



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

No Room for Mistakes

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects for the Kollel

After the Jewish people complain that they don't have water, G-d instructs Moshe to bring forth water from a rock. In the ensuing episode, Moshe errs in some fashion and is told by G-d that, as a consequence for not sanctifying G-d in the eyes of the people, Moshe would not merit to lead the Jewish people into the land of Israel. The commentators offer many interpretations as to what Moshe's sin actually was. Rashi takes the approach that Moshe erred by hitting the rock instead of speaking to it as he had been commanded. Ramban, however, disagrees on the grounds that if G-d did not want Moshe to hit the rock, he would not have commanded him, "Take your staff." Ramban therefore explains that Moshe sinned when he asked, "shall we bring forth water for you from this rock?" which implied that he and Aharon actually had the power to produce water from a rock. He should have said, "shall G-d bring forth water for you?"

The Ksav Sofer comments that Moshe certainly did not mean to imply that he and Aharon had miraculous power of their own but rather had intended that they obviously could not produce water from a rock without G-d's intervention. Nonetheless, because his words could have been misinterpreted, Moshe was punished. The Ksav Sofer explains that the need to be accurate and exact with one's words and not leave room for any misinterpretation was particularly pertinent for Moshe in his role as teacher of the Jewish people. One small error in interpreting Moshe's words could have produced drastic results.

As teachers and parents or simply role models for the next generation, we must learn from this episode about the clarity with which we must impart our tradition to the future representatives of our people. The words that we use to teach our children should be chosen carefully to not allow for misinterpretation. At times, we may also have to clarify our beliefs for ourselves through further Torah study or rabbinical guidance. We should all merit to attain clarity of understanding of our holy tradition and successfully pass it on to the next generation!

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

Bnei Yisrael arrived at Midbar Zin in the first month and the people settled in Kadesh. Miriam died there and was buried there. There was no water for the Assembly and they gathered against Moshe and Aaron (20:1-2).

Since the water ceased right after Miriam's death, it shows that all the years in the desert, Bnei Yisrael were supplied with water in Miriam's merit (Rashi).

As a reward for her waiting for Moshe at the Nile when he was placed there as a baby (Shemos 2:4), Miriam merited that Bnei Yisrael would be supplied with water in the desert (Sifsei Chachomim).

When Miriam waited by the Nile she did not supply anyone with water. So what is the mida K'neged mida that Bnei Yisrael should receive water?

In addition, when Miriam was afflicted with tzaraas, Bnei Yisrael waited for her until she healed (Behaaloscha 12:16). Rashi says that this was in merit of her waiting for Moshe at the Nile. Which reward was granted for Miriam's waiting for Moshe - a personal reward for her when Bnei Yisrael waited for her after being secluded with leprosy or a reward for Bnei Yisrael - water?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What lesson was learned from the beginning of this parsha?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How did the Kabbalas Shabbos davening trick Korach?

Answer: Korach read the posuk that states that his grandson Shmuel is listed as equal to Moshe and Aaron. This led him to believe that he was supposed to be a leader as well.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Chukas*, the Jews smite the Amorite king Sihon and his forces and take possession of his land. The Torah explains that this territory had originally belonged to the king of Moab, and had previously been taken from him in battle by Sihon (21:23-26). [The narrative in *Sefer Shoftim* (11:12-27) read as the *haftarah* of *parashas Chukas* implies that territory originally belonging to Ammon had also been captured from Sihon.]

The Talmud (*Gittin* 38a) declares: "Ammon and Moab were purified via Sihon" - although we are enjoined from "distressing" the nations of Ammon and Moab (*Devarim* 2:9,19), the seizure of territory originally belonging to Ammon and Moab was nevertheless permissible, since Sihon had duly taken over ownership of the territory by capturing it from those nations. The fact that Sihon's seizure of the territory granted him title to it is thus a source for a *halachic* "right of conquest." The same Talmudic discussion proceeds to cite another such source, also from *parashas Chukas*: the Torah relates (21:1) that the Canaanite king of Arad "warred against Israel and took a captive from it." The Torah's recognition of the captive as belonging to the king implies that he had duly acquired title to the captive.

R. Avraham Dov-Ber Kahana Shapiro suggests that this right of conquest is the fundamental principle from which the legislative authority of sovereign governments, recognized by *halachah* under the principle of *dina de'malchusa dina* ["the law of the government is the law"], derives. Since a conquering power acquires title to the subjugated territory and people, it follows that it can do with them as it wills (*Shut. Devar Avraham* 1:1:5-6).

R. David ibn Zimra (the Radvaz), on the other hand, assumes the inverse relationship between the right of conquest and the rule of *dina de'malchusa dina*: it is the latter principle that legitimizes the conqueror's right to the territory and people that it subjugates. Since it is the custom of kings to seize territory from each other, and it is their law that when they do so, the subjugated real estate and people become the sovereign's property, the principle of *dina de'malchusa dina* applies and legitimizes the conqueror's right to these spoils (*Shut. Radvaz* 3:968).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am a medical sign.
2. The attacker healed.
3. My end was powder.
4. I made them look up.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am similar to Esav.
2. I confused King Shlomo.
3. There have been 9.
4. There will be a 10th.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 The mouth of the ground that Korach is in (With this you shall know; I was a new creation; Steaming; I got a mouthful.)

#2 Reuven (I was the neighbor; I am the firstborn; See son; I am not groovin', rather...)

Congratulations to
Betzalel Komarow

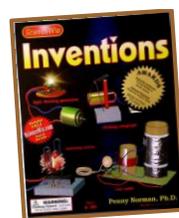
and others for answering last week's questions correctly!

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.

THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
AUGUST 22nd.

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

Win a



Science
Inventions
Kit!

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

In conjunction with Young Israel Shomrai Emunah, Greater Washington Community Kollel invites men and women of the community to join us for a lecture by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman:

International Arms Trade: The Responsibility of Governments in Arms Control

This Jewish Ethics Lecture takes place Sunday, July 9th, at 9:30 am at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah.

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