



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Sent away by his mother more than 30 years earlier to escape Eisav's wrath over the incidence of the blessings, Yaakov is finally journeying back to his beloved parents and homeland. Having spent the last twenty years working for his devious uncle Lavan, Yaakov travels home with a large family and great wealth. Still concerned about Eisav's abiding anger, Yaakov sends a message of conciliation and peace. Included in his message are the words "im Lavan garti" - I lived in the home of Lavan. Rashi cites a Medrash that Yaakov was sending a coded message. The numerical value of the letters of the word "garti" -- gimmel, reish, toph, and yud -- add up to 613. Yaakov was proclaiming that while he hoped his brother chose peace, should he choose war, he will be afforded Divine protection because he "kept the 613 commandments and never learned from Lavan's ways."

Yaakov's declaration that he didn't learn from Lavan's idolatrous ways in addition to keeping all the commandments seems redundant. Certainly if Yaakov kept the entire Torah, he didn't learn from Lavan's sinful conduct!

In truth, Yaakov understood that the Torah is not just a vast rule book of do's and don'ts. Yaakov knew that the technical fulfillment of the mitzvos is not sufficient. Rather, G-d desires that through the fulfillment of the Torah we become uplifted. The Torah should mold our character and purify our nature, imbuing us with holiness and spirituality. Yaakov was declaring that not only did he fulfill all of the commandments, but his spirit was the spirit of the Torah, uncorrupted by the influence of Lavan.

The lesson that is imbedded in Yaakov's words teaches us that we cannot content ourselves with the fulfillment of the mitzvos alone. We need to be certain that we are being uplifted by the Torah and living a life of sanctity and loving kindness. Our lives must be suffused and directed by the values of the Torah.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

But he (Yaakov) got up that night and took his two wives... and his eleven sons... (32:23)

Where was Dinah? Yaakov put her in a box, so that Eisav should not see her and take her for a wife. Yaakov was punished for withholding Dinah from Eisav, for had she married Eisav she may have caused him to become a righteous person. The punishment was that Dinah was taken by Sh'chem (Rashi).

Leah's eyes were tender... (Vayeitzei 2:17)

She would constantly cry due to the possibility that she might marry Eisav because people used to say that Lavan has two daughters and Rivka has two sons. The oldest son Eisav should marry the oldest daughter Leah, and the youngest son Yaakov, should marry the youngest daughter Rochel (Rashi).

Since she always prayed that she would not marry Eisav, Leah merited to be the first one to marry Yaakov, and to have many children with him (Bereishis Rabba).

Why was Leah rewarded for avoiding marriage with Eisav, and Yaakov was punished for preventing his daughter's marriage with Eisav?

PARSHA RIDDLE

Which Tanna is referenced in the parsha?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last issue's riddle:

Which posuk in this parsha is recited when one travels?

Answer: The last two pesukim of Parshas Vayeitzei are said as part of Tefilas HaDerech.

TIMELESS WISDOM

When he (the angel) perceived that he could not overcome him (Yaakov), he struck the socket of his hip... (32:25)

The word that the Torah uses for hip, "yireicho," could also mean descendants. This demonstrated that the Angel of Eisav could not affect Yaakov directly, but he was able to affect Yaakov in a way that would cause weakness in the observance of his descendants (Abarbenel).

If a corpse will be found... Atone for Your people Yisrael that You have redeemed. (Shoftim 21:1, 8)

That You redeemed from Mitzrayim – even though they did not sin here, but they require atonement for the sin of the future generation (Horiyos 6a).

Someone once complained to the Brisker Rav that one of the Rav's children was not being kind. "Very unlikely," the Brisker Rav answered. The person was confused, "How do you know it is unlikely?" The Brisker Rav explained that tendencies are transmitted down through the generations. For instance, the Angel of Eisav caused a weakness in Yaakov that affects generations today. Similarly, the Torah requires atonement for those who left Mitzrayim when a future generation sins because those future sins reflect a weakness possessed in the earlier generations. The only way we can combat this phenomenon is to excel. When we excel, our descendants will be able to combat the effects of Eisav's Angel.

"My father excelled in kindness, and it is therefore highly unlikely that his grandchild would be lacking in that area. If we will try to excel in our service of Hashem, our children will have a better chance to persevere and excel as well."

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Noach was in me.
2. Sarah was in me.
3. Dinah was in me.
4. The Sefer Torah is kept in me.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was for Moshe.
2. I was for Yaakov.
3. More than a stiff neck.
4. I am not a candy but I was a life saver.

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

#1 Yaakov (I left, went, dreamt, and arrived.)

#2 Stones/Rocks (We were many, became one, and argued; Yaakov made me into a matzeiva)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Moshe Lederman

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 ripstik.



Please visit www.gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

The next raffle will be November 26th!

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

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