



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Eyes On Our Nest

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

"Is He not your Father, your acquirer (*kanecha*)?" (32:6)

In the Song of *Haazinu*, Moshe questions how anyone could veer from G-d's path, demanding, "Is He not your Father and *kanecha*?" Rashi cites three different explanations for the word "*kanecha*." 1) the one who acquired you (from the word *kana* meaning acquire), 2) the one who nested you (from the word *kan* meaning nest), 3) the one who rectified you (from the word *takan*).

Rav Chaim Berlin suggested a fourth possible reading, also based on the word *kan*, meaning nest: "Is He not your Father and your Nest?" When he was the Chief Rabbi of Moscow in the late 1800's, Rav Berlin was once approached by a man requesting that the Rabbi come in secret to his house to perform a Bris Mila for his son. At that time, it was not forbidden to practice Judaism in Russia so Rav Berlin wondered about the need for secrecy. The man explained that he was completely assimilated and did not want anybody to know that he was Jewish. Rav Berlin inquired why someone who was embarrassed to be Jewish would go to such lengths to ensure that his son received a Bris Mila? The man's response was, "I don't want to shut the door on my son."

This encounter awakened Rav Berlin to a novel explanation of a verse in Shir Hashirim (Song of Songs) (1:15) where the Jewish people are praised that their "eyes are as doves." The Gemara (Bava Basra 24a), in discussing laws pertaining to returning lost birds, states that a young dove that is hopping away from its nest will continuously look back and not allow the nest to get out of sight. In describing the Jewish people with the expression that our "eyes are as doves" the verse is expressing the notion that even when a Jew moves away from his or her Nest – our Father in Heaven – he will not allow that Nest to get completely out of sight. He will always make sure to leave an opening so that he may return when he is ready. *Our eyes are like those of doves and G-d is our Nest.*

As Yom Kippur approaches, and we seek atonement, reconciliation, and closeness with G-d for ourselves and our families, we must also give thought to our Jewish brothers and sisters who have become distant from Him. We pray in our Amidah for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur that we should become an "*agudah achas* – a united group to perform Your will wholeheartedly." Let us *daven* for this with great intent and consider what actions we can take to help all of His doves return to their Nest.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a G'mar Chasimah Tovah!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Our Father, our King, wipe away and remove our willful sins and errors from your sight. (Avinu Malkeinu)

The term "willful sin" is a more severe form of sin than error. Why is "willful sin" mentioned first; it should be mentioned after "our errors?" Therefore, the correct wording should be "wipe away our errors and remove willful sins." (Mishna Berura)

During the Yom Kippur Mussaf we say: "Wipe away and remove our willful sins and errors from before Your eyes, as it says, **"I, and only I, am the One Who wipes away your willful sins for My sake and I shall not recall your errors."** (Yeshaya 43, 25)

In Mussaf, it is clear that we first mention willful sins and then errors. Why doesn't the Mishna Berura edit the text in Mussaf just as he did in Avinu Malkeinu?

Parsha Riddle

Where in Nach, in addition to Sefer Yonah, is Yonah mentioned?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the greatest number of days (not including Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur) that Ashkenazim recite selichos in Elul and Tishrei in any year?

Answer: 14. 8 before Rosh Hashana and 6 after.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The eponymous *haftarah* of *Shabbos Shuvah* begins: "Return, O Israel, to Hashem, your G-d, for you have stumbled through your iniquity." The *sine qua non* of sin that necessitates repentance is volition – the sinner deliberately chose to do wrong (*meizid*), or at least was not as careful to avoid wrong as he could have been (*shogeg*) - but there is no obligation of repentance for something beyond one's control (*ones*). Various *halachic* authorities articulate this fundamental principle that "Hashem does not hold an *ones* culpable (*ones Rachmana patrei*)" in a variety of contexts:

- The Maharam of Rothenburg rules a woman who was intimate with a man and subsequently discovered that she had been *niddah* at the time does not require atonement insofar as there had been no requirement for her to inspect herself at that particular time, since she is considered to have been an *ones* (Responso Prague ed. #622).
- R. Meir Eisenstadt rules that one who ate from a bird that was subsequently discovered to be a *treifah* does not require atonement insofar as the particular type of *treifah* in question was not one for which there is a requirement to inspect, since he is considered an *ones* (*Panim Me'iros* 2:41).
- In a letter to a pious friend of his who had eaten on Yom Kippur in compliance with medical advice that it was necessary for him to do so in order to preserve his life, R. Yaakov Ettliger firmly rejects the friend's contention that he required atonement: "Do I have to remind his eminence that atonement is only applicable to *shogeg* ... but *ones Rachmana patrei*, and this is true for even an ordinary *ones*, and *a fortiori* for such an *ones* that entails the *mitzvah* of *ve-nishmartem* [the commandment to avoid danger – see *Hatorah V'Hamitzvah* for this past *parashas Va'eschanan*] (*Binyan Tzion ha-Chadashos* 25).

In light of the above, the very first line of the "Al Cheit" section of the Yom Kippur *vidui*, in which we ask Hashem's forgiveness, pardon, and atonement "For the sin that we have sinned before You **under duress** and willingly," is perplexing; a discussion of this point is beyond the scope of this article (see *Siddur Beis Yaakov*; *Shut. Divrei Yisrael* 177; and the sources cited in R. Josh Flug, B'Onnes UV'Ratzon: What is True Duress?).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I am made of bricks.
2. I am not a building.
3. I am a song.
4. I have no musical accompaniment.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I make you bang.
2. I am for the bad.
3. Hunch.
4. I am not a video, rather...

Last Week's Answers

#1 Simanim (I might have a black eye, My head might be cut off, I might be sweet, I won't be "beat.")

#2 Shana/Year (I have two beginnings, I am not 365, I am 12 or 13, I am not repeat.)

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