



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

Kayin and Hevel (Cain and Abel), born to Adam and Chava (Eve), are inspired to bring an offering to G-d. Kayin, a farmer, brings his sacrifice from the earth's bounty, identified in the Medrash as flax seed. Hevel, a shepherd, chooses his offering from his flock. G-d accepts the offering of Hevel, while rejecting that of Kayin. The commentators, based upon the Torah's description of the different offerings, explain that Hevel selected from the finest of his flock for his offering, while Kayin proffered his inferior produce.

Smitten with jealousy and ignoring G-d's entreaties for repentance, Kayin rises up and kills Hevel. When G-d questions Kayin as to the whereabouts of his brother, he insolently responds, "Am I my brother's keeper?" G-d chastises Kayin for the murder of Hevel, saying that the "voice of your brother's bloods cries out to Me from the ground!" Commenting on the plural usage of blood in the verse, Rashi explains that it refers not only to the blood of Hevel, but to the blood of all his potential descendants.

This, says Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, should serve as a perspective for all our actions. We cannot evaluate what we do in an isolated way. All of our actions have consequences far beyond what we immediately perceive, and all those repercussions are attributed to us.

The story is told of Rabbi Shlomo Heiman, Rosh HaYeshiva (Dean) in Torah V'Daas. One wintry New York day, very heavy snow made travel all but impossible. Only a few students were able to gather for Rabbi Heiman's daily lecture. Rabbi Heiman began to expound passionately on the Talmud, his voice rising to a thunderous crescendo. One of the students expressed his amazement and wonder at the intensity and energy that his Rebbe mustered for just the few boys sitting in front of him. Turning to the boy, Rabbi Heiman said, "Do you think I only see the four of you sitting in front of me?! I see your children and grandchildren, your students and the students of your students."

This is the true power of our actions. A kind word, meant to give courage and hope. A small loan to put someone back on their feet. A Torah thought shared, to inspire and uplift. Who can accurately determine the impact of our deeds? Who can measure the reality of what we accomplish? As we reflect on the extraordinary, far-reaching effects and potential of all we do, may we be fortified and invigorated to carry on in devotion to man and G-d.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

"Hashem said, 'Let there be a firmament between the waters, and let it separate between water and water.' Hashem created the rakia (firmament) and separated between the waters which were beneath the rakia and the waters which were above the rakia; and so it was." (1: 6-7)

When Hashem created the rakia, the Torah wrote a verse relating His command to create it and another verse concerning its creation. This is unlike all the other creations where Hashem stated the command to create an item and it was automatically created. For example, during the creation of light on the first day, we find that Hashem commanded that there should be light, and light appeared. Why by the creation of the rakia did Hashem Himself actually create it after He gave the order for it to be created?

Parsha Riddle

During which two times of the year is the "Shemonei Esrei" in Eretz Yisrael different from the one outside Eretz Yisrael (besides for the second day of yomtov)?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How could a person be doing an aveira by building a sukkah (on a weekday)?

Answer: If he/she builds it on Har Habayis.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

[Correction: In the Sukkos issue of this column, we wrote that the section of parashas Emor discussing the holidays is read on the first two days of Sukkos as well as the first two days of Pesach. While it is indeed read on the first two days of Sukkos, it is only read on the *second* day of Pesach. We are Most grateful To an avid reader for bringing this error to our attention.]

In *parashas Bereishis* (4:9), following Kayin's murder of Hevel, Hashem asked Kayin: "Where is Hevel your brother?" to which he replied: "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper (*ha-shomer achi anochi*)?"

In Jewish law, a *shomer* is a custodian or bailee, who accepts responsibility for an item entrusted to his care, and is thus civilly liable, in certain circumstances, for the loss of, or damage to, the item. While the item in question is typically personal property (chattel), there actually is some discussion among medieval authorities, in cases of personal injury or other misfortune that befall someone while in the employ of another, as to whether the laws of *shomer* are applicable to human beings entrusted to a custodian's care. Some maintain that the framework of bailment does indeed extend to human beings, and accordingly grant the injured employee a cause of action to sue his employer for damages (*Mordechai Bava Metzia* #359, 367, and 461), while others dismiss the possibility of such a claim out of hand, insisting that the laws of bailment are limited to personal property, and do not extend to human beings (*Shut. ha-Rosh* 79:4).

Various later authorities raise an objection to the former position from the rule that in Jewish civil law, human beings are generally considered to have the same status as real property (land), and since it is an established rule that there is no *shomer* liability for real property, neither should there be any for human beings (*Sefer Yehoshua psakim u-ksavim* 472, and cf. *Shut. Sho'el u-Meishiv* 2:2:30). Some accordingly suggest that the adherents of this position follow the view that it is only slaves who have the status of real property, and not free men (*Shut. Be'er Moshe [Danushevsky]* CM 11). Others distinguish between employees, who are indeed equivalent (in this context) to slaves, who have the status of real property, and are thus not subject to *shomer* liability, and contractors, who are not considered slaves and so do not have the status of real property, and thus are indeed subject to *shomer* liability (*Nesivos ha-Mishpat siman* 176 *biurim* 60).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I ruled with another.
2. Some confuse me with a male child.
3. I referred to Yaakov.
4. When I leave, Shabbos comes.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was created from surgery.
2. My title describes my source.
3. My name defines my purpose.
4. I caused pain.

Last Week's Answers

#1 The letter "heh" (I am the shortest word in the Torah, I was special from Avraham and Sara, I refer to Hashem, I have a ledger for those who do Teshuva.)

#2 Sukkos (I was for cattle, I was cloudy, I make you move, My name describes my design.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Kollel Classes Resume this Week! (Oct. 22)

Weekly classes at SEHC @ 8:30pm (Men)

Mondays: Michtav M'Eliyahu: The thought and perspective of Rav Eliyahu Dessler – **Rabbi Musicante**

Tuesdays: The Battlefield: Confronting life's challenges with the wisdom of Chazal – **Rabbi Biberfeld or Beis Medrash Night** in-depth learning led by **Rabbi Mandel and Rabbi Grossman**

Wednesdays: Yesodei Hatorah: Gemara Skills Building – **Rabbi Sussman**

Thursdays: Parashas Hashavua: Pshat, Halachah & Hashkafa – **Rabbi Grossman**

Tuesdays: For Women (8:15pm): Bereishis: An in-depth study – **Mrs. Sara Malka Winter** (Resumes Tuesday, Nov 1)