



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Foreign "Powers"

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

"He sent and summoned all the necromancers of Egypt and all its wise men; Pharaoh related his dream to them, but none could interpret them for Pharaoh." (41:8)

Pharaoh dreams of seven healthy and robust cows being swallowed by seven ugly, gaunt cows and then an almost identical dream consisting of ears of grain in place of the cows. The Torah describes how none of Pharaoh's necromancers could interpret the dreams "for Pharaoh." Only Yosef was able to interpret the dreams.

Rabbi Menachem Bentzion Zacks infers from the verse that Pharaoh's necromancers were indeed able to correctly interpret the dreams – they just couldn't do so "for Pharaoh." Pharaoh considered himself a god – someone above the natural order. The necromancers could not bring themselves to offer an explanation to Pharaoh that would insinuate there was a higher being who controlled even Pharaoh.

Yosef had no such fear. "That which G-d is doing, He has told Pharaoh," Yosef declares using the present tense, "is doing." Even presently under your rule, Yosef tells Pharaoh, G-d is guiding all world events.

In the times of Chanukah, the Greek king, like Pharaoh, also fancied himself a god and chose the name Antiochus Epiphanes, which means, God Manifest. He would also be taught the lesson, that the one true G-d is guiding world events. The strong and numerous Greek army was defeated by the small and weak Jewish army.

World events and foreign powers can at times appear frightening to us. On Chanukah we are reminded that it is G-d who controls and guides the world and by turning to Him in prayer and putting our trust in Him, we can merit salvation.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a Happy Chanukah!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

We do not add a ninth day to Chanukah due to S'feika D'yoma (uncertainty which date it is). The reason is as follows - In the time of the Bais Hamikdash, when the sanctification of the new moon was performed via witnesses, it was possible that people would be unsure which day was Yom Tov. With a set calendar now in use, indeed there is no S'feika D'Yoma, however we continue the custom of our fathers to add a day to Yom Tov. However, this only applies to a Biblical Yom Tov and not to a Rabbinic Yom Tov. (Chavas Daas 110, Minchas Chinuch 301)

Rav Yochanan said in the name of Rebbi Shimon Ben Yehotzodok, "In the Diaspora we recite the complete Hallel on twenty one days... and on the eight days of Chanukah" (Taanis 28b).

Rebbi Shimon Ben Yehotzodok lived during the time when the new moon was sanctified by witnesses (Sanhedrin 26a) and the calendar wasn't set? Why then does he say that Hallel is recited for eight days in the diaspora and not nine?

Parsha Riddle

How many Chashmonaim fought the Greeks?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: Eglu Arufah (the axed heifer)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Mikeitz begins with the Torah relating Yosef's release from the dungeon "two years to the day" from the incident at the end of parashas Vayeishev in which he had asked Pharaoh's Chamberlain of the Cupbearers to remember him and mention him to Pharaoh, but the Chamberlain had forgotten him instead. The midrash explains that Yosef really deserved to have been released then, but Hashem caused him to remain in prison for an additional two years since he had acted improperly by relying upon the Chamberlain, a human being, instead of upon Hashem (Targum Yonasan and Tanchuma at the end of Vayeishev).

Ralbag apparently disagrees: he actually derives the lesson from Yosef's request of the Chamberlain that one should always exert himself to the utmost of his ability to escape a bad situation, and he explains that the reason that Hashem caused the Chamberlain to only mention him to Pharaoh after two years had elapsed is because that was the ideal time for Pharaoh to hear about Yosef (i.e., when desperate to find an interpreter of his dream and thus most amenable to releasing him and even elevating him to lofty estate).

The midrashic criticism of Yosef notwithstanding, the general attitude of our tradition (at least for ordinary individuals, who are not on lofty spiritual levels) is that prudent efforts to protect oneself and one's family and improve their lot are indeed appropriate. A classic case study is the rabbinic perspective on life insurance and related insurance and savings products: over the last century, numerous halachic authorities have considered the question of whether the purchase of such financial products constitutes a failure of bitachon (trust in Hashem), and the overwhelming consensus is that it does not. Just as the Torah expects one to work in order to earn a living, and not to simply do nothing and expect Hashem to provide, so, too, is the purchase of insurance to protect one's dependents in the event of one's death a perfectly reasonable measure toward that end (Shut. Pri Hasadeh 2:44; Shut. Igros Moshe OC 2:111; Shut. Yechaveh Daas 3:85; Shut. Sheivet Halevi 4:1:2; Shut. Be'er Moshe 8:118).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not for benefit.
2. I am for those returning.
3. I am to be seen.
4. I go up in number.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I caused a fight.
2. I was dipped.
3. I represent hardships.
4. I was woolen.

Last Week's Answers

#1 The sale of Yosef (I was caused by tranquility, I was caused by dreams, I was to Egypt, I was a blessing in disguise.)

#2 Yosef's coat (I cause jealousy, I was a proof of death, I was a sign of love, I was colorful.)

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

WIN a Fort Building Kit



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
Feb 11.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Girls New Year's Day Learning & Pizza

With Mrs. Sara Malka Winter
at Ben Yehuda Pizza
for girls in 4th, 5th & 6th grade



Wednesday, Jan 1, 10:15am-11:15am - Please RSVP to info@gwckollel.org