



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives. The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L, in 2010.

In this week's Torah portion of Eikev, we are introduced (chapter 11:13-21) to the second paragraph of the time-honored "Shema." Whereas the declaration of the first paragraph of the Shema (chapter 6: 4-9) acknowledges our acceptance of one G-d, this second paragraph binds us to the observance of G-d's commandments and statutes. The Torah continues to delineate in this chapter the rewards for the fulfillment of the commandments and the punishments for the failure to heed and observe them.

We must note that the introductory word to this paragraph is "ve-hayah," literally meaning "and it will be." The commentaries teach that the word "ve-hayah" is used to describe the emotion of joy. While our first impression is that reward and punishment is an institutional necessity to ensure compliance, it hardly merits an expression of joy. However, in truth, reward and punishment are indeed the foundation of joy. G-d's oversight and our personal accountability for every act and deed, large and small, is the greatest manifestation of His enduring and all-encompassing love of each and every individual. What greater testimony to G-d's love and concern can there be, that the Almighty engages personally from His celestial abode to lower Himself into our mundane life and affairs. How distinguished and noble should we feel that we draw G-d's attention so intimately. Every mitzvah and transgression is recorded and evaluated. Nothing is lost or forgotten.

As such the Torah declares "ve-hayah," "and it will be" when you listen and perceive the true nature of His accountability. You will truly understand and appreciate the meaning of G-d's love and the joy we should feel in return.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

He fed you the manna that you did not know, nor did your forefathers know, in order to make you know that not by bread alone does man live, rather by everything that emanates from the mouth of G-d does man live. Your garment did not wear out upon you and your feet did not swell, these forty years (8:3-4).

Moshe is in middle of reminding Bnei Yisrael how Hashem sustained them in the desert. Why does he interrupt his account with the lesson of "in order to make you know"? That should either precede or follow the entire account. Why is it interjected in the middle?

Parsha Riddle

Which brachos should be recited while sitting?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the source for the obligation to recite 100 berachos daily?
Answer: The verse (Devarim 10:12) says "Mah Hashem sho'el meemcho..." / meaning 'What does Hashem ask of you.' However, it could be read as "Meah Hashem sho'el meemcho ..." meaning 'A hundred Hashem asks of you.'

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Eikev* (8:5), Moshe tells the Jewish people: "You should know in your heart that just as a father will chastise his son, so Hashem, your G-d, chastises you." It is taken for granted here that a father chastises his son, and the imperative of chastising children (sometimes specifically by the rod) is a theme that recurs throughout *Mishlei* (13:24; 19:18; 23:13-14; 29:15).

The Talmud as well takes for granted that parents chastise their children via corporal punishment. It characterizes this as a *mitzvah*, and there is even an opinion that a child should be struck (occasionally?) even when he is not misbehaving (*Makkos* 8a)! A child should, however, be hit only "with the strap of a sandal" (*Bava Basra* 21a), and not with "a rod or a staff," since he is not to be beaten "cruelly, like an enemy" (Rambam *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 2:2).

Various rabbinic sources indicate that corporal punishment was common, even ubiquitous in medieval Jewish society. Ramban (*Milchamos Hashem Bava Kama* 31a in Rif pagination) asserts that "there is no one who does not strike his son and (corporally) discipline his student," and Rosh (*Moed Katan* 94) mentions that "striking children, and pulling them by their ears" was customary.

More recently, the Gaon of Vilna (*Iggeres ha-Gra*) instructs his wife to hit their children if they do not listen to her, and R. Eliyahu Dessler (*Michtav me-Eliyahu* 3 p. 360) insists that modern pedagogical experts who oppose corporal punishment are fundamentally misguided.

The Talmud (*Moed Katan* 17a) does prohibit striking an "older child," due to the likelihood that the son will retaliate against his father, and the father will thus have violated the prohibition against placing a stumbling block before the blind. *Halachic* authorities have various interpretations of "older child" (see Ritva there; *Rema YD* 240:20), but some authorities have argued that today, when *chutzpa* is rampant, hitting even younger children is likely to lead to rebellion and is therefore prohibited (R. Mordechai Willig, V'Higadta L'Vincha [citing R. Shlomo Wolbe]). R. Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg (*Seridei Eish* 2:41) notes that "modern pedagogues" have corroborated this principle of our sages that force and compulsion directed at an older child will arouse in him excess stubbornness and a rebellious impulse.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for trampling.
2. I could be the end.
3. I could be the reason.
4. I could be sly.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for rising.
2. I am for night.
3. I am for bedtime.
4. I am a Torah obligation.

Last Week's Answers

#1 *Arei Miklat (Cities of Refuge)* (Six, Forty-two, I am for accidents, Follow the signs.)

#2 *Aseres Hadibros* (I am nor for a minyan, I am listed twice, I am split in two, Utterances of commandments?)

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