



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Get Fired Up!

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

At the end of Parshas Ki Seitzei, the Torah commands us to remember what Amalek did to us after we left Egypt – a reference to how the nation of Amalek attacked the Jewish people shortly after the Splitting of the Sea. The Torah goes on to describe Amalek's attack on the Jewish people as "*asher karcha*." Rashi provides a number of interpretations of the word "*karcha*" including that "they happened upon you," and that "they defiled you." In his third explanation, he relates the word "*karcha*" to the word "*kor*" meaning coldness and explains that it means "they cooled you down." When the Jewish people left Egypt, they were untouchable – like a hot bath that nobody would enter. Amalek's attack was comparable to that first person to stick their foot into the hot bath, thereby cooling it down and inviting others to follow suit.

Rav Yerucham Levovitz notes that this explanation conveys an important message about our ability to be influenced by the actions of those around us. Observance of the Torah's commandments should be viewed as untouchable. The *mitzvos* are G-d's Will revealed to us and intransgressible. Inevitably though, there are people who become lax in their observance of the Torah's commandments. This could have a cooling effect for those around them as it can diminish the severity of transgressing G-d's word in the eyes of others. Rav Yerucham reminds us how susceptible we can be to outside influences and the importance of not letting the actions and opinions of others wear away at our Torah values.

Even more dangerous than the influence of others, however, is the influence of our own actions. We can all have moments where we slip and transgress the Torah's commandments. Our Sages (Kiddushin 40a) teach us that after one repeats a sin more than once, it can become permitted in one's eyes. Our own prior mistakes have an even stronger cooling effect on how we view the Torah's commandments.

During this month of Elul we are called upon to take stock of our relationship with G-d and His commandments. We are to consider in which areas of our observance we have "cooled down" whether due to outside influences and pressures or due to our own missteps which have now become second nature to us. May we all merit to do complete *teshuva* – reigniting our fire and passion for a closer relationship with G-d and reestablishing for ourselves the proper perspective of His commandments.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

You shall surely send away the mother bird... so that it will prolong your days. (22, 7)

Rebbi Yaakov saw a man tell his son to climb onto a roof and take down the chicks. The son climbed to the top, sent away the mother bird and took the chicks. The son thereby fulfilled the mitzva of honoring his father and of sending away the mother bird. In regard to both of them, the Torah promises long life. As the son descended, he fell and died... What happened to the promise of long life? The verse means it will prolong your life in the world that is long - Olam Habo. (Kiddushin 39b)

It is understandable that a person needs a blessing for long life in this world because this world is temporal. Since Olam Habo is eternal, what is the meaning of long days and how is the blessing of long days relevant?

Parsha Riddle

Where is there a hint in this week's parsha to the common minhag that a man begins wearing a tallis only after he gets married?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the connection between an unworthy judge and an Asheira tree? Answer: One who appoints an unworthy judge is considered as if he served an asheira tree. (Sanhedrin 7b)

HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Ki-Seitzei* (23:19), the Torah commands:

You shall not bring a harlot's hire or the exchange for a dog to the House of Hashem, your G-d, for any vow, for both of them are an abomination of Hashem, your G-d.

Commentators offer various rationales for this prohibition: Ibn Ezra asserts that "it is a disrespectful act," whereas Ramban explains that: Harlots are wont to do good deeds with their hire, thinking thereby to atone for their sins ... Therefore the Torah prohibited a harlot's gift to be brought for any vow, for *now they sin more and more*.

While the prohibition primarily forbids bringing a harlot's hire or the exchange for a dog as a sacrificial offering in the Temple, Rabbeinu Yerucham extends the prohibition to items donated for use in the synagogue or in the performance of *mitzvos*. (Some assume that this extension is merely rabbinic [*Magen Avraham siman 153 s.k. 46*].) Rabbeinu Yerucham notes, however, that the Talmud sets forth a number of technical criteria for something to be considered a harlot's hire, and he accordingly rules that donations from unmarried prostitutes to a synagogue or for accessories to a Torah scroll may be accepted (*Nesiv 23 chelek 1*).

Beyond this prohibition against bringing a harlot's hire as an offering, there is no general *halachic* prohibition against accepting charitable donations of ill-gotten gains. The Mishnah (*Bava Kamma 10:1*) forbids accepting charity from individuals whose primary or exclusive source of income is theft, but this is apparently due to the fact that the stolen money is considered to remain the property of the original owner, and we cannot necessarily extrapolate a general prohibition against accepting charitable donations of ill-gotten gains where this concern of accepting money that does not belong to the donor does not apply. R. Ovadia Hadaya, however, argues against accepting charity raised via functions involving mixed dancing and gambling (which is *halachically* problematic according to at least some authorities) on various grounds, including the fact that accepting such charity constitutes an endorsement of such behavior, and will result in its continuation (*Yaskil Avdi 8:OC:28:2*). This concern is somewhat similar to the Ramban's understanding of the rationale behind the prohibition against bringing a harlot's hire as an offering.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. For some I am only small.
2. For some I am also big.
3. I'm not punished even though I'm in the corner.
4. I can be Shatnez.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. You heard me six months ago.
2. The Torah requires me once.
3. Tzeirei or segol?
4. Remember.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Witnesses (We must be two, We can't be related, We must be questioned, In Shema I am large.)

#2 Reasons that a soldier returns from the battlefield (I am a new house, I am a new vineyard, I am a new wife, I am afraid.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Sunday Mornings

at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah, 1132 Arcola Ave
Breakfast: 9:30am - Classes 9:45-10:30am
Men's programming - Free of charge