



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Seeing the Stars

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

"And He took him outside and said, 'Gaze, now, toward the heavens, and count the stars if you are able to count them!' And He said to him, 'So shall your offspring be!'" (15:5)

In our Parsha, Hashem tells Avraham to gaze at the Heavens and try to count the stars. Hashem promises Avraham that his offspring, the Jewish people, will be compared to the stars. This begs the question, for what purpose are the Jewish people being compared to the stars?

The Abarbanel gives a fascinating answer. The stars are always shining in the sky, yet their light is only discernable at night. We are unable to see them during the day. It is the same way with the Jewish people. Each and every Jew, no matter how unassuming they may be, is a shining star. Sometimes, however, the value of a fellow Jew is only realized at 'nighttime,' during times of pain and suffering. At those times, people tend to forget their differences and come together, appreciating the true worth of one another.

Present times have provided numerous opportunities for people to shine and show their true colors. Let us utilize these uncertain times to recognize the value of each other. But, let us not only limit this recognition to the times of darkness, but rather appreciate our Jewish brothers and sisters at all times. Such an exercise will bring us together and unify us as the indivisible nation that we truly are.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

"Behold, now I have known that you are a woman of beautiful appearance." (12, 11)

An Aggadic Medrash says: Until now he had not noticed the quality of beauty as a result of their modesty. But now he recognized her quality of beauty through this incident. (Rashi)

Avram was obligated to recognize the qualities of his wife before he married her, as the Gemara (Kidushin 41a) rules, "It is forbidden for a man to marry a woman without seeing her, perhaps after their marriage he will find a quality that he dislikes and will dislike his wife." How was Avram permitted to marry Sarai without recognizing her? Avram saw her before they got married, but due to their extreme modesty he did not note her beauty afterwards, and Avram assumed that due to aging, Sarai would have lost her quality of beauty. However, after the incident, Avram realized that she still possessed qualitative beauty, he commented "now I have known..." (Maharsha Kiddushin 41a)

Chazal (Bava Metziah 87a) relate that aging was a phenomenon that occurred only once people were unable to differentiate between Avraham and Yitzchak. Avraham then davened that he should look older, due to his age. This occurred many years after Avraham went to Egypt. If so, why would Avram have assumed that Sarai would have looked any different due to her age?

Parsha Riddle

How old was Avraham when he went to Eretz Yisroel for the first time?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Who in the Torah had a father and father-in-law who had the same name?

Answer: Noah and his wife, Na'ama. Both of their fathers were named Lemech.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Lech-Lecha relates the capture of Lot by the four kings, and his rescue by his uncle Avraham. Various motivations have been suggested for Avraham's decision to risk his life on behalf of Lot: his perception that the capture of Lot by the four kings indicated that they were his enemies (Or Hachaim); a sense of responsibility for Lot, either because Lot had followed him out of his birthplace Charan (Ramban 19:29), or because Lot's father, Avraham's brother Haran, had died in a fiery furnace as a consequence of professing his belief in Avraham's G-d (Emes L'Yaakov 14:14); and the desire to sanctify G-d's Name (Bereishis Rabbah 43).

R. Moshe Tzurriel suggests that Avraham could not tolerate the gross injustice of the conduct of the four kings (R. Moshe Tzurriel). The idea that their behavior was unacceptable already appears in a remarkable comment of the Tosafists (Moshav Zekeinim 12:13), who suggest it as one possible explanation of why Avraham fought for Lot but did not do so for his wife Sarah when she was seized in Egypt: Avraham had tried to smuggle Sarah into the country, and so her seizure by the Egyptians was legitimate, under the principle of dina d'malchusa dina ("the law of the government is the law" – i.e., recognized as valid by halachah), but Lot's capture by the four kings was mere kidnapping. Similarly, the Or Hachaim maintains that the capture of Lot by the four kings was legitimate, despite their not having been at war with Avraham and his family. Lot's capture was analogous to the Jewish people's capture from Sichon of territory that he had previously seized from Moab, despite their being adjured against hostilities against Moab itself.

In general, halachah recognizes the principle that at least in conflicts between nations, "to the victor belong the spoils." The Rambam rules (Hilchos Avadim 9:4): "When a gentile king wages war, brings captives and sells them, a slave who is purchased in this manner is considered a Canaanite slave with regard to all matters." In this vein, the Radvaz (Shut. Radvaz 3:968) rules: "The law of kings is that when they capture a province in battle, all the houses, fields, and vineyards are theirs, and the people as well are theirs as tributary slaves."

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. For us I begin at night.
2. I usually have two dozen.
3. This week (for them) I will have more.
4. A hook differentiates between me and the sea.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am cut in half.
2. I caused sleep.
3. I revealed.
4. I attracted the birds.

Last Week's Answers

#1 The Teiva (Ark) (I am not nature, I refer to a box, In English I am a place for the Torah, I got stuck in a "a rut.")

#2 Tower of Bavel (I mean confusion, I caused miscommunication, I was bricked, I brought dispersion.)

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!**

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