



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

"And now, write this song for yourselves and teach it to the Children of Israel..." (Devarim 31:19).

In this verse, G-d charges us with the positive commandment to write for ourselves a Torah Scroll. Interestingly, this mitzvah directly follows the verse in which G-d communicates the consequence for abandoning His ways - *"And I will have concealed My face on that day because of all the evil that it did, for it had turned to other gods"*. This "concealment" characterizes G-d's relationship with us in the Diaspora. Although He continues to guide and protect us, His providence is hidden and obscured.

What is the meaning of the incongruous juxtaposition of these two verses? What connection is there between G-d "concealing" Himself and the mitzvah to write a Torah Scroll?

An answer emerges from the words of the Chofetz Chaim. The effects of the Exile are extensive and profound. We have been stripped of our former glory and are bereft of G-d's intimacy. We can no longer bask in the glory of the Temple and are without national identity and mission, exiled from our land. Encoded in the proximity of these verses, however, G-d provides us with the ultimate comfort. True, we have lost much, but the gift of the Torah remains eternal. It will be by our side, guiding and supporting us, throughout the vicissitudes of our existence. Even deprived of the tangible gifts of the Temple and the Land of Israel, the Torah will forever provide us with direction and a national identity. And through the Torah, we will be able to cling to G-d Himself, albeit unseen and "concealed".

We fervently pray for our imminent return to Jerusalem, the Temple, and G-d's full embrace. But even in their absence, we must know that G-d will never forsake his beloved children, for He has provided us with the cherished and eternal gift of the Torah.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

Points to Ponder

It (the Torah) is not in heaven, for you to say, "Who can ascend to heaven for us and take it for us, so that we can listen to it and perform it" (30:12).

This is generally interpreted to mean that it is man's responsibility and right, and not that of Heavenly bodies (e.g., angels), to interpret the Torah and determine the law. See Talmud Bava Metzia 59b. Yet, the Talmud, on Eiruvim 6b, relates a story wherein a Heavenly voice emanated stating that the halacha (law) follows the opinion of Bais Hillel, and the Sages followed that ruling. If the Torah is no longer in Heaven, however, why did the sages listen to the Heavenly voice and rule like Bais Hillel? See the Kesef Mishneh commentary on Rambam's Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah, 9:3.

Parsha Riddle

You are standing today, before Hashem, your G-d... (29:9)
Those who speak untruths will not merit being in Hashem's presence (Sotah 42a).

Where is there a hint to that idea in this posuk?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the halachic similarity between bee honey and milk?

Answer: Both bee honey and milk are products that are produced from a non-kosher source, and are kosher. Milk is produced from blood (Bechoros 6b), which one is not allowed to eat, and is kosher. Bee honey is produced from a bee, which is a non-kosher insect and one is not allowed to eat, and yet the honey is kosher.

TIMELESS WISDOM

And all the nations will say... (29:23)

An Israeli young man, having finished his Army service, decided to travel the world. He arrived in India and was taken by the lifestyles of the Buddhists. What resonated most was their adherence to a code of laws, their modesty, how they limited their pursuit of physical pleasure, and their tranquility. After spending some time with them he decided that he wanted to join their ranks. Before doing so, though, he was required to meet with the Buddhist leader. "Where are you from?" the leader asked him. Upon hearing that he hailed from Israel the leader asked if he was Jewish, to which the young man answered in the affirmative. Surprising the young man, the leader replied, "Why would you want to join us? You have the original, authentic religion. Why leave Judaism to come to us?" The former soldier traveled home and discovered his roots, ultimately becoming observant.

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 93a) relates that When the Jews bowed to an idol during the reign of Nevuchadnetzar, Gentiles mocked them, saying, "You have the Jewish G-d, and you are bowing to an idol?"

Why does the Torah make reference in this week's Parsha to what the nations will say? Why do we care about their view on our religion? Because at times it takes the word of an outsider to make us appreciate the beauty of our own religion and our special closeness to Hashem. In the future, we should try to realize the treasure we have in Torah and Mitzvos on our own, and not need others to remind us.

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I will be performed by Hashem
2. I am not a bris
3. I will cause love
4. For you and your children

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am not in Heaven
2. I am not overseas
3. I am in your heart
4. I am very close

Last Week's Answers

1. Bikkurim

Congratulations to:

Shimon Graff, Yitzhak Graff

2. Vidui Ma'aser

Congratulations to:

Yitzhak Graff, Shimon Graff

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

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 gwckollel.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!

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Join the community

for the Kollel's annual Rosh Hashana Symposium this coming Monday, September 2nd, at 8:15 PM. Come hear words of inspiration from Rabbis of the Greater Washington community and prepare yourself for the High Holidays!

Experience the satisfaction and accomplishment of opening a Gemara and reading it all on your own! Yesodei Hatorah, the renowned program for fostering independent Talmud study skills, is offered by the Kollel on virtually every night of the week and for every skill level. Classes are offered in Kemp Mill, White Oak, and Potomac.