



The Greater Washington Community Kollel
**SHABBOS
 DELIGHTS**
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TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Every Step Along the Way

Presented by Rabbi Zechariah Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

“And when you will say, ‘What will we eat in the 7th year?’... and I will command My blessing in the 6th year.” (25:20-21)

In Parshas Behar, the Torah teaches the mitzvah of Shemitta – allowing the earth to lie fallow every seven years. In describing this mitzvah, the Torah anticipates that people will question, “What will we eat in the 7th year if we do not plant and harvest?” Hashem responds that He will bless the crop in the 6th year, and it will be enough to last the 6th, 7th, and 8th years (while the newly planted seeds are still growing). The Seforno explains that the miraculous yield of the 6th year is only for the person who questions, “What will we eat in the 7th year?” For those of greater faith, however, who do not feel the need to ask this question, there is no need for a greater yield; rather, their normal yield will be so satisfying that it will be able to last all three years, even though the amount will be the same as always.

At face value, the Seforno is teaching us about a higher level of faith in Hashem, one which precludes all doubt and questions. It is worth noting, however, that the person of lesser faith, who is concerned about the source of his or her food, still merits a tremendous miracle. Ultimately, this person still displays faith in Hashem by performing this difficult mitzvah.

We see from here that *Avodas Hashem* (Service of G-d) is not an “all or nothing” proposition. On the one hand, we must set our sights high and aim to achieve as much as we can. But on the other hand, achieving great heights is a lifelong mission, and we must never think that we are “failing” in the meantime. Every measure of spirituality that we achieve is precious in the eyes of Hashem. Let it not be small in our own eyes.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And I led you erect. (25, 13)

With an erect posture. (Rashi)

A person should not walk four amos with an erect posture, as the verse says, "The entire world is full of His glory." (Isaiah 6, 3) (Brachos 43b)

We have a mitzvah to "walk in Hashem's ways." Why should a person not walk erect in emulation of the way Hashem led us?

Parsha Riddle

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

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Eighteen to get married. (Pirkei Avos 5, 21)

Where is there a hint to this in this week's parsha?

Answer: "He shall marry a woman" (21, 13) – the numerical value of He (הוא) is eighteen.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Among the *mitzvos* in *parashas Behar* are the prohibitions against working the land (in the Land of Israel) during every seventh year and fiftieth year (*shemittah* and *yovel* – 25:1-4,11) and charging interest for loans (*ribbis* - v. 36-37). At various points in Jewish history, it became very difficult to observe these laws, and various subterfuges (*ha'aramos*) were developed to legitimize practices that would normally violate the prohibitions in question.

With respect to *shemittah*, as we discussed in this column for [Behar 5782](#), beginning with the *shemittah* of 5649 (1888-89), agricultural land in the Land of Israel was sold to non-Jews in order to circumvent the prohibitions against working the land:

[I]n light of the great socio-economic difficulties that [ideal *shemittah*] observance was often claimed to entail, many authorities were willing to condone various forms of the *heter mechirah* in order to alleviate these difficulties. As the *heter mechirah's* staunchest supporters argued, such legal fictions (*ha'aramos*) were already ubiquitous in other areas of *halachah*, such as the sale of *chametz* before Pesach! ... Other authorities, however, vehemently rejected such mechanisms for evading the laws of *shemittah* ...

With respect to *ribbis*, the transformation of Jewish society from an agrarian one in the Biblical period to a commercial one in the medieval period made it difficult to observe the prohibitions against lending money at interest, and so various mechanisms were introduced to circumvent them, culminating in the *heter iska* ("business partnership dispensation") arrangement that is widely used today, which works by recharacterizing a loan as an equity investment (see *Torah Temimah* 25:35 #192). Various authorities acknowledge, however, that the use of such *ha'aramos* is not really ideal, and they were only introduced in order to enable Jews to earn a living (*Sema Kuntras ha-Ribbis* 22).

As mentioned above, the *ha'aramah* of *heter mechirah* is often justified by the argument that such legal fictions are widespread in other contexts, including the sale of *chametz* before Pesach. The truth is, however, that those *ha'aramos* are not universally accepted either. The Gaon of Vilna is reported to have opposed the modern version of the sale of *chametz* – "One should not sell any *chametz* item except in the form of a permanent sale" (*Ma'aseh Rav* 180) – as well as the *heter iska* – "There is no dispensation [to lend for] profits ..." (*ibid.* 108).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am your boss.
2. You are my boss.
3. Don't keep me busy.
4. I am for theft.

#2 WHO AM I?

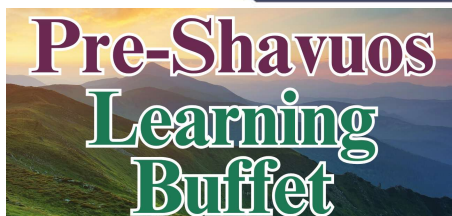
1. Where is your produce?
2. Where is your loan?
3. Where is your work?
4. Go learn.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Chalal (I am hollow, I am a Kohen who can't serve, I can be a sin to Hashem, I am similar to sand.)

#2 A Korban (I must be wanted, I must be unblemished, I am in your place, I am brought close.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Tuesday, May 19 | 8:45-9:30pm
at Kemp Mill Synagogue

3 Presenters (You choose two.)

3 Topics (You choose two.)

3 Cheesecake Flavors (You can have all three!)

Mrs. Adina Blaustein | Rabbi Menachem Winter
Rabbi Yitzchak Kaminetsky

Open to the entire community!