



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter
From our archives

Moshe ascends Mount Sinai and remains there atop the mountain for forty days and nights, while G-d imparts to him all the secrets and wisdom of the Torah. As the days go by, the people grow increasingly fearful that their beloved leader will never return. Anxious and searching for a new "intermediary," the people gather their gold together and fashion a golden calf. The people proceed to worship it, offering to it sacrifices, while singing and dancing around it. Angered by the brazen display of heresy, G-d informs Moshe of the nation's actions and sends him down from the mountain. Moshe makes his way down the mountain, carrying the two tablets of stone on which G-d engraved the Ten Commandments. When Moshe draws near to the camp and sees the golden calf and the revelry that surround it, Moshe's anger flares. He casts down the tablets and shatters them. The Torah, when it records the narrative above, employs a "Kri and Ksiv" - a word that is written one way but by tradition is meant to be read a different way. Here the Torah writes "he cast down the Tablets from his hand" (Miyado) - in the singular, but it is read "from his hands" (Miyadov) - in the plural.

Rabbi Yisroel Salanter provides us an insight into the meaning of this "Kri and Ksiv." Upon seeing the idolatrous conduct of the Jewish people, Moshe knew that their relationship to G-d had been grievously harmed. He therefore intended to throw down the first tablet, which contains the first five commandments that legislate man's conduct with G-d. Moshe reasoned though, that the second tablet, which legislates man's relationship with his fellow, could be preserved because the worship of the golden calf did not contravene those laws. Moshe, however, concluded that man's relationship with G-d and his relationship with his fellow man are inextricably linked. If man does not have a healthy and wholesome relationship with G-d, he cannot have a true and proper relationship with others. Likewise, if man does not have a healthy and wholesome relationship with other people, he cannot have a proper relationship with G-d. This is the meaning of the "Kri and Ksiv." Initially, Moshe intended to only throw down one tablet ("from his hand") but concluded that both had been violated and, therefore, both should be cast down ("from his hands").

What a powerful lesson to take to heart! We can never be true G-d fearing individuals if we don't treat G-d's children with respect and compassion. And likewise, without a firm and committed relationship with G-d, we will not attain a truly upright and virtuous affiliation with those around us.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

He gave to Moshe, when He finished speaking with him on Har Sinai... (31, 18)

Just as a bride adorns herself with twenty-four ornaments, mentioned in Sefer Yeshaya, so too a Torah scholar must be fluent in the twenty-four books of TaNaCh. (Rashi)

Rav Chiya told Rav, "Son of great ones, did I not tell you, when Rebbi is learning one Tractate do not ask him a question pertaining to another Tractate because he may not know the answer?" (Shabbos 3b)

Rebbi was the quintessential Torah scholar. Wasn't he fluent in every Tractate?

Parsha Riddle

What is the connection between the Machatzis HaShekel (half-shekel) and Yosef HaTzadik?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What were the names of the seven maids of Esther?

Answer: Esther's seven maids were named for the days of the week, in order to remind her when it would be Shabbos. 1) Chulsa: beginning; refers to the beginning of creation. 2) Rukiasa: sky; the sky was created on the second day 3) Ginunisa: garden; refers to vegetation which is grown in a garden that was created on the third day 4) Nihoryasa : luminaries; refers to the luminaries which were created on the fourth day 5) Ruchshista: swarming; refers to the swarming creatures which were created on the fifth day 6) Churfisa: means the day before, since the sixth day is the day prior to Shabbos 7) Rugiasa: means feeling which refers to Shabbos when there is a feeling of tranquility in the air.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Ki Sisa (32:2), Aharon instructs the Jewish people: "Remove the rings of gold that are in the ears of your wives, sons, and daughters, and bring them to me," but (as understood by various midrashim) the women refused to cooperate with the project of the Golden Calf. The Torah relates: "The entire people removed the gold rings that were in their ears, and brought them to Aharon." The Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer (45) explains that when faced with the women's recalcitrance, the men simply contributed their **own** earrings instead. The Tosafists (to 35:22), on the other hand, understand that the men **forcibly seized** the women's jewelry from them.

In any event, the Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer declares that as a reward for the women's faithfulness, in contrast to the behavior of the men, they were granted Rosh Chodesh (the first of the month) as a holiday that is especially theirs. The Yerushalmi (Pesachim 23a) endorses a custom of women refraining from "work" on Rosh Chodesh, and the Tur (OC #417) explains that this is based on the aforementioned passage in the Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer. The Shulchan Aruch rules that the custom of women to refrain from work "is a good custom," and the Rema adds that if the custom is to refrain from some types of work but not others, the custom is to be followed.

While it is not entirely clear from the language of the Shulchan Aruch whether this custom is universal or mandatory, the Biur Halachah concludes that it is indeed a universally binding custom.

R. Doniel Neustadt (Weekly Halacha, Parshas Noach) writes:

Over the centuries, various customs evolved as to exactly what is considered "work" vis-à-vis Rosh Chodesh. Nowadays, women generally refrain from sewing, crocheting and doing laundry on Rosh Chodesh. Ironing, however, is permitted.

Some poskim hold that using a washing machine is permitted, and only washing by hand is prohibited. Others are more stringent and prohibit laundering in washing machines as well.

According to this author's small, informal survey, the main type of work that many, albeit not all, contemporary observant women refrain from on Rosh Chodesh is laundry (even via a washing machine).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I served the below.
2. I lost my position.
3. I need redemption.
4. I was spared from the tenth.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. My mother cleans my mess.
2. I am not part of your leg.
3. I wasn't a golden opportunity.
4. Walking metal.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Choshen Mishpat (I'm named for the High Priest's garment, I'm for the money matters, The lips of the Kohen explain me, I also have "enlighteners.")

#2 Kohen's hat (Wrapped, On top, One of four and one of eight, I was not black.)

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