



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Like a Fish Without Water

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

In this week's Parsha, the Torah tells us about the importance of reviewing the Torah that we learn. The verse states: "Just be careful and watch your life well, so that you do not forget the matters." Our Sages derive from here that a person forfeits his life if he deliberately forgets the Torah that he learned. Of course, this raises the obvious question: Is forgetting Torah so terrible to warrant such a devastating punishment?

Perhaps when the Sages say that one who forgets the Torah he learned is responsible with his life they are not stating the punishment the person deserves. Rather, the forfeiture of the person's life is a direct consequence of his forgetting his Torah. Because Torah study is our life, discontinuing our learning, or forgetting our Torah, automatically causes us to lose our spiritual life. In the same way if we ceased to breathe we would die, ceasing to learn Torah would bring about a spiritual death. We must learn and review the Torah every day.

The following story illustrates this point well. There was a time when the Romans did not allow the Jews to learn or teach Torah. Rabbi Akiva, however, chose not to adhere to the prohibition and continued to teach Torah. When he was asked how he could risk his life to teach Torah, he answered with the following parable. There was once a hungry fox that saw fish swimming back and forth in the water. The fox asked the fish what they were worried about. The fish answered that they were trying to escape the fishermen's nets. The sly fox advised the fish, "Why don't you come here to the dry land where you will be safe from the fishermen's nets?" The fish answered, "Fool! The water is our life. We can't live without water. If we stay in the water we have a chance of survival, but if we go out to the dry land we will surely die."

The same is true, explained Rabbi Akiva, with the Jews and the Torah. "The Torah is our life. The Romans may or may not take away my life for learning Torah. But if I stop learning Torah, I will surely not have my life."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

SPONSOR

To sponsor an issue of Shabbos Delights, please contact info@gwckollel.org

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And make them known to your children and your children's children. (4, 9)

"Make them known to your children" teaches that one has an obligation to teach Torah to his sons. Where is the source that obligates a person to teach Torah to his grandchildren? Therefore the verse ends with, "and your children's children." (Kidushin 30a)

Grandchildren are halachically considered children. (Yevamos 70a)

Since grandchildren are considered sons, why is it necessary to have another verse to teach that one is obligated to teach his grandchildren?

Parsha Riddle

What is the Torah hinting to with the word Va'eschanan?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

On which day of Av did the Bais HaMikdash burn down?

Answer:

The tenth of Av

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parshas Va'Eschanan (6:13) contains the imperative (reiterated in 10:20) of "in His Name shall you swear." Rambam counts this as one of the 613 commandments: when it becomes necessary to take an oath, to affirm or deny something, we must do so in Hashem's Name. (Sefer Ha'Mitzvos aseh 7) Ramban disagrees and maintains that there is no mitzvah at all to swear in Hashem's Name. Our verse is merely granting permission to do so, or prohibiting taking an oath in the name of anything other than Hashem. (Hasagos to ibid. and commentary to our verse)

Chasam Sofer goes even further, explaining that without the dispensation of this verse, swearing even truthfully in Hashem's Name would be punishable by lashes; the verse teaches that it is not, but it is nevertheless considered sinful. This undergirds the prevalent attitude that any oath at all, even a truthful one required by a court, is sinful and something to be avoided if at all possible, even if this involves financial cost. (Shut. Chasam Sofer CM 90. We have previously discussed this idea in our column for this parashah in 5775)

What exactly Rambam means by saying that there is a mitzvah to swear in Hashem's Name is the subject of dispute:

- Some understand that if one swears by Hashem's name, he fulfills a mitzvah, but he is certainly permitted to refrain from swearing entirely. The Chinuch (#435), however, explicitly states that according to Rambam, one who declines to swear in Hashem's name when necessary actually violates the mitzvah.
- Some explain, based on the Chinuch, that when one is faced with a civil claim in beis din (rabbinic court) and is required to either pay the claim or take an oath to justify his plea that he cannot do so, in such a case a refusal to swear violates the mitzvah. (Cheil Ha'Melech Shevuos 11:11)
- Some explain that if one needs to swear, there is a mitzvah to do so in Hashem's name. This is analogous to the mitzvah of shechitah (ritual slaughter): one may certainly refrain from slaughtering animals, but if one needs to do so, he must follow the rules of shechitah. (Zechor L'Avraham ibid.)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the morning.
2. I am on your eyes.
3. I bear testimony.
4. I was said by Yaakov and to Yaakov.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am what I am on.
2. I am for the gate.
3. I am for the door.
4. I am slanted for many.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Tisha B'Av (I am the same nights as Pesach, I am not the father's, I will become a Yom-tov, I was caused by crying.)

#2 Sefer Devarim (I am the fifth, I am almost one day, I am words, I am from Moshe's perspective.)

The raffle has been postponed until after the shuls are reopened. We are still accepting entries to the raffle.

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!

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

All regular GWCK classes are now on break for the summer and will resume in Elul - exact date to be announced.