



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

Sensing that the end of his life is drawing near, Yaakov calls for his son Yosef, the powerful viceroy of Egypt. Yaakov asks Yosef to ensure that he will not be buried in Egypt, transported instead to the Land of Israel (Canaan) and buried together with the Patriarchs and Matriarchs in Chevron. Furthermore, Yaakov asks Yosef to take an oath that he will carry out these instructions, to which Yosef readily agrees. Yaakov then prostrates himself toward the head of the bed (47:28-31). Rashi, citing the Medrash, explains that Yaakov was bowing to the Divine Presence, for as is taught in the Talmud (Shabbos 12b), the Presence of G-d attends the sick and infirm.

Why is the Divine Presence found specifically by the unwell and ailing?

Imparting an important and consequential spiritual principle, Rabbi Wolbe explains: When we recognize G-d in our lives and acknowledge that He guides us, we bring G-d closer and strengthen our attachment to Him. If we deny G-d's role, however, and attribute what occurs to us to chance, skill, or other causes, we distance and alienate ourselves from Him.

When one is successful and in good health, it is common that he does not think of G-d and fails to properly attribute his blessings to Him. He believes that his success is a product of his own acumen and wisdom. In contrast, when one is ill and vulnerable, he divests himself of the illusion of control and turns his thoughts to G-d. This new perspective provides the proper ingredient for a profound and wholesome connection to G-d.

As people with a great spiritual legacy, we need not fall prey to this common human dynamic. Instead, in wealth, in health, and in prosperity, we can recognize G-d as the source of our blessings and compound our good fortune further by bringing G-d's Presence into our lives.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

But as for me – when I came from Paddan, Rochel died ... and I buried her there...(48, 7)

And I did not even take her to Beis Lechem, to bring her into Eretz Yisroel, and I know that you have hard feelings in your heart against me. But you should know that by the word of Hashem I buried her there, so that she should be of aid to her children when Nevuzradan would exile them and they would pass by Rochel's tomb, Rochel would weep and seek mercy for them... (Rashi)

Would Rochel not beg for mercy for her children if they didn't pass her tomb? How does the fact that they will pass her tomb, add to the mercy that Rochel would seek for them?

Parsha Riddle

From when is the affliction by the Egyptians considered to have begun?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why did Pharaoh tell Yaakov's family to settle in Goshen, and not in any other part of Egypt?

Answer: Because Goshen was given to Sarah by Pharaoh in parshas Lech Lecha.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Vayechi, Yaakov asks Yosef and the rest of his sons not to bury him in Egypt, but to transport his remains out of the country and bury them in the tomb of his ancestors, in the cave of Machpelah. Similarly, Yosef later asks the children of Israel to bring his bones with them when Hashem will bring them out of Egypt to the land that He swore to Avraham, Yitzhak, and Yaakov.

The midrash and later commentaries offer various reasons for Yaakov's request, some involving a negative desire to avoid being buried in Egypt, and others involving a positive desire to be buried in the Land of Israel (Bereishis Rabbah 96:5; Ralbag). The desirability of burial in Israel is reflected in the halachah that although buried human remains may generally not be moved to another location, and even before burial they may generally not be transported out of a city with existing graves for burial in another city, they may be moved (either before or after initial burial) for burial in Israel (Shulchan Aruch YD 363:1-2).

In Yaakov's case, there are several other reasons why the prohibition of relocating human remains would not apply:

- Remains may be moved in order to bury them alongside the deceased's ancestors, since "it is pleasant for a person to rest alongside his ancestors."
- Instructions of the deceased to transport his remains (before initial burial) to another location are obeyed. Similarly, if relocation was planned at the time of the initial burial, the remains may be moved.
- If the remains are insecure (e.g., they are threatened by grave robbers or flooding), it is a mitzvah to move them. The midrash brings opinions that Yaakov was concerned about being interred in Egyptian ground since it would later (during the Plagues) be transformed into lice, or about the fact that when the dead are resuscitated, those who are buried outside Israel will suffer having to roll through subterranean tunnels to reach Israel, or about the possibility of his deification by the Egyptians (since Hashem punishes one who is worshiped as an idol as well as its worshipers). These concerns may be grounds for considering Egyptian burial sites "insecure".

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not spaced out.
2. I am for closing off.
3. Run on.
4. I am between last week and this week.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was the best land.
2. I have Ramses.
3. I contained a yeshiva.
4. I was for pasture.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Binyomin (I was for mourning, I did not bow, I had 10 sons, I am of the right)

#2 Yosef (I was now bearded, I spoke harshly, I was a dreamer, I was the gatherer of shame.)

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

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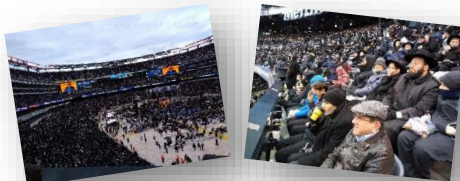
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