



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.

This week's Parsha, Bechukosai, begins (chapter 26, verse 3) "If in My statutes you will walk and observe my commandments and perform them..." The commentaries are puzzled by the terminology "you will walk," in connection with the performance of the statutes of the Torah. The answer given by Rabbi Nochum Zev, the son of the Alter of Kelm (1824-1898), is that the Torah is giving us a yard stick, a tool by which we can accurately measure our true relationship with our Creator.

The expression "you will walk" has a dual connotation. It means one's daily pedestrian activity: the normative daily functions at home, work, leisure, etc. It also connotes a capacity of strength and courage. It conveys the ability to meet challenging individuals and circumstances and be able to overcome and move forward with fervor and commitment.

Hence, the Torah defines for us that the observance of G-d's law and the measure of one's relationship with G-d are not an intermittent activity. It is not observed once a week, once a month, or once a year. It is as consistent as the walking footsteps of an individual. It incorporates every facet of our daily activity. It is as expressed in the psalm that King David wrote, (Psalm 150): "Let every breath praise G-d" - "כל הנשְׁתָּחָה לֵה' תִהְיֶה לְיָ."

Furthermore, we inevitably encounter individuals and situations that impede our spiritual journey forward. Whether it be family, friends, or society at large, life's everyday challenges require strong footing to maintain our balance and objectives. Consequently, our Torah uses the terminology "in My statutes you will walk". Our commitment and relationship with G-d is measured by the nature of our stride. The consistency and strength of those steps forward will determine if we are indeed truly walking in His statutes. It is, as the adage says, not sufficient to "talk the talk", but rather to "walk the walk."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

These are the commandments that Hashem commanded Moshe to B'nei Yisrael, on Har Sinai. (27, 34)

A Prophet is not allowed to teach any new halachos. (Toras Kohanim)

After Moshe passed away, three thousand halachos were forgotten. B'nei Yisroel asked Yehoshua to ask Hashem to teach them to him again... They (later) asked Shmuel. He replied, 'I cannot ask Hashem to teach me these halachos because it is forbidden for me to teach you new halachos, as the verse says 'these are the mitzvos', which means that a prophet may not teach new halachos. (Temura 16a)

Chazal are clearly stating that the prohibition for a prophet to teach new halachos also applies to halachos that were forgotten. This seems to be in contradiction with the following Chazal. Rav Yochanan (Sukkah 44a) says that the mitzva of taking an Arava in the Bais HaMikdash on Sukkos was taught to Moshe on Har Sinai. When it was forgotten, the prophets retaught it to B'nei Yisroel.

Parsha Riddle

When Chazal (Megilla 3a) refer to 'final letters', they call them 'menatzpach', which is an acronym for mem, nun, tzadi, phei and chaf. This is not in the order of the Alef Bais. Why?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

If one loses count of when Shemittah is, how can one quickly figure it out?

Answer: Divide the current Hebrew year by seven. If there is no remainder, it is a Shemittah year. Ex. 5782/7=826

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Bechukosai* (and elsewhere in *Tanach*), Hashem promises us great rewards for observing His decrees and commandments, and threatens us with dire punishments for failing to do so. The enumerated rewards and punishment, however, are almost exclusively material – agricultural success and bounty, peace and military victory, and so on, as opposed to agricultural failure and famine, war and military catastrophe, and dreadful plagues – and include no explicit mention of the World to Come. Numerous commentators and theologians grapple with this omission and offer a variety of explanations, some of which follow:

- R. Saadia Gaon (*Emunos ve-Deos* 9:2) offers two suggestions. First, since the existence of the World to Come is indicated by reason, the Torah does not need to discuss it at length.
- Second, prophets customarily expound at length on subjects of imminent significance, but discuss only briefly matters related to the more distant future. The Jews were about to enter Eretz Yisrael, and so the Torah sets forth what they will experience there in the events of their obedience or disobedience to Hashem.
- R. Hai Gaon (cited by Ibn Ezra to *Devarim* 32:39) explains that it was not necessary for the (written) Torah to discuss the World to Come, since it was known by tradition. (*Chovos ha-Levavos (Sha'ar ha-Bitachon* 4) combines this reason with R. Saadia's first one: ordinary Jews knew of the World to Come from the prophets, and scholars derived it from reason.)
- Ibn Ezra himself explains that the Torah was given to all, and the abstruse topic of the World to Come cannot be understood by even one in a thousand, since it hinges on the topic of the soul and the nature of the service of the heart and its reward.

Rambam explains that ultimate reward and punishment occur in the World to Come (*Teshuvah* 8:1). The earthly rewards and punishments detailed in *Tanach* "are not the ultimate reward for the *mitzvos*, nor are [they] the ultimate retribution to be exacted from someone who transgresses all the *mitzvos*." Rather, if we observe and study the Torah, then Hashem will grant us the opportunity to continue to do so unburdened by trouble and want, but if we do not, then "the True Judge will remove from those who have abandoned [the Torah] all the good things of the world which strengthened their hands to rebel." (*ibid.* 9:1)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I come from Eliyahu.
2. Guarantor for redemption.
3. I sometimes connect.
4. I can make you say "oh."

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I equal all.
2. The blessing container.
3. I am the last blessing.
4. Love me and pursue me.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Tzedaka (I am a life saver, Open your hand, G-d like, I am not a righteous lady.)

#2 Lag Ba'omer (I do not lag behind, My number is my name, Don't get burnt, Glory of Glory.)

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