



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel

From our archives

We are living through times of enormous national challenge. Heavy questions linger about the future. Our Parsha provides a powerful source for inspiration, insight, and hope.

Following the plague that killed 24,000 people, G-d orders a census to once again count the populace. According to the Sages, this census is commanded in the spirit of a loving shepherd counting his flock after a wolf had attacked the sheep. So, too, G-d wanted to count each one of His children who had survived the deadly plague.

When we look at the tally from the various Tribes, we see something very striking. Binyamin, who had ten sons, tallies at 45,600. In contrast, Dan merited to have only one son, Chushim. Additionally, the Talmud tells us that Chushim was handicapped by deafness. Nevertheless, Dan's total is much greater, with a total of 64,400!

The Chofetz Chaim relates that this teaches us that even when natural laws would predict a given outcome, it is but the will of G-d that triumphs. He alone decrees and guides the world according to His wisdom.

While we cannot understand all that transpires, one thing we can be certain of: G-d is firmly in control and never forsakes His children.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: "Pinchas... turned back my wrath from upon Bnei Yisrael, when he zealously avenged My vengeance among them... Therefore, say: Behold! I give him My covenant of peace" (25:10-12).

By law, Pinchos should receive his reward (Midrash).

Every mitzva is rewarded. So why does the Midrash specify here that 'by law' Pinchas is to receive his reward? Is there a particular law regarding one who sanctifies Hashem's Name which states that one receives a reward? Furthermore, why does the Torah only record the reward of Pinchas's act without restating the act itself?

Parsha Riddle

In this week's parsha there is a hint that one should wake up a bit later on Shabbos morning than one wakes up during the week. Which verse alludes to this matter?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Bilaam arose in the morning and saddled his she-donkey... (22:21) Hashem said, "Wicked one, Avraham preceded you, as it says "And Avraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey." (Rashi) **Who else got his animals ready for riding, even though it should have been done by his servants?**

Answer: Yosef and Pharaoh

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Pinchas begins with Hashem's seemingly unequivocal endorsement of Pinchas's vigilante execution of Zimri son of Salu and Cozbi daughter of Zur: "Pinchas son of Elazar son of Aharon the Kohen, turned back My wrath from upon the Children of Israel, when he zealously avenged My vengeance among them, so I did not consume the Children of Israel in My vengeance. Therefore, say: Behold! I give him My covenant of peace. And it shall be for him and his offspring after him a covenant of eternal priesthood, because he took vengeance for his G-d, and he atoned for the Children of Israel."

Our tradition, however, identifies Pinchas with the prophet Eliyahu, who is also described as having been extremely zealous for Hashem's honor, and there are a number of midrashim that criticize Eliyahu's zealotry as excessive (*Mechilta de-Rabbi Yishmael, Masechta de-Pischa; Eliyahu Zuta 8; Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah 1:6*). *Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer* (29) goes so far as to imply that even Pinchas's vigilante execution, for which he is warmly commended by Hashem, was not wholly unobjectionable. When Eliyahu declared at Mount Horev that: "I have acted with great zeal for Hashem, G-d of Legions, for the Children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant (*brisecha*); they have razed Your altars and have killed Your prophets by the sword, so [that] I alone have remained, and now they seek to take my life (*Melachim I 19:10*)," *Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer* states that Hashem responded: "You are always zealous! You were zealous at Shittim [where Pinchas executed Zimri and Cozbi] regarding forbidden relations ... and you are zealous here - by your life, when the Children of Israel perform circumcision [i.e., the "*bris*" that Eliyahu claimed that the Children of Israel had forsaken] you shall see it with your eyes!"

Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer proceeds to explain that this is the basis for the institution of the Sages that a chair of honor be set up for Eliyahu at a circumcision ("*kisei shel Eliyahu*").

This idea appears in the Zohar (*Lech Lecha*) as well, and that work is apparently the source of the idea that Eliyahu is actually present at every circumcision: "[Hashem] said to him: 'By your life, wherever my sons mark that holy mark in their flesh, you will be present there, and the mouth that testified that Israel has forsaken [the *bris*] will testify that they actually fulfill it.'"

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Sometimes I mean three times.
2. From me you know 'only if you can walk'.
3. On me you see to be seen.
4. I was in last week and this week.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was a hands-on job.
2. I was because of staying in the tent.
3. I was a moonlike event.
4. I was in the front of everyone.

East Week's Answers

#1 Donkey (I am Mashiach's ride, I was also Avraham's, I am like Yissachar, I got hit three Yomim Tovim.)

#2 Hashem's moment of anger (I am for a moment, I am daily, Bilaam knew me, For a few days I wasn't.)

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