

A Torah Minute com™

A PROJECT OF MIDRASH BEN ISH HAI (MIDRASH.ORG)

By the Hakham, Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe

25 Heshwan 5779/Nov' 3 '18 Hayyei Sarah

Parasha

Hayyei Sarah: Why was Adam Created First?

In Bereishith Rabbah it asks why Abraham Abinu, 'a"h, was not created first and Adam created later. The answer is that since his purpose was to make a *Tiqqun* (rectification), had he been created first, who would have done the *Tiqqun* after Adam and Hava (Adam and Eve)? The *Mequbbalim* (Kabbalists) tell us that Abraham Abinu and Sarah Immenu, 'a"h, came to rectify Adam and Eve's wrong doings.

Adam and Eve brought death into the world – Abraham Abinu and Sarah Immenu brought life. The first caused a curse – the latter were a source of blessing. Adam was the cause of the *Shekhinah* (G-d's holy presence) departing from earth to the first heaven (others eventually, through their sins, drove it to the seventh heaven). Abraham and Sarah brought it down from the seventh heaven to the sixth (other righteous individuals brought it lower till Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h, brought it from the first heaven back to earth). Additionally, the impurity of the serpent entered Eve whereas Sarah Immenu, 'a"h, was twice taken away but guarded herself.

For these reasons Abraham Abinu, 'a"h, had to be created after Adam, in order to rectify the above-mentioned wrongs that were done to the world.

(See Alshikh,
Parashath Hayyei Sarah)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5779 פרשת חיי שרה

Halakha

Importance of Making up 248 Words in the Shema'

The Shulhan 'Arukh mentions that the Shema' contains 245 words. In order to make it 248 words to represent the 248 limbs of a person, the Hazzan must repeat the last three words (H' Elokekhem Emeth) loudly. The question is, what does one do when not praying with the congregation?

There are various opinions about this. We will just mention the two prevalent customs. The Rama mentions that the custom (among Ashkenazim) when reading the Shema' Beyahid (privately and not with the congregation), is to add the words *E-l Melekh Ne-eman* before the Shema', thus bringing up the total to 248.

The Ben Ish Hai states that the number of 248 that we have mentioned has very deep *Kavanot* (intents), and under no circumstances should the number ever be lacking. Therefore, even an individual who is reading on his own must repeat the words *H' Elokekhem Emeth* when reading the Shema'. He must do so at all times (Sha'arith, 'Arbith and before going to sleep), in order to make up the 248 words. However, when reading with the congregation, he should listen to the repetition of the words by the Hazzan and have the intent that these words he hears will count towards the 248. This is the prevalent custom among Sepharadim.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh 61:3, with Rama. Ben Ish Hai, 1st year,
Parashath Wa-era, Oth 1)

Sponsorships Available.
Please contact Midrash BEN ISH HAI
(516) 487 6676/www.midrash.org

The Blessing of Gomel If There Is No Sefer Torah in Three Days

Birkath Haggomel (blessing of thanksgiving) should be said within three days. The custom is to read it after the reading of the Torah because there is a Minyan (quorum of 10 males) there at that time, and Gomel should ideally be read with a Minyan, not counting the one who is reciting the blessing.

Someone who returns from his travels (from a trip that requires the blessing of Gomel, and arrives too late for the Torah) on a Monday and the first opportunity to go up to the Torah will be on Thursday, should try to recite the blessing within three days, before ten men, and not wait till Thursday.

If one was not able to recite the blessing within three days, it may be recited at any time after that. However, one should not delay it more than three days unnecessarily.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh 219:3 & 6. Kaf HaChayyim ibid, Oth 24, 25)

Not Leaving Empty or Rotten Items on the Table

It is good to be particular not to leave any empty utensils on the table (such as cups, plates, spoons, etc.) when making Birkath Hamazon.

Additionally, one should be careful not to have any food item on the table that is spoiled, smelly or has gone bad, when saying Birkath Hamazon. This is because of the Pasuq (verse) in Yehezqel (Ezekiel) which says, *This is the table that is before G-d* (Ezekiel 41:22). Obviously, a table before G-d should not contain any food that has gone bad.

(See Ben Ish Hai, 1st year, Parashath Shelaḥ Lekha, Oth 4. Kaf HaChayyim 180, Oth 5)



Women's Corner - by Rabbanith Ruth Menashe 'a"ḥ

Her Merits are Greater than Mine! Part 2

The question of how Abraham Abinu 'a"ḥ, the prototype of loving kindness, could put his beloved wife in danger, by leaving her up to the mercy of the immoral Egyptians, was answered by the Hida, z"l, who wrote that Abraham Abinu 'a"ḥ, in his extreme humility, did not trust himself to have enough merits to be saved from the immoral Egyptians. However, he did have complete and utter confidence in his wife. Sara,

Being the righteous individual that she was, she would unquestionably not be harmed by the wicked Egyptians. This is why he did not hesitate to tell her: *Please say you are my sister...*

We see here another evidence of Sara Immenu's extremely high spiritual level. Abraham Abinu, a"ḥ, the epitome of loving kindness looks up to his wife thinking: "Her merits are far greater than mine!"

Another great woman to admire and emulate.

