. *דבר* a biblical passage. *דבר* a divine utterance, a biblical expression. *חכ* refers to the correct spelling of words, whether to use *ח* or *כ* for example (Kallah, chapter 8).

² *אחרת*, who participated in Absalom's rebellion against David, was at first David's best friend. His wisdom was believed to be superhuman.

³ *דברים* two lessons only which were, according to a talmudic statement, to the effect that one should study in the company of a colleague and that it is proper to walk to the house of prayer eagerly and not leisurely (Kallah, chapter 8). It has been suggested that instead of *דברים* *דברים* should read *דברים* *דברים*, "who merely conversed."

¹ *Proverbs* 11:22. ² *Ecclesiastes* 32:16. ³ *Numbers* 21:19. ⁴ *Psalms* 55:14.

תורה, ומעשה כמעין המהפכה, ומהפכה שאתנו פוסק. ומהפכה שאתנו פוסק על עולבנותו, ומעשה שאתנו פוסק על עולבנותו, ומעשה שאתנו פוסק על עולבנותו.

ב. אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: ככל יום יום פת קול ויצאת מרה חורה ומכרזות ואומרות: איי להם לגבירות מעלפונה של תורה, שקל מן שארנו עוסק בתורה נקרא נחיה, שאומרת: נחיה וזרב פאר חזיר, אשה נפה וסרת קעם. ואומרת: נחלה מעשה אלהים המה, והמהפכה מכפס אלהים הוא, חרות על הלהת. אל תקרא חרות אלא חרות, שאין לה בידה חרות אלא מי שעוסק בתלמוד תורה, וכל מי שעוסק בתלמוד תורה הרי זה מתעלה, שאומרת: וממהפכה נחילאל, וממהפכה נחילאל במהות.

ג. הלומר מהבין פסק אחד, או הלכה אחת, או פסוק אחד, או דבור אחד, או אפילו אות אחת, צריך לנהגו כבוד; שכן מצוינו בדרך הלכה ושלל, שלא למד מהאחרת אלא שני דברים בלבד, קראו רבנו, אלופו ומידעו, שאומרת: ואמה אנש כערבי, אלופו ומידעו. והלא דברים קל וחומר, ומה דרך הלכה ושלל למד מהאחרת אלא שני דברים

¹ *ל* was one of the first generation of the Amoraim, whose discussions of the mishnaic law are recorded in the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds. He lived in Palestine during the middle of the third century and became the subject of many legends.

² The initial *ת* in *תורה* are combined with the last letter of *תורה* to form *תורה*.

³ *אשה* "a fair woman lacking in taste," refers here to one who has the aptitude for Torah and makes no use of it.

⁴ *א* introduces a play on words, and not an emendation of the text. The Hebrew place-names are here interpreted as if they were common nouns.

master, guide and intimate friend, how much more ought one who learns from his companion a section, rule, verse, expression, or even a single letter, to treat him with respect. *Honor* implies Torah, as it is said: "The wise shall inherit honor; men of integrity shall attain good fortune."¹ *Good* implies Torah, as it is said: "I give you good doctrine; forsake not my Torah."²

4. This is the way of Torah study: eat bread with salt, drink water by measure, sleep on the bare ground, and live a life of hardship while you toil in the Torah [study of the Torah is expected even if one is extremely poor]. If you do this, "happy shall you be and it shall be well with you"; *happy shall you be* in this world, *and it shall be well with you* in the world to come.

5. Do not seek greatness for yourself and do not crave honor; let your deeds exceed your learning; do not desire the table of kings, for your table is greater than theirs, your crown is more glorious than theirs; your Employer can be trusted to pay you for your work.

6. The Torah is greater than priesthood or royalty; for royalty is acquired by virtue of thirty qualifications, and priesthood by twenty-four, while the Torah is acquired by forty-eight, namely: study, attentive listening, ordered speech [audible rehearsing], mental alertness, intuitive insight, awe [in the student's attitude towards his master], reverence [for God], humility, cheerfulness, attendance on scholars, close association with colleagues, discussion with students, sedateness, knowledge of Scriptures and Mishnah, moderation in business, moderation in worldly interests, moderation in pleasure, moderation in sleep, moderation in conversation, moderation in merriment, patience, a good heart [unselfishness], intellectual honesty, uncomplaining acceptance of chastisement, knowing one's place, being content with one's lot, setting a limit to one's words, claiming no credit for oneself, being beloved, loving God, loving mankind, loving righteousness, loving

¹ Proverbs 3:35; 28:10. ² Proverbs 4:2. ³ Psalm 128:2.

בִּלְבָב, קָרָא רַבּוֹ אֲלוֹפּוֹ וּמִיָּדָעוֹ, הַלּוֹמֵד מִחֲבֵרָיו פְּרָק אֶחָד, אִו הִלְכָה אֶחָת, אִו פְּסוּק אֶחָד, אִו דְּבוֹר אֶחָד, אִו אֲפִילוֹ אֶחָת, עַל אֶחָת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה שְׁעָרֵי דְלִתְגַּדְפוּ כְבוֹד. וְאִין כְּבוֹד אֲלָא חוֹרָה, שְׁנוֹאֵמַר: כְּבוֹד דְּקָמְמִים יִתְחַלּוּ, וְחַמְמִימִים יִתְחַלּוּ שׂוֹב. וְאִין שׂוֹב אֲלָא חוֹרָה, שְׁנוֹאֵמַר: כִּי לְקַח שׂוֹב נִחְמִי לְכִם, חוֹרָהי אֵל תַּעֲזֹבוּ.

ד. קָדֵי דְרַבְּקָה שֶׁל חוֹרָה: פַּת בְּמַלַּח הַאֲבֵל, וְנִמִּים בְּמַשׁוּרָה תַשְׁתֵּה, וְעַל הָאָרְיָז חִישָׁן וְחַיִּי צִעַר תַּחֲזִיה, וּבַחוּרָה אֶתְהָ עֵמֶל. אִם אֶתְהָ עוֹשֶׂה כֵּן, אֲשַׁרְיָה נְשׁוֹב לָהּ; אֲשַׁרְיָה כְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וְשׁוֹב לָהּ לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

ה. אֵל תִּבְמַשׁ וְרַבְּלָה לְעִצְמָהּ, וְאֵל תַּחֲמוֹד כְּבוֹד. יוֹתֵר מִלְּמַוְרָדָה עֵשָׂה, וְאֵל תַּחֲמוֹדָה לְשִׁלְחָנָם שֶׁל מַלְכִים, לְשִׁשְׁלִיחָהּ גְּדוּלָה מִשְׁלִיחָנָם, וּבַחוּרָה גְּדוּלָה מִבַּחוּרָה; וְנִאֲמָן הוּא כְּעַל מַלְאָכְהָ, שְׁשִׁשְׁלָם לָהּ שֶׁכֵּר פִּעֲלָהּ.

ו. גְּדוּלָה חוֹרָה יוֹתֵר מִן הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִן כַּמְלָכוֹת, שֶׁהַמְּלָכוֹת נִקְנִיָה בְּשִׁלְשִׁים מַעֲלוֹת, וְהַבְּהֵמָה נִקְנִיָה בְּעֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבַּע, וְהַחוּרָה נִקְנִיָה בְּאַרְבָּעִים וְשָׁמוֹנֶה דְבָרִים, וְאֵלּוּ הֵן: כִּתְלָמוֹד, בְּשִׁמְרֵיַת הָאֵזוֹן, בְּעִרְיַבַת שְׁפָחוֹתִים, כְּבִינַת הַלֵּב, בְּאִמְרָה בְּיָרְאָה, בְּעִנְיָה, בְּשִׁתְּחָה, בְּשִׁתְּחָה דְבְּקָמִים, בְּרַבּוֹק דְבָרִים, בְּפִלְפּוּל הַמְּלָמוּדִים, בְּיָשׁוּב כְּמַקְרָא וּכְמַשְׁנֵה, בְּמַעוֹט סְחוּרָה, בְּמַעוֹט דְּרָדָה אֲרִיז, בְּמַעוֹט תַּעֲנוּג, בְּמַעוֹט שְׁנָה, בְּמַעוֹט שִׁיחָה, בְּמַעוֹט שִׁחוּק, בְּאֲרָה אֲפִים, בְּלֵב שׁוֹב, בְּאִמְנוּת דְּקָמִים, בְּקַבְּלָה הַיְסוּדָרִים; הַמַּפְרִיר אֶת מַקְוָמוֹ, וְהַשָּׂקִים בְּחִלְקוֹ, וְהַעוֹשֶׂה סִיג לְדְבָרָיו, וְאִינוֹ מַחֲזִיק שׁוֹבָה לְעִצְמוֹ, אִדּוּב, אִדּוּב אֶת הַמַּקְוִים, אִדּוּב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת, אִדּוּב

equity, loving reproof, shunning honors, taking no pride in one's learning, not delighting in dictating decisions, bearing the yoke with one's colleague, judging him favorably, directing him to truth and peace, being composed in one's study, asking and answering, listening and adding to one's knowledge, learning in order to teach, learning in order to practise, making his teacher wiser, noting with precision what one has learnt, and reporting a thing in the name of the person who said it. You may infer that whoever reports a thing in the name of the person who said it brings deliverance into the world, for it is said: "And Esther told the king in the name of Mordecai."¹

7. Great is Torah, for it gives to those who fulfill it life in this world and in the world to come, as it is said: "For they are life to those who find them, health to all their flesh." "It shall be health to your body, marrow to your bones." "It is a tree of life to those who take hold of it; happy are those who support it." "They shall be a graceful garland for your head, a necklace around your neck." "It shall place on your head a graceful garland; a crown of glory shall it bestow on you." "By me your days shall be multiplied, the years of your life shall be increased." "Long life is in its right hand; in its left hand are riches and honor." "Length of days, years of life and peace, shall they add to you." "Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace."²

8. Rabbi Simeon ben Judah said in the name of Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai: Beauty and strength, wealth and honor, wisdom and age, gray hair and children are comely to the righteous and comely to the world, as it is said: "Gray hair is a crown of glory, to be found in the path of righteousness." "The glory of the young

¹ רחמי

² רבי שמעון בן יוחאי
A large number of students attended his lectures in Galilee. The Romans condemned him to death because he was accusing them of selfishness and immorality. He fled together with his son Rabbi Elazar and took refuge in a cave for thirteen years. His fame as a mystic became so great that the kabbalistic work *Zohar* has been attributed to him.

רחמי ורחמי ורחמי are obviously good things and do not seem to require proof to that effect. It has therefore been suggested that the biblical texts are quoted here chiefly on behalf of old age and children, because these do not appear to be unmixed blessings.

¹ *Esther* 2:22. ² *Proverbs* 4:22; 3:8; 3:18; 1:9; 4:9; 9:11; 3:16; 3:2, 17.

את הצדקות, אהב את המישרים, אהב את התוקחות ומתרחק מן הפבור, ולא מניס לפו פתלמוד, ואינו שמת פדוקא, נושא כעל עם תבדו, ומקריעו לכה זכות, ומעמידו על האמת, ומעמידו על השלום, ומתלשב פתלמודו, שואל ומשיב, שומע ומוסיר, הלומר על קמת ללמוד, והלומר על קמת לעשות, המתכוון את שמועתו, והאומר דבר בשם אומר. הא למדת, כל האומר דבר בשם אומר, מביא נאלי לעולם, שואמר: והאמר אסתר לפרך בשם מרדכי.

ו. ורולה תורה שדיא נחמת חיים לעושיה פעולם הזה ובעולם הבא, שואמר: פי חיים הם למצוייהם, ולכל פשרו מרפא. ואמר: רפאות חדי לשדה, ושקוי לעצמונתיה. ואמר: עץ חיים היא לפתוחקים ביה, והמביה מאשר. ואמר: פי לית חו הם ללאשה, וענקים קרובותיה. ואמר: חמו לראשה לית חו, עמרת תפארת חמונה. ואמר: פי כי ירפו ימיה, ויוסיפו לה שנות חיים. ואמר: ארד ימים ברימיה, בשלמולה עשר וקבוד. ואמר: פי ארד ימים ושנות חיים ושלום יוסיפו לה. ואמר: דרביה ברכי נעים, וכל נחובותיה שלום.

ד. רבי שמעון בן יודנה, בשום רבי שמעון בן יוחאי, אומר: רנוי, ורפח, והעשר, והפבור, והתקמה, הוקנה והשיבה והקנים, נאה לצדיקים ונאה לעולם, שואמר: עמרת תפארת שיבה, בדרך צדקה תמצא. ואמר: תפארת פדוקים פתם,

lived towards the end of the second century. ¹ belonged to the fourth generation of the *Tannaim* and lived towards the end of the second century.

men is their strength, and the beauty of old men is gray hair." "The crown of the wise is their riches." "Grandchildren are the crown of old men, and fathers are the pride of their children."¹¹ And it says: "The moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will be King on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and there shall be glory before the elders of his people."¹²

Rabbi Simeon ben Menasya said: These seven qualities, which the sages have enumerated as becoming to the righteous, were all realized in Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi and his sons.

9. Rabbi Yose ben Kisma said: I was once travelling on the road when a man met me and greeted me, and I returned his greeting. He said to me: "Rabbi, from what place are you?" I said to him: "I come from a great city of sages and scholars." He said to me: "Rabbi, are you willing to live with us in our place? I will give you a million golden dinars, and precious stones and pearls." I told him: "Were you to give me all the silver and gold and precious stones and pearls in the world, I would not live anywhere except in a place of Torah." In a like-manner, it is written in the Book of Psalms by David, king of Israel: "Thy own teaching means more to me than thousands in gold and silver."¹³ Furthermore, when a man dies, neither silver nor gold nor precious stones nor pearls accompany him, but Torah and good deeds alone, as it is said: "When you walk, it shall guide you; when you lie down, it shall watch over you; and when you awake, it shall talk with you."¹⁴ When you walk, it shall guide you in this world; when you lie down, it shall watch over you in the grave; and when you awake, it shall talk with you in the world to come. It says also: "Mine is the silver and mine is the gold, says the Lord of hosts."¹⁵

10. Five possessions has the Holy One, blessed be he, specifically declared his own in his world, namely: the Torah, heaven and earth, Abraham, Israel, and the sanctuary. How do we know this about the Torah? Because it is written: "The Lord possessed

¹ Proverbs 16:31; 20:29; 14:24; 17:6. ² Isaiah 24:23. ³ Psalm 119:72.
⁴ Proverbs 6:22. ⁵ Haggai 2:8.

וְדָרַר זְמַנִּים שְׁיֵהָ. וְאוֹמֵר: עֲמִירָה תִּקְמִים עֲשָׂרָם. וְאוֹמֵר:
עֲמִירָה זְמַנִּים בְּנֵי בָנִים, וְתַפְאֵרַת בָּנִים אֲבוֹתָם. וְאוֹמֵר: וְחַפְרָה
תִּלְקַחְהָ וּבְלֹשֶׁת הַחַפְזוֹת, כִּי מְלֹךְ יִי צְבָאוֹת הַיְיָ וְנִבְרַר וְשִׁלְיָם,
וְנָמַר זְמַנִּי קְבוּרָה. רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן מִנְיָנָא אוֹמֵר: אֵלֶּיךָ יָעֲבֹ
מִדְּרוֹת שְׁמֹנוּ תִּקְמִים לְצַדִּיקִים, כְּלָם נִחְמָדִינוּ בְּרַבִּי וּבְכַנְיִי.

ט. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בֶן קִיסְמָא: כָּעַם אִתְּחַת הָיִיתִי מְהֵלָה
בְּדַרְבָּה, וּכְפַע בִּי אָרַם אַחַד וְנָתַן לִי שְׁלוֹם, וְהִחְזַרְתִּי לוֹ שְׁלוֹם,
אָמַר לִי: רַבִּי, מַאי זֵה מְקוֹם אִתְּךָ. אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ: מַעֲיִר בְּדוּלְהָ
שָׁל תִּתְקַמֵּם וְשָׁל סוֹפְרִים אָנִי. אָמַר לִי: רַבִּי, רַצְוֹנָה שְׂתַדְרוּ
עֲפָנֵנוּ בְּמִקְוֵמֵנוּ, וְאֵי אִתְּוּ לָךְ אֲלֵךְ אֲלֵפִים דִּינָרִי זָהָב וְאֲבָנִים
שׁוֹבוֹת וּמְרֻקָּלוֹת. אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ: אַם אִתְּךָ נִתְּוּ לִי כֹל כְּפָקֵה זָהָב
וְאֲבָנִים שׁוֹבוֹת וּמְרֻקָּלוֹת שְׂעָעוּלָם, אֵינִי דָר אֲלֵךְ בְּמִקְוֵם
תּוֹרָה. וְכֹן כְּחוֹב כְּסָפֵר תּוֹהֲלִים עַל יְדֵי דָרֵךְ מְלֹךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל:
טוֹב לִי תּוֹרַת פִּיךָ מֵאֲלֵפֵי זָהָב וְכֶסֶף, וְלֹא עוֹד, אֲלֵךְ שְׂעָעִיעַת
כְּפִיִּרְתִּי שָׁל אָרַם אֵיז מְלִיזִים לוֹ לְאָרַם לֹא כְּסָף, וְלֹא זָהָב,
וְלֹא אֲבָנִים שׁוֹבוֹת וּמְרֻקָּלוֹת, אֲלֵךְ תּוֹרָה וּכְפַעִישִׁים שׁוֹבִים
בְּלָכָה, שְׂעָעֵמֵר: כְּהִתְלַכְךָ תַּנְחֵה אִתְּךָ, כְּשִׁכְבְּךָ תַּשְׁמֵר
עִלְיָה, וְהִתְצַוֵּת הִיא תַּשְׁחִיָּה. כְּהִתְלַכְךָ תַּנְחֵה אִתְּךָ, כְּפַעוּלָם
תַּנְחֵה; כְּשִׁכְבְּךָ תַּשְׁמֵר עִלְיָה, כְּקַבְּרֵךְ; וְהִתְצַוֵּת הִיא תַּשְׁחִיָּה,
לְעוּלָם הַבָּא. וְאוֹמֵר: לִי כְּפָסֵף וְלִי חֲתוּבָה, וְאֵם יִי צְבָאוֹת.

י. תַּחְשִׁיבָה קְנִינִים קְהַה כְּקַדוּשׁ כְּרוּחַ הַיְיָ, כְּעוּלָמוֹ, וְאֵלֶּיךָ
הַיְיָ: תּוֹרָה קְנִינָה אַחַד, שְׁמִנִּים וְאַרְיִז קְנִינָה אַחַד, אֲבָרְתָּם קְנִינָה
אַחַד, יִשְׂרָאֵל קְנִינָה אַחַד, כִּיִּת כְּפִיִּקְוֵשׁ קְנִינָה אַחַד, תּוֹרָה קְנִינָה

11 Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi was a contemporary of Rabbi Yosi ben Kisma at the beginning of the second century.

me first of his creation, first of all his works in days of old."¹¹ How do we know this about heaven and earth? Because it is written: "Thus says the Lord: The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what manner of house would you build for me, what manner of place as my residence?"¹² It says also: "How manifold are thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy possessions."¹³ How do we know this about Abraham? Because it is written: "And he blessed him and said: Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth."¹⁴ How do we know this about Israel? Because it is written: "Until thy people pass over, O Lord; until the people whom thou possessest pass over."¹⁵ It says also: "As for the holy people who are on earth, they are the nobles in whom is all my delight."¹⁶ How do we know this about the sanctuary? Because it is written: "The place of thy abode which thou, O Lord, hast made; the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established."¹⁷ It says also: "And he brought them to the region of his sanctuary, to the mountain which his might had acquired."¹⁸

11. Whatever the Holy One, blessed be he, created in his world, he created only for his glory, as it is said: "Everything that is called by my name, it is for my glory that I have created it; I have formed it, I have made it."¹⁹ It says also: "The Lord shall reign forever and ever."²⁰

Rabbi Hananyah ben Akashyah said: The Holy One, blessed be he, desired to purify Israel; hence he gave them a Torah rich in rules of conduct, as it is said: "The Lord was pleased, for the sake of [Israel's] righteousness, to render the Torah great and glorious."²¹

the Torah was given as a mark of divine love and was designed to train Israel in holiness.

לְרַקֵּם-וְיִבְרָאִים ("righteous"). The Targum renders צְדִיק by זָכָר (Genesis 6:9). צְדִיק is here used homiletically in the sense that God meant to make Israel righteous, though literally the phrase refers to God's own righteousness.

¹¹Proverbs 8:22. ¹²Isaiah 66:1. ¹³Psalms 104:24. ¹⁴Genesis 14:19. ¹⁵Ezekiel 15:16. ¹⁶Psalms 16:3. ¹⁷Ezekiel 15:17. ¹⁸Psalms 78:54. ¹⁹Isaiah 43:7. ²⁰Ezekiel 15:18. ²¹Isaiah 42:21.

דַּכְתִּיבִי: יִקְוֶי רֵאשִׁית דְּרַפּוֹ קְדָם מַפְעָלַי מֵאֵן. שְׂמֹנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים
 מֵעוֹלָם דַּכְתִּיבִי: לֹד אָמַר יי' דְּשְׂמֹנִים כִּסְאֵי וְהָאָרֶץ חֶדְשׁ רְגֵלִי
 אֵי-יִזְדָּה בְּיָדִי אֲשֶׁר תִּכְנֹן לִי, וְאֵי-יִזְדָּה מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי. וְאֹמַר: מִה
 רַבֵּן מַעֲשֵׂיהָ, יי' בְּלֹם בְּחֻמְכָּה עֲשִׂיתָ, מִלֵּאָה הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָהָ.
 אֲבָרְכֶם מֵעוֹלָם דַּכְתִּיבִי: וְיִבְרָכְתֶּהּ וְיֵאמַר, בְּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לֵאלֹהִים
 עֲלִיזֵן, קִנְהָ שְׂמֹנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים. וְיִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעוֹלָם דַּכְתִּיבִי: עַד יַעֲבֹד
 עַמְּךָ, יי' עַד יַעֲבֹד עִם זֶה קִנְיָתָ; וְאֹמַר: לְקַדְוֹשִׁים אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ
 תְּמָרָה, וְאֶרֶץ בְּרַחֲמֵי בָם. בְּיַד הַמַּקְדָּשׁ מֵעוֹלָם דַּכְתִּיבִי: מִכּוֹן
 לְשִׁבְתָּהּ פְּעֻלָּתָ, יי' מִקְדָּשׁ, אֲדֹנָי, פּוֹנֵנוּ יְיָדָה; וְאֹמַר: יִבְרָאֵם
 אֵל בְּבוֹל קְדוּשָׁה, הֵר זֶה קִנְיָתָ יִמְיֵנוּ.

יא. כל מה שברך הקדוש ברוך הוא בעולמו, לא בראו
 אלא לכבודו, ששמו: כל הנקרא בשמי, ולכבודי בראתינו,
 יצרתיו אף עשיתנו. ואומר: יי' ימלך לעולם ועד.
 רבי חנינא בן עקשיא אומר: רצה הקדוש ברוך הוא
 לזכות את ישראל, לפרק הרכה להם תורה ומצוות, ששמו:
 יי' חפץ למען צדקה, יגדיל חזקה ויאריך.

אָרְבָּם is entirely omitted in parallel passages enumerating these special possessions. The biblical text, קִנְיָה שְׂמֹנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים, refers directly to heaven and earth as the possession of God, and does not seem to support the idea that Abraham was called *kingdom*. According to the opinion of Rabbi Elijah, the Vilna Gaon, this passage should be emended to include four possessions instead of five.

קְדוּשָׁה is taken here to refer to Israel as the people sanctified by God's commandments.

כל מה שברא The whole creation bears witness that everything has come into being for a noble and lofty purpose.

רבי חנינא בן עקשיא lived during the second century of the common era. This paragraph, found at the close of the tractate Makkoth, is repeated at the end of each of the six chapters of *Avot* in order to emphasize the thought that