



The 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

Moshe continues to exhort the people to keep the mitzvos and avoid the temptations that would surround them in their new home. This would bring them blessing and protect them in the Land. Among Moshe's pleas, he tells the nation that G-d "does not show favor, nor does He accept bribes." It is difficult to understand the necessity for stating something so obvious. How could someone possibly think that he could bribe G-d?

Possibly, Moshe is addressing the following attitude. One might think that, because he is punctilious in the observance of the commandments between man and G-d, he is absolved from concerning himself with the welfare of his friends and neighbors. After all, he is constantly engaged in Divine service, fulfilling the mitzvos with the utmost care and devotion.

Conversely, another, who is engaged in great acts of kindness, or undertaking communal responsibilities, might think that he is pardoned from the mitzvos between man and G-d. He is caring for G-d's very children - certainly it is of little concern if he cuts some corners in the observance of Shabbos or Kashrus.

To this the Torah says that G-d does not accept "bribes." The mitzvos are not a list of do's and don'ts to be bartered and traded. Rather, G-d, in His infinite wisdom, gave us the mitzvos, each one of which is necessary and imperative for our fulfillment - both individually and collectively. Only when we fully embrace the Torah do we merit to truly be G-d's "children."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

Your garments did not wear out while on you and your foot did not swell, these forty years. (Eikev 8, 4)

They did not swell like dough, in the manner of those who go barefoot, whose feet are swollen. (Rashi)

I led you for forty years in the wilderness; your garments did not wear out while on you, and your shoe did not wear out from on your feet. (Ki Savo 29, 4)

From the verse in Eikev (according to Rashi) it seems that Bnai Yisroel did not wear shoes in the desert. However, from the verse in Ki Savo it appears that they did. How do we reconcile this apparent contradiction?

PARSHA RIDDLE

How do the obligations to recite Birkas Hamazon and to daven Shacharis differ?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What day of the year is Tu B'Av compared to?

Answer: Yom Kippur

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Eikev contains the phrase (11:13): "to serve Him with all your heart." Rashi (citing *Taanis* 2a) explains that this refers to prayer. Elsewhere, the Torah commands (*Shemos* 23:25): "You shall worship Hashem, your G-d", which the Talmud (*Bava Kama* 92b) also interprets as referring to prayer (as well as the recitation of the *Shema*). Rambam combines these two Talmudic interpretations and concludes that prayer is Biblically mandated, as one of the six hundred and thirteen *mitzvos* (*Hilchos Tefilah* 1:1; *Sefer Ha'Mitzvos mitzvas aseh* #5). Ramban disagrees and maintains that the *mitzvah* of prayer is merely a rabbinic institution (*Sefer Ha'Mitzvos ibid.*).

Even Rambam concedes, however, that the Biblical *mitzvah* does not specify any particular schedule or liturgy, and the frequency and nature of prayer were originally matters of personal discretion and varied by personal ability (although one must pray at least once per day - *Kesef Mishneh*). The modern fixed schedule of three daily prayers (plus *mussaf* and *neilah* on special occasions) and formalized sequence of eighteen blessings was a later institution of Ezra and his court (*Hilchos Tefilah* 1:3-8).

It might seem, then, that the dispute between Rambam and Ramban over whether there exists a basic Biblical *mitzvah* of prayer is largely academic, since they agree that the actual form and frequency of prayer is merely rabbinic. Many *acharonim* understand, however, that there is actually a question of great practical import that hinges on this dispute: the obligation of women to pray the *shemoneh esrei* of *shacharis* and *minchah*. The Mishnah and Talmud (*Berachos* 20a-b) declare that women are obligated in prayer. According to Rambam, this clearly refers to the identical formal obligation that men have, since that is the only obligation that exists, but according to Ramban, it is possible that the Mishnah and Talmud merely mean that women are obligated in the basic Biblical *mitzvah* of prayer, but not in the rabbinically mandated form and frequency of prayer that men are (*Magen Avraham siman* 106 s.k. 2). Others, however, maintain that even Rambam agrees that women are rabbinically obligated to pray the *shemoneh esrei* of *shacharis* and *minchah* (see *Shut. Machazeh Eliyahu siman* 19 at length). [A discussion of the normative *halachah* on this question is beyond the scope of this column.]

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 a super prize

Mazel Tov to
Tuvyah
Jacobson
for winning
the latest raffle!

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am a blessing from the Torah.
2. I am not for weights.
3. I am not for sitting on.
4. I am not Birkas Kohanim.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. On me is the snake bite.
2. On me was the Og chop.
3. I was gripped by the red one.
4. I am not an eel, rather a ...

Last Week's Answers

#1 Shema (3 times a day; you cover for me; 12 said me to their elder; I am listen.)

#2 Aseres Hadibros / Ten Commandments (I am not an app, but am on tablets; I appear twice; I was commanded once; I am 10.)

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

**Answer as many as you can.
Each correct answer will entitle you
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THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
OCTOBER 9TH!

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Kollel
Classes
Resume
Sunday,
August 12th

- ☆ Sunday Kollel Brunch & Learn @ YISE: 10:00am (Rosh Chodesh Schedule)
- ☆ CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai): Mon - Thurs 8:15pm
- ☆ Spring Semester @ GWCK - Mon-Thurs 8:15pm and 9:00pm

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