



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

### A True Blessing

**Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct**

In the beginning of Parshas Vayishlach, as Yaakov prepares to appease Esav, he sends a message to Esav telling of the assets that he has accumulated. In doing so, Yaakov describes himself as "having oxen, donkeys, sheep, servants, and maidservants." (32:3) Rashi explains that Yaakov's intent was to impart a message to Esav that Yaakov had not gained anything near what Yitzchak had blessed him with, but only some livestock and servants and that Esav should therefore have no feelings of jealousy over losing the blessings to Yaakov. This is very difficult to understand; could it be that Yaakov would insinuate that Yitzchak's blessings did not come true?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein explains that Yaakov in no way meant to imply that the blessings were not fulfilled. Rather, he was demonstrating to Esav that the blessings had a far different meaning than Esav had understood. Yaakov was telling Esav that the meaning of Yitzchak's blessing of material prosperity was that the recipient would have all that he needed to live. For Yaakov who was satisfied with his lot and could get by on what little he had, this was truly a blessing and was fulfilled. For Esav, however, whose goal in life was to attain more and more and would never be satisfied, the blessing would be useless as it would not help him to achieve his desires.

The competing attitudes of Yaakov and Esav are still very much extant today. When we look around at the world, we see for ourselves examples of people who are satisfied with very little, as well as those who are never satisfied. But what do we see when we look at ourselves? What is certain, if we are honest with ourselves, is that those who emulate Yaakov have a hope of being truly happy, while those who emulate Esav can never be. To whatever degree we possibly can, let's be like Yaakov.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

#### **Yaakov arrived intact at the city of Shechem... (33:18)**

*His body was complete, that he had healed from his limp. Intact with his money, that he had not lost on account of the gift that he sent to Esav. Intact in his Torah, that he had not forgotten his Torah knowledge while in Lavan's house. (Rashi)*

*Rav said, "Intact in his body, intact in his money, intact in his Torah." (Shabbos 33b)*

*Intact in his Torah: that he did not forget his Torah on account of the difficulty traveling. (Rashi)*

Why does Rashi offer two different explanations as to the significance of Yaakov being "intact in his Torah"?

### Parsha Riddle

**In which verse in the Torah does every word end with a mem?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**When was Har HaBayis (The Temple Mount) not in Yerushalayim?**

**Answer: When Hashem relocated it to Bais El. (See Rashi 28:17)**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The opening section of *parashas Vayishlach* relates our forefather Yaakov's conduct before and during his encounter with his brother Esav. *Bereishis Rabbah* (78:15) relates that a certain rabbi used to regularly peruse this narrative before embarking upon trips to Rome; Ramban explains that this

*was because of the Rabbinical tradition that this was the section of the exile. Therefore when Rabbi Yanai entered Rome, in the court of the kings of Edom, [on a mission] concerning public matters, he would peruse this section of the Torah in order to follow the advice of the wise patriarch, for it is he that the generations are to see and emulate.*

The crucial question of the most effective means of engaging a powerful and potentially hostile but possibly friendly power is as relevant today as it was in the eras of the patriarchs and the Talmud; one particular tactic mentioned in the Talmud that is quite familiar to us today is the political demonstration:

**[T]he wicked kingdom (Rome) issued a decree against Israel that they should not occupy themselves with Torah study, and that they should not circumcise their sons, and that they should desecrate Shabbat. What did Yehuda ben Shammua and his colleagues do? They went and took advice from a certain matron [matronita] whom all the prominent men of Rome would visit regularly, thinking that she would know how to annul the decree. She said to them as follows: Come and cry out [hafginu] at night in the streets and markets. They went and cried out at night, saying: O Heavens! Are we Jews not your brothers; are we not children of one father; are we not children of one mother? How are we different from every other nation and tongue that you issue such harsh decrees against us? And indeed the decrees were annulled, and the Sages made that day a festive day. (Rosh Hashanah 19a)**

In 5748 (1987), R. Yehudah Herzl Henkin was asked about the great march and rally of that year on behalf of Soviet Jewry. He responded by citing the above account as proof of the basic legitimacy of demonstrations against injustice to Jews, and he thus endorsed the 1987 demonstration, with the recommendation that experts be consulted, and that the demonstration have the imprimatur of *gedolim* ("great men"), with the proviso that the *gedolim* themselves consult experts, as R. Yehuda ben Shammua and his colleagues did by seeking the advice of the "matron" (*Shut. Bnei Banim* 2:51).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. We caused aloneness.
2. We were small.
3. We were more precious than his body.
4. We could be for drinking.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I was for Efron.
2. I was for Esav.
3. I am not "tough."
4. I was for the years of affliction.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Sheep** (We were spotted - but not necessarily spotted - at the well, Designs differentiated us, For us there was separation, We made Yaakov wealthy.)

**#2 Yaakov** (I am the simple one, I am sharp, I am truthful, I could mislead.)

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