



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

An Alien Fire

Presented by Rabbi Yonatan Zakem
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The sons of Aaron, Nadav and Avihu... brought before Hashem an alien fire that He had not commanded them (Vayikra 10:1).

With the construction of the *Mishkan* complete, the inauguration of the service therein begins. Following a week of Moshe initiating the sacred processes, the awaited moment arrives when Aharon and his family take over and assume the position of Priests. Tragedy, however, is soon to follow. Aharon's two eldest children, Nadav and Avihu, amidst the jubilation of the inauguration process, bring a foreign offering, and are immediately punished with death.

Our Sages, in both the Medrash and the Talmud, offer several explanations of what the infraction of Aharon's sons was, each of which illuminates a certain facet of their mistake. Nonetheless, the verse does not depart from its simple meaning. At its most basic level, the root of their misdeed was that this offering was not commanded by Hashem.

The service of the *Mishkan* was the model and paradigm of serving Hashem. Fundamental to this relationship is that Hashem has instructed us as to how He wishes to be served. Central to the performance of this service is the awareness and acknowledgement that we are doing what Hashem has commanded us to do, not what we have decided to do. The moment at which we determine the Divine Will based on our own values is the moment at which we have replaced G-d with ourselves.

In our own personal relationship with our Creator, as well, this principle is of utmost significance. Often we are tempted to define our *mitzvos* based on what we find to be the most meaningful, and find fulfillment in what we see as inspirational. We must, however, remember that we are serving Hashem, not ourselves. The fire that burns in our personal *Mishkan* must be an authentic one.

May we all merit to find true meaning and inspiration in the *mitzvos* which Hashem has given us.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

And Aharon was silent (Vayeedom) (10:3).

Why does the posuk use the word Vayeedom (which has connotations of being like a rock) when describing Aharon's remaining quiet? The word usually utilized in this context is vayishtok or vayacharish.

In addition, what was unique about the silence of Aharon that he deserved so much reward?

PARSHA RIDDLE

How can one miss counting the day of the Omer and still be able to recite a beracha the next day?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why is Shabbos HaGadol called Shabbos HaGadol?

Answer: 1) To commemorate the big miracle of the Egyptians not harming Bnei Yisrael who had taken their god (the sheep) into their homes. 2) It was customary to bake a big bread for the Shabbos before Pesach, in order to use up all the chometz flour.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Toward the end of *parashas Shemini* (11:43), the Torah admonishes: "You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps, neither shall you make yourselves unclean with them, that you should be defiled thereby." Although the context of this verse, at the end of the Torah's lengthy exposition of the laws of *kashrus* of animals, fowl, birds and crawling things, might suggest that it refers to the consumption of those species that the Torah has already forbidden, the *halachic* tradition understands it as a more general prohibition against engaging in any sort of "abominable" behavior, such as holding in one's waste (*Makos* 16b). [There is some debate, however, whether this general prohibition is Biblical, or Rabbinic, i.e., based on an extension of the verse beyond its plain meaning (*asmachta* - *Beis Yosef* YD #116; *Pri Chadash* YD 84:3; *Tevuas Shor* 13:2; *Shaarei Teshuvah* OC 3:7).]

One major category of behavior forbidden under this general prohibition is the consumption of "abominable" material. But ultimately, taste is at least somewhat subjective - as the saying goes, "*al ta'am va'rei'ach ein le'hisvakei'ach*." Is the standard of "abominable" in this context determined by the eater's subjective preferences, or by some sort of general consensus? The *Pri Chadash* promulgates the principle that "the standard of 'revolting' is not determined by 'most of the world' but rather by each individual." He therefore rules that one may eat something that most people consider revolting provided that he himself is not revolted by it, and conversely, one may not eat something that revolts him even if most people are not revolted by it. Even the *Pri Chadash*, however, apparently agrees that there is some level of objectivity involved here, since he concedes that something that "everyone" is revolted by may not be eaten by anyone, even one who is not revolted by it, since "his opinion is null in the face of everyone [else's opinion]" (*batlah da'ato eitzel kol adam* - this is the *Sedei Chemed's* (*Kelalim*, *Ma'areches ha'Beis* #79) interpretation of the *Pri Chadash's* position).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am an alternative to pigeons.
2. In Aramaic I am four legged.
3. In Megillas Esther I am mentioned twice.
4. In the Midrash I am the sound of Moshiach.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. We are locks without keys.
2. You owe us money.
3. Sometimes we are wet behind the ears.
4. We have a no-cut contract.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Pesach (Mouth speak; jump over; I am the first; I create Order.)

#2 Shabbos HaGodol (I am big, not really; I precede the spring holiday; say 'Telling'; sheepish celebration.)

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

win
WATERPROOF NIGHT VISION BINOCULARS!



THE NEXT RAFFLE WILL BE JUNE 6TH!

Answer as many as you can.

Each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning!

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Pearls of Prayer begins this week!

Join Rabbi Yonatan Zakem for a new weekly class for men and women exploring the depth and meaning of our daily prayers.

Pearls of Prayer: Jewish thought and life lessons based on the text of the weekday Shemoneh Esrei

Wednesdays, 9:15 pm, beginning April 26th, in the YISE small beis medrash.