



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives.

The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT" L.

Perhaps the most well-known question in all of halachic literature is the Beis Yosef's query regarding Chanukah lighting: After finally vanquishing the Greeks, the Jewish people turned their attention to the Temple, which had been in the hands of their enemy. Desperate to resume the service of lighting the menorah, they sought a cruse of oil, sealed and marked for its purity. After much searching, only one cruse could be located. Overjoyed, they lit the menorah. Their concern, however, remained: It would take eight days to manufacture new oil, but the oil in the single cruse would last only one day. What would they do tomorrow and the next day?

Their concern gave way to joy and gratitude as the miracle of Chanukah unfolded. The small cruse of oil continued to burn for eight days, allowing for the processing of new oil. In commemoration of this miracle, the Sages of the generation established the holiday of Chanukah. Why, wonders the Beis Yosef, is Chanukah celebrated for eight days? The actual miracle was apparently only for seven days, given that the oil was sufficient to burn for the first day.

Many wonderful and insightful answers are given to this famous question. I would like to share with you an answer provided by the Alter of Kelm: When we observe the world around us, its beauty and luster, its power and magnificence, its intricacy and design, we should see the omnipotence of G-d. However, because of the regularity of the world in which we live, with its order and seeming predictability, we neglect to discern G-d's hand in the beautiful setting of the sun and are deaf to G-d's voice in the melodious warble of the songbird. We ascribe the world around us to "nature" and look no deeper.

When a miracle occurs or an unaccountable phenomenon transpires, we undeniably encounter G-d through His mastery of world events. We acknowledge that it is indeed G-d who guides us and sustains us. Through this miracle, says the Alter, we are now able to extrapolate and see G-d in all of nature that surrounds us. We understand that the everyday wonders of the human body, the expanse of the universe, and the mysteries of the sea can only be designed and fashioned by G-d Himself. Indeed, this is the lesson of miracles.

When that cruse of oil, which by the laws of nature should have burned only one day, burned instead for eight days, it became clear to us that all that transpires, whether it be an everyday occurrence or a once-in-history event, is but the will of G-d. It is this miracle, the miracle of "nature," now recognized as G-d's will, that we celebrate with the eighth candle.

This Chanukah, may the light of the candles illuminate our world, allowing us to see G-d manifest all around us: guiding us, protecting us, and embracing us.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a Happy Chanukah

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

A man / ish discovered him (Yosef), and behold he was blundering in the field... (37:15)

This is the Angel Gavriel, as the posuk (Doniel 9:21) refers to him as "ish" (Rashi).

Yaakov was left alone and a man / ish rested with him (Vayishlach 32:25).

Chazal explained this man to me the Angel of Esav (Rashi).

Why does the word "ish" sometimes refer to Gavriel and sometimes refer to the Angel of Esav?

Parsha Riddle

How many times did Yosef's coat cause him to be thrown into a pit? When?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: Bereishis 32:15

HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayeishev* (37:12-14), the Torah relates that Yaakov asked Yosef to check on the welfare of his brothers, who were pasturing their father's sheep in Shechem, and Yosef responded "Here I am!" Yosef's brother hated him, and by going to them Yosef was thereby apparently endangering his life; indeed, various *midrashim* assert that when Yaakov came to believe that Yosef had been killed, he deeply regretted having sent him to his presumed death (see *Torah Sheleimah Vayishlach* #97); why, then, did Yaakov ask Yosef to go to his brothers, and why was Yosef willing to do so? The commentators take a number of approaches to these questions:

- The Radak explains that Yosef was actually not afraid that his brothers would harm him, despite his knowledge that they hated him, since he thought that the fear of their father would restrain them. Yaakov, too, did not believe that they would harm him.
- The *Or Hachaim* explains that there is a principle that "those on the path to perform a *mitzvah* are not susceptible to harm." (*Pesachim* 8a) While this is limited to situations of low or moderate risk, the risk to Yosef from his brothers was deemed to fall into that category, and so Yaakov believed that Yosef, who was engaged in the *mitzvah* of carrying out his father's commission, would not come to harm.
- The *Sefer Chassidim* (341) asserts that Yosef was committed to fulfilling his father's commission even at the cost of risking his life. The *Rosh Dovid* (p. 22a) explains that although a son may certainly respectfully decline a request of his father that entails a significant risk to his life, he may choose to accept the risk in order to please his father. The *Shelah* (*Torah she-Bichsav, Vayeishev s.v. ve-Yosef halach*) explains that although one need not and may not obey a father's order that entails violating Torah law, a person's life is his own to relinquish in the service of his father if he so chooses. (Cf. *Teivas Gome Vayeishev*)
- The *Sefer ha-Mikneh* (39b s.v. *ve-Dilma*) asserts that it was indeed forbidden for Yosef to endanger his life in order to obey his father. (He does not explain Yosef's thinking in doing so.)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was for old age.
2. I was wise.
3. I was a look alike.
4. I was not a beard.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am to be seen.
2. I am not to be used.
3. I am holy.
4. I am for publicity.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Small Jugs (We caused aloneness, We were small, We were more precious than his body, We could be for drinking.)

#2 400 (I was for Efron, I was for Esav, I am not "tough," I was for the years of affliction.)

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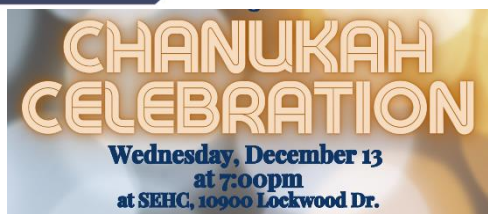
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