



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Seeing is Believing

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

"And all the people saw the sounds..." (Exodus 20:15)

In this week's parsha, the Torah describes the awe-inspiring events as the Jewish people stood at Mount Sinai to receive Hashem's Torah. In examining these verses, Chazal relate that at Mount Sinai the nation's senses of sound and sight were reversed; the people saw that which is typically heard and heard that which is typically seen. How are we to understand this phenomenon? What is the relationship between this unusual alteration of nature and the events at Mount Sinai?

The Meshech Chochmah offers an insightful explanation of Chazal's statement. Sight, he explains, is analogous to that which we consider our concrete reality. Hearing, on the other hand, refers to that with which we have an abstract, more theoretical relationship. While *before* and *after* the experience at Mount Sinai the Jewish people saw the physical world as their concrete reality and related to Hashem and spirituality in a more abstract way, this was reversed *during* the events at Mount Sinai. The nature of the event was such that it was absolutely clear at that time that Hashem is the true reality and that the material world is actually ephemeral and fleeting.

The Jewish people who stood at Mount Sinai were given a gift: if only briefly, they were able to clearly discern what is truly real in life and what is not. While we may not be able to fully relive the events of Mount Sinai, we can certainly attempt to tap into that awesome experience and incorporate those lessons into our own lives. May we always strive to remember what life is really all about: that closeness to Hashem and observance of His Torah are what is truly real and enduring.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

You shall not covet your friend's house... (20, 14)

How can the Torah command a person in regard to his thoughts and desires? (Ibn Ezra)

One does not transgress the prohibition of sachmod (coveting) his friend's house until he acquires the item he desires... but one who desires his friend's possessions transgresses the thoughts of his mind... (Rambam Gezeila 1, 9 – 10)

The Ibn Ezra's question seems out of place. The prohibition of sachmod (coveting) requires an action. Whereas the prohibition of tisava (desire) (Va'eschanon 5, 18) does not require an action.

Would it not seem more appropriate for the Ibn Ezra to ask his question in Va'eschanon, where one transgresses without an action and not in Yisro, where an action is required to transgress?

Parsha Riddle

You shall not kill... (20, 13)

How does this mitzva allude to the day of the creation of man?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which tzaddikim in our history are recorded as having split bodies of water?

Answer: Yaakov, Moshe Rabbeinu, Yeshoshua, Eliyahu HaNavi, Elisha and Rabbi Pinchos Ben Ya'ir.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Yisro contains the first version of the "Ten Commandments", the fifth of which is: "Honor your father and your mother" (kibud av va'aim). The Talmud (Kiddushin 31b) explains: "What is honor? He gives his father food and drink, dresses and covers him, and brings him in and takes him out for all his household needs." Some authorities, noting that the Talmud's examples all pertain to actual needs of the father, limit the obligation of kavod (as well as the related obligation of mora [fear]) to such cases, and maintain that there is no general imperative to obey one's father's commands where they do not concern the father's actual interests (Shut. Maharik #166; Shut. Maharam Lublin #136). Others argue that on the contrary, a child or student is certainly prohibited from flouting his father's or master's command, "for there is no diminishment of honor greater than this, that he does not care about his master's admonition." (Shut. Yad Eliyahu [Ragoler] psakim #41) A third view is that disobeying a father's command indeed does not violate the imperative of kavod, but does violate that of mora, since not listening to him is the equivalent of contradicting him, which the Talmud gives as an example of a lack of mora (Sefer Ha'Mikneh ibid.).

One of the leading proponents of the view that there is no general obligation to obey one's father's commands is R. Yosef Colon (Maharik), who advances this idea as one of several reasons that a son need not respect his father's objection to his marrying the woman that he desires. R. Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin (Netziv) maintains that Maharik would concede that a son may not enter into a marriage that will cause his father "disgrace and pain" (Shut. Meishiv Davar 2:50). R. Moshe Shternbuch, discussing a father who objected to a match between his son and a girl whose father was a "worthy Jew" (Yehudi kasher) albeit not a Torah scholar, suggests that Netziv would concede that the son is not obligated to respect his father's objection, since although the match is not prestigious, neither is it actually disgraceful (Shut. Teshuvos Ve'Hanhagos 2:445).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I contain ten.
2. I hint to 613.
3. I am double sided.
4. I have hanging letters.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. No trespassing.
2. I am a source of hate.
3. I am not a health center.
4. I am humble.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Mon (manna) (Daily, What is this? I became worms, I was for forty years.)

#2 Splitting of the Sea (I was worldwide, I was "torn," I was for passage, I am not sweet potato soup.)

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

win a super prize

Congratulations to Yonah S. on winning a Fort Building Kit!!



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
Apr 28.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Sunday Jewish Ethics Lecture Series

The Mitzvah of Emunah: What do I have to believe?

Rabbi Moshe Walter.

For men and women.

Sunday, Feb 16 at 9:30am at YISE 1132 Arcola Ave.