



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

"And you shall cover it [the Ark] with pure gold, within and without shall you cover it, and you shall make upon it a crown of gold all around it "(25:11).

From this directive to overlay the wooden Aron with gold, both from within and without, the Talmud in Yoma deduces that a Torah scholar is required to have "his inside match his outside" (72b). It isn't enough for a Torah scholar to be knowledgeable; his internal character must match his public demeanor. His behavior must be consistent with his scholarship.

This requirement is readily understood. To be designated a Torah scholar, it is not sufficient merely to have achieved proficiency in the texts and the laws. Rather, one must embody the very virtues and morals of the Torah.

But what about teaching Torah to someone who is not of refined character?

In Tractate Berachos (28a), there is a Tannaitic dispute regarding this issue. Rabban Gamliel, the head of the Academy, granted entrance to the study hall only to students of high moral stature. That standard, however, did not last. After Rabban Gamliel was replaced as head of the Academy by Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria, a new policy was implemented: all students were now welcome in the Academy. The Talmud relates that many hundreds of students, who had previously been barred, came and joined the Academy.

What is the philosophy underpinning this new approach?

A similar Tannaitic dispute is recounted in the Medrash of Avos D'Rabbi Nosson (2:9). The School of Shammai opined that it is forbidden to teach Torah to someone who is not of high moral character. Torah, sublime and pure, should not be wed to the coarse and dissolute. The School of Hillel, however, objected and offered a timeless and reverberating rationale: "One should teach every person, for there were many sinners in Israel, but since they came close to Torah, there emerged from them righteous and saintly people."

There has been much concern and hand-wringing, particularly in the last few years, regarding the alarming increase in the number of Jewish youth who profess a lack of interest in or connection to Judaism. Many creative ideas and ambitious initiatives have been proposed as solutions to this terrifying reality. Yet, there is only one tried and true method that has connected us to Judaism throughout the millennia, the method so well-articulated long ago by the great sage Hillel – the power of the Torah.

*Have a wonderful Shabbos,
Rabbi Menachem Winter*

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

The Keruvim shall be with wings spread upward... with their faces toward one another... (25:20)

They had the image of a child (Sukka 5a).

He stationed at the east of Gan Eden the Keruvim... (B'reishis 3:24)

The keruvim were destructive angels (Rashi).

How could one word mean two opposite things?

Furthermore, how does Rashi know that here it means the innocent face of a child, and there it refers to destructive angels?

PARSHA RIDDLE

How many crowns were there in the Mishkan? Where?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

In which parsha are Bnei Yisrael's famous words, "na'aseh v'nishma," recorded?

Answer: Mishpatim

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Terumah begins with Hashem instructing Moshe to accept donations "of every **man** that giveth it willingly with his heart." The *Meshech Chochmah* explains that donations could only be accepted from men, but not from [married] women, as reflected in the Talmudic prohibition against accepting large charitable contributions from married women (*Bava Kama* 119a). Classic *halachah* assumes that husbands and wives retain individual ownership of their respective assets, so a wife may not on her own authority donate her husband's assets to charity (nor, presumably, may a husband donate his wife's). Nevertheless, some *halachic* authorities have argued that in contemporary times, donations may be accepted from married women, for a variety of reasons, including the following:

• The Raavan (end of *Bava Kama*) declares that "contemporary" (twelfth century German) women have the status of "guardians" (*apotroposos*) over their husbands' assets (i.e., they are generally so entrusted by their husbands, but cf. *Yam Shel Shlomo* *ibid.* Ch. 10 #59).

• The standard text of the traditional engagement contract (*tenaim*) includes the phrase "[the spouses] shall rule over their assets coequally." R. Yechiel Michel Hibner (*Mishkenos Ha'Ro'im, Kuntres Eis Dodim* p. 13) argues that this constitutes an explicit contractual stipulation that the spouses shall have equal control over all their assets. R. Shlomo Kluger (*Shut. Tuv Ta'am Va'Da'as* 3:181) strongly disagrees, arguing that the phrase in question is not legal language, but merely a blessing for marital harmony, to the extent that the spouses shall willingly share control over their assets.

• R. Yehuda Leib Graubart (*Shut. Chavolim Ba'Ne'imim* 5:34) argues that since modern secular law treats wives as partners in their husbands' assets, this becomes the prevailing custom, and husbands therefore tacitly accept this arrangement when marrying (but see the sharp dissent in *Shut. Va'Yevarech David, Even Ha'Ezer* #127, and cf. R. Chaim Jachter's "Bittul Chametz and Contemporary Financial Arrangements").

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Childlike
2. We have something in common with angels.
3. Friendship was revealed by us.
4. We put a lid on it.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was all halves.
2. I was three-part.
3. I carried my carriers.
4. Testimony

Last Week's Answers:

#1 The payment for stealing (Sometimes I am single; there is a time of double; for some it is 4 times; I can even be multiplied by 5.)

#2 The two crowns that Bnai Yisrael got by Matan Torah (We were 2; 1 was lost; Moshe got the lost one; we were for the Angelic response.)

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to

Win a
Casio Mini
Keyboard!



The next
raffle is
February 16th.

Congratulations to Rabbi Biberfeld's 4th grade class and others for answering last week's questions correctly!

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can - each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning.

THIS SUNDAY!

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

In conjunction with Young Israel Shomrai Emunah, Greater Washington Community Kollel invites men and women of the community to join us for a lecture by Rabbi Moshe Heinemann, titled

"Recoding Creation: Halachic Implications of Genetic Engineering."

This Jewish Ethics Lecture takes place

Sunday, February 14th, 9:30am at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah.