



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Parshas Vayera begins with the narrative of Avraham the Patriarch convalescing from his recent circumcision at the advanced age of 99. G-d appears to Avraham in the spirit of the Mitzvah to visit the infirm and to show honor to Avraham for the great Mitzvah of Milah (circumcision) that he undertook. Avraham observes three men who appear to be Arab travelers approaching. Undeterred by his recent operation or the scorching heat, Avraham excuses himself from G-d's presence and runs to the wayfarers to greet them and extend an offer of hospitality. The Torah continues to record in great detail the compassionate and kindhearted care with which Avraham tended to the journeymen, and the lavish feast he provided for them. Indeed, the Rabbis teach us that Avraham was the paradigm of loving kindness, a characteristic that was a spiritual legacy ultimately bequeathed to his progeny.

The Talmud in Tractate Shabbos (127a) deduces from the narrative of Avraham excusing himself from G-d's presence that "extending hospitality is greater than receiving the Divine Presence." This Talmudic passage is extremely perplexing. We can readily understand that it is a great Mitzvah to provide for someone in need. But how is it possible that this deed transcends the experience of prophecy inherent in receiving G-d's presence?

Rav Shach of blessed memory explains the passage as follows. Prophecy transports a person to a realm where he or she is considered to be standing before the Almighty. When we emulate G-d by modeling his conduct, however, we are considered to be "clinging" to G-d Himself. G-d acts with loving kindness, compassion, and mercy, and Avraham was following His example. Through acting in G-d's beneficent ways we are able to embrace G-d in a fashion that surpasses even prophecy.

Let us immerse ourselves in the lessons of Avraham our Patriarch and conduct ourselves with kindness and compassion to those near and far. Doing so will place us in the most coveted of places - G-d's wonderful embrace.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

"I (Hashem) will descend and see: If they (Sodom) act in accordance with the outcry that has come to Me..." (18:21)

Hashem Who sits on high, but lowers Himself to see what happens on heaven and earth (Tehillim 113:6).

Hashem always sees what we are doing here on earth – why does He need to descend to see Sodom?

PARSHA RIDDLE

If one prays on behalf of someone else, and he needs that very same thing, he will be answered first (Bava Kama 92a).

Where do we see an application of this in this week's parsha?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last issue's riddle:

A person should first tie his left shoe and then his right shoe (Orach Chaim 2, 4). Where is this sourced in this week's parsha?

Answer: We merited the mitzvah of Tefillin because Avraham said, "To a shoelace" (Lech L'cha 14, 23). Since we tie the Tefillin on the left hand, we tie our left shoe first (Meshech Chochmo).

TIMELESS WISDOM

So Avraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as an offering instead of his son... The angel of Hashem called to Avraham a second time... "The word of Hashem... I shall surely bless you and greatly increase your offspring..." (22:13 - 17)

Rav Aryeh Levin zt"l would visit the jails in British controlled Palestine to see the Jewish inmates. One day the British guard would not let Rav Levin enter the jail. "But I have documents allowing me entry" Rav Levin argued. The guard conceded that point, but responded that a curfew was now in place, as well as more restrictive regulations, and his documents could not override those rules.

A Jewish attendant at the prison happened to hear the exchange and asked the British guard, "Why don't you allow the old Jewish Rabbi entry?" The guard responded, "He is probably doing this as a job, for money. Let him go find another job." Meanwhile, Rav Levin was determined to visit the inmates who eagerly awaited his inspirational visits. He searched the surrounding fence and found a small breach. He climbed in and visited the inmates. Naturally, he was caught and was brought to the British guard to decide what should be his punishment. Surprisingly, Rav Levin was not punished. The guard said, "Now I know that you were doing this selflessly. Only someone so personally vested would go to such lengths to visit the inmates." The guard decreed that Rav Levin has every right to enter the prison for his visits.

The same is true by Avraham. Once he showed himself to be personally vested in bringing a korban to Hashem, making sure to untangle the ram so that he could accomplish his objective, Hashem sent His blessings.

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was from Sodom.
2. I now have a sodium content.
3. I looked.
4. I'm not a foundation although I'm a pillar.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was the first for day eight.
2. I am the second of the three.
3. I am named for laughter.
4. My brother tried to kill me.

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

#1 Bris Mila (I was for 99 and 13; I am for 8; I need a northern wind.)

#2 Bris bain habisorim (Cut in half; I caused sleep; Revealing; I attracted the birds.)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Aharon Feldman

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 www.gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Stay tuned for information on the next drawing!

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

Young Men's Programming

Mishna Enrichment and Halacha Conundrums have begun!

5th & 6th grade boys are invited to join Rabbi Brotsky Mondays at 7:45 PM to hone their Mishna skills learning Mishnayos Avodah Zara

7th - 9th grade boys are invited to join Rabbi Zakem Thursdays at 8:15 PM for a stimulating discussion of challenging topics in halacha.

There will be raffles, prizes, and refreshments!

Join the Kollel Sunday nights in Potomac for a variety of learning opportunities, with a wide selection of classes from which to choose!

Sundays from 8:15 - 9:15 PM, followed by Maariv, at Young Israel Ezras Israel of Potomac.

See the Kollel website for more details.