



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.***

In this week's portion of Shemini, the Torah records (10:16): "Moshe inquired insistently about the he-goat of the sin-offering, for behold it had been burned! And he was wrathful with Elazar and Itamar, Aaron's remaining sons..."

Moshe was angry that the sacrificial offering for the new month was burnt rather than eaten. Aharon and his sons, Elazar and Itamar, reasoned that, given that they were in a state of mourning after the deaths of Aharon's other sons, Nadav and Avihu, they were not permitted to eat of the sacrifice. In the ensuing debate between Moshe and his brother Aharon, the Torah concludes (10:20): "Moshe heard and it found approval in his eyes."

Rashi, quoting the Medrash, says that when Moshe heard Aharon's reasoning, he conceded that his brother was correct. Moshe was not ashamed to admit his error. He had been so certain of his own logic that the conduct of Aharon and his sons brought him tremendous distress and made him angry at their failure to eat of the sacrifice. Ever the man of humility and truth, however, Moshe kept an open mind throughout. Not only did he accept and embrace their position in the end, but he took personal joy in their success at determining the correct approach of burning the sacrifice.

The Torah recounts Moshe's reaction to teach us that his emotional and intellectual response was of equal importance to the law itself. One of our greatest daily challenges is the opportunity to acknowledge that we have erred. "I'm sorry" are two of the most difficult words to utter. The ability to listen with an open heart and mind to the thoughts and feelings of another, and to be so nimble as to change positions in the process, is the hallmark of personal greatness and accomplishment. Such a man was Moshe, who was able to change course seamlessly on both a conceptual and an emotional level. The Torah's record of his conduct is intended to be a teachable moment which challenges all of us to emulate the fine and noble precedent of our exalted leader, Moshe.

Have a wonderful Shabbos,

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

A fire came forth from before Hashem and consumed them... (10:2)

Moshe told Aaron, "Aaron, my brother. I knew that the consecration of the Mishkan would cost the lives of one of those close to Hashem. I thought it would be you or me. Now I know that your sons were greater than us (Rashi).

Moshe and Aaron were walking and Nadav and Avihu were walking behind them, with Bnei Yisrael walking in the back. Nadav and Avihu said to each other, "When will these two old people die, and we will rule in their place." This is the reason why they died (Tanchuma Acharai Mos 6).

Were Nadav and Avihu greater than Moshe and Aaron? Did their greatness cause their death, or was it their improper speech?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What halacha do a posek and a Kohen have in common?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Whose name appears twice in the Megilla - but is spelled differently each time?

Answer: Charvona (once with ח and once with חו)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Many halachic authorities articulate a doctrine that since "the Torah was not given to the ministering angels," but rather to human beings, its laws apply only to phenomena perceivable by the unaided senses, and not to those whose perception requires magnifying glasses, microscopes or other technological instruments or techniques. This principle is invoked with regard to at least two different Biblical commandments contained in *Parashas Shemini*, in one instance yielding a stringency, and in the other, a leniency.

Microscopic fish scales: The defining characteristics of kosher fish are the features of fins and scales (*Va'Yikra* 11:9). The *Tiferes Yisrael* (*Avodah Zarah* Ch. 2 *Boaz* #3) relates a great dispute over the kashrus status of a certain fish whose scales are not visible to the naked eye, but can be seen with a microscope. Although a certain great authority ("*gadol ha'dor*") permitted the fish based upon its microscopic scales, the preponderant opinion, strongly endorsed by the *Tiferes Yisrael* himself, prohibited it, "for the Torah has told us to only rely on something that can be seen without [magnifying] glass."

Microorganisms: All sorts of "teeming" ("*shoreitz*") creatures are forbidden, including tiny insects. The halachic consensus, however, permits the ingestion of microorganisms, despite the fact that when viewed with a microscope they certainly seem to qualify as "teeming" creatures. As the *Aruch Ha'Shulchan* (*Yoreh De'ah* 84:36) explains: "The truth is that the Torah has not forbidden that which the eye cannot perceive, for the Torah was not given to the angels." If this were not so, he argues, the very act of breathing would be problematic, for the scientists tell us that "the entire atmosphere is full of minuscule creatures, and when a man opens his mouth he swallows many of them!" He warns, however, that any creature, no matter how minuscule, that is visible to the naked eye, even if only in direct sunlight, is considered a bona fide *sheretz*.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am a mystery to the wise.
2. I am named for my color.
3. I am similar to Esav.
4. I purify the impure & impurify the pure.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am after a week.
2. I am for a bris.
3. I was for the Mishkan.
4. On Sukkos, I have my own Yom Tov.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Walled cities from the time of Yehoshua

(We get the extra day; triple is our luck; Shushan was not one of us; I got you surrounded.)

#2 *Dagim/Fish* (I cannot be a korban; I am the siman now; I am mentioned every night; I am fishy business.)

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

win a pair of portable camping lantern flashlights!

The next raffle is April 12th.

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

In conjunction with Young Israel Shomrai Emunah, Greater Washington Community Kollel invites men and women of the community to join us for a lecture by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman:

The Sale of Chometz in History and Halacha

This Jewish Ethics Lecture takes place Sunday, April 10th, 9:30am at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah.