



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

The Splendor of Your Deeds

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

And Yaakov departed from Be'er Sheva and went toward Charan. (28:10)

Rashi comments on the above verse, that it would have sufficed to merely write, "and Yaakov went toward Charan." Why does the verse highlight Yaakov's departure from Be'er Sheva? Rashi cites a Midrash that explains that Yaakov's leaving Be'er Sheva had a significance of its own. When a righteous person is in the city, he is its glory, splendor, and beauty; when the righteous person departs, all that glory, splendor, and beauty leave as well.

It is interesting to note that this lesson is specifically mentioned regarding our forefather, Yaakov. There were plenty of "departures" that occurred with Avraham and Yitzchak that could have been used to teach us about the incredible impact a righteous person has on their surroundings. What is unique about Yaakov that the Torah teaches this lesson with regards to him?

Rabbi Moshe Shternbuch answers with an incredible insight. Regarding Avraham and Yitzchak, the fact that they had an impact on their hometown is somewhat obvious. After all, they were paradigms of righteousness for all to follow and there were no other righteous individuals in their vicinity. Yaakov, however, was unique. He lived in his father Yitzchak's house. There was already a righteous person in the town. It is in this scenario that the Torah emphasizes the incredible influence and impression a righteous person has on his place. Even though there were other righteous people around, including our great forefather, Yitzchak, there was still an additional impression made by Yaakov when he lived there, and a void was felt when he left.

From here we can learn how much of an impact we, too, can have. Even if there are others doing good deeds, we must never assume that our actions will not make a difference as well. Just as Yaakov's presence was felt even in the shadow of Yitzchak's stature, so too, every individual's actions and behavior can add splendor and beauty to the place that they live.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

He (Yaakov) took from the stones of the place and placed them by his head. (28,11)

He took the stone that... (28, 18)

Why does the verse begin the story with many stones, and end the narrative with a singular stone? The stones began fighting among themselves and said, "I want the Tzaddik to rest his head on me." To resolve the situation, Hashem formed them into one stone, so all of them had the Tzaddik's head resting on them. (Rashi)

One is not permitted to rearrange the straps on his tefillin from the top to the bottom because the part of the strap that is near the knot has greater sanctity and cannot be moved from there. (Magen Avraham Orach Chaim 42, 3)

We see from the Magen Avraham that the closer a holy item is to the sanctified place, the holier it is. If so, how did Hashem solve the problem by merging all the stones into one, as they could all still claim, "I want the Tzaddik closer to me?"

Parsha Riddle

How old was Rochel when she died?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Who was named before they were born?

Answer: Yitzchak

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Vayeitzei (29:17-18), the Torah relates: "... Rochel was beautiful of form and beautiful of appearance. Yaakov loved Rochel ..." Radak and Ralbag understand the juxtaposition of these two sentences to imply that Yaakov loved Rochel due to her beauty, and they struggle to explain why a righteous man like Yaakov, whose interest in marriage was surely for the purpose of procreation, would care about physical beauty.

R. Yaakov Reischer also understands the Biblical text to clearly indicate that Yaakov chose Rochel "because she was beautiful of form and beautiful of appearance," and he infers from this that the Sages' criticism of one who marries for money (Kiddushin 70a) or looks is limited to one for whom that is the sole consideration, but does not apply to one with nobler motives ("I'sheim mitzvah") but who is also interested in money or looks. As he points out, were this not so, "the entire world would be guilty of this, since all men marry women who find favor in their eyes, and also seek money." (Shut. Shevus Yaakov 3:135)

The truth is that R. Reischer's need to reconcile the Talmudic criticism of marriage for base considerations with the conduct of Yaakov and indeed that of "the entire world" is rather puzzling, since normative halachah follows the position of R. Yitzchak b. Sheshes that the Sages' objection is only to one whose base interests motivate him to choose a halachically unsuitable wife, but there is nothing wrong with marrying for money if the woman in question is halachically unobjectionable. (Shut. Rivash #15, Shulchan Aruch EH 2:1, but cf. Biur Ha'Gra #6) The Aruch Hashulchan goes so far as to encourage a Torah scholar to do so, in order to forestall the distractions of worldly affairs (i.e., earning a living).

Some explain that since we find that Rochel, as well as the other Matriarchs, are praised for their beauty, it follows that when it is stated in Proverbs (31:30) that: "Grace is false, and beauty vain; a woman who fears Hashem, she should be praised," this must be interpreted to mean that grace is false and beauty vain only in the absence of fear of Hashem, but a woman who fears Hashem should be praised for her grace and beauty as well! (Kol Eliyahu; Pele Yoetz Erech Yofi)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not an obligation.
2. I am for the direction.
3. I am the third.
4. I am the first.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was the first to thank.
2. I was a weeper.
3. I had half.
4. I was soft-eyed.

Last Week's Answers

#1 "Anochi" (Why thus?, Dirt and dust, I begin the ten, I am "I am.")

#2 Wells (I was dug, I was filled, I have a city named for me, I caused a treaty.)

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

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