

# TIDAL WAVES AND MIDDAS HA'DIN

## Background

Sarah Imeinu was not able to bear children. She offered her maidservant Hagar to Avraham to “build from her.” When Hagar had a child, she began looking down on Sarah. Sarah came to Avraham with a complaint, saying, “Let HASHEM judge between you and me as to who was correct.” Because of this, she was punished and lost 38 years of her life.

### מדרש רבה בראשית פרשה מה פסקה ה

רבי תנחומא אמר בשם רבי חייא רבה ורבי ברכיה אמר בשם רבי חייא כל מי שהרחיק אחר מדת הדין לא יצא שפוי מתחת ידיה ראויה היתה שרה להגיע לשניו של אברהם ועל ידי שאמרה (שם טז) ישפוט ה' ביני וביניך נמנעו מחייה שלשים ושמנה שנה

*Rabbi Tanchuma says in the name of Rebbe Chiyah: “Whoever pursues the middah of judgment doesn't come out well from it. Sarah was fit to live as many years as Avraham, but because she said, ‘HASHEM should be the judge between you and me,’ thirty-eight years were taken from her life.”*

*Matnas Kehunah (One of commentaries on the Me-drash) - Sarah gave over the issue to be judged by Heaven.*

## Questions

If Sarah is being so severely judged, this leaves a question: We certainly have no right to assume that Sarah Imeinu wasn't exactly who we are taught she was: a *tzaddeikas*, a completely righteous person. In fact, she was one of the four greatest women who ever lived. So it seems that the system is greatly slanted against man's success. If one of the most perfect women who ever lived lost 38 years of her life because she was judged, then who could possibly make it though this life complete and intact? If Sarah didn't, who can? Why would HASHEM create a world where even the best isn't good enough?