



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

Sponsored by the Cypess Family Foundation

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

The Gift of Peace, The Gift of Life

Presented by Rabbi Zechariah Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

"... therefore say, behold I give him My covenant of peace." (25:12)

Our Parsha begins with Hashem's praising of Pinchas for his heroic act of zealotry on Hashem's behalf at the end of Parshas Balak. As a reward for defending His honor, Hashem bestows upon Pinchas "My covenant of peace." The Sforno notes that aside from this blessing of peace, Pinchas merited an extraordinarily long life. These two blessings, explains the Sforno, should not be understood as distinct rewards. Rather, peace, by its very nature, enables those who possess it to live a long life, for it is friction and strife that cause the body to wear down and ultimately, die.

There is a common sentiment in the world that "it's every man for himself" and "it's a dog-eat-dog world." Everyone wants to succeed and it is assumed that success can only be achieved at someone else's expense. Therefore, to succeed, one must assert oneself over others and overpower them. But, in fact, the opposite is true. The drive for competition and the need to "get ahead" of others only leaves a person worn out and sick. Someone who is at peace with others, though, can put in the effort to achieve success while still being happy for others. Such a person has the gift of peace, and in turn, that peace will give back to him or her the gift of life.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

Point to Ponder

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

Therefore say, "Behold I give him My covenant of peace." (25, 12)

Hashem said, "Legally he should take his reward."
(Bamidbar Rabba 21, 1)

The reward for mitzvos is not in this world (rather in the World to Come). (Kiddushin 39b)

According to the opinion that there is no reward for mitzvos in this world, how could Pinchas receive reward for his good deed in this world?

What was the name of Levi's wife?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Hashem opened the mouth of the donkey and it said to Bilaam, "What have I done to you that you struck me these three times?" (22, 28) When did Hashem open the mouth of a different animal? Answer: When Eliyahu HaNavi took the cow to give to the idolaters on Har HaCarmel, the cow told Eliyahu that it did not want to be used for avoda zora.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Pinchas*, the Torah records that in the census carried out at the end of the Israelites' forty year sojourn in the desert, the male members of the tribe of Levi who were at least one month old numbered 23,000 (26:62). In the earlier census carried out in the second year of the sojourn in the desert, that demographic had numbered 22,000 (3:39). The Ramban (3:14) wonders why the tribe of Levi was so much less populous than the other tribes (in both censuses, the males of the other tribes who were at least twenty years old totaled over 600,000, so the mean tribal population was more than 50,000 and the smallest of the tribes numbered 32,200 in the first census (Menashe), and 22,200 in the second (Shimon), and these numbers do not include those under twenty), and why it experienced little growth between the two censuses. The Ramban offers a couple of explanations for these anomalies.

The *Meshech Chochmah*, however, offers his own, provocative explanation: Hashem knew that the tribe of Levi would not receive a standard share of the Land of Israel, but only certain cities contained within the land of the other tribes, and were the tribe of Levi to have been numerous, the other tribes would have complained about the loss of their land to the tribe of Levi. Additionally, the duty to support such a large population (i.e., via tithes and other obligations) would have been burdensome to the Children of Israel. Accordingly, Divine wisdom dictated that the tribe of Levi should not experience the miraculous growth experienced by the rest of the nation, but merely more modest natural growth.

Although demographic growth is generally presented by the Torah as a blessing, and there are multiple *halachic* imperatives upon us to reproduce and populate the world, the *Meshech Chochmah* is teaching that sometimes even Hashem who is all-powerful chooses to limit demographic growth due to the constraints of economics. Whether it is legitimate for humans to invoke economic considerations as a justification for limiting family size is a charged and controversial question: While a number of *halachic* authorities categorically prohibit doing so (see *Levusei Mordechai* EH 1:28; *Minchas Yitzchok* 3:26:3; *Tzitz Eliezer* 9:51:2:2:6), others allow it, at least in certain circumstances (see *Igros Moshe* EH 4:74 (but see also 1:64); *Bnei Banim* 2:38).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. My opposite caused me.
2. I am for peace.
3. I am not for day eight.
4. I am for Pinchas.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I come monthly.
2. I am special for women.
3. I am not a head.
4. I can be 17,18, 19, 20 or 21 times per year.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Balak (Don't confuse my father and Gershom's mother, Ruled, Unscrambled, I am "to curse." I was a foreigner.)

#2 Cherev/Sword (I was Bilaam's end, Unscrambled, I am a "friend." I guard the garden, Zeroa Netuya / Outstretched arm.)



with **Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman**
and
Rabbi Dr. Jason Weiner

Wednesday, July 8 at 9:05pm on Zoom

Those not yet registered for the Medical Halacha Chaburah, please register at

<https://thegreaterwashingtoncommunitykollel.com/medicalhalacha>