



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

***It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives.
The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L, in 2011.***

Perhaps the most well-known question in all of halachic literature is the Beis Yosef's query regarding Chanukah lighting: After finally vanquishing the Greeks, the Jewish people turned their attention to the Temple, which had been in the hands of their enemy. Desperate to resume the service of lighting the menorah, they sought a cruse of oil, sealed and marked for its purity. After much searching, only one cruse could be located. Overjoyed, they lit the menorah. Their concern, however, remained: It would take eight days to manufacture new oil, but the oil in the single cruse would last only one day. What would they do tomorrow and the next day?

Their concern gave way to joy and gratitude as the miracle of Chanukah unfolded. The small cruse of oil continued to burn for eight days, allowing for the processing of new oil. In commemoration of this miracle, the Sages of the generation established the holiday of Chanukah. Why, wonders the Beis Yosef, is Chanukah celebrated for eight days? The actual miracle was apparently only for seven days, given that the oil was sufficient to burn for the first day.

Many wonderful and insightful answers are given to this famous question. I would like to share with you an answer provided by the Alter of Kelm: When we observe the world around us, its beauty and luster, its power and magnificence, its intricacy and design, we *should* see the omnipotence of G-d. However, because of the regularity of the world in which we live, with its order and seeming predictability, we neglect to discern G-d's hand in the beautiful setting of the sun and are deaf to G-d's voice in the melodious warble of the songbird. We ascribe the world around us to "nature" and look no deeper.

When a miracle occurs or an unaccountable phenomenon transpires, we undeniably encounter G-d through His mastery of world events. We acknowledge that it is indeed G-d who guides us and sustains us. Through this miracle, says the Alter, we are now able to extrapolate and see G-d in all of nature that surrounds us. We understand that the everyday wonders of the human body, the expanse of the universe, and the mysteries of the sea can only be designed and fashioned by G-d Himself. Indeed, this is the lesson of miracles.

When that cruse of oil, which by the laws of nature should have burned only one day, burned instead for eight days, it became clear to us that all that transpires, whether it be an everyday occurrence or a once-in-history event, is but the will of G-d. It is this miracle, the miracle of "nature," now recognized as G-d's will, that we celebrate with the eighth candle.

This Chanukah, may the light of the candles illuminate our world, allowing us to see G-d manifest all around us: guiding us, protecting us, and embracing us.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!
Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

A man / ish discovered him (Yosef), and behold he was blundering in the field... (37:15)

This is the Angel Gavriel, as the posuk (Doniel 9:21) refers to him as "ish" (Rashi).

Yaakov was left alone and a man / ish rested with him (Vayishlach 32:25).

Chazal explained this man to me the Angel of Esav (Rashi).

Why does the word "ish" sometimes refer to Gavriel and sometimes refer to the Angel of Esav?

PARSHA RIDDLE

How many times did Yosef's coat cause him to be thrown into a pit? When?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How does this parsha help us determine the age for Bar Mitzvah?

Answer: *The posuk (34:25) refers to Levi as an Ish, and he was 13, teaching us that a boy becomes a man at 13.*

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Va'Yeishev includes the episode of the apparently heartless sale of Yosef by his brothers. R. Yaakov Kamenetsky was asked by a student why this does not constitute *lashon ha'ra* ("evil speech", i.e., slander, generally prohibited even when true). R. Yaakov initially proposes that the Biblical prohibition against slander only applies with regard to the living, and not with regard to the dead. Defamation of the dead is prohibited only by an "anathema of the ancients," and is limited to falsehood (*Emes Le'Yaakov* to our *parshah*). As the *Aruch Ha'Shulchan* (*orach chaim* 606:4) notes, the Talmud (*Brachos* 19a) declares that in general, talking about the deceased is like talking about a stone, "either because they do not know, or because they do not care." Others, however, argue that the Biblical prohibition does extend to the deceased, and the anathema was merely meant to strengthen that preexisting prohibition.

R. Yaakov subsequently notes that there is really no problem at all with the Torah's narrative, as Yosef's brothers were actually acting in good faith, having judged him to be capitally liable "according to the *din* [law of the Torah]" and genuinely believing this to be the *din*.

It would seem that there is another, even more fundamental justification of the Torah's narrative: after all, the Torah is not a work of general history, and it is axiomatic that everything it comprises is included for our benefit, for the religious and other lessons we are expected to derive therefrom. The great fundamental exception to the prohibition of *lashon ha'ra* is the category of *to'eles* ("benefit"): speech that is not vindictive, but motivated by some constructive purpose. Any information that Hashem considers important enough to include in the Torah surely falls under this category!

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was for old age.
2. I was wise.
3. I was a look alike.
4. I was not a beard.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am to be seen.
2. I am not to be used.
3. I am holy.
4. I am for publicity.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 The small jars that Yaakov forgot and returned to collect them (I caused being alone; I may be little but I caused a fight; for me there was a return; I was left.)

#2 400 (I was for Efron; I was for Esav; I am 'tough'; I was for the Bris bein HaBesorim.)

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.

Congratulations to Eitan Lichtash and others for answering last week's questions correctly!

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

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

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Celebrate Chanukah with the GWCK!

Monday, Dec. 7th, at 7:00 p.m.

Join the Kollel for our annual Chanukah Festival!

Come enjoy delicious Chanukah refreshments and dancing with music from Kol HaLev. Featuring a special theater performance by Shlomo Horwitz and a magic show for children!