



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

The Mitzvah of Bikkurim marked a particularly joyous time of the year as Jews from every corner of the Land would bring the first fruits of their crop to the Beis Hamikdash and present them to the Kohein. There, they would proclaim their gratitude to G-d for their bounty and the precious Land that He gave them. The Talmud in Bava Kama relates that the wealthy would place their fruits in baskets of gold and silver, while the indigent used baskets of reed. The Kohein would take the basket from the owner and accept the fruit as a gift. But while he would return the gold basket to the wealthy pilgrim, he would keep the reed basket of the poor man.

Why the discrepancy of custom and what lesson can we learn from it?

Rabbi Aharon Bakst offers the following explanation. The rich man's fruit were likely lush and beautiful. The Kohein, therefore, took the fruit and returned the basket. The poor man's fruit, on the other hand, were likely deficient and inferior. Removing the fruit from the basket would cause the poor man shame and embarrassment. To preserve his dignity, the Kohein accepted the fruit together with the basket, keeping the fruit hidden inside.

Rabbi Yaakov Niman offers another insightful thought in his sefer, Darchei Mussar. Ostensibly, the wealthy man set his fruit in a golden basket to honor the Mitzvah of Bikkurim. Nevertheless, there is also the likely possibility that the gold basket represents some level of pride, perhaps even haughtiness, regarding his ornate gift and the wealth that it demonstrates. Accordingly, the Kohein accepts the fruit, the fundamental mitzvah, but not the basket used to deliver the mitzvah as pride and arrogance have no place in G-d's Temple. In contrast, the indigent pilgrim, with his simple reed basket, comes before G-d humbly and with a heart full of only gratitude to G-d. A gift given in such a manner is accepted completely - both fruit and basket alike.

These two lessons are of special importance as we near the days of Rosh Hashana. We must be careful to guard the feelings of those around us and make every effort to preserve their dignity. We must also approach G-d humbly and with a heart full of gratitude, void of any self-pride. Conducting ourselves in such a manner towards our fellow man and G-d will serve as a great merit for us to be granted a year of health, happiness, and blessing.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

Points to Ponder

And you should take of the first of every fruit (26:2).

Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi organized the masechtas of mishnayos and did it in a very specific order. The Rambam explains that in the Order dealing with agricultural laws, maseches orlo (which involves the prohibition against eating fruits until after 3 years following the tree being planted) precedes maseches bikkurim (which discusses the annual offering of the first fruits) in order to follow the sequence in the Torah, in which orlo is mentioned in Sefer Vayikrah and bikkurim is mentioned in Sefer Devarim, in this week's parsha.

The Rambam's reasoning seems puzzling, though, because in reality the mitzvah to bring the first fruit was originally mentioned in Sefer Shemos, as the verse states, **The choicest first fruit of your land shall you bring to the house of Hashem (Mishpatim 23:19).** Thus, maseches bikkurim should precede maseches orlo, as it is mentioned in the Torah first!

Parsha Riddle

What is the halachic similarity between bee honey and milk?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which part of this week's Torah reading is a biblical commandment this year according to some opinions?

Answer: Since one must remember what Amalek did to Bnai Yisroel, we read about Amalek once a year before Purim. However, when the year is a leap year, it will be more than a year (twelve months) before we read about Amalek Purim time. Therefore in order not to let a year pass, some are of the opinion to have in mind to fulfill the obligation of remembering about Amalek when we read about them in Parshas Ki Seitzei.

TIMELESS WISDOM

Then you should call out and say before Hashem, your G-d, "Arami oveid ovi / An Aramean (Lavan) tried to destroy my father..." (26:5)

Rav Sholom Vallach related the following incident, which was told to him by a well-known Rabbi.

I come from a family that did not value commitment to Torah learning. After I had spent some time in Yeshiva my parents wanted me to leave, although I wanted to remain. After much discussion and a lot of pressure, I capitulated and was going to leave Yeshiva in a few weeks. When my Rebbi heard that I was scheduled to leave the Yeshiva, he met with my parents. My Rebbi recounted the famous story of Hurkonos, a wealthy individual who was not pleased that his son deserted the fields in favor of learning in Yeshiva. Hurkonos decided to inform his son that he would be disinherited if he remained in Yeshiva. As Hurkonos approached the Yeshiva he was met by the leader of Torah Jewry at the time, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai. Upon seeing Hurkonos, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai proclaimed "How fortunate are you that you have a son like Rebbi Eliezer".

My Rebbi asked my father, "Have you heard of Rebbi Elizer in mishnayos"? "Of course" my father replied. My Rebbi followed up, "Have you ever heard of his brothers, Hurkonos' other sons? Of course not, no one has. They faded away into the annals of history. It is only Rebbi Eliezer that history recorded." My parents were convinced and I remained in Yeshiva.

Rav Sholom Vallach commented that a person's true and lasting legacy in this world is determined by his attachment to Torah. One who studies it will gain for himself a remembrance in this world, while those who forsake it fade away.

It is for this reason that the Torah uses the word *oveid* / lost when describing what Lavan wanted to do to Yaakov. Lavan wanted to lure Yaakov away from his commitment to Torah, and thereby make him disappear like a lost item.

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am loud
2. I make you tie
3. I am a basket case
4. I am a history lesson

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am confession
2. I am for the fourth
3. I am for the seventh
4. I bring blessing

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to

Win a super prize

Please visit gwckolle.org to submit your answers.

The drawing will be held Sept. 30th.

Answer as many as you can because each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chance of winning!

Last Week's Answers

1. Aishes Yifas Toar – The Captive Woman
2. The prohibition to marry an Amoni or Moavi

Please see next week's issue for the answers to this week's questions.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

The New Year is just around the corner! Don't miss the Kollel's annual Pre-Rosh Hashanah Symposium for an evening of inspiration featuring Rabbis from around the Greater Washington Community, on Monday evening September 2nd at 8:15 PM.

Tefillah Gems!

Come and join Tefillah Gems as Mrs. Sara Malka Winter continues to offer insightful and inspiring perspectives into the meaning of our prayers. The class is now exploring the tefillos of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Take this excellent opportunity to prepare yourself for the New Year!

Tuesday evenings 8 PM.

Right now is an excellent opportunity to join the Monday night Chumash Expositions class.

This coming week, Rabbi Schwartz will begin his exploration of a new parsha, Parshas Noach, at 9 PM.