

TORAH READINGS

by Rabbi Daniel Travis

Every morning we recite blessings before learning Torah. When a man is called up to the Torah he repeats the blessing of "asher bachar banu" and afterwards says "asher nasan lanu". If he has already recited blessings on the Torah why does he need to say these two other ones?

Moshe Rabbeunu instituted a special mitzva to read publicly from the Torah every Shabbos. Ezra added on Monday, Thursday, and Shabbos afternoon to insure that no Jew should pass three days without Torah learning. Since the public Torah reading is a specially instituted decree, we recite independent blessings on it (Responsa of Rashba; Rosh Berachos 1,13).

Every person who reads from the Torah makes a blessing afterwards as well. In truth, we are instructed to learn Torah day and night, and it is really not possible to recite an after blessing on Torah learning. This blessing merely marks the conclusion of one's aliya to the Torah (Beis Yosef 47).

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