



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Second Chances

Presented by Rabbi Yisrael Glassberg

Former Kollel Scholar, and Current Director of Kollel Alumni

In this week's Torah portion, Beha'aloscha, we read about a small contingent of the Jewish people who were unable to bring the pesach-offering at its appointed time, the fourteenth day of the month of Nissan. The Talmud (Sukkah 25a) relates that they were spiritually impure after fulfilling the obligation to bury an unidentified body they encountered during the exodus and were therefore disqualified from participating in the pesach-offering. Disappointed about being unable to bring the offering, they appealed to Moshe Rabeinu, "Why should we be diminished by not offering Hashem's offering in its appointed time amongst the Bnai Yisrael" (9:7).

The Ohr Hachaim is perplexed by this verse, as it was a well-known rule that one could not partake of the pesach-offering while in a state of ritual impurity. Why did they think they were worthy of an exception?

Rav Moshe Shapiro Z"L explained that the verse is not to be read as a question, but rather as a declarative statement. They understood that by not bringing the pesach-offering they were missing a critical and fundamental expression of their identity as Jews and they were not prepared to let that opportunity pass without a fight, so to speak. Their intense yearning to participate in this special mitzvah was a demonstration of their firm commitment to Hashem and to keeping the laws of the Torah. Thus, they pleaded with Moshe to help facilitate their ability to bring the pesach-offering and were unwilling to accept the fact that they would be precluded from the mitzvah's fulfillment.

Ultimately, Hashem answered the "question" of the Jewish people in the desert and gave them the mitzvah of Pesach Sheni- *the second pesach-offering*. He looked at their sincerity and responded by giving them the opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah thirty days later. In our daily lives, we often look for ways and methods to connect to a variety of spiritual pursuits that we care deeply about. Prayer, Torah study, charity, visiting the sick, etc. The list is endless. If we demonstrate that burning desire to maximize these opportunities, and constantly seek occasions to develop our spiritual character, Hashem will surely recognize this and treasure these efforts. Hashem might even afford us another opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah if we were unable to do so the first time around through no fault of our own.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

There were men who had been contaminated by a human corpse... (9:6)

These people were those who were carrying the coffin of Yosef with them from Mitzrayim (Sukka 25a).

Chazal (Yerushalmi Sotah 1) say that every shevet brought out the bones of its founder when they left Mitzrayim. If so, members from each shevet had the problem of being contaminated, not only those who carried out Yosef's bones!

In addition, some Rishonim (see Parashas Derachim) maintain that Yaakov and his sons were not Jewish and had the status of Noahides. Chazal (Yevamos 61a) rule that the corpses of non-Jews are not tamei. If so, why would the coffin of Yosef or any of Yaakov's sons contaminate those carrying it?

PARSHA RIDDLE

From where in the parasha can we learn that after one adds the title Rebbi, Rabbi, to his teacher's name that one can refer to him by name?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

On average, how many marital conflicts did Aaron HaKohen resolve daily?

Answer: 5. After Aharon died, 80,000 boys with the name Aharon escorted his coffin. These boys were named by their parents in honor of Aharon who had mediated conflicts in their marriage (Kala Rabasi 3). Bnei Yisrael camped in the desert 14,200 days. 80,000 divided by 14,200 is 5. (Rav Moshe Aaron Stern zt'l)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Beha'aloscha*, the Jews complained about their diet of manna and demanded meat. Hashem granted their request, but in the most pyrrhic manner possible (11:33): "The meat was still between their teeth; it was not yet finished, and the anger of the Lord flared against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very mighty blow." A similar episode, albeit without the tragic conclusion, had occurred following the splitting of the *Yam Suf*: then, too, the Jews had complained and invidiously compared their stay in Egypt with its fleshpots and bread to their current situation of starvation. *Chazal* contrast the people's legitimate need for bread with their problematic demand for meat: bread (unlike meat) is an essential need, and the people actually possessed plenty of livestock (which they could have used to satisfy any legitimate craving for meat - *Sifrei ibid.* #86, *Yoma* 75a-b).

Our tradition generally does allow the consumption of meat. It is almost unanimous, however, that this permission was granted to Noah and his descendants upon their disembarkation from the Ark, whereas antediluvian humanity was forbidden to consume meat (*Sanhedrin* 59b, *Ramban Bereishis* 1:29, but see *Ralbag ibid.*)

Some (although certainly not all) thinkers understand this to imply that vegetarianism is actually the ideal. The *Sefer Ha'Ikarim* (3:15) asserts that the killing of animals involves great cruelty and wrath, and the inculcation of bad character traits, and the consumption of meat causes harm to one's soul. He explains that the consumption of meat was allowed merely out of necessity and as a concession to the evil inclination, [and] to forestall the terrible error that had become prevalent in the antediluvian era (and has been revived today by contemporary philosophical advocates of vegetarianism such as Peter Singer) that there is no significant difference between man and beast, and all are subject to the law of the jungle.

Similarly, the Abarbanel (*Devarim* Ch. 14) explains that vegetation is the ideal food for man, conducive to his physical and spiritual health, while meat has the opposite effects. Adam's loftier nature was sensitive to these influences, and he was therefore prohibited to consume meat, whereas Noah and his children, due to the viciousness of their natures, would not be any worse off by its consumption, and it was therefore permitted to them.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. My seven gave you eight.
2. Enlightening.
3. The *eigel* and I have something in common.
4. I was Aharon's consolation.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. We each equal fifty.
2. We are backwards.
3. We change five books into seven.
4. We divide between tragedies.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *Birkas Kohanim* (For some I am daily; for most I am Holy day; for many I am Friday night; I am three-fold.)

#2 176 (I am like Bava Basra; compare me to chapter 119; my hint is Nachshon's father; one more than Avraham's life.)

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

win

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THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
JUNE 13TH!

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.

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