



Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

One Kind Word

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects for the Kollel

Upon arriving at the well outside of Charan, Yaakov finds three flocks of sheep and their shepherds resting nearby. Not realizing that they are waiting for more shepherds to arrive to help them remove the rock that is covering the well, Yaakov says: "The day is still long and it is not yet time to bring the livestock in. Water the flock and go on grazing" (29:7). Rashi explains that Yaakov mistakenly thought that the shepherds were preparing to retire for the day and he was reprimanding them that, as hired day laborers, they should continue working because they had yet to complete the day's labor. The shepherds respond matter of factly that they cannot provide water for their sheep until the rest of the shepherds arrive to help them remove the stone.

At first glance, this entire exchange appears strange. How could Yaakov, a total stranger, start rebuking the shepherds with the expectation of any positive result? And in the face of such a rebuke, why weren't the shepherds angrier at the audaciousness of the stranger? Rather than reply in an angry tone, they simply responded to him and explained their situation. Why were they so accepting?

Rabbi Yosef Kahaneman, the Ponevezher Rav, provides the following answer. A few verses earlier, we find that Yaakov's first words to the shepherds were: "My brothers, where are you from?" With these words of brotherhood at the very beginning of their encounter, Yaakov displayed a deep love for the shepherds despite having never met them. After having expressed his love and brotherhood for them, Yaakov knew that whatever he said afterwards, the shepherds would understand that it was said out of love and friendship. For that reason, they did not become angry and responded to the rebuke in a calm fashion.

In our many relationships, we will occasionally need to confront or criticize a loved one, such as a friend or spouse. We must keep in mind that a kind word said at the outset, as a reminder of our love and friendship, can go a long way in helping our words be heard and accepted.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

A ladder was set earthward and its top reached heavenward; and behold, Angels of Hashem were ascending and descending on it (28:12).

The Angels ascended and looked at the images engraved in Heaven, which included Yaakov's image. And they descended and looked at the image of the person on the bottom. Those Angels wished to harm Yaakov because they were jealous of him. Immediately, 'Hashem was standing over him (Yaakov)' (28:13) to protect him (Chulin 91b and Rashi).

When Moshe ascended to Heaven to receive the Torah, the Angels were arguing with Moshe that he should not bring the Torah down to earth. Moshe argued, "Is there jealousy amongst you that necessitates a command regarding jealousy"? (Shabbos 89a)

The above Chazals seem contradictory. From Chazal in Chulin it seems that Angels do have jealousy. However, from the Chazal in Shabbos it seems that Angels are not jealous.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The central narrative of the second half of *chumash Bereishis* focuses on the formation and development of our patriarch Yaakov's family, beginning with his marriages in *parshas Vayeitzei* to Leah, Rachel, Bilhah and Zilpah. This, of course, occurred before the giving of the Torah, but even afterward, under both Biblical and rabbinic law in the Talmudic and post-Talmudic eras, polygamy remained permitted. There is a Talmudic opinion that maintains that marriage to a second wife constitutes grounds for the first wife to demand a divorce along with payment of her *kesubah* (marriage settlement), but the *halachah* follows the dissenting view that "a man may marry many women despite being already married, as long as he has the resources to support them" (*Yevamos* 65a, *Shulchan Aruch EH* 1:9). The rabbis advised, however, against marrying more than four wives (*Ibid.* 44a).

About a millennium ago, Rabbeinu Gershom instituted his eponymous ban of polygamy. The rationale and context for this edict, however, are unclear. Some authorities explain that polygamy causes [household] dissension (*Hagagos Mordechai Kesuvos* #291), while others explain that due to the stresses of exile, the financial strain of supporting multiple wives may be too great (*Shut. Maharam Padua* end of #14). Still others, noting that R. Gershom's ban was not universally accepted, and was primarily followed in Ashkenazic, as opposed to Sephardic, communities – i.e., those living within Christian, as opposed to Islamic, host cultures – explain that the ban was a precautionary reaction to Christian abhorrence of polygamy. Although Jews are generally actually forbidden from adopting non-Jewish mores, Jews in Christian environments nevertheless banned polygamy in deference to Christian sensibilities, since refraining from polygamy does not involve active conduct but merely the absence of such conduct (*shev ve'al taaseh*), and the practice of polygamy could potentially provoke dangerous non-Jewish reaction (*She'eilas Yaavetz* end of 2:15, *Shut. Ginas Veradim EH* 1:10).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

PARSHA RIDDLE

Where is a source in this week's parsha that one should not give more than a fifth of his possessions to tzedakah?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: Blood that never left the mouth may be swallowed, but once it left it can't be consumed.

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
JUMBO
BANANAGRAMS
GAME!



THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
JANUARY 25TH!

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I was for the second seven.
2. I am grabby.
3. I am the weeper.
4. I'm 'on the road'.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I was for 'last week'.
2. I was a weeper.
3. I had half.
4. I was soft eyed.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Yitzchak (My father is not the 'father of the king'; the first was my similarity; I found one hundred; I established the "Offering" prayer.)

#2 Esav (I was red; I was a double; I am 'done'; I got my hands.)

*Congratulations to Yaakov Baars
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.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Bring your family to celebrate Chanukah with the Greater Washington Community Kollel family! Special guest speaker Rabbi Ari Storch, a magic performance for kids, live music, dancing, and hot Chanukah refreshments!

Monday, Dec. 26th, 7:00 pm at the Kollel.

