



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

It's All About Consistency

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

The beginning of this week's *Parsha* features the story of Yehuda's plea to Yosef not to enslave Binyamin for having stolen Yosef's goblet, leading to the dramatic scene of Yosef revealing himself to his brothers. Yosef expresses his climactic revelation with the words, "I am Yosef. Is my father still alive?" The question, "Is my father still alive?" seems strange, as Yehuda had made it clear in the conversation preceding Yosef's revelation that their father was, in fact, alive. The *Beis Haleivi* provides a fascinating interpretation of the true intent behind Yosef's question. Yehuda had just finished pleading with Yosef to allow Binyamin to return to his father because his father would die if Binyamin didn't return. Yosef therefore responds, "I am Yosef. Is my father still alive?". In other words, "Where was the concern over our father's well being when you sold *me* down to Egypt, separating me from my father? Can he possibly be alive still after going through that experience?"

The *Beis Haleivi* goes on to explain that the words of Yosef contain an important lesson for each of us. It is common for us to rationalize our behavior when our actions fall short of what is expected of us. We may not realize, however, that our own behavior in other situations may contradict our excuses. For instance, a person may not give charity because he or she "can't afford it", yet has deep pockets when it comes to lavish vacations and fancy restaurants.

Let us take the lesson of Yosef and always ensure that our actions are consistent. We should give thought that our actions are truly a reflection of our values and that our investment in the performance of *mitzvos* and avoidance of sin is at least on par with the efforts that go into our personal pursuits.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos !

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

And to his (Yosef's) father he sent as follows... and mazon (food). (45, 23)

... From here we derive that all types of food are called mazon. (Yerushalmi Eiruvim 3, 1)

If one recited a "Borei Minei Mezonos" on almonds he has not fulfilled his obligation of reciting a bracha. (Rav Akiva Eiger Berochos 36b)

If all types of food are called mazon, why aren't almonds included?

PARSHA RIDDLE

How long did Serach bas Asher live?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: 1) The small cows ate the large cows hints to the weak conquering the strong. 2) The amount of words in Mikeitz is 2025. The gematria of ner is 52, multiplied by eight nights equals 2000. Add the date (25 Kislev) and it equals 2025.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayigash* (47:20-22), the Torah relates: "And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. ... Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands."

Governmental policies of favoritism toward the clergy have survived even to the present day, in the form of such privileges as exemptions from income and property taxes (as per IRS 501(c)(3) and individual state laws), and the exclusion of a "minister's" housing allowance from gross income for income tax purposes (U.S. Code Title 26 § 107).

Talmudic law has an even more sweeping rule: Torah scholars are personally exempt from all sorts of taxation (*Bava Basra* 7b-8a). Communities and governments may not assess taxes upon them, and there is a dispute over whether the community is actually obligated to indemnify Torah scholars from any taxes that a non-compliant government requires them to pay (see *Tur CM* #163).

There is also some dispute over the definition of a "Torah scholar"; R. Ovadya Yosef concludes that as a matter of normative *halachah*, a Torah scholar is one who studies Torah "in all his available time", even if he spends some time working in a profession or business in order to support himself and his family, even beyond mere subsistence, as long as the study of Torah is his primary vocation, and his work is secondary to it. (*Shut. Yabia Omer* 7:CM:10).

In addition to the general rule that Torah scholars are exempt from taxes, the Talmud asserts another principle that they are exempt from contributing toward communal security expenses, since "Torah scholars do not need protection" (*Bava Basra ibid.*), since "the Torah protects them" (*Yad Hachazakah Hilchos Shcheinim* 6:6). They must, however, contribute their share of other, non-security expenses, although there is some dispute over whether this is limited to essential needs such as potable water, or extends to any (non-security) project for the general welfare (see *Shut. Darkei Noam CM* #56; *Shut. Tzitz Eliezer* 2:25:14; R. Azarya Ariel, *Ha'im Talmidei Chachamim Pturim Mimism?*, and cf. *Zot Torat Hahesder* 12:2.)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not Avraham's father.
2. My father is not "a share".
3. My music got me long life.
4. I was the first news reporter.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the order.
2. The old like the old.
3. I am for kiddush.
4. I am for the lots day.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *The 3rd Day of Teves* (Sometimes I am holiday; this year I am not; my fate is 30 caused; I am 3 on the 3rd.)

#2 *Dreams* (Wheat, cows, stars, something foolish within.)

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 Betzalel Komarow 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

**Wednesday
Nights
with
GWCK**

For Men and Women: LINKS: One-on-one Jewish Study
8:00 PM @ The Bender JCC, 6125 Montrose Rd. Rockville, MD

For Men: Reading Responsa with Rabbi Y. Grossman
8:15 PM @ YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave.

Shivti: In - Depth Halachic Topics with Rabbi Y. Zakem and Rabbi A. Sussman
8:15 PM (Mon. - Thurs.) @ YISE

Yesodei Hatorah: Talmud Skills Building with Rabbi C. Biberfeld
8:15 PM @ GWCK, 10900 Lockwood Dr.