



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

“And Now...!”

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

“V’ata (and now), O Israel, what does the Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d...” (10:12)

The Midrash (Bereishis Raba 21:6) seeks to prove from the use of the word “V’ata – and now” (Bereishis 3:22) that Adam repented for his sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge. The Midrash comments: “‘V’ata’ is always a language of *teshuva* (repentance) as the verse states, ‘V’ata (and now), O Israel, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you?’” The Chofetz Chaim (Ahavas Chessed Ch. 11) is troubled by this comment. What does the word “v’ata” have to do with *teshuva*? Had the Midrash referenced the part of the verse that beseeches us to “fear Hashem,” it would have been readily understood how this connects to *teshuva*, but the statement “and now” seems completely unrelated.

The Chofetz Chaim explains that one of the greatest obstacles to spiritual growth is procrastination. Our *Yetzer Hara* (Evil Inclination) is constantly telling us that we don’t have time to learn Torah today or to pray slowly and carefully. We don’t have time to assist others or to stop and contemplate our purpose in this world – and then to consider how we are doing in accomplishing that purpose. “You’ll have more time tomorrow,” our *Yetzer Hara* tells us. Our Sages, however, saw within our verse the antidote to the *Yetzer Hara*’s poison. The solution is to constantly ask ourselves, “And now... what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you?” At every juncture and before every decision we are to ask ourselves this question. Living with this level of awareness is *teshuva* – returning to Hashem in its truest sense.

As we approach the month of Elul and the High Holidays that follow, the question of how to “do *teshuva*” is on all of our minds. If the words “And now what does Hashem want from me?” can accompany us throughout our day, we will be well on our way to meaningful growth and true *teshuva*.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And now, O Israel, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d, to go in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and all your soul (10:12).

Hashem asked Dovid HaMelech, "You said 'I ask one thing from you Hashem...' and then you delineate a long list of requests. Why?" Dovid HaMelech answered, "I learned from You. You wrote 'What does Hashem want from you, only to fear Him' and then You began a long list of responsibilities. I followed in Your footsteps." (Yalkut Shimoni Tehilim 27, 706)

How did Dovid HaMelech excuse his wording with "blaming it" on Hashem? Furthermore, why did Hashem word the verse this way?

Parsha Riddle

Besides the mitzva to recite Shema, which other mitzva is fulfilled while saying Shema?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Besides for the gematria of "Va'eschanan," how do we know that Moshe davened 515 prayers to be permitted to enter Eretz Yisroel?

Answer: 200 days elapsed from when Hashem told Moshe he would not be allowed to enter Eretz Yisrael until the day Moshe died. Multiply 200 by the amount of tefillos one is obligated to daven on those days, Shacharis, Mincha, Maariv, and Musaf on Shabbos. The sum total is 515 tefillos. (Pnei Yehoshua)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Eikev* (9:7-8), the Torah states:

Remember, do not forget, that you provoked Hashem, your G-d, in the Wilderness ... And in Horeb you provoked Hashem ...

The Torah proceeds to relate the sin of the Golden Calf. The Talmud never acknowledges an imperative to remember the sin of the Golden Calf, and accordingly, many of the classic tabulators of the six hundred and thirteen *mitzvos*, such as the Rambam and the *Sefer ha-Chinuch*, do not include such a commandment. The Sifra (beginning of *Bechukosai*), however, does consider this verse to constitute an imperative to remember the specified events by verbal utterance. The Ramban (*Sefer ha-Mitzvos, Shichechas ha-Esin 7*) is uncertain as to whether this command was limited to the sinners themselves, i.e., to the generation of the desert, or whether it constitutes a perpetual commandment: to know Hashem's lovingkindness to us and his keeping of the covenant of our ancestors, and to give thanks to His name and to bless Him for everything.

The Ramban concludes that according to this latter approach, this commandment should be counted among the six hundred and thirteen *mitzvos*. The *Sefer Charedim* (Ch.4 22-23) rules that one should act stringently in this matter, and he adds that if one is obligated to remember even the sins of his ancestors, *a fortiori* is he obligated to remember his own sins. The *Aruch ha-Shulchan* (OC 60:5), however, maintains that the surrounding context of the verses we have cited is explicit that the commandment was directed exclusively to the generation of the desert.

The *Magen Avraham* (*ibid. s.k. 2*) cites the Arizal as directing that the various commandments of the Torah to remember certain things are to be fulfilled while reciting various phrases at the end of the second blessing of the morning Shema, from "You have chosen us from among every nation and language," and the Magen Avraham accordingly suggests that one should remember (as per the Sifra) the sin of the Golden Calf when reciting the phrase "and to proclaim Your Oneness with love" - as opposed to that time that they did not love Hashem.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am the opposite of Hamotzi.
2. Fill for me.
3. I cause favoritism.
4. Don't sit on me.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the snake's bite.
2. I was for Og's death.
3. I was for chasing Esav.
4. I am for Dan's horses.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Torah (I equal 611, I equal all, I am black, yet blue print, Pass me on.)

#2 Shema (Three times a day, You cover for me, Twelve said me to their elder, I am listen.)

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