



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

This week's Torah portion, Vayechi, bids farewell to our patriarchs and their distinguished children, the twelve tribes of Israel. The Torah records (Chapter 49 Verse 28) that Jacob, before his death, blesses each of his children, forming the foundation for our nation Israel to grow and prosper. However, a reading of the blessings reveals that the words and thoughts Jacob directed to his children were not blessings, rather prophetic insights into the strengths and weaknesses of their respective personalities and character. What, then, is the meaning of the Torah when it characterizes his final words to them as a blessing?

The Torah is teaching us magnificent life lessons. The greatest blessing a parent can bestow upon a child is to give them an understanding and appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses. This allows them to know themselves with clarity and objectivity in order to make life choices which are both meaningful and productive. Jacob's parting words were truly a profound blessing. He sent each of his children on the path of their national destiny, guiding and directing them with the knowledge of their unique and special gifts and characteristics to maximize their strengths and minimize their weaknesses. The biggest blessing of all is to know thyself.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

So Yosef went to bury his father, and with him went all of Pharaoh's servants, the elders of his household, and all the elders of Egypt, and all of Yosef's household... his brothers... (50:7,8)

Yosef returned to Egypt – he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father... (50:14)

Why are Yosef's brothers listed last on the ascent to Eretz Yisrael, and listed first on the descent to Egypt?

Parsha Riddle

And Yisrael bowed towards the head of the bed (47:31). Which halachos are derived from this verse?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

And now do not be distressed... (45:5) Why only now? When in the future will B'nei Yisrael be distressed about the sale of Yosef? Answer: Because there will be times when Hashem will send punishments that are at least in part because of the sale of Yosef. Some examples: The destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, the Purim story, the Asara Harugei Malchus/The Ten Martyrs.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayechi*, both Yaakov and Yosef request that their remains be transported out of Egypt and buried in Israel. Yaakov asks Yosef:

Please do not bury me in Egypt. For I will lie down with my fathers and you shall transport me out of Egypt and bury me in their tomb. (47:29-30)

and Yosef "adjured the children of Israel saying":

When G-d will indeed remember you, then you must bring my bones up out of here. (50:25)

The Talmud, *midrashim* and later commentaries offer various reasons for Yaakov's request, some involving an objection to burial in Egypt and others involving a specific desire to be buried in Israel (*Kesubos* 111a; *Bereishis Rabbah* 96:5; *Tanchuma* 3). Many of the Sages extolled the value of burial in Israel in general, and while there is an opposing view that it is actually inappropriate for one who dies outside Israel to be buried there (see *Yerushalmi Kilayim* 9:3 and the Zohar to our *parashah*), the general (albeit not universal) consensus of later authorities is that it is indeed desirable for even one who lived and died outside Israel to be buried there.

Rambam writes:

One who is buried [in Israel] receives atonement as if the place in which he is buried is an altar of atonement as Deuteronomy 32:43 states: "His land will atone for His people." In contrast, the prophet, Amos [7:17, used the expression] "You shall die in an impure land" as a prophecy of retribution.

There is no comparison between the merit of a person who lives in Eretz Yisrael and ultimately, is buried there and one whose body is brought there after his death. Nevertheless, great Sages would bring their dead there. Take an example, from our Patriarch, Yaakov, and Yosef, the righteous. (*Hilchos Melachim* 5:11)

The *Shulchan Aruch* (YD 363:1) codifies a ruling of the Ramban that an exception to the rule against disinterring an already buried body is when this is done in order to rebury it in Israel.

R. Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, however, was ambivalent about the transportation of bodies to Israel for burial, particularly in light of the expenditure involved. He maintains that supporting Torah study and donating to charity in general are better uses of money than following fads and spending money on "wood, marble, and trips." (*Teshuvos Ivra* 66)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for "all the youth."
2. I am for your bed.
3. Some sing me.
4. I am fishy business.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. The serpent is my reference.
2. I was a "crown."
3. My prayer is mentioned in this parsha.
4. In my blindness I killed thousands.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Beis Hamikdash (Temple) (My future destruction caused crying, The neck is my reference, The origin of my trees gives me my name, I am for Yehuda and Binyomin.)

#2 70 (I am for the nations, I could be an eye, I was for those descending, I am the faces of the Torah.)

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