



Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

The Honest Truth

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz

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At the climax of this week's Parsha, we are told the story of how Yaakov secured the blessings that Yitzchak had originally intended to give to Esav. Yitzchak, not knowing the extent of Esav's evil ways, had intended to give Esav the blessings of material prosperity, while Yaakov would inherit the blessings of spiritual success (see *Malbim*). Rivka however, knowing Esav's true nature, instructed Yaakov to pretend to be Esav in order that Yitzchak, being blind and unable to see who was in front of him, would give Yaakov the blessings instead. Upon presenting himself to Yitzchak and being asked to identify himself, Yaakov says to Yitzchak, "I am Eisav, your firstborn". *Chazal* are bothered by the notion that Yaakov would outright lie, and explain that Yaakov's words could also be interpreted as, "I am who I am, and Esav is your firstborn". But, this re-interpretation of Yaakov's words seems difficult to accept. After all, Yaakov intended that Yitzchak understand his words to mean that he was Esav, which was false. How does it help that Yaakov's words could have had a subliminal truthful meaning as well, given that Yaakov's intent was to deceive?

The apparent falsity actually teaches us a profound lesson in the importance of speaking truthfully. Yaakov intended to deceive. In fact, given the circumstances, that was absolutely the right thing for him to do. Nevertheless, the notion that a falsehood should leave his lips was unthinkable to Yaakov. Even at a time when he needed to deceive, he was still able to phrase it in such a way as to be true, even if the intent was that it be understood in a different, and false, way. Such is the value of speaking truthfully. Let us take the message of Yaakov to inspire us to always speak with truth and honesty.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

And Esav said, "Look, I am going to die, so what use is the Bechora to me?" (25:32)

Esav said, "What is the nature of the Service that the Firstborn performs?" Yaakov said to him, "Several prohibitions, punishments and death penalties are associated with it, such as, "The following are included in the death penalty, those who serve after drinking wine and those that serve while having long hair." Esav responded, "I am going to die if I will be the Bechor. If so, what is there in it that I should want?" (Rashi)

Before the Mishkan was built, Bechorim performed the Service and the Service was performed on a bama. Once the Mishkan was built, the bama was prohibited and only Kohanim performed the Service (Bamidbar Rabba 4:8).

The Ramban says that one who performs the Service on a bama while intoxicated is not punished by the death penalty (Vayikra 10:9). If so, Esav could have done the Service on a bama while being drunk and would not have been punished!

PARSHA RIDDLE

How is it possible that something never seen may be consumed, but once it is seen, it may not be consumed?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What was the name of Lot's wife?

Answer: Pirkei D'Rebbi Elozar (25) says her name was Idis. However, the Radal quotes sources, including the Baal Haturim, which say that the text is wrong and should read Iris.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Toldos*, when Yitzchak asks Yaakov to identify himself, he responds "I am Esau your first born" (or, according to Rashi, "It is I, Esau your firstborn - Bereishis 27:19). The *Chizkuni* explains that circumstances sometimes necessitate prevarication; we find that Avraham had instructed Sarah to publicly describe him as her brother (rather than her husband), and he had assured his young men prior to the *akeidah* that he and Yitzchak would "worship and come again to you" (although he did not think that Yitzchak would be returning).

The Talmud relates that when Rachel warned Yaakov at their engagement that her father was a trickster, he reassured her that "I am his brother in fraud." In response to her challenge "And are the righteous permitted to engage in fraud?", he replied "Yes - 'With the pure you will show yourself pure; and with the perverse you will show yourself crooked'" (*Shmuel 2 22:27 - Megilah 13b*).

In a similar vein, the Tosafists wonder how an "absolutely righteous" man such as Yaakov could have used the rods to manipulate the mating ewes in order to obtain favorable outcomes of his arrangements with Lavan, as related in *parashas Vayitzei*. They explain (based on careful readings of the narrative) that Lavan had been the initial one to behave unfairly, thus permitting Yaakov to reciprocate under the dispensation of "showing oneself crooked to the perverse" (*Daas Zekeinim Mi'Baalei Ha'Tosafos, Rabboseinu Baalei Hatosafos and Riva to Bereishis 30:37*).

Similarly, the *Riaz* invokes Yaakov's assertion of the legitimacy of "showing oneself crooked to the perverse" as a precedent to permit a course of deceit vis-à-vis someone who has seized one's property by force, in order to retrieve what is rightfully one's own (*Piskei Riaz Berachos 5b*, but see *Shut. Ha'Rashba 3:81* who apparently disagrees, at least in the context of a *beis din* proceeding. Cf. *Mishpatecha Le'Yaakov 8:10*).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

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

Win a
**JUMBO
BANANAGRAMS
GAME!**



THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
JANUARY 25TH!

#1 WHO AM I?

1. My father is not the 'father of the king'.
2. The first was my similarity.
3. I found one hundred.
4. I established the "Offering" prayer.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was red.
2. I was a double.
3. I am 'done'.
4. I got my hands.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Chayei Sarah / The years of Sarah's life (We are similar to Achashveirush's rule; we were all good; the bind stopped us; I am the name this week.)

#2 The Me'aras HaMachpeila (I have four sets; I was four hundred; I am also 'ahead'; I am the 'double'.)

*Congratulations to Betzafelel Broth
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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