



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

“And He brought him outside, and said: 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if you are able to count them'; and He said to him: 'So shall your offspring be!' ” (15:5).

In Parshas Lech Lecha we see the early development of a Jewish nation. G-d designates Avraham to be an ambassador for His message and to father “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Avraham is commanded to leave his birthplace and travel to the Land of Israel, a place suitable to be a homeland for this spiritual mission. Moreover, G-d promises Avraham offspring, as innumerable as the stars in the heavens.

Why does G-d specifically select stars to depict Avraham’s progeny? Many items too numerous to count could have been chosen.

Rabbi Simcha Wasserman relates that a powerful message is imbedded in this comparison. The greatness of Avraham’s future offspring is not limited to their collective nationhood alone. Like a star, solitary and luminous in the heavens, each and every Jew is endowed with individual greatness. Just as a star shines like a brilliant gem ensconced in its own precious setting, so too every Jew has his own unique value and mission.

This perspective is of dual consequence to us. It teaches of the care and sensitivity we must have for our fellow Jew and of the value in helping him, as each person is a wondrous world unto himself. It also reminds us of our own vast potential and unique mission, for we too may be a universe not fully discovered.

This past Wednesday marked the third Yahrzeit of my father and founder of the Kollel, Rabbi Kalman Winter zt"l. His belief in the inherent value, greatness, and potential of every Jew influenced his lifelong calling to educate and inspire Jews of all backgrounds and circumstances. And it was this outlook that guided his many accomplishments. May his memory be a blessing.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

And they captured Lot and his possessions, the nephew of Avraham, and they left (14:12).

This posuk seems to be written backwards. Why does the posuk write “the nephew of Avraham” after mentioning the possessions of Lot? The possessions were not the nephew of Avraham! Seemingly, the posuk should have said, “Lot, the nephew of Avrohom, and all his possessions.”

PARSHA RIDDLE

Why should Yitzchok be named Yitzchok?

Please see next week’s issue for the answer.

Last week’s riddle:

What is the similarity and dissimilarity between Noach and Moshe?

Answer: Both floated in a wooden box. Noach’s had pitch inside and outside, while Moshe’s was only covered with pitch on the outside

HATORAH V’HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Lech-Lecha condemns the inhabitants of Sodom as “wicked and sinners before Hashem exceedingly” (*Bereshis* 13:13), but does not elaborate on the nature of their villainy. In the book of *Yechezkel* (16:49), the iniquity of Sodom is specified to be her failure to “strengthen the hand of the poor and needy,” and the Rabbinic tradition contains a vivid elaboration of the city’s radically pernicious ideology of selfishness, manifested in a systematic program of terror intended to extirpate any tendency toward kindness and charity (*Sanhedrin* 109a-b).

In the *halachic* literature, “*midas Sedom*” (“the attitude of Sodom”) is a term of art characterizing an insistence on enforcing one’s rights and refusing to accommodate another in spite of the absence of any harm, cost, or even inconvenience that such accommodation would entail. The *halachah* is that “*kofin al midas Sedom*” (“we compel [people to refrain from adopting] the attitude of Sodom”), but the scope of this principle is unclear. Some authorities understand it to imply that a property owner must allow someone else the use of his property where he has no reasonable objection to such use. For example, Reuven may not object to his neighbor Shimon’s temporary basing of a small ladder on Reuven’s property in order to access his (Shimon’s) structure, for we tell him (Reuven): “You incur no loss by this – any time you wish, he will remove it” (*Yad Ha’Chazakah, Hilchos Shcheinim* 8:4, and cf. *Magid Mishneh*). Others, however, reject this view, insisting on the inviolability of property rights: “How can he utilize his fellow’s [property] against his will?” (*Tur Choshen Mishpat siman* 153. Cf. *Shut. Noda Be’Yehudah tinyana Choshen Mishpat* #24; *Shut. Maharsham* 2:153). According to this latter position, *midas Sedom* only engenders an actionable claim when the defendant is not being asked to waive an outright property right (see *Nimukei Yosef Bava Kama* pp. 8b-9a).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not a portion.
2. I confused the generations.
3. I chose wickedness.
4. The nephew

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Avraham
2. Yehoshua
3. Sarah
4. Yaakov

Last Issue’s Answers:

#1 Teiva [not teva – nature] (I refer to a box; I am not nature; in English I am for Torah; in the end I got stuck in ‘a rut’.)

#2 Noach (My name is for non-Jews; I needed gloves not mittens; I was permitted to eat meat; was I righteous?)

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

Win a pair of two-way radios!



The next raffle is December 15th.

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

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

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Join us for a men’s VIP trip to Lakewood, New Jersey for “A Day of Learning and Inspiration.” Highlights include a learning session together with thousands of Torah scholars, an exclusive tour of Beis Medrash Govoha campus, a private lunch with Rabbi Aaron Kotler, CEO of BMG, and much more! Sunday, November 8, departing 7am and returning (estimated) 10:30pm.

\$50 cost includes transportation, breakfast, snacks, and lunch. Reservations required and spaces limited.

To rsvp or for more info, contact Rabbi Yonatan Zakem at 513.313.4899; yzakem@gwckollel.org.