



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

### Challenging Our Perspectives

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

Our *Parsha* begins with *Yaakov* beginning to settle in at home after being away for 36 years. This marks the end of a difficult period in *Yaakov's* life, which included *Yaakov* having to run away from his brother, *Esav*, and surviving the treachery of his father-in-law for 20 years. As our Sages tell us, *Yaakov* hoped to live out the rest of his life in tranquility. This, however, was not to be the case as only a short time later, *Yaakov* suffered the tragedy of losing his beloved son, *Yosef*. Our Sages teach us that *Hashem* was informing *Yaakov* that a life of tranquility was not something that he should have been seeking. This begs the question, why not? What was wrong with *Yaakov* seeking some peace and calm? Surely *Yaakov* intended to use the tranquility to better focus on his service of *Hashem*?

Rabbi Yehuda Leib Chasman explains that people often think that they would serve *Hashem* better if only some challenge in their life was not present. But, he explains, the reality is quite different. In truth, the unique blend of life circumstances that *Hashem* gives each person – with all of its trials and tribulations – is the exact recipe for his or her growth.

We are all given a unique set of talents and strengths, as well as a unique set of weaknesses and challenges. When we face a challenge in life, we must know that *Hashem* has given us that challenge because we can use it to become better than we are and better than we would be without the challenge. May we merit to recognize the source and purpose of adversity in life, and may we utilize it as it is intended – as a tool for growth.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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# TABLE TALK

## Point to Ponder

**He (Yaakov) recognized it and he said, "My son's tunic! An evil beast devoured him! Yosef surely has been torn to bits. (17, 33)**

Rav Yaakov said, "The reward for the fulfillment of mitzvot is not in this world. Rav Yaakov saw a man tell his son to climb onto a roof and bring down the chicks. The son climbed to the top, sent away the mother bird and took the chicks. The son thereby fulfilled the mitzva of honoring his father and of sending away the mother bird. In regard to both of them, the Torah promises long life. As the son descended, he fell and died... What happened to the promise of long life? The verse means it will prolong your life in the world that is long - Olam Habo. (Kiddushin 39b)

Why didn't Chazal bring a proof to this premise from Yaakov Avinu? Yosef was sent by his father to check on his brothers' welfare (37, 13). With the place for reward for fulfilling mitzvot not being in this world, how could Yaakov have thought that Yosef was killed? Isn't this a good proof that the reward for mitzvot is not in this world?

## Parsha Riddle

**What was the last Halacha that Yaakov learned with Yosef, before he was sold?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**On which day of the year did Yaakov fight with the angel of Esav?**

**Answer: The first night of Pesach**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Vayeishev (38:25), the Torah relates that "As [Tamar] was taken out [to be burned], she sent word to her father-in-law saying, 'By the man to whom these belong I am with child.' And she said, 'Identify, if you please, whose are this signet, this wrap, and this staff.'" Apparently, even on the verge of losing her life, Tamar declined to publicly expose her father-in-law, and left it to him to decide whether to confess, from which the Talmud (Bava Metzia 59a) infers that "It is better that a person should cast himself into a fiery furnace than that he should shame his fellow in public."

Halachic authorities disagree as to whether this rule is actually normative. Some rule that it is indeed mandatory to accept death in order to avoid publicly humiliating one's fellow, with some offering the rationale that public humiliation of another is tantamount to murder, as per the Talmudic assertion that: "If anyone makes his friend's face turn white [from shame] in public, it is as if he has spilled blood [i.e., murdered the friend]," and one is obligated to give up his life to avoid committing murder (Magen Avos (Duran) 3:11; Mayim Chaim Yesodei Hatorah 5:2; Shut. Binyan Tzion #172).

Others, however, maintain that Tamar went beyond the letter of the law (lifnim mishuras hadin – Teivas Gome chakirah 5), or that the Talmud is merely condoning such self-sacrifice as permissible (and not prohibited as suicide), but not mandatory, and the Talmudic phrase "it is as if he has spilled blood" does not imply absolute equality, but merely general comparability (Divrei Shaul YD 345:2). R. Osher Weiss argues that the assumption of absolute equality leads to absurdities: we would kill someone attempting to publicly humiliate someone else in order to prevent the humiliation, just as we would kill someone attempting murder, and it would be permitted to violate the Sabbath to forestall public humiliation (e.g., by turning off a light, so no one will witness the humiliation), just as this is permitted to save a life (Noach Lo L'Adam Sheyapil es Atzmo L'Kivshan Haeish v'Al Yalbin Pnei Chaveiro B'Rabim [5778], and cf. Shut. Yabia Omer 6:YD:13:12 and Shut. Bnei Banim 1:41).

PRESENTED BY  
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I was caused by tranquility.
2. I was caused by dreams.
3. I was to Egypt.
4. I was a blessing in disguise.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I caused jealousy.
2. I was a proof of death.
3. I was a sign of love.
4. I was colorful.

#### Last Week's Answers

- #1 Jugs that Yaakov returned for** (We caused aloneness, We were small, We were more precious than his body, We could be for drinking.)  
**#2 400** (I was for Efron, I was for Esav, I am not "tough", I was for the years of affliction.)

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

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