



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

The Greatest Gift

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

Parshas Haazinu is a song Moshe sings about Hashem, praising His majesty and His special relationship with the Jewish people. In the very beginning of the song, the verse states, "As I call out the Name of Hashem, declare the greatness of our Lord" (32:3). This verse is puzzling. As the entire song is a declaration of Hashem's greatness, what exactly was Moshe asking the people to add? Furthermore, why should Moshe's calling out Hashem's Name trigger the nation's declaration of Hashem's greatness?

Perhaps Moshe intended to give the Jewish people a message. They should realize that they always have the ability to call out to Hashem. When the Jewish people hear Moshe call out the Name of Hashem, they should understand that they too can raise themselves spiritually by connecting with Him. This precious gift, the opportunity to bond with the Divine, is one of the greatest kindnesses that Hashem has bestowed upon His people. This is what Moshe meant that they should declare Hashem's greatness - to praise Him for the gift of prayer.

A story is told about a king who was displeased with the behavior of one of his sons. After several warnings to improve, the king had no choice but to banish him from the castle. Before the prince left the palace, the king handed him a tiny sealed box. "Take this, my son," he said. "Although you are banished from the palace, this box may help you in times of dire need." The prince took the box and left. For a few years, the prince managed to survive without needing to open the sealed box and to use the riches it contained. One day, however, he was in such a desperate situation that he had no choice but to open the box. He expected to find it filled with diamonds, but, to his surprise, it contained a piece of paper folded over many times. He read the paper and burst into tears. It was a letter from the king allowing the banished prince to enter the palace and present any request directly to the king. That letter was a more precious gift than the finest jewels.

Prayer is our special "letter," allowing us to present our requests directly to the King. As we stand before Hashem this Yom Kippur, with the gates of heaven wide open, let us utilize this special gift to connect with Hashem and return to Him wholeheartedly.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a G'mar Chasima Tova!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Even though during the year we daven quietly, on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur we daven loudly, and there is no need to be concerned that this will confuse other people because they have Machzorim to daven from. (Orach Chaim 582, 9)

Someone other than the Shaliach Tzibur should blow the Shofar, in order that the Shaliach Tzibur should not get confused with the words of the davening... (Orach Chaim 585, 4)

If he is davening from a Machzor or siddur the Shaliach Tzibur can blow the Shofar, and does not need to be concerned about getting confused. (Mishneh Berurah 14)

Why with regards to davening loudly does the Shulchan Aruch assume that everyone davens from a Machzor, while in regards to the Shaliach Tzibur the Shulchan Aruch does not assume that?

Parsha Riddle

How many Shabboses are named for their Haftorah? Which ones?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How is it possible that the one who blows Shofar does not fulfill his obligation, while those who hear the Shofar from him fulfill their obligation?

Answer: 1) If the blower does not want to fulfill his obligation, he does not fulfill his obligation, while the ones listening do fulfill their obligation. 2) If the mouth of the shofar is in a cave, those outside do not fulfill their obligation because they are only hearing the echo of the shofar. However, those inside are hearing the sound of the shofar and do fulfill their obligation.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parshas Haazinu (32:7), Hashem commands: "Remember the days of yore, understand the years of generation after generation. Ask your father and he will relate it to you, your elders and they will tell you." While this verse is often invoked in support of the study of history, the halachic tradition is actually somewhat equivocal on whether the study of history is generally even permitted.

The Rambam includes under the category of works that have no purpose or benefit "chronicles of history," and condemns their study as mere waste of time. (Introduction of the Rambam to Perek Cheilek) Similarly, the Shulchan Aruch rules that it is prohibited to read "books of wars", since this constitutes "the session of scorners" (moshav leitzim). More generally, the Shulchan Aruch seems to assert a sharp dichotomy within non-Torah literature: "books of wisdom (chochmah)" are permitted during the week, and there is a dispute over whether they may be read on Shabbos, whereas all other literature is certainly prohibited on Shabbos, and even during the week due to the aforementioned concern of moshav leitzim and additional problems. (OC 307:16-17)

It is difficult to know whether this stark distinction is really to be taken at face value. R. Simcha Bunim Cohen rules that "History is not considered an area of 'wisdom.' Thus, it is categorically forbidden to read secular history works on Shabbos. ... [I]t is forbidden to read all secular material on Shabbos ... this includes secular history books ... and certainly, fictional novels." (The Shabbos Home, pp. 57-58) Similarly, the authors of Orchos Shabbos (vol. 2 p. 391) assume that history and "the science of commerce" are not considered "wisdom", although they are unsure about economics. Even R. Cohen and these authors, however, do not (explicitly) rule that such works fall into the category of moshav leitzim and are prohibited during the week. Perhaps there are actually three categories of literature: works of "wisdom", which may be read during the week and according to some opinions, even on Shabbos; works of "serious" history and fiction, which are prohibited according to all opinions on Shabbos, but permitted during the week; and "frivolous" literature, which is prohibited even during the week. (Cf. R. Yair Hoffman, Reading Secular Books on Shabbos, and see R. Chaim Ozer Grodzenski's introduction to Dor Yesharim)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the morning.
2. I am for an aliya.
3. I "ascribe greatness."
4. Ahava Raba works.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am not a shoe.
2. I have 7 (or 8) of the 13.
3. I am number five.
4. Closing time.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Shofar sounds (I am for one day this year, I am four, but really three, I am a crying memorial, I am your lawyer)

#2 Rosh Hashana (I am an inauguration, I am a court case, Tu B'Shevat is similar to me. I make you taste many foods.)

The raffle has been postponed until after the shuls are reopened. We are still accepting entries to the raffle.

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to **WIN a Claw Machine Arcade Game**



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!

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