



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Upon the birth of her fourth son, our Matriarch Leah names her son by exclaiming, "This time I will proclaim my gratitude," and the Torah further records, "therefore she called his name Yehuda" (29:35). *Yehuda* derives from the same root as the word *hoda*, meaning praise and gratitude.

Citing the verse above, the Talmud in Tractate Berachos (7b) states that Leah was the first person since Creation to express gratitude to G-d. This would appear to be a very perplexing statement. Gratitude is a bedrock Jewish value; surely many great people who preceded Leah, including the earlier Patriarchs and Matriarchs, acknowledged G-d's kindness and bounty.

Rabbi Moshe Aharon Stern, Mashgiach of Kamenetz Yeshiva, explains in the name of his grandfather, Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Herman: Leah's expression of gratitude differed from and exceeded all prior declarations of gratitude. Hers was not just a one-time acknowledgement of G-d's gift. By naming her son Yehuda, which embodied the very essence of thankfulness, Leah ensured that her sentiment of gratefulness would endure and be eternalized. This became the exemplar of gratitude which serves as the standard for all time. In comparison, all previous pronouncements of gratitude paled by comparison.

Interestingly, Jews throughout the ages have been referred to as *Yehudim* (or its local variant). It is further indication of the fundamental nature of the Torah value of gratitude and the significance attached to it by the Jewish people.

When we feel gratitude, we are filled with happiness and contentment. We are motivated to reciprocate, thus strengthening our relationships with G-d and man. With our focus trained beyond our own needs, we are able to lead a life of purpose and meaning.

In the words of the 35th U.S. President, John F. Kennedy: "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." May Leah's stellar example of true gratitude be the beacon by which we navigate our daily lives.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

He (Yaakov) took from the stones of the place... (28:11)

Yaakov arose early in the morning and took the stone... (28:18)

The stones began to argue one with the other, "The Tzadik should rest his head on me..." Hashem immediately made them into one stone. Therefore the posuk later refers to the stone as a single stone (Rashi).

Where does the original posuk relate that Yakov took multiple stones? Why is Rashi bothered by a contradiction between the pesukim? The posuk merely says that Yaakov took from the many stones, it does not specify if he took one or more stones.

PARSHA RIDDLE

When was Har HaBayis not in Yerushalayim?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Where in the Parsha do we see that the day of burial is considered to be the day of sorrow and not the day of the passing?

Answer: "Why should I (Rivka) be bereaved of both of you (Yaakov and Esav) on the same day" (27:45).

When Chushim killed Esav, the words of Rivka were fulfilled. Even though Yaakov had died more than a week earlier, both Yaakov and Esav's burial were on the same day (Sotah 13a).

Rivka's words were fulfilled that her bereavement (the burial) of both of her sons would be on the same day.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Va'Yetzei includes Yaakov's outraged protestation to Lavan of his exemplary conduct in his capacity as Lavan's fiduciary with respect to the latter's flocks: "This twenty years have I been with thee ... That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes" (Bereishis 31:38-40). It is unclear whether normative halachah actually requires this level of dedication and responsibility from a paid fiduciary (shomer sachar), or whether Yaakov was pointing out that he had gone beyond the call of duty (see Bava Metzia 93; She'iltos D'Rav Ahai #20 and She'eilas Shalom and Ha'amek She'alah thereto).

R. Moshe Sofer asks: once Yaakov has accepted liability for any lost sheep, what does he add by describing his extraordinary commitment to their safety? Is he not merely acting in his own self interest? R. Sofer infers from this that a bailee actually has dual responsibilities: he is liable ex post facto for loss or damage, but that notwithstanding, he must also ab initio strive for the preservation of the bailment, and not simply commit to make the bailor whole after the fact (Shut. Chasam Sofer choshen mishpat end of #57). The question consequently arises as to whether a bailee who neglects his duties is still entitled to his fee: is the fee payment for his services, which he did not provide, or is it compensation for his assumption of liability? (See Kesav Ve'Chosam of R. Akiva Eger, part 1 Teshuvos Ve'Chidushim end of #14; Shut. Yad Eliyahu (Ragoler) 1:114; Shut. Maharil Diskin kuntres acharon #249).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. We were spotted at the well.
2. Designs differentiated us.
3. For us there was separation.
4. We made Yaakov wealthy.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am the simple one.
2. I am sharp.
3. I am truthful.
4. I could mislead.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Yaakov & Esav and Peretz & Zerach (We were at 9, but they were at 7; our 'twin' is lacking, but theirs is full; they were double righteous, but we weren't; for us 'the red' came out first - for them it was the second.)

#2 Esav (I was hairy; I was made; I caused the 'aleph' to be removed; I was tricked.)

Congratulations to Yaakov Baars for answering last week's questions correctly!

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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