

## THE LIGHT OF THE ETERNAL PEOPLE

Presented by Rabbi Shmuel Irons

Series IV Lecture #5

## AVOS CHAPTER 1:3 ANTIGONOS OF SOCHO

### I. Antigonos of Socho

A. Now when Alexander, king of Macedon, . . . ended his life; and as his government fell among many, **Antigonos**, obtained Asia, Seleucus obtained Babylon; and of the other nations which were there, Lysimachus governed the Hellespont, Cassander possessed Macedonia, as did Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, seize upon Egypt, and while these princes ambitiously strove one against another, every one for his own principality, it came to pass that there were continual wars, and those lasting wars too; and the cities were sufferers, and lost a great many of their inhabitants in these times of distress, insomuch that all Syria, by the means of Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, underwent the reverse of that denomination, of Savior (Soter) which he then had. He also seized upon Jerusalem, and for that end made use of deceit and treachery; for as he came into the city on a Sabbath day, as if he would offer sacrifices, he, without trouble, gained the city while the Jews did not oppose him, for they did not suspect him to be their enemy; and he gained it thus, because they were free from suspicion of him, and because on that day they were at rest and quietness; and when he had gained it, he ruled over it in a cruel manner. . . . But when Ptolemy had taken a great many captives, both from the mountainous part of Judea, and from the places about Jerusalem and Samaria, and the places near mount Gerizim, he led them all into Egypt and settled them there. . **Josephus Flavius, Antiquities of the Jews Book XII Chapter I**

B.  
 אנטיגנוס איש סוכו קבל משמעון הצדיק הוא היה אומר אל תהיו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב על מנת לקבל פרס אלא היו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב שלא על מנת לקבל פרס ויהי מורא שמים עליכם כדי שיהיה שכרכם כפול לעתיד לבא: אבות דרבי נתן פרק ה

Antigonos of Socho (see Josh. XV, 35. I, Sam. XVII, 1) received [the oral tradition] from Shimon HaTzaddik (the Righteous). He used to say: Don't be like servants who serve their master in order to receive a reward, but rather be like servants who serve not for the purpose of receiving reward, and let the fear of Heaven be upon you (Avos 1:3) so that your reward will be doubled in the future [world]. **Avos D'Rabbi Nassan Chap. 5 (See Avos 1:3)**

## II. The Sadducees

### A.

אנטיגנוס איש סוכו היו לו שני תלמידים שהיו שונים בדבריו והיו שונים לתלמידים ותלמידים לתלמידים. עמדו ודקדקו אחריהן ואמרו מה ראו אבותינו לומר דבר זה אפשר שיעשה פועל מלאכה כל היום ולא יטול שכרו ערבית. אלא אלו היו יודעין אבותינו שיש עולם אחר ויש תחיית המתים לא היו אומרים כך. עמדו ופירשו מן התורה ונפרצו מהם שתי פרצות צדוקים וביתוסין. צדוקים על שום צדוק ביתוסי על שום ביתוס. והיו משתמשים בכלי כסף וכלי זהב כל ימיהם. [שלא] היתה דעתן גסה עליהם אלא צדוקים אומרים מסורת הוא ביד פרושים שהן מצערין עצמן בעולם הזה ובעולם הבא אין להם כלום: אבות דרבי נתן פרק ה

Antigonos, of Socho, had two disciples who would study and repeat his words and repeat his teachings to their students and they in turn would teach it to their students. They arose and analyzed his statements and said, "How could our forefathers say such a thing, [to serve Hashem without the expectation of reward]? Is it possible that a laborer should work all day and not receive his wages at night? If our forefathers were aware of another world and of resurrection of the dead, they wouldn't have made such a statement! They arose and severed their ties to the Torah and created two breaches, the Sadducees and Beithusim (or perhaps Essenes). One group was named for Saduc (Tzadok, one of Antigonos' disciples) and the other for Beithus (the other disciple of Antigonos). Throughout their lives, the Sadducees would use vessels of silver and gold, for they were gross and arrogant people. They would often say that the Pharisees have a tradition to torment themselves in this world without having anything in the next world. **Avos**

### **D'Rabbi Nassan Chapter 5**

B. At this time there were three sects among the Jews, who had different opinions concerning human actions; the one was called the sect of the Pharisees, another the sect of the Sadducees, and the other the sect of the Essenes. Now for the Pharisees, they say that some actions, but not all are the word of fate, and some of them are in our own power, and that they are liable to fate, but are not caused by fate. But the sect of the Essenes affirm, that fate governs all things, and that nothing befalls men but what is according to its determination. And for the Sadducees they take away fate and say there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal, but they suppose that all our actions are in our own power, so that we are ourselves the causes of what is good, and receive what is evil from our own folly. However, I have given a more exact account of these opinions in the second book of the Jewish war. **Antiquities Book XIII Chap. 5:9**

C. But the Sadducees are those that compose the second order, and take away fate entirely, and suppose that G-d is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they say, that to act what is good, or what is evil, is at men's own choice, and that the one or the other belongs so to every one, that they may act as they please. They also take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades. Moreover, the Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord and regard for the public. But the behavior of the Sadducees one towards another is in some degree wild; and their conversation with those that are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them. And this is what I had to say concerning the philosophic sects among the Jews. **The Wars of the Jews Book II Chapter 8**

## III. A Labor of Love

A.

תניא: (דברים ל) לאהבה את ד' א-להיך לשמוע בקולו ולדבקה בו - שלא יאמר אדם: אקרא שיקראוני חכם, אשנה שיקראוני רבי, אשנן שאהיה זקן ואשב בישיבה, אלא למד מאהבה וסוף הכבוד לבא, שנאמר: (משלי ז) קשרם על אצבעותיך כתבם על לוח לבך, ואומר: (משלי ג) דרכיה דרכי נועם, ואומר: (משלי ג) עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה ותומכיה מאושר. רבי אליעזר בר ר' צדוק אומר: עשה דברים לשם פעלם, ודבר בהם לשמם, אל תעשם עטרה להתגדל בהם, ואל תעשם קורדום להיות עודר בו, וקל וחומר: ומה בלשצר שלא נשתמש אלא בכלי קדש שנעשו כלי חול נעקר מן העולם, המשתמש בכתרה של תורה על אחת כמה וכמה. נדרים סב.

It was taught: That you may love the L-rd your G-d, and that you may obey His voice, and that you may cleave to Him: (Deut. 30:20) [This means] that one should not say, "I will read Scripture [and gain expertise] so that I may be called a Sage." "I will study [the Oral Law], so that I may be called Rabbi," "I will teach, in order to be an Elder, and sit in the assembly [of elders]", but rather learn out of love, and honor will come in the end, as it is written: Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. (Prov. 7:3) It is also said: Her ways are ways of pleasantness. (Ibid. 3:17) In addition, it is written: She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her and happy is everyone that retains her. (Ibid 3:18) R. Eliezer son of R. Tzadok said: Do [good] deeds for the sake of their Maker, and speak of them (the words of Torah) for their own sake. Make not of them a crown wherewith to magnify yourself, nor a spade to dig with. And this follows a fortiori. If Belshazzar, who merely used the holy vessels which had been profaned, was driven from the world; how much more so one who makes use of the crown of the Torah! **Nedarim 62a**

B.

דרש רבי שמלאי: מפני מה נתאוה משה רבינו ליכנס לא"י? וכי לאכול מפריה הוא צריך? או לשבוע מטובה הוא צריך? אלא כך אמר משה: הרבה מצות נצטוו ישראל ואין מתקיימין אלא בא"י, אכנס אני לארץ כדי שיתקיימו כולן על ידי אמר לו הקב"ה: כלום אתה מבקש אלא לקבל שכר, מעלה אני עליך כאילו עשיתם, שנאמר: (ישעיהו ג) לכן אחלק לו ברבים ואת עצומים יחלק שלל תחת אשר הערה למות ל' בפתח מ' בקמץ ו' בסגול נפשו ואת פושעים נמנה והוא חטא רבים נשא ולפושעים יפגיע, לכן אחלק לו ברבים - יכול כאחרונים ולא כראשונים? ת"ל: ואת עצומים יחלק שלל, כאברהם יצחק ויעקב שהן עצומים בתורה ובמצות תחת אשר הערה למות נפשו - שמסר עצמו למיתה, שנאמר: (שמות לב) ואם אין מחני נא וגו' ואת פושעים נמנה - שנמנה עם מתי מדבר והוא חטא רבים נשא - שכיפר על מעשה העגל ולפושעים יפגיע - שביקש רחמים על פושעי ישראל שיחזרו בתשובה, ואין פגיעה אלא תפלה, שנאמר: (ירמיהו ז) ואתה אל תתפלל בעד העם הזה ואל תשא בעדם רנה ותפלה ואל תפגע בי. סוטה יד.

R. Simlai expounded: Why did Moses our teacher yearn to enter the land of Israel? Did he want to eat of its fruits or satisfy himself from its bounty? But this is what Moses said, 'Many precepts were commanded to Israel which can only be fulfilled in the land of Israel. I wish to enter the land so that they may all be fulfilled by me'. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, 'Is it only to receive the reward [for obeying the commandments] that you seek? In my eyes, I consider it as if you performed them'; as it is said (Isaiah 53): Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. 'Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great' — it is possible [to think that his portion will be] with the [great of] later generations and not former generations; therefore there is a text to declare, 'And he shall divide with the strong', i.e., with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who were strong in Torah and the commandments. 'Because he poured out his soul unto death' — because he surrendered himself to die, as it is said: And if not, blot me, I pray thee etc. 'And was numbered with the transgressors' — because he was numbered with them who were condemned to die in the wilderness. 'Yet he bore the sins of many' — because he secured atonement for the making of the Golden Calf. 'And made intercession for the transgressors' — because he begged for mercy on behalf of the sinners in Israel that they should turn in penitence; and the word *pegi'ah* ['intercession'] means nothing else than prayer, as it is said: Therefore do not pray for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to Me. **Sotah 14a**

#### IV. The Fear of Heaven

A.

אמר רבי חנינא: הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים, שנאמר (דברים י'): ועתה ישראל מה ד' א-להיך שואל מעמך כי אם ליראה. אטו יראת שמים מילתא זותרתא היא? והאמר רבי חנינא משום רבי שמעון בן יוחאי: אין לו להקדוש ברוך הוא בבית גנזיו אלא אוצר של יראת שמים, שנאמר: (ישעיהו ל"ג) יראת ד' היא אוצרן - אין, לגבי משה מילתא זותרתא היא. ברכות לג:

R. Hanina said: Everything is in the hand of Heaven except the fear of Heaven, as it says, And now, Israel, what does the L-rd, your G-d, require of you, but to fear the L-rd your G-d . . . (Deut. 10:12) Is the fear of heaven such a little thing? Has not R. Hanina said in the name of R. Shimon b. Yohai: The Holy One, blessed be He, has in His treasury nought except a store of the fear of Heaven, as it says (Isaiah 33:6), The fear of the L-rd is His treasure? — Yes; for Moses it was a small thing; as R. Hanina said: To illustrate by a parable, if a man is asked for a big article and he has it, it seems like a small article to him; if he is asked for a small article and he does not possess it, it seems like a big article to him. **Berachos 33b**

B.

אמר רב יהודה: לא ברא הקדוש ברוך הוא את עולמו אלא כדי שייראו מלפניו, שנאמר (קהלת ג) והא-להים עשה שיראו מלפניו. . . . אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי אלעזר: אין לו להקדוש ברוך הוא בעולמו אלא יראת שמים בלבד, שנאמר (דברים י) ועתה ישראל מה ד' א-להיך שואל מעמך כי אם ליראה וגו' וכתוב (איוב כח) ויאמר לאדם הן יראת ד' היא חכמה וגו', שכן בלשון יוני קורין לאחת הן. שבת לא:

Rav Yehudah said: The Holy One, blessed be He, created His world only that men should fear Him, for it is said (Koheles 3:14), G-d does it, that men should fear before Him. . . .

R. Johanan said in R. Elazar's name: The Holy One, blessed be He, has nothing else in His world but the fear of Heaven alone, for it is said, "And now, Israel, what does the L-rd your G-d require of you, but to fear the L-rd your G-d. (Deut. 10:12) and it is written, And unto man he said, Behold [ *hen* ], the fear of the L-rd, that is wisdom, and in Greek, one is *hen*. That proves it. **Shabbos 31b**