

# Jesus the Sin Fearer

1. BEN AZAI said: One who bears in mind the following four things, and never loses sight of them, will never sin namely, whence he came, and whither he goes, who is his judge, and what will become of him. Whence he came? - from a place of darkness; and whither he goes? - to darkness. Whence he came? - from a dirty place; whither he goes? - to make unclean every one who will touch him. Whence he came? - from a fetid secretion, and from a place which is invisible to a human being; whither he goes? - to sheol and Gehenna, to be burned in fire. And who is his Judge? Remember that his Judge is not of flesh and blood, but the Lord of all the creation, blessed be He, before whom there is no iniquity, no oblivion, no consideration of person, no bribery. And what will become of him? - worms and worms and maggots, as it is written [Job, xxv. 6]: "How much less the mortal, the mere worm? and the son of earth, the mere maggot?" R. Simeon said: A human being has worms in his body when alive - i.e. lice, and he is converted into a maggot after his death. (Derech Eretz Zuta 3.1)

2. The qualities of the sages are: Modesty, meekness, eagerness, courage, bearing wrongs done to them, and being endeared to every one; submission to the members of their household, fear of sin, and judging every one according to his deeds. (Derech Eretz Zuta 1.1)

3. Rabban Jochanan, the son of Zakkai, had five disciples, and these are: Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Hyrcanus; Rabbi Joshua, the son of Hananiah; Rabbi Jose, the Priest; Rabbi Simeon, the son of Nataniel; and Rabbi Eleazar, the son of Arach. He used thus to recount their praise: "Eliezer, the son of Hyrcanus, is a cemented cistern, which loses not a drop; Joshua, the son of Hananiah, happy is she that bore him; Jose, the Priest, is a pious man; Simeon, the son of Nataniel, is a fearer of sin; Eleazar, the son of Arach, is like a spring flowing with ever-sustained vigor." (Avot 2.8)

4. When Rabbi (Yehudah the Prince) died, humility and fear of sin ceased. (m Sotah 9.15)

5. We learnt fear of sin from a maiden [who gave herself up to prayer] and [confidence in] the bestowal of reward from a [gadabout] widow! Fear of sin from a maiden — for R. Johanan heard a maiden fall upon her face and exclaim, 'Lord of the Universe! Thou hast created Paradise and Gehinnom; Thou hast created righteous and wicked. May it be Thy will that men should not stumble through me'. (b Sotah 22a)

6. Just as there was a Vestry of the Secret Ones, so was there one in every city for the sake of the respectable people who had come down in life so that they might be helped in secret. (t Shekalim 2:16)

7. In the days of Jeroboam son Nebat, King of Israel guards were posted on the roads to keep worshippers from going to Jerusalem. Sin fearers and the worthy of that generation risked their sin fearers" and worthy in that generation" because they "risked their lives for the Torah and the precepts by going to Jerusalem. (t Ta'anit iv 7-8)

8. [In a time of drought] it was revealed to the Rabbis in a dream that a certain man in a certain village should pray that rain might come. So they sent and fetched him. They asked him what his trade was, and he replied that he was an ass-driver. Then they said, 'Have you ever done any good deed in your life?' [Ass-drivers were not much esteemed.] He answered, 'Once I hired an ass to a woman who began to weep on the road. I asked her why she wept, and she told me that her husband was in prison, and that she was going to the city to sell her chastity to obtain his ransom. When we came to the city, I sold my ass, and gave her the money I received, and I said to her, "Take this, free your husband, and do not sin."' The Rabbis said to him, 'Worthy indeed art thou to pray for us and be answered.' And the man prayed, and the rain fell. (t. J. Ta'anit 64 b.)

9. Pinchas Ben Yair says: Heedfulness leads to cleanliness, cleanliness leads to purity, and purity leads to abstinence, and abstinence leads to holiness, and holiness leads to humility, and humility leads to fear of sin, and fear of sin leads to saintliness, and saintliness leads to [the gift of] the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit leads to the resurrection of the dead. And the resurrection of the dead will come through Elijah of blessed memory. Amen. (m Sotah 9.15)

10. Study leads to precision, precision leads to zeal, zeal leads to cleanliness, cleanliness leads to restraint, restraint leads to purity, purity leads to holiness, holiness leads to meekness, meekness leads to fear of sin, fear of sin leads to saintliness, saintliness leads to the [possession of] the holy spirit, the holy spirit leads to life eternal, and saintliness is greater than any of these, for Scripture says, Then Thou didst speak in vision to Thy saintly ones. (b Avodah Zarah 20 B)

11. "Separate not thyself from the congregation; trust not in thyself until the day of thy death; judge not thy neighbor until thou art come into his place; and say not anything which cannot be understood at once, in the hope that it will be understood in the end; neither say, 'When I have leisure I will study'; perchance thou wilt have no leisure." He used to say, "An empty-headed man (bor) cannot be a sin-fearing man, nor can an ignorant person be pious, nor can a shamefaced man learn. (Avot 2.5-6)

12. R. Hanina ben Dosa, said, "He in whom the fear of sin precedes wisdom, his wisdom shall endure; but he in whom wisdom comes before the fear of sin, his wisdom will not endure." He used to say, "He whose works exceed

his wisdom, his wisdom shall endure; but he whose wisdom exceeds his works, his wisdom will not endure". He used to say, "He in whom the spirit of his fellow-creatures takes not delight, in him the Spirit of the all-present takes not delight." (Avot 3.11)

13. "See, my sons, it is not the poisonous reptile that kills, it is sin that kills." (t. Berakhot 3.20)

14. Johanan ben Zakai If a man is learned and sin fearing, to what could he be likened? He answered, he is like a skilled workman with his tools in his hand: the learned man who is not sin fearing is like an unskilled man with tools in his hand. (ARN 22)

15. With the footprints of the Messiah presumption shall increase and dearth reach its height; the vine shall yield its fruit but the wine shall be costly; and the empire shall fall into heresy and there shall be none to utter reproof. The council-chamber shall be given to fornication. Galilee shall be laid waste and Gablan shall be made desolate; and the people of the frontier shall go about from city to city with none to show pity on them. The wisdom of the Scribes shall become insipid and they that shun sin shall be deemed contemptible, and truth shall nowhere be found. Children shall shame the elders and the elders shall rise up before the children, for the son disowneth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: a man's enemies are the men of his own house. The face of this generation is as the face of a dog, and the son will not be put to shame by his father. On whom can we stay ourselves? – on our Father in heaven. (m Sotah 9.15)

16. May it be Thy will, Lord, our God and God of our fathers, that You begin for us this month for good and for blessing. May You give to us long life, a life of peace, a life of goodness, a life of blessing, a life of sustenance, a life of physical health, a life in which there is fear of heaven and fear of sin, a life in which there is no shame or humiliation; a life of wealth and honor, a life in which we love Torah and fear God; a life in which the Lord fulfills the requests of our hearts for good. Amen. Selah.

17. When Rav concluded his Tefillah, he would add: May it be Your will, O Lord our God, to grant us a long life, a life of peace, a life of goodness, a life of blessing, a life of

sustenance, a life of bodily vigor, a life in which there is fear of sin, a life free from shame and disgrace, a life of sufficiency and honor, a life marked by love of Torah and fear of Heaven, a life in which You will fulfill all the wishes in our hearts that are good for us. (Megillah 18a)

18. *The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven* Matthew 18  
1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 He called a little child and had him stand among them. 3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. 6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. 7 "Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come! 8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. 9 And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

19. Luke 1

5 In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. 6 Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.

41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

67 His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

20. Luke 2

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ.