



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Using the Forest to See the Trees

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, former Kollel Scholar and currently a Kollel Adjunct

At the beginning of Parshas *Masei*, the Torah provides a comprehensive accounting of all the regions in which the Jewish people encamped throughout their forty-year journey in the desert. Rashi, apparently bothered by why this accounting is necessary, offers a metaphor to which this section of the Torah may be compared. Rashi writes: *"It is comparable to a king with a sick son whom he brought to a faraway place to seek treatment. As they were returning home from their trip, the king began recounting all of the travels. The king said to his son, 'In this place we slept, in this place we were cold, in this place you got a headache, etc..'"* So too, at the end of the Jews' forty-year journey, Hashem recounts each encampment and the significant events that occurred along the way.

This metaphor begs understanding. Why is it important to recount the events of the journey after it is all over? Furthermore, the events that are listed in the metaphor, sleeping, getting cold, and getting a headache, hardly seem significant. Indeed, most of the encampments listed in this *Parsha* are not accompanied by an associated event at all.

I would like to suggest the following approach. As the king was traveling to his destination, each stop along the way was just that, a stop along the way. After the entire journey was complete, however, he was able to see how each stop along the way, no matter how insignificant, contributed to the totality of the trip as a whole. Similarly, at the end of forty years in the desert, Hashem wanted to emphasize to the Jewish people that each encampment to which *He* brought them was necessary and contributed to the overall success of the mission. Each stop along the way had a lesson to impart.

Our lives are filled with various journeys, and in the moment it is often hard to see Hashem's guiding hand. But more often than not, if we take the time to look introspectively into our lives, we can see how some seemingly insignificant and coincidental events made all the difference. Let us all take advantage of the gift of hindsight to see *Hashem's* presence in our lives, and to help us more readily see Him guide us through each day.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

The children of Gad and the children of Reuven came and said to Moshe... "the land Hashem smote before the assembly of Yisrael, it is a land of livestock, and your servants have livestock" (32:1).

He (Gad) chose the first portion for himself (he chose to receive his land on the other side of the Jordan), for that is where the lawgiver's plot (Moshe's grave) is hidden (V'zos Habrocho 33:21).

Did Gad want to live on the other side of the Jordan for his livestock or to be in close vicinity to Moshe's grave?

Furthermore, why does the Torah list Gad before Reuven, if Reuven is the older Shevet?

PARSHA RIDDLE

When does a person need atonement, even though they did not perform a sin?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What two connections are there between the letter "vav" and Eliyahu HaNavi?

Answer: 1) the broken vav in Shalom 2) the five times Eliyahu's name appears without a vav and Yaakov's name appears with an extra vav

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Matos* (31:27), Hashem commands the Jews to "divide the prey [i.e., the spoils taken in their victory against Midian] in half; between those who undertook the battle, who go out to the legion, and the entire assembly." It is unclear whether the Torah means to establish the equipartition of the spoils between the fighters and the general population as a general rule, or just the procedure to be followed in this particular case. The *Noda Be'Yehudah* (*Tinyana YD* #201) assumes that this was a special case and that in general, the fighters retained all the spoils for themselves. As proof, he notes that we are told (*Shmuel* 1 30:20-25) that in the aftermath of one of King David's battles, those who had fought with him were unwilling to share their booty even with their support forces, until King David persuaded them to do so and established as a general rule the equipartition of the spoils between combat and support forces - but those who did not participate in the military effort at all received nothing.

The *Abravanel* (to *Shmuel*) also suggests that the reluctance of King David's combat soldiers to relinquish any of their booty was due to the lack of precedential significance of the arrangement of our *parashah*. He additionally notes that King David's arrangement differed from the Torah's regarding the booty of Midian in that it gave the support personnel an equal share to that of the fighters, as opposed to merely receiving their share of the portion allotted to the general population. [In the battle against Midian, for example, there were 12,000 soldiers, while the general population totaled 600,000. Accordingly, the share of an individual soldier was about 50-60 times larger than that of a member of the general population.]

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. We acted out of fear.
2. We were spared.
3. We have good doves.
4. We were purified by Sichon.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was for Yaakov.
2. I was for Yaakov's livestock.
3. I was for the journeys.
4. I am a Yom Tov.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *Shalosh Regalim* (Sometimes I mean three times; "only if you can walk"; on me you see to be seen; I was in last week and this week.)

#2 *The enlarged letters in the Torah* (This week I am a 'nun'; in a few weeks I will be a 'ayin'; the 'daled' ensures no idolatry; near the end I am a 'hey'.

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

POPCORN
POPPER 

*The next
raffle is
September 6th.*

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

The Kollel summer intersession begins Friday, August 5th.

Have a great summer, and we hope to see you for the Elul Semester at the Kollel for new and exciting programming!