



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

The Key to Redemption

Presented by Rabbi Yisrael Glassberg, Director of Alumni

Following the curses enumerated in this week's Torah portion, Hashem offers words of conciliation and encouragement: "I will remember My covenant with Yaakov and also My covenant with Yitzchak and also My covenant with Avraham." (26:42) The unbreakable bond Hashem forged with our forefathers withstands the test of time; the relationship we have with Hashem can never be fully severed, regardless of the worthiness of the Jewish people. The commentaries are perplexed because the verse lists the forefathers in reverse chronological order, beginning with Yaakov and concluding with Avraham.

Rav Meir Shapiro explains that each of our forefathers embodied a different aspect of dedication to Hashem. Yaakov's trademark was his complete immersion in Torah study, dedicating himself for fourteen years to study in the halls of Shem V'Ever. Yitzchak personified the attribute of prayer with his willingness to become a holy offering during the Akeidah. Avraham was renowned for his historic acts of *chesed* (kindness), welcoming strangers into his home and offering protection to his nephew Lot and even the wicked inhabitants of S'dom.

Rav Shapiro comments that the verse uses the sequence of our forefathers to describe our long, protracted exile and the state of the Jewish people on that journey. In the early years of exile, we were able to cling to the attribute of Yaakov, establishing yeshivos in Babylonia and maintaining high standards of Torah study. Over time, our ability to study Torah on that level decreased; we latched on to Yitzchak's characteristic of fervent prayer as our primary means to connect to Hashem during the dark times. Ultimately, as the exile continued, many became detached from that wellspring as well. The attribute of *chesed*, however — in the tradition of Avraham — remains intact on a large scale: Jews of all backgrounds are always involved in helping, supporting and caring for one another.

We often wonder today what we can do to hasten the Redemption. How can we possibly compare to the generations before us, those giants of Torah study and meaningful prayer? What special merit can we seek to be most effective? The Torah reminds us that, by following the path laid out for us by our forefathers — and specifically Avraham's *chesed* — we invoke special remembrance by the Almighty and thus bring the Final Days of Redemption ever closer.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Five of you will pursue a hundred, and a hundred of you will pursue ten thousand... (26:8)

The math is off. If five pursue one hundred, then one hundred (which is twenty times five) should pursue two thousand (which is twenty times a hundred). From here we see that when many people are following the Torah their power increases exponentially (Rashi).

For how could one (enemy) pursue a thousand (Jews), and two (enemies) cause a myriad (ten thousand Jews) to flee? (Ha'azinu 32:30)

Why doesn't Rashi ask in Ha'azinu why the power of the enemies chasing the Jews increases disproportionately?

Parsha Riddle

How does the letter "vav" guarantee the coming of Moshiach?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

If one loses count of when Shemitta is, how can one easily figure it out?

Answer: Divide the year of the Jewish calendar by seven. If there is no remainder, it is a shemitta year.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Bechukosai begins with the verse: "If you will follow My decrees and observe My commandments and perform them;" Rashi, following Sifra, explains that the phrase "If you will follow My decrees" cannot refer to the performance of the commandments, since that is what is denoted by the verse's continuation. The opening words must therefore refer to toil in [the study of] Torah, in order to observe and fulfill the commandments (but cf. Mizrahi's interpretation of the Sifra and Rashi). Rabbinic literature frequently extols the value of "toil in Torah" (Brachos 17b, 28b, and cf. 63b; Sanhedrin 99b; Pirkei Avos 6:4).

Some go so far as to maintain that active measures to minimize the effort expended in studying Torah are inappropriate: R. Israel Isserlein is reported to have been critical of certain "rich, pampered young men" who utilized some sort of mobile table to convey books to themselves: "on the contrary, when one seeks out a book and it comes to him with great effort, he thereby remembers what he wishes to learn" (Leket Yosher vol. 2 p. 39). On the other hand, there is a tradition that R. Shabbatai Ha'Kohen – a scholar whose works exhibit remarkable erudition – utilized the Name of Finding, a holy Name which when meditated upon granted instant discovery of any desired source (Shem Ha'Gedolim maareches seforim os Shin #135).

In a similar vein, the Talmud records a debate over whether one who attends a synagogue that is farther from one's home than a nearby one will receive "reward for one's steps" (schar psios - Sotah 22a, Bava Metzia 107a). It is not entirely clear whether normative halachah accepts the notion of schar psios – Rambam and Shulchan Aruch do not codify it, but Magen Avraham (siman 90 s.k. 22) and Mishneh Brurah (s.k. 37) do. R. Malkiel Tannenbaum argues that it does not make sense for one to be rewarded for pointless effort, and suggests that schar psios applies only when one has been accustomed to pray at the farther synagogue prior to the construction of the nearer one. Continuing to frequent the farther one in accordance with the value of maintaining a fixed location for prayer despite now having an easier option may indeed be meritorious (Shut. Divrei Malkiel 5:19).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

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

Win a
Great Wall
of China
Lego Set



#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am 50 and 30.
2. I am 20 and 10.
3. I am not less than a month.
4. I am worth it.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for ten.
2. I could be for nine or eleven.
3. I cause painting.
4. Single file line please.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Yovel (Seven sevens before me, I have a shofar; "Forever" is until me, I return people.)

#2 Lag Ba'Omer (I do not lag behind, My number is my name, Don't get burnt, Glory within glory.)

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!**

THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
July 16.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Join the GWCK this Shabbos for a Shabbaton in Woodside at Woodside Synagogue Ahavas Torah

7:15am Hashkama Minyan - *V'Talmud Torah K'Neged Kulam: The Relative Values of Study and Action* - Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

8:45am Main Minyan - *Standing for the 10 Commandments: Reverence or Heresy* - Rabbi Menachem Winter

5:00pm Women's Shiur - *Preparing for Shavuos: Lessons from Rus* - Mrs. Sara Malka Winter

5:00pm Children's Program - *The Unusual Upbringing of the Kli Yakar* - Rabbi Moshe Sadwin

6:30pm Afternoon Class - *"And It Was Evening and It Was Morning:" Did Night Actually Precede Day in Creation?* - Rabbi Hillel Shaps
Seudah Shlishit - *Um'sar Lan Oraisa: Torah Study - Discovery or Creation?* - Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman