



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"ל

Short But Sweet

Presented by Rabbi Yisrael Glassberg, Director of Kollel Alumni

At the end of parshas Beha'alosecha, the Torah describes the uniqueness of Moshe's prophecy and his relationship with Hashem in great detail. Unlike the other prophets — including his brother, Aharon, and his sister, Miriam — Moshe always received a direct and clear message from Hashem without need for additional interpretation. In response to Miriam's criticism of Moshe for having separated from his wife Tziporah, Hashem calls Moshe a faithful servant who is trusted in His house at all times. Although Miriam had the purest of intentions, she is nonetheless afflicted with *tzara'as* (a skin condition) and quarantined for seven days.

Moshe immediately beseeches Hashem to heal Miriam from her illness. Rashi comments: Moshe's prayer was notably short — all of five words — so that the Jewish people would not say, "Your sister is in pain and you are spending a long time praying?" Rashi's comment is perplexing. What else could the nation possibly expect of their leader? Surely prayer for a normal duration should be praiseworthy!

The Ksav Sofer explains: In the normal rhythm and flow of prayer, one typically takes time to "warm up" and reach a level of sincere and heartfelt intent. The structure of our morning prayers reflects this progression, beginning with the morning blessings and continuing through the *pesukei d'zimrah* and the blessings of the *Shema*, before climaxing with the *Shemoneh Esrei*. Our Rabbis understood the need of the individual to separate from life's daily distractions, focus one's thoughts and prayers, and develop a deep sense of connection with the Creator. In contrast, the Ksav Sofer continues, Moshe demonstrated an immediate and focused empathy for his sister and needed all of five words to reach the height of efficacious prayer. His sensitivity to his sister and close connection with her enabled him to pray from the depths of his heart in an expedited fashion.

Moshe imparted a timeless lesson to us: We must strive to identify with the pain and difficulties of others, almost as if they were our own. When we truly contemplate the situation of others in need and reflect upon our ability to help through heartfelt prayer, we will be inspired to increasing levels of *kavanah* — meaningful intention. In this way, may we merit that our collective prayers will be brought before the Heavenly throne!

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Points to Ponder

Moshe cried out to HaShem, saying "Please G-d, heal her now". (12, 13)

When we beseech HaShem to heal a sick person, we use the person's mother's name. Why is this? Doesn't one's lineage follow the father, as the verse says, "...their families, to their father's household" (Naso 4, 38)?

Parsha Riddle

Who was given Manna to eat (besides the generation on the desert)?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

This week's parsha has 176 verses. What other 'holy work' has the same amount of verses? What other 'holy work' has 176 of something?

Answer: Chapter 119 in Tehillim has 176 verses. Maseches Bava Basra has 176 blatt (folios).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parshas Beha'alosecha (12:3), the Torah describes Moses as "exceedingly humble, more than any other person on the face of the earth". The Rambam understands Moses to have attained utter perfection of character generally (Shmoneh Prakim #7 and Commentary to Avos 4:4).

R. Yisrael Lipschutz relates having seen a tale involving a gifted artist in the time of Moses who painted the great man's portrait. Expert physiognomists who analyzed the portrait reported that Moses's superlative reputation notwithstanding, the portrait depicted someone "entirely wicked, arrogant, greedy, capricious, indeed suffused with every known vice". Moses affirmed the accuracy of the portrait, and explained that he was indeed naturally not virtuous, but rather inclined to all those vices, and it was only through his great effort and determination that he overcame his inclinations. "This is how I earned the glory that I now enjoy in heaven above and on earth below." (Tiferes Yisrael at the end of Kidushin, translated and discussed in Shnayer Z. Leiman, "R. Israel Lipschutz: The Portrait of Moses", Tradition, 24(4), Summer 1989, pp. 91-98).

While most of the discussion of this story consists of skepticism of its historicity and provenance, and debate over whether it is charming and inspirational, or libelous and heterodox (see Leiman *ibid.*; Zev Aharon Teller, "Moshe Rabbeinu Ve'Tzuraso Ha'Kadosh", Beis Vaad La'Chachamim, pp. 388-402), the anecdote is also cited at least once in a halachic context. With the invention of photography in the nineteenth century, halachic authorities began to consider its evidentiary value to establish a husband's death in order to allow his widow to remarry. They debated the reliability of identification via photograph, and whether it is possible for a two dimensional representation to accurately depict a three dimensional entity such as a human being. The Maharsham (*Shut. 3:256*) invokes the portrait of Moses tale in support of the (potential) accuracy of photographic representation, although he does not consider it dispositive. [See *Shut. Yabia Omer 6:EH:3:[3:]19* for a typically comprehensive analysis of the literature on this question.. R. Chaim Jachter (Gray Matter 2, p. 123 n. 16) adds that "Presumably, a beit din nowadays would need to verify that a photograph was not forged before admitting it as evidence. Otherwise, technological advances enable unscrupulous individuals to fabricate evidence."]

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

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

*Win
Ripstik!*



THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL
BE July 31st.

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I caused delay.
2. I am one of six
3. I was because of a sister's words.
4. I was snowy, but not cold.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. What's this?
2. I was seed-like.
3. You surround your challah like I was.
4. Portioned for you.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Sotah (I am not a soft drink, "Sin" or a "Samach", I bring animal food, Become wineless.)

#2 The offerings of the Nesi'im (I was a dozen of one, We were identical, yet unique, Princely gifts, We make the Parsha long.)

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!**

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