



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

True Wisdom

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

Our Sages teach us that a wise person is one who learns from everyone (Pirkei Avos 4:1). The Maharal explains that a truly wise person is one who not only *possesses* wisdom but who *loves and pursues* wisdom as well. This may help us understand the verse in *Parshas Ki Sisa*, which states, "*and in the heart of all wise-hearted I have given wisdom.*" (31:6) Perhaps the Torah's message is that Hashem grants wisdom to those who truly love it and pursue it.

There is an important lesson to be learned here. It is natural to feel that the success of our pursuit is measured only by its outcome. The Torah teaches, however, that what truly defines a person's actions is the pursuit itself, irrespective of the outcome.

Thus, if we sit down to learn Torah but come away not understanding that which we have learned, our actions are judged by our earnest attempt, not by our lack of comprehension. If we set out to do *chesed* (kind deeds) for our neighbors but are ultimately unable to do so, we are defined nonetheless as *ba'alei chesed* (doers of kind deeds). Let us never be deterred from pursuing worthwhile goals for fear that we will not succeed. May we always remember that true success lies in the pursuit itself.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

They have strayed quickly from the way that I have commanded them; they have made themselves a molten calf, prostrated themselves to it, and they said, "These are your gods, Israel..." (32, 8)

Idolatry is unlike other sins. On other sins, even a righteous person can stumble... However, in regard to idolatry, even an ordinary person does not fall to the low level of worshipping an idol, even on only one occasion. As the Rabbis taught, "This is the way the yetzer hora operates: Today he says to perform a minor sin and tomorrow he tells you to sin a greater sin, until he can convince you to serve an idol." (Shabbos 105a)

If an ordinary person does not fall to the level of idolatry immediately, how could Bnai Yisroel in the desert, who had seen Hashem and heard His giving of the Torah, quickly fall to sin such a grievous transgression?

Parsha Riddle

Which other Tzadikim glowed like Moshe Rabbeinu?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which two gentile kings wore the Kohen Gadol's (High Priest's) vestments?

Answer: Balshetzar and Achashveirosh. (Megilla 12a)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Ki-Sisa, the Torah relates (32:19) that when Moshe "saw the calf and the dances, [his] anger flared up. He threw down the Tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain." The commentaries give three general interpretations of Moshe's action:

- He could no longer carry the Tablets, either because the writing that had (miraculously) enabled him to carry them had (miraculously) departed from them (Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 45), or because the sight of the calf had enervated him (Rashbam).
- Moshe deliberately shattered the Tablets pursuant to a command from Hashem (numerous sages in Avos D'Rabbi Nassan 2:3).
- Moshe decided on his own to destroy the tablets, either in order to mitigate the punishment the Jews would receive for the sin of the calf (R. Yosi Ha'Galili in ADRN ibid.), or because the people's sinfulness rendered them unworthy of the Tablets (Shabbas 87a, Sforno).

The Talmudic sages who adopt the third approach add that Hashem ultimately expressed His approval of Moshe's action.

In a civil context, there is considerable discussion among the early Sephardic aharonim over whether an agent entrusted with his principal's assets who deviates from his instructions and whose principal subsequently incurred a loss can defend himself by claiming that he acted according to his judgment of the principal's best interests in the situation before him. The general consensus is that good intentions are not a valid defense, "for if they were, every agent would say that" (Shut. Mabit 1:179, and cf. Shut. Maharit Tzahalon 129; Shut. Maharshach 3:64; Shut. Maharit CM:112), but there is a ruling of Maharit that they are (ibid. #110). Later authorities struggle to reconcile this latter ruling with the general consensus; the generally accepted approach is to distinguish between active deviation (e.g., the purchase of different goods from the instructed ones), in which case good intentions are insufficient as a defense, and passive deviation (e.g., the refusal to follow an order to sell the merchandise), in which case they are (Shut. Zera Avraham CM 24; Shut. Masas Moshe 1:CM:65; Shut. Nehpeh Ba'Kesef 1:CM:18).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. The Red Heifer cleans up after me.
2. I am like the Menorah.
3. I ended up in a drink.
4. I came from stolen jewelry.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am a covenant.
2. I am the seventh.
3. I am a sign.
4. I am a testimony.

Last Week's Answers

- #1 **Vashti** (I was killed for a friend, I made a party, I oppressed the Jews, I refused to appear.)
#2 **The 4 Mitzvos of Purim** (Listen, Eat, Give, Give (x2).)

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to **WIN a Claw Machine Arcade Game**



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
Apr 28.

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Beginning the
2nd perek of Maseches
Taanis this week!

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Potomac: Sundays, 8:15pm at YTEIP
White Oak: Mondays and Thursdays,
9:00pm at SEHC
Woodside: Mondays, 9:00pm at WSAF