



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Your Real Estate

Presented by Rabbi Yonatan Zakem

Kollel Scholar and Director of Community Outreach

"Avraham gave all that he had to Yitzchak. And to the children of the concubines Avraham gave gifts..." (25:5-6)

After having shown himself to be equal to all of the tests with which he was challenged, Avraham has firmly established himself as the appropriate choice to father a nation that will be dedicated to Hashem. Avraham now turns himself to preparing for the next generation, Yitzchak, to carry on this legacy. Avraham goes about the task of finding a suitable partner with whom Yitzchak can fulfill this mission, and then proceeds to bequeath all of his wealth to him.

At first glance, the verses that relate Avraham's passing of his estate are difficult to understand. The Torah tells us that he gave *everything* that he had to Yitzchak, and immediately thereafter relates that he gave gifts to the other children. If the totality of his possessions had been granted to Yitzchak, what was left for him to give to the other children?

The comments of the *S'fas Emes* may help us resolve this difficulty. The *S'fas Emes* explains that a person has two types of acquisitions. One type relates to that which a person has earned through his own efforts. The second type relates to that which a person receives via gift. Acquisitions that truly belong to a person are those for which he or she has worked. When the Torah relates that Avraham gave the other children gifts, it means that he gave them that which *he* himself had received as gifts. What Avraham passed on to Yitzchak were those accomplishments that were the most meaningful to him, those that were really *his*, because Avraham earned them through his own toil and effort. It was these accomplishments that Avraham bequeathed to Yitzchak as the legacy of the Jewish nation.

We should all take a lesson from our forefather Avraham and recognize the opportunity that the struggles in life present to us. When the road is difficult, when we are faced with challenges, Hashem is giving us the chance to make something ours.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

I came today to the spring and said... (24:42)

Rav Acha said, "The conversation of the servants of the Avos is more pleasing to Hashem than the Torah of their descendants. The proof to this is from the fact that the episode of Eliezer's mission to find a wife for Yitzchak is repeated in the Torah, while many essential elements of the Torah are only alluded to in the Torah" (Rashi).

Torah has more value than the speech of Eliezer. If so, why would Hashem admire Eliezer's dialogue more? In addition, since Eliezer employed deceptions in his speech, why is his speech more pleasing to Hashem?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What was the name of Lot's wife?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why are there specifically eighteen berochos in Shemoneh Esrei?

Answer: 1) The names of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov appear together in the Torah eighteen times. 2) There are eighteen vertebrae in the spine. The eighteen berochos remind us that one is supposed to daven with his whole body (Tehillim 35:10). (Tanchuma Vayeira) 3) There are eighteen mentions of Hashem's name in ch. 29 of Tehillim.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Chayei Sarah describes the test of Avraham's servant (assumed by the Talmud and many commentators to be Eliezer) to ascertain whether the girl he encountered was the right wife for Yitzchak: he would request water to drink, and see if she responded by offering to supply water for both him and his camels.

The Torah prohibits divination – attempting to acquire information or predict the consequences of one's potential courses of action by superstitious or paranormal means (*Sanhedrin* 65b-66a). In a puzzling (and somewhat ambiguous) passage, the Talmud seems to imply that Eliezer's test is actually the **paradigmatic** example of divination (*Chullin* 95b, but see *Hasagos Ha'Raavad Hilchos Avodas Kochavim* 11:4 and *Radak to Shmuel* 14:9 who understand the passage differently). But how can this be – how can we accuse such a righteous figure of sinful behavior? The commentators offer numerous justifications of his conduct:

- There is a Talmudic dispute over whether the prohibition of divination applies to non-Jews (*Sanhedrin* 56b). Eliezer's conduct is unproblematic according to the view that it does not (*Tosafos Chullin ibid.*, *Kesef Mishnah ibid.*).
- Eliezer may have actually waited to give Rivkah the gifts of jewelry until after verifying her familial status (and thus did not rely upon his test) (*Tosafos ibid.*, *Mizrachi Bereishis* 24:23, and cf. *Levush* 24:14).
- Eliezer's test was not superstitious, but rather a rational procedure to determine whether the girl he encountered was a suitable wife – and the one intended by Hashem – for Yitzchak (*Chidushei Ha'Ran Chullin ibid.*, *Gur Aryeh* 24:14).
- Eliezer acted based on *ruach ha'kodesh* (Divine inspiration or communication), and trusted in Hashem and the merit of Avraham that an appropriate mate for Yitzchak would be miraculously provided (*Bach YD* #179).
- Divination is only prohibited when purely superstitious, but not when one is attempting to discern the will of Hashem, as Eliezer was (*Avodas Ha'Melech* to Rambam *ibid.*, and cf. *Mirkeves Ha'Mishnah ibid.*).
- Divination is not prohibited when done for the sake of a *mitzvah* (*Gur Aryeh ibid.*).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. We are similar to Achashveirush's rule.
2. We were all good.
3. The bind stopped us.
4. I am the name this week.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I have four sets.
2. I was four hundred.
3. I am also 'ahead'.
4. I am the 'double'.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 The Three Melachim (We are three; it was not Purim yet we did v'nahapoch hu; we were not comedians, yet we caused laughter; we ate, as is the custom.)

#2 The Akeida (I am the final exam; in the end I was rammed; I caused death; my reminder is not your chauffeur.)

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

win a super prize



*Congratulations to
Bashah Chaya & Liora Ness Seemann
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.

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