



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

### The Almighty Mitzvah

*Presented by Rabbi Yisrael Glassberg, former Kollel Scholar and Director of Kollel Alumni*

Our sages find numerous parallels between Moshe Rabbeinu and our forefather Yaakov. Both shepherded sheep belonging to their fathers-in law, both met their spouses at a well, and both conferred unique blessings upon each of the 12 tribes. This idea is reflected further in the verse, "The Torah was commanded to us via Moshe, it is an inheritance of the Congregation of Jacob."

However, the Maharal of Prague notes an interesting distinction between these two great leaders based on Rashi's commentary (3:24). After Moshe Rabbeinu was victorious over the giants Sihon and Og, he hoped that he would be granted permission to enter the Land of Israel, despite Hashem's previous refusal. The victory made him hopeful, and he beseeched Hashem for additional kindness. This is in contradistinction to Yaakov's reaction after emerging unscathed from the house of Lavan, whereupon he prepared to face his brother Eisav. Yaakov felt that he had depleted his merits and feared that he would not succeed in his confrontation with Eisav. Why did Moshe feel confident to the point that he sought commutation of his previous punishment while Yaakov felt less secure?

The Maharal answers that Moshe Rabbeinu was in the middle of a process – the conquest of the Land of Israel. That special process of fulfilling the Divine will carries with it a distinct force and impact that is only actualized upon its completion. Based upon the concept, "One who begins to perform a Mitzvah should persevere to complete that same Mitzvah," Moshe understood the power of completing the job that he had started. Yaakov, however, had completed his mission at the house of Lavan. Facing his brother Eisav represented a new challenge.

We are faced with many important mitzvah opportunities throughout the balance of our lives. May we be fortunate to learn the lesson from Moshe and strive to complete each mitzvah with diligence and excitement!

***Have a wonderful Shabbos!***

## TABLE TALK

### POINTS TO PONDER

***You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your possessions (6:5).***

When the Romans were taking Rebbi Akiva to be killed, it was time to recite Krias Shema. While they combed his back with iron combs, he accepted the Yoke of Heaven (by reciting Shema). His students asked him, "Our master, must one endure so much?" Rebbi Akiva responded, "All my life I yearned to fulfill the command of the verse, 'with all your soul,' which means that even while one's life is being taken from him, he must accept upon himself Hashem's Yoke. Now that it has come to my hand, I should not fulfill it?"

Since the mitzva of Krias Shema needs one's kavana / intent, and the mitzva of giving up one's life for Hashem needs intent, how could Rebbi Akiva have intent on fulfilling these two mitzvas simultaneously?

### PARSHA RIDDLE

***How do we know that Moshe davened 515 prayers to be permitted to enter Eretz Yisroel?***

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

**Last week's riddle:**

***How many words in Chumash are not Lashon HaKodesh? What are they?***

**Answer:** Yagar sahadusa, totafos, and vayeisa in vzos haberacha 33:21

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

*Parashas Va'Eschanan* (5:6-18) includes the second version of the "Ten Statements." This is how the Torah itself, as well as the Rabbinic tradition, refers to them, but in English they are generally referred to as the "Ten Commandments." This latter formulation is, however, problematic, as some of the Statements may contain more than one commandment, and whether the very first Statement - "I am Hashem your G-d, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" - constitutes a commandment at all is a matter of dispute.

The Rambam does indeed consider it a commandment, and he counts the imperative to believe in G-d as the very first of the six hundred and thirteen *mitzvos*. The Ramban (*Shemos* 20:1), too, counts belief in G-d as a positive commandment. R. Hasdai Crescas, however, considers this an "evident error" and logically incoherent, since the notion of a commandment fundamentally presupposes the existence of a known commander (*Or Hashem, Hatzaah*). The Abarbanel concedes this basic point and explains the subject of the commandment according to the Rambam to be not the basic existence of G-d, but rather the absolute perfection of His existence and the fact that it is necessary, not contingent (*Rosh Amanah*, Ch. 17).

R. Crescas further argues that commandments only apply to aspects of human behavior subject to will and choice (as opposed to beliefs, which are not acquired by will and choice). Here, too, the Abarbanel concedes the basic logical point, and explains the commandment to refer to the intellectual preparations - the study, investigation, examination and acquisition of relevant facts - that lead one to belief. "There is no doubt that these preparations are an activity of will and choice and are acquired over time. For it is up to each person 'to perceive, learn, teach,' and know those things which necessitate and give birth to belief in his soul" (*Rosh Amanah ibid.*, Prof. Menachem Kellner's translation. Cf his introduction pp. 41-50, and *Otzar Yisrael* Vol. II p. 81).

PRESENTED BY  
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### WHO AM I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I remove the gap.
2. I equal all.
3. I am black, yet blue print.
4. Pass me on.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. Three times a day.
2. You cover for me.
3. Twelve said me to their elder.
4. I am listen.

#### Last Week's Answers:

##### #1 *Tisha B'Av that falls out on Motzei*

*Shabbos* (I delay Havdalah; I make the third meal earlier; I give the nine two days of rest; no queenly escort.)

**#2 *Amon and Moav*** (We were from the father; we were given to Lot; our men are prohibited; do not fight us.)

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 6<sup>th</sup>.*

Visit [gwckollel.org](http://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.*

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