



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Relax and Smell the Roses

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

This week's Parsha contains the distressing account of the sale of Yosef, by his brothers, to an Ishmaelite caravan. The Torah describes how this Ishmaelite caravan had "camels bearing spices, balsam, and lotus." (37:25) Rashi, citing the midrash, explains that the Torah deliberately mentioned the type of merchandise they were carrying to teach us the reward for the righteous – for Arab merchants normally sell naphtha and tar which smell foul, yet in Yosef's case they were carrying good smelling spices.

One can only imagine the tremendous pain and sorrow that Yosef must have felt as he was carried away in that caravan. After being thrown in a pit by his brothers and then hurriedly sold to some passing merchants on their way to a foreign land, would Yosef have really noticed or cared what his surroundings smelled like?

Rav Mattisyahu Solomon explains that by recording that this caravan was laden with good smelling spices, in addition to teaching us "the reward for the righteous," the Torah is also testifying to Yosef's tremendous level of *bitachon* (trust in G-d). In order for Yosef to have benefited from the fragrant aromas being carried to him with the breeze, he would have had to have been in a relaxed and tranquil state. After undergoing such challenging experiences, such a state of tranquility could only be achieved through an unparalleled level of trust in G-d that everything that happened to him was for a purpose and part of G-d's master plan. Indeed, after Yosef has become the viceroy in Egypt and has been able to provide food to save his family, he tells his brothers, "Although, you intended me harm, G-d intended it for good." (50:20) What our verse demonstrates, however, is that Yosef was able to feel this sentiment not only after everything "worked out" but even at the very beginning of an apparently dire situation. Even then, Yosef was able to put his trust in G-d and move forward calmly and patiently.

Putting our trust in G-d can help us navigate both the smooth and bumpy portions of our lives while maintaining our composure and our dignity. Through prayer and diligent Torah study we can develop a closer connection with G-d, thereby learning to trust that He has a plan and all that happens is for a purpose. As a result, we will be able to achieve serenity in our lives, which in turn will allow us to recognize and enjoy the many blessings that G-d bestows upon us.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

When the Jews defeated their enemies on the twenty fifth of Kislev, they entered the *Bais HaMikdash* (Temple) and couldn't find any oil that was not *tamei* (ritually impure). One jug was found, which was only enough to burn for one night. Hashem created a miracle and it burned for eight nights. (Rambam Chanukah 3, 2)

If most of the Jewish people are *tamei*, a *tamei* may perform the service in the *Bais HaMikdash*, even though it is generally forbidden for a *tamei* to perform the service. (Pesachim 79a)

Everything had become *tamei* when the Greeks ransacked the *Bais HaMikdash*. Since *tamei* items may be used in the *Bais HaMikdash* when the majority of the Jewish people are *tamei*, why did the Jews have to search for oil that was not *tamei*?

PARSHA RIDDLE

How many times did Yosef's coat cause him to be thrown into a pit? When?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What was the name of Rivka's mother?

Answer: Devora (Midrash Aggada)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Vayeishev contains the episode of Yosef and Potiphar's wife. At the climax of her continuous, repeated attempts to bend Yosef to her will, she physically seizes Yosef by his garment. He abandons it to her and flees, and she then brazenly accuses him of having assaulted her! Potiphar responds by throwing Yosef in jail (39:7-20). Various *midrashim* explain that Potiphar did not actually believe his wife's accusation. Had he believed her, he would surely have executed Yosef! He nevertheless felt compelled to jail Yosef, to cover up the scandal that would have otherwise besmirched his family (*Chizkuni* 39:20, and see *Torah Sheleimah* #118). The *midrashim* add that the Egyptian priests were instrumental in demonstrating Yosef's innocence, by pointing out forensic evidence supporting his (truthful) account of the incident and refuting her (false) one, and that this was the reason for Yosef's later generosity toward them during his tenure as viceroy during the famine years (47:22 – see *Tur* there and *Torah Sheleimah* #58).

This episode highlights a problem faced by judicial systems: how to ascertain the truth of such accusations, which concern incidents that by their very nature typically occur in private, and will not generally have been observed by credible, impartial witnesses. *Halachic* standards of evidence generally require the testimony of two valid witnesses even in civil cases, and certainly in criminal ones. How, then, are we to establish the guilt of predators who commit crimes of this nature?

One interesting and powerful doctrine is articulated by R. Zalman Nechemia Goldberg. He argues that the Torah's requirement of actual eyewitness testimony, and concomitant rejection of circumstantial evidence, is limited to the conviction of criminals and the imposition of punishment after the fact. Where our concern is the forestalling of the perpetration of future crimes, these strict requirements do not apply, and we may rely on compelling circumstantial evidence (*umdna*) to determine that a particular individual poses a danger to society, and to take the necessary action to prevent such harm. He thus allows the reporting of apparent child abusers to the authorities, even in the absence of explicit testimony to their guilt by two valid witnesses, as long as there exists compelling circumstantial evidence to that effect, and there is no other way to ensure the public safety (*Yeshurun* #15 p. 655).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Moshe removed me.
2. I was barter.
3. Twice I am forbidden.
4. I am said to flies.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am 36.
2. With service I am 44.
3. 30 is my timing.
4. I am hot.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *The Gid HaNesheh* (Tasteless; boneless; eatless; I am not Gad.)

#2 400 (I am Taf, Rav Preida's repetition; exile to Egypt; I frighten this week.)

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

Win a
LASER PEGS
HELICOPTER SET



Congratulations to Meir Herman 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!

THE NEXT RAFFLE WILL BE DECEMBER 26th.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Upcoming Events

GWCK Chanukah Celebration ~ inspiring words of Torah, delicious hot Chanukah refreshments, live music, spirited dancing, a magical performance for the kids, and much more! Free admission. Wednesday, Dec 13 at 7:00pm at GWCK, 10900 Lockwood Dr.

Redefining Truth: When a Falsehood Fits the Definition of Truthfulness ~ a Jewish Ethics Lecture by Rabbi Moshe Walter Sunday, December 10 at 9:30am, YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave.

Lunch and Learn at BECO with Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman. "Betting and Speculating: From the Strip to the Street" Tuesday, December 12, 12:45 - 1:30pm at BECO Building West ~ Bet Medrash, 2nd floor 5410 Edson Lane ~ Rockville, MD. Complimentary lunch will be served. RSVP required to info@gwckollel.org