



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

### Inn Sensitivity

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

**And he went to his journeys, from the south until Beth El... (13:3)**

After his temporary sojourn in Egypt, Avram and his family return to the Land of Canaan. The Torah records that "he went to his journeys," implying that he traveled back the same way he had come. Why is this significant? Rashi, quoting the Talmud (Arachin 16b), explains that Avraham returned by the same route in order to stay in the same inns he had stayed in on his way down to Egypt. This, continues Rashi, teaches us *derech erez* (respectful conduct) that a person should not change the place that they lodge when traveling. This explanation, however, still requires further elaboration. Why is it *derech erez* for a person not to change their place of lodging?

The Ksav Sofer suggests that this praise was specific to Avram's circumstance. When Avram went down to Egypt, he was not particularly wealthy. The lodgings he would have chosen would not have been overly luxurious. Upon his departure, however, Pharaoh showered him with gifts making him extremely rich. All of a sudden, a much more luxurious lifestyle would have become accessible to him. Now, Avram could have stayed in the most expensive hotels upon his return, but he did not. Simply because he could afford a life of luxury did not mean he was going to indulge himself in such a lifestyle. The resources that G-d had blessed him with could be directed at more loftier causes.

The Maharal offers a different explanation. Avram was extremely sensitive to the impression his choices could make. Were he to change his place of lodging on his return journey, people might think that there was something wrong with the first inn. This could damage the proprietor's ability to attract customers. In order to not risk hurting the reputation of any of the inns, Avram made sure to stay in the same places as he did on his way down.

Developing this level of sensitivity is not an easy task. Too often, when we make our choices in life, we only think about what the best choice is for ourselves. Avram reminds us to think beyond ourselves and consider how our choices will impact others as well.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

***I will bless those who bless you, and he who curses you I will curse, and all the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you (12:3).***

Rashi interprets this verse to mean that when people bless their children, they will say "You should be like Avraham." But if all the families of the earth will be involved in blessing their children to be like Avraham, who will be left to potentially curse Avraham? Yet, the verse allows for the possibility that someone might just do that!

### Parsha Riddle

**A person should first tie his left shoe, and then the right shoe (Orach Chaim 2:4). Where in this week's parsha is there a source for this halacha?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

***What is the similarity and dissimilarity between Noach and Moshe?***

***Answer: Both floated in a wooden box. Noach's had pitch inside and outside, while Moshe's was only covered with pitch on the outside.***

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

*Parashas Lech-Lecha* relates the capture of Lot by the four kings, and his rescue by his uncle Avraham. The Radak comments:

This story was written in the Torah ... to inform us that it is appropriate for one to place himself in danger to rescue his relative, as Avraham our forefather did.

R. Yaakov Kamenetsky characterizes the nature of Avraham's obligation to rescue his nephew as follows:

Had Avraham asked a *she'eilah* (halachic query) as to whether he was obligated to go and rescue Lot, he would certainly have been answered that he was exempt from doing so, for one is not obligated to place himself into a situation of even possible danger in order to save his fellow man. That which Avraham did so is because the Patriarchs are called *yesharim* (upright ones – *Avodah Zarah* 25b), i.e., that their entire conduct was not (only?) in accordance with the laws of the Torah but in accordance with *seichel ha-yashar* ("upright thought"). As a matter of *yosher* (rectitude), it was incumbent upon Avraham to strive to rescue Lot, as I have previously explained that Avraham felt himself responsible for Lot's welfare since his father Haran had died in a furnace because he had declared that he believed in the G-d of Avraham, and therefore according to *yosher – menchlichkeit* – Avraham was compelled to *arm his disciples* and to pursue the kings (*Emes le-Ya'akov* 14:14).

R. Yaakov explains the Biblical condemnation of Sodom for its failure to practice charity (*Yechezkel* 16:49) in the same vein:

Although prior to the giving of the Torah the commandment of charity had not yet been given, the men of Sodom were nevertheless indicted for this, since even non-Jews are obligated to know fundamental things through simple contemplation of the creation, and the obligation of charity and *chessed* (kindness) to those in need upholds the world.

R. Yaakov proceeds to develop this doctrine of natural morality, and concludes:

And based on this principle it appears that if an ill person (i.e., one in danger of his life) has the choice to eat either human flesh or the flesh of a *neveilah* (an animal that has not been properly slaughtered), he should prefer the flesh of the *neveilah* and not human flesh, since it is obvious that we are barred from eating human flesh ("cannibalism"), and this prohibition is not from the Torah but from *seichel ha-yashar* (*Emes le-Ya'akov Yechezkel ibid.*, and cf. *Dor Revi'i, Pesichah Kolleles* os 2).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I was for 99.
2. I was for 13.
3. I am for 8.
4. I need a northern wind.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. Cut in half.
2. I attracted the birds.
3. I caused sleep.
4. Revealing.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Teivah** (I refer to a box, I am not nature, In English I am for Torah, In the end I got stuck in a 'a rut'.)

**#2 Noach** (My name is for non-Jews, I needed gloves not mittens, Was I righteous?, I was permitted to eat meat.)

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