

## Pirkei Avot 1:3

### Translation

**Antigonos, a man of Sokho, received from Simon the Righteous. He used to say: Don't be like slaves who serve their master in order to receive a reward; rather, be like the slaves who serve their master not in order to receive a reward, and let the fear of heaven be upon you.**

### Maimonides

**In order to receive a reward:**

“Reward”: Is called “*hagamul*” the good a person gives (*yigmol*) to one who does not good fortune, and does this on the path of loving-kindness and graciousness. Just like a person would say to his slave or his little child or his wife: “Do such-and-such for me and I will give you a *dinar* or two.” This is the difference between “reward” and “compensation” (*sachar*). “Compensation” is that which is given according to

the law. And this the Pious One said: That you will not serve the Holy Blessed One on account that God will be good to you and God will give you loving-kindness. Or on the hope of God's giving and then you serve God for this reason. Rather, serve God like slaves that do not hope for goodness, and not for loving kindness. Desire this: that you will serve God out of love, as we have said in the tenth chapter of Sanhedrin. And with all of this, God does not do free us from the obligation to fear. He says if you will be slaves from love, don't set us fear completely, “let the fear of heaven be upon you.” For the *mitzvah* to fear God has already come in the *Torah*, in its saying: “And the LORD your God you shall fear” (Dt 6:13). The Sages said: “Serve from love; serve from fear.” And they said: “The one who loves does not forget anything that has been commanded to do. The one who fears does not do any thing that he has warned about doing.” Because fear leads greatly to observing the negative commandments, and even more so those whose reason is not obvious. This Sage had two students: Tzadok and Baytos. When they heard him

speaking this statement they went out from before him and said to each other: “Behold the Master has spoken clearly that a person does not have reward or punishment and has no hope whatsoever. Because they did not understand his meaning. They joined together, left the community and set aside the *Torah*. They each brought together a sect which the Sages called *Tz'dokim* and *Baytosim*. And when they were not able to gather the communities around what they believed, because this evil belief separates

those who are gathered and even more so cannot gather those who are separated, they pretended to believe in that which they could not spurn in public, that is to say the words of *Torah*, because if they spoke it they would have been killed. So each told his followers that he believed in the *Torah* but that he rejected the oral tradition that was a lie.

אֲנִיגֵנוֹס אִישׁ סוֹכוֹ קָבַל  
מִשְׁמֵעוֹן הַצְּדִיק. הוּא הָיָה  
אוֹמֵר, אֶל תְּהִיוּ כְעֹבְדִים  
הַמְשִׁמְשִׁין אֶת הָרֵב עַל מְנַת  
לְקַבֵּל פְּרָס, אֲלֵא הוּוּ כְעֹבְדִים  
הַמְשִׁמְשִׁין אֶת הָרֵב שְׁלֵא עַל  
מְנַת לְקַבֵּל פְּרָס, וַיְהִי מוֹרָא  
שְׁמַיִם עֲלֵיכֶם :

This was in order to free themselves from the commandments of the tradition, the decrees and the enactments (of the Sages) since they could not reject everything, the Written and the Received. And more: they expanded for themselves the path of interpretation. Because once they made interpretation their own choice, each could be lenient whenever they wanted and strict whenever they wanted, according to his own designs, after each no longer believed in the fundamental principle. And they desired things that were the traditions of a minority. In time, the evil sects came out of these which in these lands are called, that is to say Egypt, Karaites, and their names for the Sages – *Tzadokim* and *Baytosim*. They were the ones who began to argue against the Received Tradition and to interpret verses as it appeared to them, without listening to the Sage in general, they overturned what God said: “According to the *Torah* that they will teach you, and the law that they will say to you, you will do; do not turn from the matter that they will tell to you right or left” (Dt 17:11).