

Jewish Values & People with Disabilities- Appreciating the Variety of Life

Compiled by Rabbi Micah Becker-Klein

Genesis 1:27

God created the human in God's own image...male and female, God created them...

Exodus 4:10

But Moses said to the Lord, "Please O Lord, I have never been a person of words, either in times past or now that you have spoken to Your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue. And the Lord said to him: "Who gives a person speech? Who makes one unable to speak or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, and I will be with you..."

Leviticus 19:14

You shall not insult the deaf or place a stumbling block before the blind. You shall have awe for God. I am the Lord.

Proverbs 31:8

Speak up for those who cannot speak, for the rights for the unfortunate. Speak up, judge righteously, and champion the poor and needy.

Pirkey Avot 4:3

Ben Azzai taught: Do not disdain any person; do not underestimate the importance of anything. For there is no person who does not have an hour, and there is not thing without its place.

Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5

An individual person was created to show the greatness of God. While a person stamps many coins from a single cast, and they are all alike, God has stamped every person with the cast of the first human, yet none of them are alike.

Jerusalem Talmud

Rabbi Yochanan said: Each of the 40 days that Moses was on Mount Sinai, God taught him the entire Torah. And each night, Moses forgot what he had learned. Finally, God gave it to him as a gift. If so, why did God not give the Torah to him as a gift on the first day?

In order to encourage the teachers of those who learn in a non-traditional manner.

Talmud Sanhedrin 4:5

Human beings were created as a single individual to teach you that anyone who destroys a single life is as though that person has destroyed an entire world, and anyone who preserves a single life is as though an entire world has been preserved. The creation of an individual human being was done also for the sake of peace among humanity, so that no person could say to another, "My parent is greater than your parent."

Mishneh Torah based on Talmud Brachot 58b

One who sees...people whose physical nature is distinct recites the blessing, "Blessed are you, God, Sovereign of all worlds who creates variety in life." (...*mishaneh et ha-briot*)