Vayeitzei 5787

The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

Sponsored by the Cypess Family Foundation

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Leaving a Mark

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

Parshas Vayeitzei begins with the verse: "And Yaakov left Beer-sheva and went toward Charan." (28:10)

Since the Torah already established that Yaakov had lived in Beer-sheva, it could have simply stated that he went to Charan. Why does the text explicitly mention where he was leaving from?

Rashi addresses this question by explaining that the departure of a tzaddik (a righteous person) from a city leaves a distinct void. As long as a tzaddik lives in a town, he provides its glory, splendor, and beauty. Once they leave, that stature leaves with them. The Torah therefore emphasizes that Yaakov left Beer-sheva to highlight the impact that his departure would have made.

Rav Yaakov Bender brings the Kli Yakar who raises an important question on Rashi's explanation: Yaakov was not the only tzaddik in Beer-sheva. His parents, Yitzchak and Rivka, were still living there. If those two great people remained in the city, why did Yaakov's departure still make such a noticeable impact? Shouldn't the presence of Yitzchak and Rivka have been enough to maintain the city's greatness?

The Kli Yakar explains that while Yitzchak and Rivka certainly brought their own spiritual greatness to Beer-sheva, they could not recreate the unique contribution of Yaakov. Every individual has their own distinct strengths, traits, and role to fulfill in serving Hashem.

This teaches a fundamental lesson. It can be easy to look around and think, "There are already so many talented and capable people here, so my presence doesn't really matter." However, the Torah demonstrates that every person possesses a unique mark to make on the world. No one else can fulfill your specific purpose or replace the distinct impact that only you can bring.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

… he took from the stones of the place… he took the stone that he had placed around his head… (28, 11 & 18)

The stones began to quarrel with one another. One would say, "Upon me the righteous one should lay his head," and the other one would say, "Upon me the righteous one should rest his head." Hashem made them into one stone. This is why the verse says, "And he took the stone that he placed around his head," using the singular word stone. (Rashi 28, 11)

Even after the stones merged into one, Yaakov was unable to rest his head on every part of the large stone. How did the desire of the stones that Yaakov's head did not reach have their wish fulfilled?

Parsha Riddle

Which verses in the parsha are said when one travels?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's 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? Answer: Why should I (Rivka) be bereaved of both of you (Yaakov and Esav) on the same day" (27:45). When Chushim killed Esav, the words of Rivka were fulfilled. Even though Yaakov had died more than a week earlier, both Yaakov and Esav's burial were on the same day (Sotah 13a). Rivka's words were fulfilled that her bereavement (the burial) of both of her sons would be on the same day.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayeitzei* (30:10-11), the Torah relates: "And Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, bore Yaakov a son. And Leah said, "Luck has come (*ba gad*)"; so she named him Gad." This translation of "*gad*" as "luck" follows that of Targum Yonasan and many *rishonim*, who cite two bases for this etymology: a verse in Isaiah (65:11): "You, who forsake the L-rd, who forget My holy mount, who set a table for Gad and who fill mingled wine for Mni," and an expression mentioned in the Talmud (*Shabbos* 67b) "*Gad gdi u'snuk lo* (my fortune be fortunate and be not weary)." Both these mentions of "*gad*," however, are quite negative; the prophet Isaiah is castigating those who abandon the service of Hashem and engage in the idolatrous worship of an entity called "*Gad*," and the Talmud condemns the cited expression as either forbidden superstition (*darchei ha-Emori*) at best or (in light of the verse in Isaiah) outright idolatry.

The Talmud takes for granted in other contexts as well that "setting a table for Gad" refers to an idolatrous practice, including the statement of R. Elazar (*Sanhedrin* 92a) that "With regard to **anyone who leaves pieces** of bread **on his table, it is as if he worships idols, as it is stated: "who set a table for Gad and who fill mingled wine for Mni."**

Based on this statement, Rabbeinu Yerucham b. Meshulam (*Toldos Adam v'Chava Nesiv* 17 *Chelek* 5) rules:

That which they are accustomed in certain lands to set a table and to place upon it a variety of foods on a night when they will circumcise a baby the following morning, and they say that they do it for the luck of the baby, I have seen my teachers accustomed to consider this prohibited and they object to those who do so, and they say that this included in "who set a table for Gad."

The Shach (*YD siman* 178 *s.k.* 6), however, distinguishes between this practice and the custom of the *vachnacht* on the night before a *bris*:

Nevertheless, there is no prohibition in that which they are accustomed in these lands to make a feast on a night when they will circumcise a baby the following day (that they call *vach*), because it is only prohibited to place a variety of foods on a table and to leave them like that, since that is like "setting a table for Gad," but there is no prohibition in a feast.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I was for the second seven.
2. I am grabby.
3. I am the weeper.
4. I'm 'on the road.'

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I am not white.
2. I am tricky.
3. Father-in-law/Uncle.
4. I am not Naval.

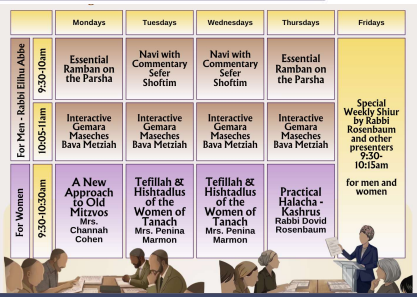
Last Week's Answers

#1 The voice of Yaakov (I defeat Esav, "Rise up, please," I sound, Davening and learning.)

#2 Esav (Dovid's resemblance, Made, Gripped heel, Hairy.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

כולל בקר
Kollel Boker
of Greater Washington



Weekday mornings at YISE

For full schedule and to register click gwckollel.org/boker

For more information contact: The Greater Washington Community Kollel 10900 Lockwood Dr, Silver Spring, MD 20901 • 301.593.4260
www.gwckollel.org • Rosh Kollel Rabbi Menachem Winter - 301.213.6504 • info@gwckollel.org