



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

### The Kohen Gadol's Children

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

**He shall not come in contact with any dead body. He shall not make himself impure, even for his father or mother. (21:11)**

Parshas Emor details many of the special laws placed upon the Kohanim (priests) due to their exalted status. Even more than regular Kohanim, the Kohen Gadol (high priest) has a higher level of holiness, and is therefore subject to even more specific laws and heightened restrictions. One of the special laws that all male Kohanim have is a prohibition to come in contact with a corpse. A regular Kohen, however, is permitted to come in contact with the body of a close relative (father, mother, son, daughter, brother, unmarried sister, and wife). The Kohen Gadol, on the other hand, is prohibited from coming in contact even to his close relative.

Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk gives a beautiful insight into this specific restriction on the Kohen Gadol. The Kohen Gadol is the spiritual leader of his generation - he shoulders the spiritual responsibility of the entire nation. As a leader, he must feel love and a familial closeness to each and every Jew. He therefore doesn't have a personal exemption to come in contact with his close relatives, because the entire Jewish nation is a close relative. Just as he cannot come in contact with the corpse of a regular Jew, he cannot come in contact with the corpse of his blood relatives because, in his eyes, they need to be, and are, one and the same.

A true Torah leader feels the same love and dedication to each and every Jew as he does to his own family. Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman related that, one time, he was talking to his Rebbi, the renowned Alter of Slabodka, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel. The Alter's own son happened to have just come home after a long absence. The Alter quickly acknowledged his son's presence and then continued talking with Rav Ruderman. The Alter's wife exclaimed, "Didn't you notice? Your son just came home!" The Alter replied, "Right now I'm also talking to my son. Why should I interrupt my talk with one son in order to greet another?" In the eyes of a Torah leader, they were both his sons.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**You shall not contaminate yourself to a dead person... (21, 1)**

The serpent ordered that lots be cast, and the lot fell on Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. He hastened to shed Rabban Shimon's blood as if he were an ox, and when his head was severed, Rabbi Yishmael Kohen Gadol took it and wailed over him in a bitter voice, "Woe is the tongue that hastened to teach words of beauty – how could it lick the dust because of sins?" (Mussaf Yom Kippur)

How could Rabbi Yishmael Kohen Gadol touch the severed head of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel? He was contaminating himself to a dead corpse?

### Parsha Riddle

**What was Nechemia's other name?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**What was Nechemia's other name?**

**Answer: Hetershasa (Kiddushin 69b, see Rashi why he was called this name)**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Emor* (22:24), the Torah commands: "One whose testicles are squeezed, crushed, torn, or cut, you shall not offer to Hashem, nor shall you do these in your Land." Rambam (*Issurei Biah* 16:10, 13) rules:

It is forbidden to destroy a male's reproductive organs. This applies to humans and also to animals, beasts, and fowl, both from a kosher species and from a non-kosher species, in *Eretz Yisrael* and in the Diaspora. Although it states: "nor shall you do these in your Land," according to the Oral Tradition, we learned that this [prohibition] is applicable in every place. The verse teaches that one should not act in this manner among the Jewish people, not with their own bodies, nor with the bodies of others.

Furthermore:

It is forbidden to tell a gentile to castrate one of our animals. If the gentile took the animal and castrated it on his own initiative, it is permitted.

Historically, Jews often found it desirable to neuter their livestock and poultry, and *halachic* authorities have discussed the possible legitimacy of various arrangements for having non-Jews perform the neutering in such a manner that avoids technical violation of the prohibition by Jews (see *Terumas ha-Deshen* 1:299 and *Otzar ha-Poskim EH* vol 1 pp. 252-55).

In our society, this prohibition commonly arises in the context of pet ownership. R. Chaim Jachter writes:

Although many contemporary halachic authorities believe it inappropriate to utilize [the aforementioned arrangements of having non-Jews perform the neutering] with household pets for purposes of convenience (e.g. to eliminate unwanted litters or to prevent the animal from trying to leave the house), it is quite possible that one may do so if it is necessary to alleviate an animal's suffering due to sickness. ...

The best solution to this problem seems to be the use of one of the many newly developed (though still experimental) alternatives to castration and ovariectomy which do not involve removal (direct or indirect) of reproductive organs. There appears to be no halachic opposition to these methods since the animals are only rendered infertile. The prohibition of "*sirus*" appear[s] to apply only to the removal of reproductive organs and not to causing the animal to become infertile. One must consult a competent halachic authority to ascertain the permissibility of any of these procedures. (JHCS No. XXIII Pesach 5752)

PRESENTED BY

**RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH**

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I am hollow.
2. I am a Kohen who can't serve.
3. I can be a sin to Hashem.
4. I am similar to sand.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I must be wanted.
2. I must be unblemished.
3. I am in your place.
4. I am brought close.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Arla** (I am for fruit, I was for Moshe's lips, I am for a baby boy, I am for the heart)

**#2 Reversing parents** (I am right before Shabbos, I flip from honor, I am a nature switch, Don't sit in their place.)

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