



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

### A Life of Torah

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

**"...and you shall say to them, 'You shall be holy'..." (19:2)**

As our Parsha begins, Hashem instructs Moshe to tell the Jewish people to "be holy." This is a tall order, no doubt, but what does it mean? The Ramban explains that this command warns us against falling into the trap of being "contemptible with the Torah's permission." In other words, a person can be a shallow, materialistic person all while technically keeping the Torah's commandments and avoiding its prohibitions. The directive to be holy, however, tells us that we may not take this path.

It would seem that what is being communicated here is that the Torah, with all of its 613 commandments, is not simply a list of dos and don'ts. Rather, it is an all-encompassing way of life. The goal of a Torah lifestyle, of keeping the Torah's laws, is to become a Torah person, a holy person.

Viewing Torah observance in this way can be, and should be, lifechanging. Amid the hustle and bustle of the daily grind, it is easy to go through the motions of getting up in the morning to daven, checking the kashrus of our food, making *brachos*, etc. without giving much thought to what it is that we are doing. But every day provides us with multiple opportunities for holiness, chances to become nobler people, people who are more connected to Hashem. With all of the *mitzvos* that we do and the transgressions that we try avoid on a constant basis, if we could only occasionally stop and think, "I am doing this as a reflection of an elevated way of life and by doing this I am becoming a holier person," it could go a long way to allowing us to see our daily lives in a whole new light.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**A worker's wages shall not remain with you overnight until morning. (19, 13)**

Rav Asi said, "Even if a worker was hired to harvest one cluster of grapes, there is a prohibition to withhold his wages until morning." (Bava Metzia 111b)

Even if the wages are less than a pruta, he transgresses the prohibition. (Ritva ibid)

Less than a pruta is not considered money, as we find regarding theft. One does not transgress the biblical prohibition of stealing for stealing less than a pruta. (Rambam Gezaila 1:1) If so, how can one transgress the prohibition to withhold wages if the wages are worth less than a pruta?

### Parsha Riddle

**You shall not eat over the blood... (19:26) Besides the prohibition to eat meat while there is blood in it, what other prohibition is derived from this verse?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**What was Nechemia's other name?**

**Answer: Hetershasa (Kiddushin 69b, see Rashi why he was called this name.)**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Kedoshim* (19:19), the Torah commands:

You shall observe My decrees (*chukosai*): you shall not mate your animal into another species (*kilayim*), you shall not plant your field with mixed seed (*kilayim*); and a garment that is a mixture (*kilayim*) of combined fibers (*shaatnez*) shall not come upon you.

The Talmud (*Yoma* 67b) includes *shaatnez* among a group of *mitzvos* whose reasons are unknown. Rashi (to our verse) apparently understands that **all** the various forms of *kilayim* (forbidden mixtures) mentioned here are considered *chukim* – "orders of the King which have no reason." Ramban, however, disagrees, and maintains that our Sages only declared the prohibition against *shaatnez* to be a *chok*, but not the other prohibitions of *kilayim*, for which he offers several reasons, including the following:

"G-d has created in the world various species among all living things, both plants and moving creatures, and He gave them a power of reproduction ... and He further endowed them with a power to bring forth [only] after their kind, and that they should never be changed, as it is said with reference to all of them [at the time of Creation], *after its kind*. ... Thus one who combines two different species, thereby changes and defies the work of Creation, as if he is thinking that the Holy One, blessed be He, has not completely perfected the world and he desires to help along in the creation of the world by adding to it new kinds of creatures."

Maharal (*Gur Aryeh* to our verse) objects to Ramban's assumption that man cannot presume to improve upon G-d's creation:

"Our Sages have said that everything that the Holy One, blessed be He, created in the six days of creation requires fixing, like wheat which needs to be ground and baked, and we do not say regarding this that the Holy One, blessed be He, has not perfected His world, and as they have said regarding circumcision that man was not created circumcised but must be perfected by flesh and blood (see *Bereishis Rabbah* 11:6 and *Tanchuma Tazria* 5)."

This fundamental theological dispute between Ramban and Maharal has been invoked by modern Jewish bioethicists in contexts such as genetic engineering and cloning: are such attempts to improve upon G-d's creation presumptuous and problematic, or entirely in accordance with His general plan for humanity to perfect His world? (See, e.g., R. J. David Bleich, *Tradition* 37:2, pp. 67-68.)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I make things fair.
2. I am for payment processing.
3. The firstborns prove.
4. I am not a delay.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I cause rising.
2. I am for the old and wise.
3. I am not for the satiated.
4. I am not for the beard.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 The two se'irim (goats) of the Yom Kippur service** (We were identical, Our ends were different, Our purpose is similar, We caused drawings.)

**#2 The person who brought the se'ir to the cliffs** (I was designated, For me there are sukkos, For me there was food on Yom Kippur, I put things over the edge.)

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