



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Beyond Our Reach is Within Our Reach

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

She saw the basket among the reeds, and sent *amasa* – her maidservant to get it. (2:5)

No longer able to hide her baby from the Egyptians, Yocheved, Moshe's mother, places him in a basket in the Nile River. A short while later, the daughter of Pharaoh, who has come to bathe in the Nile, spots the floating basket and, intrigued, sends forth "*amasa*" to get it. The Talmud (Sota 12b) cites two interpretations for the word *amasa*. First, it refers to "her maidservant," and second, it means "her hand." According to this second interpretation, the Talmud explains, the Torah utilized the word *ama*, rather than the word *yad*, to teach that her arm extended beyond its normal length to reach the basket. This is alluded to as the word *ama* also means cubit, a measure of length.

Rabbi Chaim Shmuelewitz explains that the Talmud did not mean to suggest that her arm miraculously extended and then returned to normal. Rather, the Talmud is teaching us an essential lesson about human potential. If we fully invest ourselves and put in our best effort to accomplish something – even if it seems to be beyond our capabilities, G-d will ensure that we have what it takes to succeed. Pharaoh's daughter sensed that it was important for her to see what was contained in that basket. Despite the distance and the apparent impossibility of reaching the basket, she nevertheless tried, extending herself as much as she was able. At that point, G-d helped her accomplish her task and she suddenly found the basket in her hand.

At times we think that our hopes and dreams are beyond our reach or we face challenges and obstacles in life that seem insurmountable. But, G-d has blessed us all with talents and strengths that we don't even realize we possess. Sometimes, all it takes is for us to try a little harder – reach a little further and soon, with G-d's help, we'll be clutching those dreams in our hands.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

On the way to their lodging place, Hashem encountered Moshe and sought to kill him. (4, 24)

Rav Yose taught, "G-d forbid to say that Moshe did not care about Bris Milah. He was faced with a dilemma. Should he perform the bris before he went to Egypt and then take the child with him? – But the infant would be in danger for the first three days after the Bris... (Rashi)

The halacha that danger to a life exempts a person from performing a mitzvah (Yoma 85b) was only given at Matan Torah. If so, why would Moshe think that he would be exempt because of danger? (R'eim)

Granted, that without the special verse, one would be obligated to sacrifice his life to perform a mitzva. However, how can one be obligated to perform a mitzva at the expense of another person's life?

Parsha Riddle

Where do we find that wood ate something?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How old was Esav when he died?

Answer: 147

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Shemos*, Hashem orders Moshe to take the Jewish people out of Egypt, but Moshe repeatedly declines. The Ramban explains that Moshe's reluctance was due to his extreme humility. There are several other examples in Tanach of men chosen by Hashem to lead who initially decline due to humility: Gideon, who responded (*Shoftim* 6:15) "Behold my thousand is the most impoverished of Manasseh, and I am the youngest of my father's house," Shaul, who (*Shmuel* 1 10:22) "[hid] among the baggage," and Yirmiyahu, who protested (*Yirmiyahu* 1:6) "Alas, my L-rd Hashem / Elokim, see, I do not know how to speak, for I am just a youth!"

The Talmud (*Menachos* 109b) relates that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Perahya said:

Initially, in response to **anyone who would say to me: Ascend to the position of Nasi, I would tie him up and place him in front of a lion** out of anger for his suggestion. **Now** that I have become the *Nasi*, in response to **anyone who tells me to leave the position, I would throw a kettle [kumkum] of boiling water at him** out of anger at his suggestion.

The Rivash (#271) understands this to have normative implications: although it is appropriate for scholars to decline invitations to assume positions of authority, once they are appointed to them, they refuse to relinquish them. Thus, a position of communal authority may not be taken away from one who has been appointed to it. The Rema codifies this view, although he prefaces it by the ruling that if the custom is that appointments are made to a limited term, or that the community retains the power to choose whomever it wants for the position, then this is the community's prerogative. (*Shulchan Aruch* 245:22)

In general, positions of authority are inherited by the holder's heirs as long as they are qualified for the position. (Rambam *Hilchos Melachim* 1:7) There is considerable debate over whether this extends to positions of Torah and religious leadership, with some authorities maintaining that it does not since it is crucial for such positions to be filled by the most qualified candidate available (see *Shut. Maharashdam YD #85; Asarah Maamaros, Maamar Chikur Din* 2:19; *Shut. Avnei Nezer YD #312*).

**PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH**

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I pushed.
2. I swallowed.
3. I was copper.
4. I was a sign.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am the first.
2. This week I am quintuple.
3. I am one.
4. I am a thousand.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Reasons Yaakov did not want to be buried in Egypt (Lice, Rolling, Avoda Zara, Techiyas Hameisim.)

#2 The arrangement of the Shevatim (I was for the funeral, I was for encampment, I was flagged, Surround the center.)

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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Phased Vaccine Distribution, Medical Prioritization, and Triage Jewish Law Perspectives

a virtual Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

Thursday, Jan 14 at 12:00pm

Online: <https://zoom.us/j/7464552195> Password: GWCK Dial-in number: 301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 746 455 2195

