



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Dusting Off

Presented by Rabbi Yisrael Glassberg, Director of Alumni

Immediately after his circumcision, Avraham embraces the next opportunity to invite guests and welcomes three angels into his home. Prior to their entry, Avraham commands them to wash their feet. He suspected they were Arabs who worshiped the dust of the earth and insisted that the symbol of idolatry be removed. Rashi contrasts Avraham's behavior with that of Lot, detailed later in the parsha. Lot too welcomes in the angels that were sent to inform him of Sdom's impending doom, although he does not insist that they wash before coming into his home because he had a lax attitude toward idol worship.

Reb Yeruchem Levovitz points out that Rashi seemingly excuses Lot's behavior later on in the Parsha. Rashi writes (19:2) that Lot specifically wanted his guests to keep the dust on their feet, fearing that the people of Sdom would detect that he had visitors, a violation of the wicked country's policy of not performing acts of kindness. By allowing the guests to enter without washing, he would be able to claim that they had just arrived, thereby avoiding the wrath of his neighbors.

Reb Yeruchem explains that had Lot shared the same level of commitment to monotheism as Avraham, he would have been willing to accept the risk of being caught by the people of Sdom, rather than tolerate idolatry in his home. While Lot grew up in Avraham's home and adopted Avraham's beliefs, he buckled under pressure and was unable to maintain those beliefs when faced with a difficult test. Avraham, on the other hand, was an immutable force when it came to his mission of adhering to belief in Hashem and spreading that belief to others at all costs. He survived being thrown into a fiery furnace and left his homeland to follow in the ways of Hashem, passing all of the tests that Hashem sent his way.

There are moments in our lives when our core principles and beliefs are tested. Throughout the ages we have had to dig deep into the recesses of our hearts and souls and muster the strength and courage to defend those beliefs. Avraham demonstrated that not only is it possible for us to live our lives based on our principles, but we can thrive and flourish despite all odds. May Hashem give us all the strength to live by the Torah and mitzvos that we treasure so dearly.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

He took cream and milk and the calf that he made and placed these before them...and they ate. (18, 8)

They appeared as if they ate. (Rashi)

Avraham fed them meat and milk together. When Hashem wanted to give the Torah to Bnai Yisroel, the angels complained that the Torah should be kept in Heaven. Hashem responded, "In the Torah it is written, 'do not eat meat and milk together'. When you descended to earth, you ate meat and milk together, as it says, "He took cream and milk and the calf which he made and placed these before them." The angels were humbled and agreed with Hashem. (Medrash Socher Tov 8)

If the angels only appeared to be eating but did not eat, how do we understand Hashem's response to the angels?

Parsha Riddle

From where, in this parsha, do we learn the importance of Bikur Cholim?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why are the tallis and tefillin worn specifically at Shacharis?
Answer: We merited the Mitzvah of Tallis and Tefillin as reward for Avraham denying strings and straps from the King of Sodom. Since Avraham instituted the tefilla of Shacharis we wear these mitzvos then. (Meshech Chochmo)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parshas Vayeira, when Avimelech 'took' Sarah, Hashem ordered him to return her: "But now, return the man's wife for he is a prophet." (Bereishis 20:7) What is the relevance of Avraham's status as a prophet to the command to return Sarah? R. Elyahu Ragoler cites a midrash (see Torah Shleimah ibid. #39) that explains that since Avraham was a prophet, he knew that Avimelech had not touched Sarah.

R. Ragoler introduces this midrash in the course of his analysis of an incident that he heard of "a great, famous chassid", who utilized his ruach ha'kodesh to identify a non-kosher bird that had become intermingled with kosher ones, by recognizing the impure spirit that accompanied it, thereby permitting the other birds. R. Ragoler is not convinced of the legitimacy of relying upon supernatural perception and Divine communication to establish realia in halachic contexts. In the course of his discussion, he initially attempts to infer from the aforementioned midrash that it is indeed legitimate to do so: Avraham was a kohein, and would therefore have been prohibited from taking back his wife once she had been seized by the king, due to the possibility that she had been raped, were it not for his reliance upon his ruach ha'kodesh to ascertain that she had not been touched.

He subsequently counters this argument by suggesting that Avraham was not relying upon a specific communication from Hashem regarding her encounter with Avimelech, but rather upon His prior promise that Sarah would bear his child, something that would be impossible were she to become prohibited to him. [I am not entirely sure why this would not still constitute reliance upon Divine communication for the establishment of realia.]

Additionally, he proposes that only subsequent to the giving of the Torah are we barred from relying upon Divine communication to determine halachah, due to the principle that the Torah is "not in Heaven", but prior to the giving of the Torah to terrestrial man, it was indeed in Heaven, and it was therefore permitted to rely upon Divine communication. (Shut. Yad Elyahu #43)

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
Mibro Really Rad Robot



#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not Talmud Bavli.
2. I was turned upside down.
3. I was home to cruelty.
4. I was one of five.

#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 Shem/Malkitzedek (My name is Name, I was a Rosh Yeshiva, I was king in Yerushalayim, I got a tenth.)

#2 Bris Bein Habesarim (Covenant Between the Parts) (I was a bris. Yet I was not on the eighth day, I caused sleeping, I caused splitting.)

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 18.

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