



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

The Immutable Torah

Presented by Rabbi Yonatan Zakem

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“And it will be, on the day that you cross the Jordan to the land the Lord, your G-d, is giving you, that you shall set up for yourself huge stones, and plaster them with lime... You shall write upon the stones all the words of this Torah, very clearly” (27:2,8).

Moshe instructs the Jewish people that, upon entering the Land of Israel, they are to set up stones upon which they are to write out the entire Torah. Additionally, they are to construct an altar of stone on which they are to bring offerings, and rejoice. The altar should be constructed of whole stones, untouched by iron tools (27:5-7).

At first glance, there seems to be an interruption in the flow of these verses. First, Moshe begins to describe the stone monument. Then he switches to discuss the altar and its construction, after which he returns to finish the instructions of the monument. What is the reason for this non-linear flow?

Perhaps a closer look at this final instruction regarding the monument can shed some light on the construction of the verses. Moshe instructs that the entire Torah is to be written on these stones “very clearly,” which the Talmud (Sotah 32a) interprets to mean that it should be written in all seventy languages. With this monument, the Torah is being made readily available and approachable for anyone to come and learn, regardless of background or education. There is a danger, however, that comes with this accessibility of the Divine message. If the Torah has been handed over to anyone, there are those who may, perhaps even with the best of intentions, seek to update its message and bring it in line with their own views of morality and justice. Therefore, Moshe warns that the altar of serving G-d is to remain untouched by the tools of man. It should not, and *cannot*, be improved upon. Only then will our altar bring us to the true joy of a relationship with G-d.

Indeed, the Torah is the heritage of the entire Jewish people, and all should be enabled to access its teachings. We must take heed, though, that the Torah is timeless, and its message is beyond human review.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

But if you do not listen to the voice of Hashem ... then all these curses will come upon you and overtake you (28:29).

Rebbi said, "Come and see the difference between the conduct of Hashem and of humans. Hashem blessed Bnei Yisrael with twenty two blessings and cursed them with eight curses. However, Moshe blessed them with eight blessings and cursed them with twenty two curses (Bava Basra 88b).

Why would Moshe refrain from blessing the Jewish people, while adding curses?

In addition, Rashi (28:23) says, "Moshe was milder in these curses. In the first curses recorded in Bechukosai (26:14-45), which were relayed from the Mouth of Hashem, it says 'your heavens will be like iron and your land will be like copper.' This implies that the heavens would not deliver any moisture, in the manner that iron does not form condensation. However, here it says, 'that your heavens will be like copper,' which implies that the heavens would produce some moisture." If Moshe added curses, why did he say this curse in a milder form?

PARSHA RIDDLE

Which letter does not appear in the Parsha of Bikurim?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How is it possible for a person to eat bread and be satisfied and not be required to say Birkas Hamazon?

Answer: 1) If one eats less than an olive size piece of bread and is satisfied, he is not required to bentsch (consult your Rabbi for final ruling). 2) An *onen* (someone who is involved in the burial of a relative).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Ki-Savo enumerates the list of imprecations that were to be pronounced at Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Eival, including: "Cursed be he who moves back his neighbor's landmark" (*Devarim* 27:17). This verse echoes a prohibition appearing back in *parashas Shoftim*: "You shall not pull back your neighbor's landmark, which the earlier ones have set as borders in your inheritance, which you will inherit in the land that the Lord, your God gives you, to possess" (19:14).

The primary sense of these verses is a condemnation of the theft of real property, i.e., enlarging one's own property by moving its boundary marker into one's neighbor's property. Although we already have a commandment prohibiting theft in general, the theft of real property (in the Land of Israel) violates this additional prohibition against "removing landmarks" (*Sifrei* #188; Rashi 19:14; *Sefer Ha'Mitzvos Le'Ha'Rambam Lo Saaseh* #246). The *Sifrei* also adds various other activities that are included in this prohibition.

At least as far back as the medieval era, we find variations of the phrase "landmark removal" (*hasagas gevul*) used to refer to the encroachment on another's livelihood by improper competition (*Shut. Ha'Rambam* #273; *Rokeach Hilchos Teshuvah* #28). Some maintain that this is merely a popular idiom, but the Biblical references to landmark removal actually refer strictly to the theft of real property, as above (*Shut. Radvaz* 4:54). [This view agrees, of course, that encroaching on another's livelihood is still sometimes forbidden on other grounds.] Others, however, defend the extension of the Biblical condemnation of "landmark removal" to economic encroachment (see *Shut. Maharshal* end of #89), and later *halachic* literature often takes this extension for granted (see, e.g., *Shut. Shoel U'Meishiv* 3:2:119; *Shut. Maharam Shik OC* #312; *Aruch Ha'Shulchan CM* 376:1).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am caused by the first.
2. I am part of the 'order'.
3. History is my essence.
4. I am loud.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Confess for me.
2. I am ten, but do not daven with me.
3. I am holy.
4. I cause blessing.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 War (Marriage is the excuse; vines were the escape route; home was your shelter; I was last week and this week.)

#2 Ben Sorer U'moreh (the rebellious son) (I am fiction, yet I am real; I am a big 'winer'; I am needy and meaty; my end justifies my end.)

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

win a



**MICKEY
MINI
WAFFLE
MAKER!**

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.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

A Dose of Inspiration for the New Year

The Kollel invites all men and women to a Pre-Rosh Hashana Symposium featuring words of insight and inspiration from Rabbis of our community. Monday, Sept. 26, 8:15 pm at the Kollel, 10900 Lockwood Dr.