



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

The Best Time for *Shema*

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

"He (Yosef) appeared before him (Yaakov), fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck excessively." (46:29)

The Torah describes in detail the reunion between Yaakov and Yosef, where Yosef embraced his father and wept. There is no mention, however, that Yaakov wept. Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch explains that Yaakov had already cried so many tears over Yosef and had already fully experienced the pain and grief of their separation that there were no more tears to be shed. Yosef, on the other hand, had experienced so much turmoil and change since being sold by his brothers, he never had a chance to grieve properly over the separation from his father. It was only now, when he was finally reunited with Yaakov, that he fully realized what all those years of separation had meant to him – and therefore he cried.

Rashi, citing the Midrash, offers a different approach. The reason why Yaakov did not cry was because he was reciting the *Shema*. The commentaries grapple with this explanation. Was this the first opportunity to recite the *Shema*? If so, why wasn't Yosef reciting it as well? Was it the last possible moment? If so, why would Yaakov have delayed so long?

The Maharal explains that it was neither the first opportunity to recite the *Shema* nor the last. Rather, Yaakov was taking advantage of an auspicious moment. When Yaakov finally set eyes on Yosef, who had risen to become the viceroy of Egypt, he was overtaken by love and recognition of the goodness of G-d. Such a moment of inspiration and connection to G-d was not something that Yaakov was going to let pass without manifesting it in something concrete. So he recited the *Shema*, a prayer devoted to the acceptance of G-d's yoke, and which speaks of His Oneness and the love that each person must have for Him.

Each one of us, on occasion, will have an inspirational experience where our connection to G-d and awareness of His providence is elevated or intensified. Our forefather, Yaakov, teaches us that we must not let that moment slip away. We must find a way to translate that inspiration into action, through reciting *Shema* or by some other means, thereby making the experience more concrete and allowing it to become a part of us and remain with us moving forward.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

“I am Yosef is my father still alive?” (45:3)

“I am Yosef your brother...” (45:4)

When Yosef first introduced himself, he did not introduce himself as their brother. Why did Yosef wait until the second verse to say “I am Yosef your brother?”

Parsha Riddle

How does this week's parsha affect how we daven Shemoneh Esrei?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

For how many years were Bnai Yisrael in Mitzrayim? Where is that hinted to in the parsha?

Answer: 210. When Yaakov told his sons, “r'du” go down – the word “r'du” is the gematria of 210 (Rashi).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Vayigash relates the descent of Yaakov and his family to Egypt. While the Talmud in several places records a prohibition against leaving the Land of Israel (Gittin 76b, Kesuvos 111a, Bava Basra 91a), Yaakov's motivation for doing so was presumably at least in part due to the prevailing severe famine. [Yaakov himself declares “How great! My son Yosef still lives! I shall go and see him before I die” (45:28), but Yosef had previously urged Yaakov to emigrate on the grounds that “I will provide for you there – for there will be five more years of famine – so you do not become destitute, you, your household, and all that is yours.” (45:11)]

Severe famine is indeed one of the various dispensations given by the Talmud for leaving Israel (Bava Basra 91a), although Maimonides maintains that even in such circumstances it is not “the habit of the pious.” (midas chassidus – Hilchos Melachim 5:9) The other dispensations are the study of Torah (even if opportunities for study are available in Israel, since “a man [may] not merit to learn from anyone”), marriage (Avodah Zarah 13a), and business. (Hilchos Melachim ibid.) These latter dispensations, however, only legitimize temporary departure from Israel, not permanent emigration. (Hilchos Melachim and Kesef Mishneh ibid.)

Leaving Israel for mere “recreation” (tiul) is prohibited (Mishneh Berurah 531:14, Shut. Yechaveh Daas 5:57), although various contemporary authorities are lenient regarding “extremely brief” trips to see the natural wonders of the Creator (Shut. Sheivet Halevi 5:173), or trips for the purpose of physical and spiritual rejuvenation (R. Zalman Nechemia Goldberg, cited in Chaim Navon, Yetziah Me'Eretz Yisrael, website Daat 5767) or experiencing scenery (nofim) or culture (tarbus) not available in Eretz Yisrael. (R. Aharon Lichtenstein, cited by Chaim Navon ibid.)

Leaving Israel to visit the graves of one's ancestors or righteous individuals is the subject of dispute. Some allow this, on the grounds that this is a great mitzvah (see Sedei Chemed, beginning of Maareches Eretz Yisrael), while others forbid it, arguing that the greatest personages in our history (such as the Patriarchs [and Matriarchs]) are buried in Israel, and there cannot therefore be a mitzvah to leave Eretz Yisrael in order to visit other graves. (Mishpat Cohen #147)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. We hint to Mordechai.
2. We were each worth a fifth.
3. We were not intended for jealousy.
4. We were for the youngest.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I atone.
2. I am not a wagon.
3. I was a sign to Yaakov.
4. Death can cause me.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Twenty amos (cubits) high (For the Mavoi, I am no good, I do not work for a Sukkah, I could invalidate your Menorah, I was for the pit.)

#2 Seven (I was for the arms of the Menorah, I was for the cows, I am for Shemittah, I was for the wheat.)

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

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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.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

The Greater Washington Community Kollel and the Vaad Hfarbanim of Greater Washington invite men and women of the community to a special lecture by

Rabbi Moshe Heinemann on Kashrus Challenges of the 21st Century

Sunday, Dec 23 at 9:30am

at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah 1132 Arcola Ave.