



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Awesome As a Star!

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

In Parshas Devarim, Moshe Rabbeinu begins to deliver his final messages to the Jewish people before his passing. In our verse, while mentioning the nation's burgeoning numbers, he also compares their numbers to the stars. This comparison refers not just to the actual numbers of Jews, but has other connotations as well.

Rav Moshe Shternbuch cites the Ba'al Shem Tov for an incredible insight as to how the Jewish people are like the stars. When we look up at the night sky and see the stars, they appear to be small, negligible specks. The truth, however, is that each star is actually massive. They are actually larger than our planet, and most of them are bigger and more powerful than the sun! Their insignificant appearance is due to their great distance. Similarly, explains the Ba'al Shem Tov, each and every Jew might seem small, but he and she in actuality are powerful beings. Each Jew has within themselves the capability to connect to Hashem and change the world with their Torah and Mitzvos.

Every one of our fellow Jews deserves our adulation and respect. Just as we cannot fathom the actual size of one of those small specks in the sky, we have no idea just how much a good deed performed by our fellow Jew may have impacted the world and made it a better place – both on a physical plane and on a spiritual one.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

So it was when the men of war finished dying from amidst the people... Hashem spoke to me (Moshe)... (2, 16 – 17)

Rabba bar Bar Chana in the name of Rav Yochanan said, "The reason why the fifteenth day of Av is a day of celebration is because the men of war (who were punished due to the sin of the spies) finished dying in the desert. As the verse says, 'Hashem did not resume speaking with Moshe until the men stopped dying'..." (Taanis 30b)

Because B'nei Yisrael were in a state of mourning for the passing of their relatives, Hashem did not speak to Moshe. (Tosfos Bava Basra 121a)

Aharon died on the first day of the fifth month (Av). (Masei 33, 38)

On the fifteenth day of Av, B'nei Yisroel were still mourning the passing of Aharon - they were in the middle of shloshim. If Hashem abstained from speaking with Moshe during a mourning period, shouldn't He have abstained from speaking with Moshe due to their still being in mourning for Aharon?

Parsha Riddle

Who was compared to a bee? Why?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

When is it possible for a healthy Jewish adult to be obligated to eat on Tisha B'Av?

Answer: When Tisha B'Av – the ninth of Av falls out on Shabbos (like this year), Jewish adults are obligated to eat! The fast is pushed off until Sunday.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Devarim* (1:16-17), Moses relates: "I instructed your judges at that time, saying: '...small and great alike shall you hear...'" Reish Lakish (*Sanhedrin* 8a) interprets this to mean that the judgment of one *peruta* should be as dear (i.e., important) to you as the judgment of one hundred *maneh* (i.e., ten thousand dinars). The Talmud elaborates that Reish Lakish cannot be referring to the need to study the case carefully and to decide it justly, since it is obvious that even cases relating to small sums must be judged thoroughly. Rather, Reish Lakish was speaking with regard to precedence: The small case may not be deferred in favor of the larger case merely because the disputed sum is smaller.

The *Sema* (*siman* 15 s.k. 1) understands that this is not a general rule of first come, first served, but is limited to where the litigant has already presented himself to the judge and the judge has already prepared to hear his case, and even this is merely a rabbinic extension of the Biblical rule, which is limited to where the proceedings have already actually commenced (*ibid.* s.k. 5). Others, however, do understand this *halachah* as a precedent for a general rule of first come, first served (see R. Avishai Natan Meitlis, *Akifat Tor*), including R. Yitzchok Zilberstein, who suggests that cutting a line may even constitute theft or tortfeasance, and at the very least is a violation of the Biblical commandment to love your fellow as yourself (*Vayikra* 19:18), since one would not want someone else to cut ahead of oneself in line (*Chashukei Chemed, Sanhedrin* 8a).

R. Moshe Shternbuch unequivocally classifies cutting a line as "a branch of theft," since:

The civil laws of the Torah are according to reason and logic, and it is obvious that upholding fairness involves keeping to one's place in line. It therefore falls within the rubric of "you shall do justice and fairness," and one who deviates from this is considered a thief (*Shut. Teshuvos ve-Hanhagos* 4:318).

Other authorities understand that the fundamental bases for the right of first come, first served are the principles of fairness and equity (*tzedeck ve-yosher* – see *Mishpetei ha-Torah* 1 pp. 306-09).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was for Hashem.
2. I was for Moshe.
3. I was for Yeshayahu.
4. I was for Yirmiyahu.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the morning.
2. I am for the mourning.
3. Floorplan.
4. Don't trip anyone!

Last Week's Answers

#1 Shevuah (Vow) (I am not a week, I am binding, I could cause destruction. I could come up in court.)

#2 Masaos (Travels) (For B'nei Yisrael, I was forty-two, For the Sanhedrin I was ten, I am not a load, Moving.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

GWCK wishes everyone a wonderful summer!

Kollel classes (unless otherwise noted) are currently on break and will resume be"tz" Rosh Chodesh Elul, Sunday, August 28.