



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Living with Consistency

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

And Yosef said to his brothers, "I am Yosef. Is my father still alive?" His brothers could not answer him for they were flustered from before his face. (45:3)

Our Parsha describes the shock that Yosef's brothers experienced at the turn of events. They had been tormented by the Egyptian viceroy. He accused Binyomin of stealing his goblet and now wanted to take Binyomin as a slave as compensation. The brothers begged him to reconsider and were prepared to fight for Binyomin's release. After all that, the seemingly heartless viceroy surprises them, revealing that he is in fact their long-lost brother, Yosef.

From this incident, the Midrash derives a sobering idea. If the brothers could not stand in the face of a human being's (Yosef's) rebuke, how will we be able to stand in the face of judgement when we come before G-d? While this is truly a sobering thought, what is the connection to Yosef? What rebuke did he give them when he declared that "I am Yosef?"

The Beis Halevi explains that Yosef did not rebuke his brothers outright. Instead, the rebuke was implied – yet powerful. The brothers had been arguing to Yosef that he must let Binyomin go free because imprisoning him will be too much for their aged father to bear. Yosef responds and says, "I am Yosef. Is my father still alive?" The implication was clear. He was saying, "When you sold me into slavery you never cared about our father's feelings then. Why now are you so concerned for our father's feelings?"

So too, explains the Beis Halevi, will be our judgment before Hashem. We often rationalize our actions or inactions with idealistic or practical justifications. Subject to a little scrutiny, however, it becomes clear that we use those justifications when they are convenient for us and ignore them when not. These inconsistencies will be demonstrated to us when we come before Hashem for judgment.

Let us be mindful of the motivations behind our actions and check ourselves for consistency now, before we must face those contradictions. Let us live our lives truly the way that Hashem wishes we lead them and grow in our service to Him.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Hurry go up to my father (Yaakov)... (45, 9)

Yosef said 'go up' because Eretz Yisroel is the highest of all the lands. (Rashi)

The source for this lesson is difficult to find in our verse. Although Yosef being in Mitzrayim proves that Eretz Yisroel is higher than Mitzrayim, however, from where do we deduce that Eretz Yisroel is higher than all lands?

Parsha Riddle

Where in Bnei Yisroel's descent to Goshen is there a hint to Moshiach?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

When would a person recite the entire Hallel for nine consecutive days, and the same person, on another occasion would recite the entire Hallel for ten consecutive days?

Answer: A person who recites a different section of Tehillim every date of the month, recites the entire Hallel on the twenty fourth of the month. Therefore, on the day preceding Chanuka he/she recites the entire Hallel, and that day with the eight days of Chanuka, totals nine. The same holds true with Sukkos. The date after Simchas Torah is the twenty fourth, (and Sukkos with Shemini Atzeres/Simchas Torah is nine days) adding a tenth day to the recitation of the entire Hallel.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The end of *parashas Vayigash* relates the consequences of Yosef's grand program of nationalization of Egypt's grain harvests during the years of plenty in order to provide for the people during the years of famine: the people eventually ran out of money, and were forced to sell first their cattle and then their land and even their very selves as serfs to the crown in exchange for food. Some have argued that the success of Yosef's plan in at least warding off catastrophic starvation during the famine is an argument for "the important role government has in smoothing out the ravages of the business cycle," while others have countered that on the contrary, the true lesson of the story is that "central planning of the kind undertaken by Yosef and Pharaoh ultimately leads down a Hayekian 'road to serfdom.'"

A century ago, during the birth of communism and socialism in the form of the Russian Revolution and the election of Socialist parliamentarians in Europe, rabbinic thought was generally conservative and hostile to these movements and ideologies. As R. Yitzchak Blau writes:

My research failed to turn up a single Rabbi of recognized stature who endorsed the communist program. ... To a great degree, this lack of rabbinic endorsement stems from the live historical example of cruelty and atheism displayed by twentieth century communist governments.

But R. Blau proceeds to suggest that the negative attitudes also stemmed from religious, philosophical, and psychological objections to communism per se. (*Tradition* 40:4, but cf. Prof. Marc Shapiro, *Rabbis and Communism*, the Seforim Blog)

A classic example of rabbinic opposition to communism and socialism appears in a responsum of the *Chavatzeles Hasharon* (2:CM:8) considering whether rent regulation legislation is binding upon Jews under the *halachic* principle that "the law of the government is the law." Contrary to the *Imrei Yosher* (2:152:2), who maintained that at least eviction controls (as opposed to price controls) are binding, the *Chavatzeles Hasharon* argued that such laws constitute an unjust taking of property and are illegitimate, particularly since the primary support for these laws was from "some free-thinking elected representatives, holding communist and socialist doctrines and opinions of [the desirability of] pressuring the rich and taking their money, and all these doctrines are against the opinion of the Torah."

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am a tune.
2. I come from Ezra.
3. Precede and Go!
4. Fourth (son)

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the morning.
2. I am for the night.
3. Yaakov said me.
4. I was a response to Yaakov.

Last Week's Answers

#1 *Seven* (I was for the Menorah, I was for the cows, I am for Shemittah, I was for the wheat)

#2 *Pharaoh's dreams* (I had a cow, I was wheat free, I was one in two, I caused saving.)

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

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The A to Z of Jewish Living

Topics from Peleh Yoetz

Mondays – 8:30pm

Presented by Rabbi Elie Gayer

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