



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

The Gift of a Relationship

Presented by Rabbi Yonatan Zakem, Kollel Scholar and Director of Community Outreach

"For the Land to which you come... is not like the land of Egypt that you left, where you would plant your seed and water it on foot like a vegetable garden. But the Land ... is a Land of mountains and valleys; from the rain of heaven it will drink water" (11:10-11).

With these words, Moshe describes the essential nature of the Land that the Jewish people are going to inherit. The Ramban explains, according to the simple meaning of the verses, that the Torah is describing a challenge of the Land of Israel. Egypt has the Nile, a constant and reliable source of necessary water. Israel, on the other hand, relies solely on rainwater and has no natural source of irrigation. It therefore requires the ongoing providence of G-d to slake its considerable thirst.

This straightforward reading becomes somewhat difficult, however, in light of the preceding verses. In those verses Moshe is quite clearly describing what makes the Land of Israel attractive. Indeed, the contrast between the Land of Israel and Egypt is given as the explanation as to why inheriting the land is a just and desirable reward for keeping the *mitzvos*. Why is the Land of Israel then described as being more needy and lacking than Egypt?

Perhaps in this point we find the true greatness of the Land of Israel. True, the valleys and hills of Israel are breathtaking, and its fruit is delicious. But this is not what we are yearning for when we dream of returning to our homeland. Israel is first and foremost a Land where we *survive* on our relationship with G-d. If we nurture that relationship, life is possible. If not, there is no way forward. It is exactly because this Land is the location that promotes a single-minded focus on our relationship with our Creator that it is the optimal place to reside.

We must take the lesson for ourselves, and learn to see the opportunities to enhance our relationship with G-d as just that – opportunities. The greatest gift we have is that which enables us to strengthen our connection to Him.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

And now, Yisrael, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Him, your G-d, to go in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and all your soul (10:12).

Hashem asked Dovid HaMelech, "You said 'I ask one thing from you Hashem...' and then you delineate a long list of requests. Why?"

Dovid HaMelech answered, "I learned from You. You wrote 'What does Hashem want from you, only to fear Him' and then You began a long list of responsibilities. I followed in Your footsteps (Yalkut Shimoni Tehilim 27, 706).

How did Dovid HaMelech excuse his wording with "blaming it" on Hashem? Furthermore, why did Hashem word the posuk this way?

PARSHA RIDDLE

Don't say 'when I will have the time I will study' (Avos 2:4). Where is this hinted to in the parsha?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How do we know that Moshe davened 515 prayers to be permitted to enter Eretz Yisroel?

Answer: The amount of days from when Hashem told Moshe he would not be allowed to enter Eretz Yisroel until the day Moshe died is 200 days. Multiply 200 by the amount of tefillos one is obligated to daven on those days, Shacharis, Mincha, Maariv, and Musaf on Shabbos. The sum total is 515 tefillos. (Pnei Yehoshua)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Eikev*, the Torah commands (10:20): "Thou shalt fear Hashem thy G-d; Him shalt thou serve, and to Him shalt thou cleave, **and swear by His name.**" This is a repetition of an admonition from *parashas Va'Eschanan* (6:13): "Thou shalt fear Hashem thy G-d, and serve Him, **and shalt swear by His name.**" What is meant by the injunction to "swear by His name"? Is there really a *mitzvah* to take oaths using Hashem's name? The Rambam apparently understands that there is indeed a *mitzvah* to swear by Hashem's name when a *beis din* orders an oath (*Sefer Ha'Mitzvos esin #7, Shevuos 11:1*). The Rambam strongly disagrees, insisting that there is no *mitzvah* to swear. He offers various other interpretations of the Biblical text: it may be an admonition against swearing in the name of any other god, or permission to swear in Hashem's name (Rambam on *Va'Eschanan ibid.*, gloss to *Sefer Ha'Mitzvos ibid.* Cf. *Mizrachi* on *Va'Eschanan ibid.*).

Many *acharonim* have trouble with the view of the Rambam - surely if upon being ordered to swear by a *beis din* one chooses to pay the claim against him rather than swear, he has done nothing wrong! Some explain that the Rambam merely means that if one does choose to swear, he fulfills a *mitzvah*, although the *Sefer Ha'Chinuch* (#435) explicitly states that according to the Rambam, one who declines to swear has violated a positive commandment. The *Cheil Ha'Melech* (on Rambam *ibid.*) explains that even the *Sefer Ha'Chinuch* agrees that one who pays the claim against him instead of swearing has done nothing wrong, and he merely means that one who cannot pay and nevertheless declines to swear violates this *mitzvah*. [Cf. *Zechor Le'Avraham* on Rambam *ibid.*]

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am the opposite of Hamotzi.
2. Fill for me.
3. I cause favoritism.
4. Don't sit on me.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the snake's bite.
2. I was for striking Og.
3. I was for chasing Esav.
4. I am for Dan's horses.

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



The next raffle is September 6th.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Torah (I remove the gap; I equal all; I am black, yet blue print; pass me on.)

#2 Shema (Three times a day; you cover for me; twelve said me to their elder; I am listen.)

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.

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Greater Washington Community Kollel is excited to announce

Community Learning At Shomrai

a new community learning venture, Monday - Thursday, 8 - 9 pm at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah.

Join together with us for engaging learning opportunities for everyone.

For more info, contact Rabbi Yonatan Zakem at yzakem@gwckollel.org or 513-313-4899.