



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives. The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L.

This week's Parsha of Shelach speaks of the ill-fated mission of the twelve spies sent by Moshe to survey the Land of Israel. Twelve of the most qualified individuals were chosen for this critical task. Among their many objectives was to determine the fertility of the land: "Are there trees in it or not?" (chapter 13, verse 20) This is most difficult to understand, for surely the Land of Israel possessed trees.

The great commentator Rashi notes that trees are not referenced here as physical entities, but rather as a metaphor for individuals possessing righteousness and piety. As a tree that provides both shade and protection for all who gather beneath her, so too a righteous person reaches forth to envelop and protect from both harm and calamity all the inhabitants of the land.

The inhabitants of Canaan, with all their cruelty and wickedness, would have been spared had there been but one righteous individual in their midst. The entire Jewish nation poised to enter the holy land with the mandate from Above would nevertheless have been thwarted and stymied had there been but one solitary person of substance in Canaan. So is the power and potential greatness inherent in every individual. We possess influence and the capacity to literally pierce the Heavens and shake the earthly foundation. One person can affect the course of history by their actions and behavior.

As foreign and remote as this sounds and appears, it is only Torah that has the authority and wisdom to share and instruct us regarding the dynamics of man's potential and his relationship to the world at large. The most powerful force in the universe is not the atom. It is the energy latent within each and every one of us. Each of us is a veritable, awesome tree of life for ourselves and all in our midst.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Moshe called Hoshea son of Nun "Yehoshua". (13, 16)

Moshe was praying for him, "Hashem should save you from the sin of the spies." (Rashi)

Everything is in the Hand of Heaven, besides Fear of Heaven. (Brachos 33b)

How could Moshe pray that Yehoshua be saved from sin? That is not a matter that is in the control of Heaven? (Maharsha Brachos 10a)

Parsha Riddle

It shall constitute tzitzis for you... I am Hashem your G-d Who has removed you from the Land of Egypt... (15:39-41)

What connection is there between tzitzis and B'nei Yisrael's exodus from Egypt?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Where is the source that fish do not require Shechita?

Answer: Can sheep and cattle be slaughtered for them and suffice for them? or if all the fish of the sea be gathered...? (11, 22) Moshe only said 'gather' and not slaughter. This teaches us that fish merely need to be gathered from the sea, and do not need to be slaughtered.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Shelach* (14:26-27), Hashem tells Moshe and Aharon: "How long for this evil assembly (*eidah*) that provokes complaints against Me!?" Rashi comments: "*Eidah* — This refers to the spies; from here we learn that an *eidah* is a gathering of ten." This is based on a Talmudic derivation from this verse (via an intricate hermeneutic analysis) of the principle that "any expression of sanctity may not be recited in a quorum of fewer than ten men." (*Megillah* 23b)

The fact that the ultimate source for the requirement of ten for a *minyan* is from the Torah's characterization of the spies as an *eidah* suggests that even arrant sinners can count toward a *minyan*. R. Moshe Feinstein indeed infers from here that even Sabbath desecrators can count toward a *minyan*, at least in difficult circumstances ("*be-sha'as ha-dechak*"), since if even the spies, who were heretics, a category worse than Sabbath desecrators, could be counted, then certainly can mere Sabbath desecrators be counted (*Igros Moshe* OC 1:23 and 2:19).

R. Ben Zion Abba Shaul, however, disagrees and rules that one who desecrates the Sabbath in public cannot count toward a *minyan*. He counters R. Moshe's proof from the spies by noting that the Talmud does not explicitly classify the spies as heretics (*Or le-Tzion* 2:20:5).

Furthermore, R. Bachya b. Asher cites an opinion that considers our text of the Talmud untenable, "since a proof cannot be brought from the ten of the spies to an expression of sanctity," and therefore emends the text so that the source is actually from Yosef's ten brothers who traveled to Egypt to obtain provisions. According to this revision of the text, there is certainly no proof that Sabbath desecrators can count toward a *minyan*. (Cf. *Shut. Lev Avraham* 18 for further rebuttals of R. Moshe's proof.)

The question of whether Sabbath desecrators in the modern era can count toward a *minyan* is the subject of considerable dispute among authorities of the past two centuries. Since the severity of the prohibition is often not understood, those who do not observe the commandments may not be considered the abject sinners that they would have been considered in earlier eras since their lack of observance may not be entirely their fault insofar as they were not raised in an observant lifestyle (see, e.g., *Yabia Omer* 9:OC:108:34).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was the server.
2. Tentbound.
3. The last of the mother became my first.
4. My delay caused my death.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am wrapped.
2. I wrap you.
3. I'm a reminder.
4. I protect from sin.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Korban Pesach (I am twice a year, I was first in Mitzrayim, I am not for the non-circumcised, I am for the designated.)

#2 Menorah (I was from one, I was G-d made, I was flowery, I was a bright idea.)

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Parsha Explorations

An in-depth weekly exploration of a theme associated with the coming week's parshah.

Presented by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

Sunday Evenings 7:30pm
at Kemp Mill Synagogue (KMS)