

מדרש

Midrash

Bereshit Rabbah 24:5

ON GENESIS 5:1

Before speaking to Moses, the Holy One blessed be He would weigh each word carefully in His heart—repeating it to Himself two or even four times, as derived from the verses in Job—before conveying it, teaching the gravity and deliberation behind divine speech. The midrash then explains why Adam the first man, though God's own handiwork and seemingly deserving, was not given the Torah or privileged to father the twelve tribes himself: since he could not even keep the few mitzvot (commandments) given to him in Eden, and since one of his two sons murdered the other, God withheld these gifts from him and reserved them instead for his descendants, as hinted in the phrase "this is the book of the descendants of Adam." Rabbi Yaakov of Kefar H̄anin adds a gematria (numerical value) on the word "zeh" (this), whose letters zayin and heh total twelve, alluding to the twelve tribes that would eventually emerge from Adam's line. AI SUMMARY

Another matter, "this is the book of the descendants of Adam." It is written: "Then He saw and assessed it" (Job 28:27). the Rabbis and Rabbi Aḥa, the Rabbis say: Each and every statement that the Holy One blessed be He would say to Moses, He would say it twice in His heart and then would say it to Moses. What is the source? "Then He saw and assessed it" – one; "prepared it, and also investigated it" (Job 28:27) – another one, and only then: "He said to the man" (Job 28:28) – this is Moses. Rabbi Aḥa said: Four times – "Then He saw" – one; "and assessed it" – another one; "prepared it" – another one; "and also investigated it" – another one, and only then: "He said to the man" – this is Moses.

Rabbi Yehuda ben Rabbi Simon said: Adam the first man was worthy to have had the Torah given through him. What is the source? "This is the book of the descendants of Adam." The Holy One blessed be He said: 'He is My handiwork; shall I not give it to him?' The Holy One blessed be He reconsidered and said of him: 'If now I gave him six mitzvot and he was unable to fulfill them, how will I give him six hundred and thirteen mitzvot – two hundred and forty-eight positive mitzvot and three hundred and

sixty-five prohibitions? I am not giving it to Adam, but rather to his descendants,' as it is stated: "This is the book of the descendants of Adam."

Rabbi Yaakov of Kefar H̄anin said: Adam the first man was worthy of having the twelve tribes emerge from him. What is the source? "This [zeh] is the book of the descendants of Adam." The Holy One blessed be He said: 'I gave him two sons and one arose and killed the other; how can I give him twelve sons?' "He said to man [laAdam]" (Job 28:28) – not to Adam will I give it, but rather to his descendants. The numerical value of Zeh is zayin, seven, and heh – five; that is twelve.