



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Missed Opportunities

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

"He (Yosef) kissed all his brothers and he wept on them, and afterwards his brothers spoke with him." (45:15)

After revealing his true identity to his brothers, Yosef reassures them that he harbors no ill will towards them, explaining that what occurred to him was orchestrated by G-d. Finally, Yosef kisses each of his brothers, crying as he does so. The Midrash comments that, just as Yosef cried as he appeased his brothers, we too will cry when G-d brings the final redemption.

This Midrash is puzzling on a number of levels. Why would there be crying at the time of the final redemption? Furthermore, what is the connection between our crying at the final redemption and Yosef's crying at this moment?

The Ksav Sofer resolves these questions beautifully. When Yosef was first sold into slavery, he was probably very pained by his separation from his family. Yet, over time, that pain dissipated as he became accustomed to his new situation. In fact, he named his first son, Menashe, because "G-d has allowed me to forget (*nashani*) my father's house." Now, however, the realization of all that he has lost due to their separation – the opportunities for growth that could have come from being around such righteous individuals – all come to the forefront of his thoughts and Yosef weeps over those missed opportunities.

Similarly, explains the Ksav Sofer, we have become accustomed to life in exile. We don't realize the opportunities for connecting with G-d that we are missing out on because we don't have a *Beis Hamikdash*. When the final redemption occurs and we come face to face with what we have been missing all these years, our joy will be tinged with sadness and weeping over all the lost opportunities due to our time in exile.

This Tuesday will be the Fast of the Tenth of Teves, the day the Babylonian King Nevuchadnezzar began his siege on Jerusalem. That siege ultimately led to the destruction of the first *Beis Hamikdash*. It is an opportunity to once again remind ourselves that we are still in exile – our situation is far from ideal. May we merit to see the *Beis Hamikdash* rebuilt speedily in our days so we can all experience the great opportunities to connect to G-d that it will afford!

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Behold! Your eyes see as do the eyes of my brother, Binyamin, that it is my mouth that is speaking to you. (45, 12)

My mouth is speaking to you in the "Holy Tongue". (Rashi)

A ruler needs to be able to converse in many languages. Why was Yosef's speaking to them in Loshon Hakodesh a proof that he was Yosef? Maybe he was bilingual? If merely the sound of Yosef's voice was proof that he was Yosef, why did Yosef emphasize to his brothers that "I am speaking to you in 'your' language?"

Parsha Riddle

Why did Bnei Yisrael specifically move to Goshen?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Yosef was called Tzofnas Paneiach. Who wrote a sefer with that name?

Answer: Rav Yosef Rozen zt"l, the Rogatchover Gaon.

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, then their land, and finally their very selves as serfs to the crown in exchange for food. As we have previously discussed, readers of the Biblical account have drawn opposite lessons from this story as to the desirability of central planning and government intervention in the economy.

In general, while the concept of private property is fundamental to the economic system of the Torah, the Talmud does endorse a communal right of economic regulation, including the establishment of price controls and measures intended to restrict free competition in support of mercantile interests (*Bava Basra* 8b-9a).

A major debate, involving technical *halachic* questions but also the philosophy of economics, took place about a century ago among European *halachic* authorities. During World War I and its aftermath, many European governments enacted various forms of rent regulation in attempts to preserve housing affordability. *Halachah* itself does provide some protection to tenants, but this is quite limited, and the question arose as to whether Jewish tenants of Jewish landlords had the right to the legal protections granted to them by the law. Some authorities, such as R. David Menachem Manis Babad, expressed deep misgivings over the economic doctrines that motivated such regulation:

It is known to us that the main support for this law comes from some free (-thinking?) elected representatives who espouse opinions and doctrines of the communists and socialists, to squeeze the rich and to seize their money, and all these doctrines are against the opinion of the Torah (*Shut. Chavatzes ha-Sharon tinyana CM 8*)

Others, such as R. Aharon Lewin, had a very different perspective (at least in the context of the exigent circumstances of the time): R. Lewin, who had actually been a member of the Polish Sejm when the issue had been debated there, relates that Jewish landlords had engaged in a major lobbying effort to persuade him and the other Jewish delegates to vote against the law, "but we did not listen to them." (*Avnei Cheifetz* 40)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was for the Babylonian Exile.
2. I was for going down to Egypt.
3. I was for the Sanhedrin.
4. Ayin.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Get up.
2. And go.
3. Fourth one.
4. I am from Ezra.

Last Week's Answers

#1 20 Amos (I am for Chanukah lights, I am for a Sukkah, I was for Yosef, I am for a *kora*.)

#2 Chanukah Lights (I am eight, I am for seven, I should be seen, I should not be used.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Women's Classes with Mrs. Sara Malka Winter resume this week!

Monday:

Parsha Journeys

8:15pm on Zoom

Tuesday:

Sefer Bereishis: An In-depth Study

8:15pm at SEJC and on Zoom

Zoom info at gwckollel.org

