



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"ל

The Work of a Lifetime

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

Our Parsha begins with the story of the death and burial of Sarah, which our Sages teach us occurred immediately following the story of *Akeidas Yitzchak*, the Binding of Isaac. Our Sages also teach us that Hashem tested Avraham with ten major tests throughout his lifetime. According to some commentaries, Sarah's death and Avraham's ordeal in obtaining a proper burial plot for her was one of those tests. This begs the following question: Avraham had just passed what would seem to be the ultimate test, bringing his son, Yitzchak, as an offering to Hashem. Why would Hashem subject Avraham to yet another test, and immediately after this last test?

Perhaps one explanation relates to the very purpose of life. Hashem put us in this world in order to grow and strive towards perfection. So long as we are growing, we are accomplishing the purpose of our existence and as long as we remain in this world there is still more growth for us to achieve. Perhaps the message that Hashem was imparting to Avraham by giving him this new challenge, and so soon after *Akeidas Yitzchak*, was that as great as his accomplishment was, there is no time for sitting on one's laurels. As long as life goes on, there is more to accomplish.

Our lives are filled with challenges. Not a day goes by that we are not tested in some way, and sometimes the tests that come our way are far from easy. We must remember, however, that these challenges are given to us by Hashem as conduits for us to grow. They make us who we are, and they enable us to accomplish our life's mission. Hashem knows that we can do it – it's up to us to realize it as well.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Then the servant took ten camels of his master's camels... (24:10)

They were noticeably different, and recognized as Avraham's camels. They were muzzled in order that they not eat from the property of other people. (Rashi)

Rebbi Pinchos ben Yair's donkey would not eat food that was not tithed (Chulin 7b), because of the influence of Rebbi Pinchos ben Yair. Why would Avraham's camels be any different? Why would they eat from stolen goods?

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In the course of Avraham's negotiations to purchase the Cave of Machpelah from Ephron, he declares: "I give the price of the field, accept it from me (nasati kesef ha'sadeh, kach mi'meni)." (23:13)

The very first words of the mishnah in Tractate Kiddushin are: "A woman is acquired [by, i.e., becomes betrothed to, a man to be his wife] in three ways ... She is acquired through money [kesef] ..." The Talmud cites various derivations for the law that betrothal [in Talmudic terminology, erusin or kiddushin] can be effected by money, including one that links the Biblical verse describing marriage to Avraham's offer to Ephron: "'When a man takes [ki yikach] a woman ...' [in this verse, the term] taking is only with money. And so it says: 'nasati kesef ha'sadeh, kach mi'meni.'" (Kiddushin 4b)

The mishnah and Talmud add that kesef is not limited to silver or currency; betrothal can be effected by any goods or even services, as long as they are worth at least a prutah (a small copper coin). (Kiddushin ibid. (2a) and 63a) For at least half a millennium, however, it has been customary to betroth with a ring, and Rema notes that a reason for this can be found in the Zohar. (Shulchan Aruch EH 27:1) A gold ring is commonly used (see Nitei Gavriel Hilchos Nisuin 21:2), although some authorities prefer silver, at least in part on the grounds that Avraham's offer to Ephron, adduced by the Talmud as a basis for betrothal via money or its equivalent, specifically mentions silver (kesef). When using silver, however, the bride must be duly notified of this, since the ring is conventionally gold [and the bride must be under no misapprehensions about the nature of what she is receiving]. (Shut. Levushai Mordechai 3:274, cited in Nitei Gavriel ibid.)

Money (kesef) can also be used to effect the purchase of real property (mishnah Kiddushin 26a). Interestingly, the Talmud (ibid.) derives this from a verse in Jeremiah, and not from Avraham's offer to Ephron. The Tosafos suggest that this is because the rules of purchasing may differ depending upon whether the seller is a Jew or a non-Jew.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH



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Parsha Riddle

Who was Bakol?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: Hashem visited Avraham when he was sick.

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

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

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#1 WHO AM I ?

- I was the exile in Egypt.
- I was Esav's army.
- I was Avraham's offer.
- I am sometimes called "tough."

#2 WHO AM I ?

- I raised the water.
- I returned the cloud.
- I was three.
- I am the second of four.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Gemmorah (or Sdom) (I am not Talmud Bavli, I was turned upside down, I was home to cruelty, I was one of five.)

#2 Ram's horn (I was tangled, Moshiach will use me, I don't beep, I was at Matan Torah.)

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