Lech Lecha 5787

The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

Sponsored by the Cypess Family Foundation

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Inn Debt

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

"He went according to his journeys – from the south to Beis-El…" (13:3)

When Avraham Avinu returns from Egypt, the verse makes a point to mention that he went "to his journeys" – lodging in the very same places he had stayed on his way to Egypt.

Rashi gives two reasons for this. The first is a lesson in *derech eretz* (proper conduct): a person should not change their accommodations simply because their situation has changed. The second is that Avraham wanted to return to the same inns in order to pay off the debts he had left behind.

This raises an obvious question. Why had the innkeepers been willing to give Avraham credit in the first place? They did not know that he would soon become wealthy and be capable of repaying his debts.

Rabbi Yaakov Bender brings a novel insight from the Chida. He suggests that Avraham had always paid for his lodging. When he traveled to Egypt, however, he appeared to be a poor traveler, so the innkeepers charged him only what they thought he could afford. They were willing to accept a small payment because they understood his financial situation.

Now, however, Avraham was returning from Egypt as a wealthy man. He recognized that the innkeepers had charged him less than they normally would have because they understood his limited means. Although he had paid exactly what they had asked of him, he realized that they had sacrificed potential earnings out of consideration for his circumstances. He therefore wanted to compensate them for the difference and ensure that they received what they would have earned had they charged their usual rates.

Avraham's conduct offers a profound lesson in *hakaras hatov* (gratitude) and sensitivity to others. He could have considered the matter settled: he had paid what was asked of him, and the innkeepers had no claim to anything more. Yet Avraham looked beyond what he owed and focused instead on what others had given up for him. Avraham wasn't satisfied with simply acknowledging the great kindness they had done for him, rather he was attuned to their needs and sacrifices, and sought the opportunity to give back even when nothing was demanded of him.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And there was quarrelling between the herdsmen of Avram and the herdsmen of Lot… (8, 13)

Lot's shepherds were wicked and would graze their cattle in the fields of others. Avram's shepherds rebuked them regarding the theft they were committing. Lot's shepherds answered, "The land was given to Avram; he has no heirs, so Lot, his brother's son, will inherit him. (Rashi)

Avram said, "My Lord, Hashem, what can You give me since I am childless and the steward of my house (Eliezer) will inherit me. (15, 3)

What was the reasoning behind Lot's shepherds' position that Lot would inherit Avram? What was the reason that Avram thought Eliezer would inherit him?

Parsha Riddle

How old was Avram when he went to Eretz Yisroel for the first time?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:
Who in the Torah had a father and father-in-law with the same name?
Answer: Noach and his wife, Na'ama. Both of their fathers were named Lemech.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Lech-Lecha* (17:1), Hashem commands Avraham: "Walk before Me and be *tamim* ('whole')." The Ramban connects this command of Hashem to Avraham with the later command of Hashem to Avraham's descendants: "You shall be *tamim* with Hashem, your G-d" (*Devarim* 18:13), and explains:

The purport of both verses is that one should believe in his heart that the Holy One, blessed be He, alone is the Omnipotent from beginning to end. It is He who has the power to do and to undo, and therefore he should not listen to the soothsayers and diviners or to the enchanters and the sorcerers. He shall in no way believe that their words shall be fulfilled, but he should decree in his heart that everything is in the hand of the Supreme One, who is G-d, G-d A-lmighty, Who doeth a person good, which was not predestined by his constellation, and bringeth evil upon him despite a constellation that was good and auspicious.

The Ramban proceeds to connect these commands to another conversation between Hashem and Avraham in *parashas Lech-Lecha*, as interpreted by our Sages:

It is stated with regard to Avraham: "**And He took him outside,** and said, 'Gaze, now, toward the Heavens, and count the stars if you are able to count them!' And He said to him, 'So shall your offspring be!'" (15:5) The Sages derived from this that **Avraham said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe,** "See, to me You have given no offspring; and see **my steward inherits me."** (15:3) The Holy One, Blessed be He, **said to him: No.** "Suddenly, the word of Hashem came to him, saying: 'That one will not inherit you. **Only him that shall come forth from within you shall inherit you.'"** (15:4)

Avraham **said before Him: Master of the Universe, I looked at my astrological** map, **and** according to the configuration of my constellations **I am not fit to have a son.** The Holy One, Blessed be He, **said to him: Emerge from your astrology,** as the verse states: "And He took him outside," **as there is no constellation for Israel** (i.e., Israel is not governed by astrological laws). (*Shabbos* 156a, and cf. Ramban to *Devarim ibid.*)

Elsewhere, the Talmud derives from the verse "You shall be *tamim* with Hashem, your G-d" that one may not consult astrologers (*Pesachim* 113b); this prohibition is codified in the *Shulchan Aruch* (*YD* 179:1).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I was in the teivah.
2. My end was Yehoshua's beginning.
3. My father also had a Lot.
4. I am not "sorry."

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. My time is 8.
2. I was at 13.
3. 1 before 100.
4. I override Shabbos.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Teivah/Ark (I am not nature, I refer to a box, In English I am a place for the Torah, I got stuck in "a rut.")

#2 Tower of "Bavel" (I mean confusion, I caused miscommunication, I was bricked, I brought dispersion.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Thank you!!

GWCK would like to express our incredible gratitude to Hashem, to our donors, and to our ambassadors for a successful campaign. We are inspired and moved by all of your support!

If you haven't yet donated, you can still help bring more Torah, more learning, more connection, and more inspiration to our community by clicking: https://causematch.com/gwck