



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Strings Attached

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Director

Parshas Shelach contains the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis*, the requirement for a Jewish male to have *tzitzis* strings on the corners of a four-cornered garment that he is wearing. Unlike most other *mitzvos*, *tzitzis* is a *mitzvah kiyumis*, which means that the Torah does not require that a man wear *tzitzis*; rather if he decides to wear a four-cornered garment, then he is required to have *tzitzis* on the corners. Despite this, the Gemara (Menachos 41a) makes it clear that it is highly encouraged for a man to choose to wear *tzitzis*.

When Hashem instructs Moshe regarding this *mitzvah*, He says, "Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them, *v'asu*, and they will make *tzitzis* on the corners of their garments..." (15:38) Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch comments that had this been an absolute requirement, it would have said, "*v'yaasu*, and they shall make." "*V'asu*, and they will make" implies that they will choose to make *tzitzis* as a result of how you (Moshe) "say to them," i.e. if the significance of the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* is carefully transmitted, then they will gladly choose to perform the *mitzvah*.

Like every *mitzvah*, *tzitzis* contains incredible layers of meaning. The Torah itself informs us that *tzitzis* serve as a reminder for all the other *mitzvos*. Rashi elaborates that the numerical value of the word *tzitzis* - ציצית is 600. When one adds the eight strings and five knots that appear on each corner, it equals 613. The Maharal explains that by placing the *tzitzis* over our bodies, we remind ourselves of the importance of beautifying ourselves with *mitzvos*. The Sefer Hachinuch adds that the *techeiles* string represents the *neschama* while the white strings represent the body. By wrapping the *techeiles* around the white strings we remind ourselves that it is the *neschama* that should be guiding and controlling the actions we take with our bodies.

Just as a greater appreciation for the depth and meaning behind the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* encourages us to choose to fulfill it, so too with obligatory *mitzvos*. Continued learning will deepen our understanding of all of the *mitzvos* and will inspire us to fulfill them with passion and zeal.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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Point to Ponder

Send forth men... (13:2)

Why is the parsha of the spies juxtaposed to the parsha of Miriam's tzaraas? Everyone saw that Miriam was punished for speaking negatively about her brother. The spies did not learn a lesson from this, and spoke derogatorily about the land (Rashi).

Miriam spoke about a person, and that person was the leader of B'nei Yisrael. The spies spoke about a piece of land. How were they supposed to take a lesson from Miriam to their situation?

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

Who went on two spy missions to Eretz Yisrael?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What was similar about the creation of the Menorah and the Golden Calf (besides for both being gold)?

Answer: They were both created by putting metal into a fire – and the final product emerged.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Shelach*, the Torah describes the sin of the spies as follows (13:32): "They brought forth to the Children of Israel an evil report on the Land (*dibas ha-aretz*) that they had spied out," and subsequently reiterates this characterization of their sin (14:37): "The people who spread the evil report about the Land died in a plague before Hashem." The Talmud emphasizes that the spies were punished for the sin of malicious speech (*lashon ha-ra*):

It is taught in a *baraisa* that **Rabbi Elazar ben Perata says: Come and see how great the power of malicious speech is. From where do we derive this? From the punishment received by the spies. And if one who defames the wood and rocks of Eretz Yisrael received such a severe punishment, then with regard to one who defames another person, all the more so will he be punished severely.** (*Arachin* 15a)

The Talmud elaborates that although the spies were also guilty of blasphemy, the sin for which they were actually punished was *lashon ha-ra*:

Rabba says that Reish Lakish says that the verse states: "The people who spread the evil report about the Land died." This teaches that they were punished not for their blasphemy but **for the evil report of the land that they brought.**

Elsewhere, the Talmud records:

Rabbi Hanina would repair its stumbling blocks, i.e., any potholes in the land, so that travelers would not fall and consequently speak ill of Eretz Yisrael.

Rabbi Ammi and Rabbi Asi would stand and pass from a sunny spot to a shady one, and from a shady spot to a sunny one, so that they would always sit in comfort and never have cause to remark that they were uncomfortable in Eretz Yisrael. (*Kesubos* 111b-112a)

R. Yosef Chaim of Baghdad comments on this passage:

A person should learn from here the moral to guard his mouth and tongue against emitting from his mouth any negative comment critical of even a single cubit of the Land of Israel, whether regarding the air, the cold or heat, the fruits, the buildings, or similar, even during the era of its destruction when it is in the hands of the Gentiles and the houses belong to the Gentiles, so that he should not fall under the category of "spreading a bad report about the Land of Israel." (*Ben Yehoyada ibid.*)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was given by Moshe.
2. I came from a woman.
3. I took two dots from the son's segol.
4. I changed a name into a prayer.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I name your bread.
2. I could cause death.
3. I am for the Kohen.
4. I am not a bride.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Aharon (For my brother I was happy, For myself and my Shevet I was sad, For my children I was silent, For others I was peaceful.)

#2 Backward nuns around "vayehi binsoah" (We each equal fifty, We are backwards, We change five books into seven, We divide between tragedies.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Join us this Shabbos for an afternoon with KMS and GWCK

Parshas Shelach, June 21

5:15pm
Interactive Kids
Learning Program
(3rd - 5th Grade)

Retracing the Footsteps of the Spies!
Rabbi Hillel Shaps



6:00pm
KMS Women's
Rosh Chodesh
Group presents

Challah in the Shadow of the Meraglim
Mrs. Sara Malka Winter



7:00pm
Breakout Sessions
Choose two
(25 minutes each)

Concentric Circles of Love and Focus: Israel at Our Center
Rabbi Brahm Weinberg
"כי חולת אהבה אני" Lovesick for Israel
Rabbi Menachem Winter
The Land He Gave Us: A Novel Approach to the Sin of the Spies
Rabbi Hillel Shaps



8:30pm
Mincha/Maariv
Shiur

Techeiles: A Knotty Problem of History, Halachah, and Meta-Halachah - Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

