

Berakhot 31a-b

Rav Hamnuna said: How many significant *halakhot* can be derived from these verses of the prayer of Hannah? As it says: “And Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved and her voice could not be heard, so Eli thought her to be drunk” (I Samuel 1:13). The Gemara elaborates: **From** that which is stated **here: “And Hannah spoke in her heart,”** the *halakha* that **one who prays must focus one's heart** on his prayer is derived. And **from** that which is stated **here: “Only her lips moved,”** the *halakha* that **one who prays must enunciate the words with one's lips,** not only contemplate them in his heart, is derived. **From** that which is written **here: “And her voice could not be heard,”** the *halakha* that **one is forbidden to raise their voice in his Amida prayer** as it must be recited silently. **From** the continuation of the verse **here: “So Eli thought her to be drunk,”** the *halakha* that **a drunk person is forbidden to pray.** That is why he rebuked her.

It is said: “**And Hannah spoke on her heart.**” Several interpretations are offered to explain her use of the phrase “on her heart” instead of the common phrase to her heart (Maharsha). **Rabbi Elazar said in the name of Rabbi Yosei ben Zimra:** Hannah spoke to God **concerning matters of her heart. She said before Him: Master of the Universe, of all the organs You created in a woman, You have not created one in vain.** Every organ fulfills its purpose; **eyes to see, ears to hear, a nose to smell, a mouth to speak, hands with which to perform labor, feet with which to walk, breasts with which to nurse.** If so, **these breasts that You placed upon my heart, to what purpose did You place them? Was it not in order to nurse with them? Grant me a son and I will nurse with them.**

Jeremiah 7 ¹Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat! ²²For when I freed your fathers from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice. ²³But this is what I commanded them: Do My bidding, that I may be your God and you may be My people; walk only in the way that I enjoin upon you, that it may go well with you. ²⁴Yet they did not listen or give ear; they followed their own counsels, the willfulness of their evil hearts. They have gone backward, not forward, ²⁵from the day your fathers left the land of Egypt until today.

Amos 5 ¹I loathe, I spurn your festivals, I am not appeased by your solemn assemblies.

²²If you offer Me burnt offerings — or your meal offerings—I will not accept them; I will pay no heed to your gifts of fatlings.

²³Spare Me the sound of your hymns, and let Me not hear the music of your lutes.

²⁴But let justice well up like water, righteousness like an unfailing stream.

Seek good and not evil, that you may live, and that the LORD, the God of Hosts, May truly be with you, as you think.

¹⁵Hate evil and love good, And establish justice in the gate; perhaps the LORD, the God of Hosts, Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

Isaiah 1 ¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, you chieftains of Sodom; Give ear to our God's instruction, you folk of Gomorrah!

¹¹“What need have I of all your sacrifices?” says the LORD. “I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, and suet of fatlings, and blood of bulls;

And I have no delight in lambs and he-goats.

¹²That you come to appear before Me— Who asked that of you?

Trample My courts ¹³no more;

bringing oblations is futile, incense is offensive to Me. New moon and sabbath, proclaiming of solemnities, assemblies with iniquity, I cannot abide.

¹⁴Your new moons and fixed seasons fill Me with loathing;

They are become a burden to Me, I cannot endure them.

¹⁵And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you; Though you pray at length, I will not listen. Your hands are stained with crime—

¹⁶Wash yourselves clean; put your evil doings Away from My sight. Cease to do evil;

¹⁷Learn to do good. Devote yourselves to justice; aid the wronged.

Uphold the rights of the orphan; defend the cause of the widow.

Mishna Brachot, 2:1 One who was reading [the verses of the *Shema*] in the Torah and the time for the recitation of the [of the *Shema*] arrived, if he directed his heart [toward the fulfillment of the obligation to recite *Shema*] he has fulfilled his obligation; and if he did not [so direct his heart] he did not fulfill his obligation.

At the breaks between the paragraphs [of the *Shema*] one may greet [one's fellow] out of respect, and respond [to a greeting]. But in the middle [of a paragraph] one may greet [only] out of fear, and may respond [to a greeting]. – the teaching of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehuda taught: In the middle [of a paragraph] one may greet [only] out of fear and may respond out of respect. At the breaks between paragraphs one may greet out of respect but may respond to the greeting of any man.

Mishna Brachot, 2:4 Craftsmen may recite [the *Shema*] atop a tree or atop a scaffold, something which they are not permitted to do for [the recitation of the] prayer [the Amida].

Mishna Brachot, 2:5 A bridegroom is exempt from the recitation of the *Shema* on the first night [after the wedding] through the end of Shabbat [following the wedding], if he had not consummated [his marriage]. Rabban Gamliel recited [the *Shema*] on the first night of his marriage. His students asked him: “Did our master not teach us that a bridegroom is exempt from the recitation of the *Shema* on the first night?” He responded: “I cannot suspend myself from the kingdom of heaven for even one hour!”

Mishna 3:1 One whose dead is lying before him [awaiting burial] is exempt from the recitation of *Shema* and from *tefillin*.

Mishna Brachot, 5:1 One must not stand up to [say] the *Tefilla* except with presence of mind. The early, pious ones would wait an hour, and then pray, in order to concentrate their minds upon God. Even if the king greets him [while praying], he should not answer; even if a snake winds round his heel, he should not stop.

Mishna Brachot, 4:3-4 Rabban Gamliel taught: Each day one must pray the Eighteen [Benedictions].

Rabbi Joshua taught: [Each day one must pray] an abbreviated form of the Eighteen Benedictions].

Rabbi Akiba taught: If one's prayer is fluent, he prays [the full] Eighteen [Benedictions], but if not, [he should pray the] abbreviated version of the Eighteen.

Rabbi Eliezer taught: One who makes his prayer fixed {*keva*} – his prayer is not prayer {*tahnunim*}.

Talmud Brachot, 29b Rabbi Eliezer taught: One who makes his prayer fixed {*keva*} – his prayer is not prayer {*tahnunim*}. What is “*keva*”? Rabbi Jacob ben Idi taught in the name of Rav Oshiya: Anyone whose prayer is like a heavy burden on him. The Rabbis taught: Whoever does not say it in the manner of supplication. Rabba and Rav Yosef both taught: Whoever is not able to add something new into it.

Midrash Tanhuma, Haya Sara 5 Rabbi Akiba, when he prayed with the community, would pray according to custom {*k'darcho*}. But when he prayed by himself, he would start at one corner [of a room] and end up at the opposite corner, because of his bowing and movements.

