



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel
From our archives

Moshe continues to exhort the people to keep the mitzvos and avoid the temptations that would surround them in their new home. This would bring them blessing and protect them in the Land. Among Moshe's pleas, he tells the nation that G-d "does not show favor, nor does He accept bribes." It is difficult to understand the necessity for stating something so obvious. How could someone possibly think that he could bribe G-d?

Possibly, Moshe is addressing the following attitude. One might think that, because he is punctilious in the observance of the commandments between man and G-d, he is absolved from concerning himself with the welfare of his friends and neighbors. After all, he is constantly engaged in Divine service, fulfilling the mitzvos with the utmost care and devotion.

Conversely, another, who is engaged in great acts of kindness, or undertaking communal responsibilities, might think that he is pardoned from the mitzvos between man and G-d. He is caring for G-d's very children - certainly it is of little concern if he cuts some corners in the observance of Shabbos or Kashrus.

To this the Torah says that G-d does not accept "bribes." The mitzvos are not a list of do's and don'ts to be bartered and traded. Rather, G-d, in His infinite wisdom, gave us the mitzvos, each one of which is necessary and imperative for our fulfillment - both individually and collectively. Only when we fully embrace the Torah do we merit to truly be G-d's "children."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

SPONSOR

To sponsor a Shabbos Delights, please contact info@gwckollel.org

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And what He did to Dasan and Aviram the sons of Eliav the sons of Reuven, when the earth opened its mouth wide and swallowed them and their households, and their tents... (11:6)

Korach was the one who initiated the machlokes (argument), and caused the earth to open its mouth. Why didn't Moshe make reference to Korach? Why did he only mention those who joined into the machlokes and not those who instigated it?

Parsha Riddle

Which verse in this week's parsha is used in Shemoneh Esrei?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What day of the year is Tu B'Av compared to?

Answer: Yom Kippur

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Elkev contains the second paragraph of *krias Shema*, which begins (11:13) with this verse: "And it will be that if you continually hearken to my commandments that I command you today, to love Hashem, your G-d, **and to serve Him**, with all your heart and with all your soul." The *Sifrei* interprets the phrase "and to serve Him" to refer to prayer, explaining that "just as the service of the altar is called 'service,' so, too, is prayer called 'service.'"

Based at least in part on this *Sifrei*, Rambam (*Sefer ha-Mitzvos aseh 5, Hilchos Tefillah 1:1*) and *Sefer ha-Chinuch* (433) maintain that there is a Biblical commandment to pray to Hashem every day, and they similarly interpret various other Biblical exhortations to serve Hashem as injunctions to pray to Him. Ramban (*Sefer ha-Mitzvos ibid.*), however, disagrees, arguing that the Talmud indicates that prayer is generally merely a rabbinic obligation, and not a Biblical one.

This dispute plays a central role in the *halachic* discussion of whether women are included in the obligation of daily formal prayer (i.e., *Shemoneh Esrei*). Following his declaration that praying every day is a Biblical obligation, but "according to Torah law, there are no fixed times for prayers," Rambam continues:

Therefore, women and slaves are obligated to pray, since it is not a time-oriented commandment.

The *Magen Avraham* (106:2[2]) explains that this position of Rambam is the basis for the custom of "most women" to not pray (formally) regularly,

since they utter some supplication immediately in the morning ... and this satisfies the Biblical obligation, and it is possible that the Sages, too, did not obligate them further.

The *Magen Avraham* continues, however, by noting that Ramban, followed by "most authorities," maintain that prayer is a rabbinic obligation, implying that according to this view, women are indeed obligated in daily formal prayer. The *Mishneh Berurah* (4) rules that this latter view is indeed normative, and he accordingly concludes that:

Women should be admonished to pray *Shemoneh Esreh*, and it is appropriate as well for them to accept upon themselves the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, i.e., that they should recite at least *Shema Yisrael* ... and they should recite as well the blessing of *Emes ve-Yatziv* ...

[A discussion of contemporary practice and the opinions of contemporary authorities on the question of women's obligation in formal prayer is unfortunately beyond the scope of this article.]

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was for Yaakov.
2. I was for Moshe.
3. The snake bites me.
4. I am for trampling.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am the second of three.
2. I am every morning and evening.
3. I have blessings.
4. I have curses.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Aseres Hadibros (Ten Commandments) (I am not an app, but am on tablets, I appear twice, I include 613, I was heard all at once.)

#2 Four sons (We are four, We ask questions (or don't), We need different types of answers, We are at the seder.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Add some new learning to your schedule before the High Holidays!

Kollel classes will resume be"tz Rosh Chodesh Elul, Sunday, August 28.

For help finding the Kollel class that's right for you, contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps:

hshaps@gwckollel.org.