



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter
From our archives

"And He brought him outside, and said: 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if you are able to count them'; and He said to him: 'So shall your offspring be!' " (15:5).

In Parshas Lech Lecha we see the early development of a Jewish nation. G-d designates Avraham to be an ambassador for His message and to father "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Avraham is commanded to leave his birthplace and travel to the Land of Israel, a place suitable to be a homeland for this spiritual mission. Moreover, G-d promises Avraham offspring, as innumerable as the stars in the heavens.

Why does G-d specifically select stars to depict Avraham's progeny? Many items too numerous to count could have been chosen.

Rabbi Simcha Wasserman relates that a powerful message is imbedded in this comparison. The greatness of Avraham's future offspring is not limited to their collective nationhood alone. Like a star, solitary and luminous in the heavens, each and every Jew is endowed with individual greatness. Just as a star shines like a brilliant gem ensconced in its own precious setting, so too every Jew has his or her own unique value and mission.

This perspective is of dual consequence to us. It teaches of the care and sensitivity we must have for our fellow Jew and of the value in helping him or her, as each person is a wondrous world unto themselves. It also reminds us of our own vast potential and unique mission, for we too may be a universe not fully discovered.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Please say you are my sister that it may go well for me ... (12, 13)

They will give me gifts. (Rashi)

But to the children of Avraham's concubines, Avraham gave gifts... (25, 6)

That which was given to him with regard to Sarah...he gave all to them, for he did not want to benefit from them. (Rashi)

If Avraham did not want to benefit from them, why did he desire them originally? Furthermore, Avraham refused the spoils from the king of Sodom even though he was entitled to them. If so, why did Avraham want to accept gifts from the king of Mitzrayim?

Parsha Riddle

Why are the tallis and tefillin worn specifically at Shacharis?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which animal does not uproot its food from the ground on Shabbos?

Answer: A Yonah/Dove

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Lech-Lecha, when Avram is about to enter Egypt, he requests of his wife Sarai that she say that she is his sister (12:13). According to the midrash, this was merely Avram's fallback plan; he actually attempted to smuggle Sarai into Egypt by hiding her inside a box, but was forced by customs inspectors to open the box (Bereishis Rabbah 40:5).

A famous account of an attempt to smuggle women past border officials by dissembling about their relationships to the smugglers appears in the seventeenth century work Shut. Chavos Yair (#182). Two men were traveling from Frankfurt to Worms, and two women, one married with her husband in Worms, and the other her single daughter, wished to make the same journey. The women lacked the requisite travel documents, without which they would be subject to a fine at the checkpoint in Oppenheim, so they asked the men to declare them as their wife and daughter respectively, since the mens' documents allowed them to travel freely with their wives and family members. At the checkpoint, the customs official refused to believe the mens' declarations, and insisted that they swear to their veracity, or else prove their kinship by kissing the women. The men replied that they could not kiss the women, since they were currently niddah, a fact that the women confirmed. After some further negotiation, the men eventually settled with the customs agent for a minimal sum, but one of them subsequently reported the episode to the author of Chavos Yair, who penned an analysis of the relevant halachic issues.

He concludes that since the men had been attempting to deceive the official, who was appropriately carrying out his duty by investigating their claims, it was prohibited for them to kiss the women or even to swear that the women were niddah based upon their representations, even if they were afraid that by failing to do so they would suffer financial harm, and it was certainly prohibited for them to falsely swear to their kinship, even to avoid a great loss.

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
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#1 WHO AM I?

1. My name is Name.
2. I was a Rosh Yeshiva.
3. I was king in Yerushalayim.
4. I got a tenth.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was a bris.
2. Yet, I was not on the eighth day.
3. I cause sleep.
4. I caused splitting.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Tzohar (Jewel or window that provided light for the Teivah)

(I may have been a window, I may have been the first light bulb, I did not need electricity, Don't confuse me with the Zohar.)

#2 Yonah (Dove) (You sing about me, I could be your name, I was not swallowed by a fish, I discovered dry land.)

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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RAFFLE WILL BE
December 18.

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