

## CHAPTER IX. [1](#)

R. Eliezer the Kapar said: Keep aloof from anger, for by being angry at others you will add to your transgression. Love your admonisher, for by doing so you, will add wisdom to your ability; and rather shun the one who honors you, that your wisdom be not lessened. Love the prayer-house, in order that you shall be rewarded daily; and the house of learning, in order that your children shall come to study. Love the poor, in order that your children shall not come to poverty. Love modesty, that you may enjoy longevity; love the pious, in order that you may be saved from the black angel. Be careful in the reading of Shema, and prayer in general, in order that you be saved from Gehenna. Your house shall be wide open, in order that you shall never lack food.' Be careful that the doors of your house shall not be closed when you take your meals, that you may not be punished

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therefor with poverty. Be careful about the honor of your wife. Be glad of your chastisement, for this probably saves you from Gehenna. Be joyful at your table when the hungry derive benefit from it, in order that you enjoy longevity and have a share in the world to come. Be also joyful when giving charity from your house, in order that you may pacify the anger of death, as it is written [Prov. xxi. 14]: "A gift in secret pacifieth anger, and a bribe in the bosom, strong fury." If you have troubled your feet for the poor or for the sake of a merit, the following passages may be applied to you [Deut. xxviii . 6]: "Blessed shalt thou be at thy coming in, and blessed shalt thou be at thy coming out." If you keep your mouth from slander, you will spend all the days of life in peace. One who is audacious towards one who is greater than he will finally be punished with a plague. If you run to do honor to a sage, you will be rewarded with enviable children; and for running to do honor to the poor, you will be rewarded with sons of learning and a law-abiding record in Israel. Dost thou see a sage die, do not turn away from him until after burial, that thou, too, mayest receive respect and attention when it will be thy time to die. When you see your neighbor has become poor and his power is on the decline, do not refuse to help him, as it is written [Eccl. viii. 5]: "Whoso keepeth the commandment will experience no evil thing." If you have loaned him something when he was in need, the following passage will be fulfilled on you [Is. lviii. 9]: "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord will answer." If you lower yourself, the Lord will lift you up; but if you assume superiority over your fellowmen, the Lord will lower you. If others quarrel with thee, whether in a house of learning or at an ordinary meeting-place, do not leave until peace is restored, and they shall praise thee in thy absence as Pinchas b. Elazar. Great is peace, that even when it reigns among idolaters nothing can be done to them, as it is written [Hosea, iv. 17]: "Ephraim

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is *bound* (bound together) to idols; let him alone." But if they quarrel among themselves, it is said of them [ibid. X. 2]: "Their heart is divided; now shall they bear their guilt." Hence that house in which there is strife will be destroyed, and the sages say that even a prayer-house in which there is strife will be demolished. The same is it with two chiefs of the court who live in one town and quarrel with each other, they will finally die. Abba Saul said: Strife between

courts is a destruction of the world. Abba Issi b. Johanan said in the name of Samuel the Little: This world resembles the eyeball of a man. The white is the ocean that surrounds the whole land; the black is the world; the circle in the black is Jerusalem, and the image (the pupil) in the circle is the Temple, which will be rebuilt in the near future. Amen.

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## Footnotes

[28:1](#) Chapters VIII. and X. are a repetition of what was stated in other places.

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