



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Judging the Fruit by its Basket?

from our 2013 archives

The mitzvah of Bikkurim marked a particularly joyous time of the year, as Jews from every corner of the Land would bring the first fruits of their crop to the Beis Hamikdash and present them to the Kohein. There they would proclaim their gratitude to G-d for His bounty and the precious Land that He gave them. The Talmud in Bava Kama relates that the wealthy would nest their fruits in baskets of gold and silver, while the indigent employed baskets of reed. The Kohein would take the basket from the owner and accept the fruit as a gift. But while he would return the ornate basket to the wealthy pilgrim, he would retain the reed basket of the impoverished man. Why the discrepancy in custom and what lesson does it teach us?

Rabbi Aharon Bakst offers the following explanation: The rich man's fruit were likely lush and beautiful. The Kohein therefore accepted the fruit and returned the basket. The poor man's fruit, on the other hand, were likely deficient and inferior. Removing the fruit from the basket might cause the poor donor shame and embarrassment. To preserve his dignity, the Kohein accepted the fruit together with the basket, thus keeping the fruit hidden inside.

In *Darchoi Mussar*, Rabbi Yaakov Niman offers another insight. Ostensibly, the wealthy man arranged his fruit in a gilded basket to honor the mitzvah of Bikkurim. Nevertheless, it is also likely that the gold basket represented some degree of pride, perhaps even haughtiness, regarding his ornate gift and the wealth that it represented. Accordingly, the Kohein accepted the fruit, the fundamental mitzvah, but not the basket in which it was delivered; pride and arrogance have no place in G-d's Temple. In contrast, the indigent pilgrim, with his simple reed basket, came before Hashem humbly and with a heart full of only gratitude. A gift given in such a manner was accepted completely, both fruit and basket alike.

These two lessons are of special importance as we near the days of Rosh Hashanah. We must be careful to protect the feelings of those around us and make every effort to preserve their dignity. It is also essential that we approach G-d humbly and with a heart full of gratitude, devoid of any self-pride. Conducting ourselves in such a manner towards our fellow man and G-d will serve as a great merit for us to be granted a year of health, happiness, and blessing.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

But if you do not listen to the voice of Hashem ... then all these curses will come upon you and overtake you. (28, 29)

Rebbi said, "Come and see the difference between the conduct of Hashem and of humans. Hashem blessed Bnai Yisroel with twenty two blessings and cursed them with eight curses. Moshe, however, blessed them with eight blessings and cursed them with twenty two curses. (Bava Basra 88b)

Why would Moshe withhold blessing from the Jewish people, while adding curses?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What letter does not appear in the parsha of Bikkurim?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Where is there a hint in this week's parsha to the minhag that a man begins wearing a tallis only after he gets married?

Answer: The Torah juxtaposes the posuk discussing the mitzva of tzitzis next to the posuk that discusses a man getting married (22, 12-13). This is to allude to the fact that there is a tzitzis garment that is only worn after marriage. (Tashbatz)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Ki-Savo*, the Torah (26:12) references "the third year, which is the year of tithing". The uniqueness of the third year with respect to tithes is that while in other years, the "first tithe" is given to the Levite and the "second tithe" is eaten by the tither himself in Jerusalem, in the third year (i.e., years three and six of the seven year *shemita* cycle) the second tithe is given to the poor (and is instead called "the tithe of the poor" - see Rambam *Hilchos Matnas Ani'im* 6:2-3).

While the tithes explicitly mentioned in the Biblical text are all predial, the Rabbinic tradition discusses the tithing of income in general (*maaser kesafim* - see *Tosafos Taanis* 9a s.v. *Aser Te'aser*). There is considerable dispute as to whether this tithe is Biblically mandated, Rabbinically mandated, or merely an appropriate custom (*Shut. Maharam b. Baruch* [Prague] #74; *Bach YD siman* 249; *Taz ibid.* s.k. 32; *Shut. Chavos Yair* #224; *Birkei Yosef ibid.* s.k. 3; *Shut. Tzitz Eliezer* 9:1:1).

Additionally, there is wide divergence among *halachic* authorities over the portion of income that is subject to the tithe. Some allow the deduction of all expenses, even household ones, while others permit only the deduction of business expenses. Some allow the deduction of all taxes, while others permit only the deduction of income taxes and business related taxes (see *Birkei Yosef ibid.* s.k. 19; *Shut. Igros Moshe YD* 1:143; *Shut. Shevet Ha'Levi* 5:133:4:8; *Shut. Tzitz Eliezer* 10:6; *Shut. Yechaveh Daas* 3:76).

Yet another debate exists as to whether one may spend his tithes on his children's maintenance. Some note that the Talmud calls the support of one's children (above six years old) "charity", and therefore conclude that this is a valid use of charity funds, whereas others reject this argument (see *Maharam ibid.* #75; *Taz ibid.* s.k. 1; *Birkei Yosef ibid.* s.k. 18; *Igros Moshe ibid.*; *Shut. Tzitz Eliezer* 9:1:4-5).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am caused by the first.
2. I am part of the 'order'.
3. History is my essence.
4. I am loud.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Confess for me.
2. I am ten, but do not daven with me.
3. I am holy.
4. I cause blessing.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Tzitzis (For some I am only small; for some I am also big; I'm not punished, even though I'm in the corner; I may be *shatnez*.)

#2 Parshas Zochor (You heard me 6 months ago; once d'oraisa; tzeirei or segol; remember.)

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

Win a
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ARCADE SET



Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Congratulations to Naphtali Tzvi Graham 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!

THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
OCTOBER 17TH.

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