

Parsha Ponders

Sheva Berachos | January 21, 2019 | 15 Shevat 5779

The Week of Sheva Berachos, Day #7 - Adam¹

א"ר אלעזר כל אדם שאין לו אשה אינו אדם שנאמר זכר ונקבה בראם ויקרא את שמם אדם

Rabbi Elazar said: Any man who doesn't have a wife isn't a complete man, as it is written²: "Man and Woman he created them, and he called their name Adam"³

As part of the Jewish wedding ceremony⁴, seven blessings known as *sheva berachos* are recited under the chuppah. As well, our Sages tell us⁵ that once a couple gets married, they are to spend the first week of their marriage rejoicing. During these seven days, the *sheva berachos* are again recited, at the end of a festive meal. Some say⁶ that these seven blessings correlate to the seven things⁷ that a man acquires⁸ when he gets married. Our Sages inform us⁹ that until a man gets married, he doesn't have joy, blessing, goodness, Torah, fortification, peace, nor is he a complete Man¹⁰. As such, it would be appropriate during this week to elaborate on each of these seven qualities, and how they relate to marriage.

The Torah tells us¹¹ that Adam was originally created as both male and female. One opinion from our Sages¹² believes this to mean that Man and Woman were originally two bodies fused together, and were subsequently separated¹³. Although they were separated, it was decreed that it was not good for them to remain this way¹⁴. As such, the institution of marriage was introduced, as a means to bring the two genders back together. Only after reuniting can they recreate the original state of Adam, the primordial Man. Reenacting the original creation of Man is one of the unique benefits of marriage.

However, there's more occurring than a simple reenactment of the beginning of Creation. The new couple each achieves a more perfected state of being once they're married¹⁵. This is because each one

¹ Based on various sources I found from the [Maharal](#)

² [Genesis](#) 5:2

³ [Yevamos](#) 63a

⁴ [Kesubos](#) 7b

⁵ [Ibid](#) 7a

⁶ [Nachalas Shiva](#) 12:4:3. See also [Levush Even HaEzer](#) 61:1 and [Shnei Luchos HaBris](#) *Sha'ar HaOsios* § קדושת הזיווג 384-386

⁷ [Nachalas Shiva](#) *loc. cit.* points out that [Bereishis Rabbah](#) 17:2 counts more than seven (it adds helpmate, atonement, life, and that he stops diminishing the Divine form), but the [Tur Even HaEzer](#) § 1 only lists these seven (although he replaces joy with "a living place", see [Beis Yosef ad. loc.](#))

⁸ Interesting to note that according to the [Rambam](#) ([Mishneh Torah Hilchos Ishus](#) 12:1,2), when a couple gets married, besides the husband's three biblical obligations towards his wife (Cf. [Ramban](#) to [Exodus](#) 21:10), the Rabbis enacted **seven** additional obligations upon the husband

⁹ [Yevamos](#) 62b, 63a

¹⁰ [Nachalas Shiva](#) *loc. cit.* brings and explains how they correlate: (1) ברכת היין – Blessing (2) שהכל ברא לכבודו – Torah (4) אדם – Adam (5) אשר יצר את האדם – Joy (7) אשר ברא – Fortification. For some reason he leaves out the third of the *sheva berachos* (יוצר האדם), and it would presumably correlate to the remaining attribute, which is Goodness

¹¹ [Genesis](#) *loc. cit.*

¹² [Eruvin](#) 18a

¹³ Each becoming only "half" a body ([Gur Aryeh](#) to [Genesis](#) 36:3 § 3, his source being [Zohar](#) III p. 83b)

¹⁴ [Genesis](#) 2:18

¹⁵ [Gur Aryeh](#) to [Genesis](#) 35:17 § 12; [Tiferes Yisroel](#) Chapter 36, 49; [Chiddushei Aggados](#) to [Yevamos](#) 62b and [Bava Basra](#) 74b

has aspects and a unique nature that the other lacks¹⁶. Men have affinity towards things that women don't, and vice versa. By completing the other with what each is lacking, they each become one step closer to perfection. This is one of the goals of marriage.

Mazel Tov!

¹⁶ Chiddushei Aggados to Bava Basra *loc. cit.*