

ing or waking, I allowed my cap to fall off, for the Jew must always wear it. The same thing happened if I violated any other injunction. For example, if the "fringes" (Num. xv. 37-39) on my garment had become disarranged, or if another child, a little girl, came, wishing to amuse the lame boy, and I did not send her away immediately.

At the age of thirty-six my father died. He had been unaccountably severe, yet a good father; he had injured his strong constitution through the privation he had imposed upon himself in order, as he hoped, to become holy.

My no less pious, yet gentle, mother now undertook my training. To her joy I made good progress at school, having a love for learning. My teachers and relations thought, "He will one day become a great man in Israel." A pious Jew regards diligence in learning a service to God.

I wanted to become a Rabbi, especially as I was a "cohen" (priest), for according to our pedigree, I sprang from the house of Aaron, therefore I had, from my ninth year, to stand up in the synagogue with those who bless the congregation.

God had early given me a tender conscience, which I owed, next to God surely, to the strict training of my pious parents, and I remember that in my fourth year I was aware of the dreadfulness of sin, and the holiness of God. Once in bathing and diving, I was in great danger of death. The anguish of my soul was dreadful. I was a sinner, that I knew, and as a bather, and hence

naked, I could not so much as cry to God for mercy. I saw my descent to damnation clear before my eyes. But God saved me out of the deep, and later also, by His grace, from eternal destruction.

In my thirteenth year the celebration of my coming of age (or, independence) and of my own responsibility (Bar Mizhar) took place. The oration, which, composed by the religious instructor, the boy has, at this celebration, to make, I had prepared myself. I had chosen the Nazerite for my subject (Numb. vi.). I desired to devote my life entirely to God. The day, on which I declared myself responsible for my sins, and received the phylacteries to wear, was a day of many pious resolutions and a happy one.

But after two days I was unhappy and burdened. I knew that I had broken my resolutions and never would be able to live a holy life, seeing there was in me an evil heart. And from that time I was never without deep soul exercises and desire for salvation.

I sought, according to the instructions of my spiritual leaders, for salvation in the Thora. I spent, as is the custom of many pious Jews, two long years in the following manner. With some strict Jewish youths and men I studied daily in "Beth-Midrasch" (*i.e.* in a particular house, wherein the law of God was searched) with fasting and watching. From seven o'clock in the morning till three o'clock in the afternoon I studied the Thora. At four o'clock I went there again for the same purpose, and studied till five o'clock