



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel

From our archives

We all know the axiom, "you don't get a second chance to make a first impression." Nowhere is this more evident than the job interview. It is crucial for the interviewee to make a good impression, and he has only this one opportunity to share his pedigree, demonstrate his various skills, and strike a rapport with the potential employer. A successful interview usually requires research beforehand to discover the corporate culture and learn the company jargon, all in order to enable the interviewee to ingratiate himself with the potential suitor.

As our Parsha begins, Yosef is still imprisoned in an Egyptian jail. Separated from his beloved father as a mere teenager, sold into slavery by his own brothers, and unjustly accused and incarcerated for a heinous crime he did not commit, Yosef is now presented with a chance for freedom. Paroh, King of Egypt, has a vivid dream that he senses is fraught with meaning and import, but all the King's wise men and advisers are unable to decode it. The Royal Butler, having experienced firsthand Yosef's prowess in dream interpretation two years earlier, steps forward and tells of Yosef and his skills to Paroh. Yosef is hurriedly taken from the jail, prepared for the royal audience, and presented to the King. Yosef's chance at liberty, wealth, and prestige is at hand, if only he can effectively ingratiate himself to the powerful King.

Unlike modern interviews where the potential employee must perfect the art of self-promotion, Yosef takes a decidedly different approach. When Paroh tells Yosef of his reputation as a skilled interpreter of dreams, Yosef responds "it is not my wisdom, rather G-d will answer regarding Paroh's welfare." Not only does Yosef not take credit for his skill, he wholly and definitively ascribes credit to G-d. Later, after Paroh relates his dream, Yosef begins his interpretation with the words "what G-d is about to do, He has related to Paroh," once again invoking G-d and His powers. And just to make sure the message was clear, Yosef twice more invokes G-d and His guiding role in relaying advice concerning Egyptian affairs.

After failing to adequately promote himself to ensure his liberty, what was the end result of the royal interview? The verses following Yosef's interpretation provide the answer:

Paroh said to his servants: "Will we be able to find a man like this, who has the spirit of G-d within him?" Paroh then said to Yosef: "Since G-d has made all this known to you, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace and by your word shall all my people be sustained; only by the throne shall I outrank you." Then Paroh said to Yosef "Look, I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt." Paroh then removed his ring from his hand and put it on Yosef's hand. ... Thus, he appointed him over the entire land of Egypt. Then Paroh said to Yosef "I am Paroh; but without you no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."

Not bad! Yosef deflected any credit from himself and directed it to G-d instead. Paroh rewarded him with not only his freedom, but made him Viceroy and ruler over Egypt!

Whether we are searching for employment, making an effort to secure or enhance our livelihood, or attempting any important endeavor, we may think it expedient to adopt the customs and values of the people around us. The Torah reminds us otherwise. When we remain true to our timeless values and eternal morals, not only will we merit G-d's Divine assistance, we will be recognized and appreciated as a person rooted in unshakable principles, transcending the protean and mutable values of society.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and Chanuka!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

What is Chanuka? The Rabbis taught that on the twenty-fifth day of Kislev... when the Greeks had entered the temple, they defiled all the jugs of oil. When the Chashmonayim were victorious, they searched and found only one jug of oil that had the seal of the Kohen Gadol (testifying to its purity). (Shabbos 21b)

These were the officers in the Bais HaMikdosh... Yochanan ben Pinchos of the seals. (Shekalim 5:1)

From the Mishna in Shekalim we see that the Kohen Gadol was not in charge of the seals - so why was his seal on the jug?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What hint is there in Parshas Mikeitz (*which is almost always read on Chanuka*) about Chanuka?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: 1) His brother's jealousy of his coat caused him to be thrown into the pit. 2) When he left his coat with the wife of Potiphar she used it to have Yosef thrown into jail, which was a pit.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Mikeitz* (44:15), when Joseph's agent "finds" his cup in Benjamin's sack, he reproves his brothers: "And Joseph said unto them, 'What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that such a man as I can certainly divine?'" The sense of the word "divine" in this context is unclear; the Ibn Ezra (44:5) explains Joseph to be asserting that he had deliberately given the brothers the opportunity to steal the cup by placing it before them and taking his eye off it, as a test to ascertain whether they were thieves.

It is debatable whether the *halachah* permits such tests. The *Torah Lishmah* (#407) forbids them, arguing that they violate the prohibition against placing a stumbling block before the blind, which the Rabbinic tradition understands to forbid the provision of an opportunity to sin to someone who may succumb to temptation. Even if the tester were to secretly transfer in advance to the potential thief the ownership of the property that he is giving him the opportunity to steal, so no actual theft will be committed, the test is still prohibited, since as long as the would-be thief is ignorant of this arrangement, his intent is sinful, and it is an established *halachic* principle that an act undertaken with sinful intent is automatically sinful even if it turns out that no actual sin has been committed.

The contemporary work *Mishpetei Hatorah* (1:78), however, while conceding that such tests are indeed problematic where the goal is merely to diagnose and thereby improve the character of the one being tested, nevertheless permits them where the goal is to reveal the character of a potential thief in order to avoid falling victim to theft. It infers this from a Talmudic passage that implies that even an act that apparently violates the literal sense of the prohibition against placing a stumbling block before the blind is permitted as a means to forestall the theft of one's property.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Sometimes I am holiday.
2. This year I am not.
3. My fate is thirty caused.
4. I am three on the third.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Wheat
2. Cows
3. Stars
4. Something foolish within

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Shoes (Moshe removed me; I was barter; twice I am forbidden; I am said to flies.

#2 Chanuka Candles (I am 36; with service I am 44; 30 is my timing; I am hot)

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



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.

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