Toldos 5787

The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

Sponsored by the Cypess Family Foundation

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

A Life of Living

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Director

When Esav returns from the fields feeling famished, he requests that his brother, Yaakov, provide him with some of the lentils Yaakov is cooking. Yaakov offers to give Esav the lentils in exchange for the firstborn rights, at which point Esav declares, "I am going to die – what do I need the firstborn rights for?" (25:32) What did Esav mean when he said that he was going to die?

The Rashbam suggests that Esav meant that since he was regularly involved in hunting wild animals in the forest, he was constantly in danger and likely to die at any moment. Rashi, based on the Gemara, explains that Esav was referring to the responsibility of the *avodah* in the Beis Hamikdash (Temple Service) that accompanied the firstborn rights. This responsibility carried the risk of death for failing to perform the *avodah* properly.

The Sha'ar Bas Rabim offers a different perspective. The Midrash teaches us that Esav relinquished his portion in the World to Come. In that sense, every moment of his life brought him one step closer to eternal death. Indeed, the Gemara (Brachos 18b) teaches that the wicked, even during their lifetimes, are called dead, because their lives are one prolonged process of dying. The righteous, on the other hand, are called living even after their deaths, because they have moved on to the World to Come and eternal life. Their time in this world is, therefore, a process of living in preparation for the greater life that awaits them in the next world. This idea is expressed in the verse (Vayikra 18:5), "You shall guard My statutes… *va'chai bahem* – and live by them," which Rashi explains to mean that one will live through them in the World to Come.

According to this understanding, Esav's declaration that he is "going to die" takes on another layer of meaning. Having already relinquished his portion in the World to Come, Esav viewed his life as nothing more than a journey toward death. Why, then, would he want the firstborn rights, with all the responsibility and potential danger that accompanied the *avodah*? What value could they possibly have to someone who had no interest in eternal life?

The Mishna (Avos 4:17) teaches that one moment of pleasure in the World to Come is greater than all the pleasures of this world. Yet this world is full of distractions and messages that tempt us to exchange the eternal pleasures of the World to Come for the fleeting pleasures of this world. The choice we make is ultimately a choice about what it means to be alive. When we fill our days with Torah and *mitzvos*, we are truly living – building a life that continues eternally.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Yitzchak was forty years old when he took Rivka... as a wife for himself. (25, 20)

Yitzchak was thirty-seven when Sarah died. At that juncture Rivka was born. He waited for her until she could halachically be married (three years old) and then married her. (Rashi) However, the Seder Olam (1) maintains that Rivka was fourteen years old when she married Yitzchak.

Her brother and her mother said, "Let the maiden remain with us for a few days..." (Chayei Sarah 24, 55)

The word 'days' means a year - they wanted Rivka to remain home for a year. (Rashi)

A girl under the age of twelve and a half years, who got engaged, remains home for twelve months in order to acquire possessions for her marriage. The source of this halacha is from Rivka's mother's request. (Kesubos 57b)

According to the Seder Olam that Rivka was fourteen when she got engaged, is there any proof that this halacha applies specifically to a girl under twelve and a half?

Parsha Riddle

Where in the Parsha do we see that the day of burial, and not the day of passing, is considered to be the day of sorrow?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:
Sarah's lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years... (23:1) What connection is there between Sarah and Queen Esther?
Answer: Sarah lived 127 years and merited a descendant, Esther, who ruled over 127 provinces.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Toldos* (27:9), the Torah relates that Rivka instructed Yaakov: "Go now to the flock and fetch me from there two choice young kids of the goats, and I will make of them delicacies for your father, as he loves." Rashi, citing *Bereishis Rabbah* (65:10), explains: "**Fetch me** — (The words may mean "Take that which belongs to me") — these are mine and not the proceeds of theft. Yitzchak had made provision in her marriage contract that she should receive daily two kids of the goats." *Nachalas Yaakov* (Selenik) explains that Rivka did not require two kids of the goats daily for her diet; rather, she would (generally) sell them and use the proceeds for her needs.

The underlying assumption of this interpretation is that a wife may generally not give away her husband's property without his express authorization. This is indeed explicit in the Talmud (*Bava Kamma* 119a):

The Sages taught in a *baraisa* (*Tosefta* 11:5): ***One may purchase from women woolen goods in Judea, and linen goods in the Galilee, but not wines, oils, and flours,*** *as these are not usually sold by women and there is a concern that perhaps the women stole them from their husbands. ...* ***Abba Shaul says: A woman may sell*** *items* ***for*** *up to* ***four and five dinars in order to make a cap [kippa] for her head,*** *as it is assumed that her husband allows her to sell these items in order to purchase additional articles of clothing. ...* ***Charity collectors may take something*** *worth* ***a small*** *amount* ***from*** *women,* ***but not something*** *worth* ***a large*** *amount, as it is possible that they do not have permission to give away expensive items. ...*

Over the last couple of centuries, *halachic* authorities have debated whether these rules still apply in contemporary times. Some argue that the phrase in the standard *tenaim* document signed before the wedding "and they shall control their assets coequally" should be taken at face value, as a legal clause granting the woman coequal rights to the marital assets, but others counter that the phrase is merely an expression of hope that the couple will manage their assets harmoniously. Some argue that the *halachah* incorporates modern societal and legal attitudes toward marriage on the basis of doctrines such as *dina de-malchusa dina* and *minhag*, while others disagree. For a comprehensive discussion of this topic, see R. Chaim Jachter, Bittul Chametz and Contemporary Financial Arrangements.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I defeat Esav.
2. "Rise up, please."
3. I sound.
4. Davening and learning.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. Dovid's resemblance.
2. Made.
3. Gripped heel.
4. Hairy.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Sarah and Rivka (We had light all week and are 1 and 2 of 3; our dough was fresh; for us it was cloudy.)
#2 Eliezer (I am very Ogly; don't confuse me with Damascus; Hashem helper; I meant 318 soldiers.)

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For Men - Rabbi Elihu Abbe 9:30-10am	Essential Ramban on the Parsha	Navi with Commentary Sefer Shoftim	Navi with Commentary Sefer Shoftim	Essential Ramban on the Parsha	Special Weekly Shiur by Rabbi Rosenbaum and other presenters 9:30-10:15am for men and women
For Men - Rabbi Elihu Abbe 10:05-11am	Interactive Gemara Maseches Bava Metziah	Interactive Gemara Maseches Bava Metziah	Interactive Gemara Maseches Bava Metziah	Interactive Gemara Maseches Bava Metziah	
For Women 9:30-10:30am	A New Approach to Old Mitzvos Mrs. Channah Cohen	Tefillah & Hishtadlus of the Women of Tanach Mrs. Penina Marmon	Tefillah & Hishtadlus of the Women of Tanach Mrs. Penina Marmon	Practical Halacha - Kashrus Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum	

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