



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

You Are Not Alone

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

Each year, we begin Yom Kippur with the *Kol Nidrei* service. At its core, this powerful, awe-inspiring prayer is actually a vow annulment procedure, in which we declare that all of our vows should be null and void, lest we get caught up in the sin of breaking a vow. While it is readily understood that we would not want to enter Yom Kippur with unfulfilled vows on our shoulders, the fact that we would specifically choose this as the opening of the Yom Kippur prayers begs explanation.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein explains that typically a person makes a vow out of a belief that it will be an effective strategy to prevent one from sinning. However, this person clearly made this decision on his/her own without consulting a Rabbi or mentor. If he/she would have turned to such a person for advice, they would have learned that the Torah does not encourage such things, as the potential benefits are outweighed by the risks. It is for this reason, says Rabbi Feinstein that one must go to a group of Torah scholars in order to have a vow annulled – to teach that the whole ordeal could have been avoided by seeking a Torah scholar's advice in the first place.

This, says Rabbi Feinstein, is why Yom Kippur begins with the *Kol Nidrei* service. As we begin the day that is so devoted to introspection and *teshuvah* (repentance), when we consider how we can grow and be better in the future, we are reminded that we are not meant to tackle this all on our own. As smart and strong as we may be, by acquiring a good mentor and by surrounding ourselves with a positive environment, we make success in *Avodas Hashem* so much more achievable.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a Gmar Chasimah Tovah!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Many evils and distresses will befall them. They will say, "It is because my G-d is not in my midst that all these evils have fallen upon me." I will surely hide My face on that day. (31, 17 - 18)

When tragedies befall Bnei Yisrael, they recognize that a closer relationship with Hashem is needed, which is really a form of repentance. Why does Hashem respond to their realization with hiding His face?

Parsha Riddle

What connection is there between the story of Purim and this week's Parsha?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

You are standing today, before Hashem, your G-d... (29:9) Those who speak untruths will not merit being in Hashem's presence (Sotah 42a). Where is there a hint to that in this posuk? Answer: The word "Atem" (you), can be rearranged to spell Emes – truth. Only those who speak the truth can stand before Hashem.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Vayeilech (31:10-13) contains the commandment to read the Torah publicly once every seven years, on Succos: "[Y]ou shall read this Torah before all Israel, in their ears. Gather together (*hakheil*) the people – the men, the women, and the small children ..." The Talmud (*Chagigah* 3a) explains: "Why do the small children come? In order to give a reward to those who bring them."

As we have previously discussed, the commentaries disagree over whether the "small children" in question are limited to those old enough to at least somewhat understand the proceedings, or whether all children, no matter how young, are included (see Ramban, *Gur Aryeh*, *Kli Yakar*, *Or ha-Chaim*, Maharsha).

Although the formal *mitzvah* of *hakheil* does not apply in contemporary times, the above dispute over the scope of the category of "small children" remains relevant in our era as well. As previously noted, the above Talmudic passage, along with a variation thereof in *Maseches Sofrim* (18:6), are cited as the source for the custom (apparently common in medieval Ashkenaz) to bring children to the synagogue (*Tosafos*; *Or Zarua hilchos Shabbas* #48). R. Menachem di Lonzano, however, excoriates the practice of bringing very young children to the synagogue, declaring that those who do so should anticipate punishment rather than reward, since such children desecrate the synagogue's holiness, behave unruly and disruptively, fight, make noise, tear apart holy books, and even relieve themselves there! Only older children who can behave appropriately should be brought, and they should be supervised, and taught to answer *kaddish* and *kedushah*, to sit with reverence and awe, and to refrain from idle chatter (*Derech Chaim* pp. 51b-52a).

It is unclear, however, how R. Menachem di Lonzano - and the many authorities who adopt his view (*Shelah* Vol. 1 p. 83b; *Magen Avraham siman* 124 s.k. 11; *Mishneh Berurah siman* 98 s.k. 3) - understand *hakheil*, the source for the custom to bring young children to the synagogue: do they follow the view that the phrase "small children" does not actually include very young children, or do they consider *hakheil* different, for some reason, from ordinary synagogue services?

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I am for Sukkos.
2. Gather.
3. Men, women & children.
4. After your Sabbatical.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. Normally, I am three.
2. Sometimes, I am four.
3. Soon, I will be five.
4. I am not tefillin, rather...

Last Week's Answers

#1 Shofar (I will be for Moshiach, I am for coronation, I am for repentance, I cause Hashem to "move.")

#2 Torah/Teshuva (I am not in heaven, I am not overseas, I am in your heart, I am very close.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Delighting In Coming Home

A Special Pre-Yom Kippur Presentation for Women by Mrs. Sara Malka

Sunday, September 12, 8:15pm

Online: <https://zoom.us/j/6018534021> Password: Winter

Dial-in number: 301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 601 853 4021 Phone Passcode: 667362