



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives. The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L, in 2011

With this week's Parsha of Vayikra, we begin the third of the Five Books of the Torah. The first word of the very first verse draws our attention in a most unusual fashion. The verse (chapter 1, verse 1) reads: "He [G-d] called to Moshe and G-d spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting (Tabernacle), saying."

The first word, "Vayikra" - ויקרא - (He called), is written in the Torah with a distinctively small Hebrew letter "aleph" - א. The Midrash comments that, in his deep humility, Moshe sought to draw attention away from himself. When G-d instructed him to write that "G-d called" to him, Moshe sought to omit the letter "aleph" entirely, thus changing the reading to "vikar" (ויקר) - that G-d came upon him by chance. "Vikar" signifies a less deliberate encounter, one that is not auspicious or planned. G-d refused to permit Moshe to transcribe such language, but did allow a compromise. The "aleph" would be inserted, albeit in a smaller font, to reflect Moshe's great humility.

The question begs itself: Why didn't G-d permit Moshe to omit the "aleph" entirely, thus accommodating his expression of humility in full measure? The Rabbis remind us that, without the "aleph," the word means that G-d encountered Moshe by chance, without predetermination. Such terminology was unacceptable to G-d, as it would indicate that events occur randomly. G-d was sensitive to Moshe's feelings and his discomfort at having the "aleph" inserted, but it could not come at the expense of a distorted perception that G-d's world operates without meticulous supervision and attention to every detail. That meticulous supervision is what the Rabbis term "hashgachah pratis" - individual providence. This is one of the fundamental principles of our faith.

We conclude with a story: Upon his return from battle, a soldier told the great sage Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk (1853-1918) that he was most fortunate that a bullet had just missed him. The Rabbi responded: "There is no such thing as 'just missed.' Every bullet has an address; fortunately, yours was not on it."

We should be comforted, strengthened, and empowered by the knowledge that each of us is so significant to the One Above as to warrant and be privileged with His individualized attention and care.

*Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Kalman Winter*

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

When a man will bring a korban... (1:2)

The concept of a korban is that the animal is taking the place of himself, who (in a sense) should be the one being sacrificed for having sinned to Hashem (Ramban).

This reasoning is good for korbanos that atone for sins. However, korbanos, like the korban Pesach or a korban shelomim, that do not atone for a sin do not seem to fit the logic of the Ramban!

PARSHA RIDDLE

And the two kidneys and the fat that is upon them which is on the two keseelim /flanks... (4:9)

What is the connection between the word keseel / fool and the word keseelim / flanks?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle: Which chapter of Tehillim is referenced in this week's Parsha?

Answer: Chapter 90 (Rashi 39:43).

HA TORAH V'HAMITZVAH

Halacha Insights from the Parsha

In Parshas Vayikra, we are instructed to remove the digestive organs of a fowl offered as a burnt sacrifice, as opposed to those of an animal, which are offered on the altar along with the rest of the carcass. Rashi (1:16) cites a Medrashic explanation for this distinction: an animal eats only from its master's trough, whereas fowl are sustained from thievery (i.e., they consume food belonging to others). Earlier in the parshah, Rashi (1:2) cites another Medrash enjoining us from offering stolen property as sacrifices.

Hashem abhors theft even - or particularly - when in the service of piety: "For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery in a burnt offering" (Isaiah 61:8). The Talmud (Sukkah 30a) explains that although everything belongs to Hashem, He nevertheless forbids us from bringing an offering from stolen property as an object lesson on the importance of avoiding theft.

The halachah takes the prohibition of theft so seriously that there are actually some opinions that the prohibition may not be violated even to preserve life (see Shut. Binyan Zion #167-73). The Maharam Shik suggests that this can be understood in light of a Talmudic dictum equating theft to murder (Bava Kama 119a). Rav Yaakov Ettlinger offers an alternative explanation, that Hashem's dispensation to violate most commandments to save life only encompasses "that which is relevant [exclusively] to Him," but not that which is also relevant to others: i.e., commandments that regulate relations between people. He therefore suggests that not just theft, but any infringement on the rights of others is forbidden even for the purpose of preserving life.

Presented by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman, Rosh Chaburah

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am the opposite of the "ayin"
2. I make it seem coincidental
3. I show humility
4. I saved some ink

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am read this Shabbos
2. I am this Shabbos
3. I am the beginning of a new year
4. For me they would violate Shabbos

Last Issue's Answers

#1 Para Aduma: (I am the mother, I clean up after my child, I cannot work, I am one of the four)

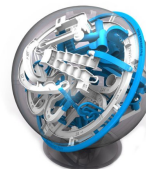
#2 Nisan: (I am for redemption, I am for spring, I am the first, I am the seventh)

**Congratulations to
Moty Gershone
and to all those who answered
correctly this week!**

Visit <http://www.gwckollel.org> to submit your answers.
Answer as many as you can because each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning.

All children
13 and under
who answer a
"Who Am I?"
correctly will
be entered
into a raffle to

Win a
Perplexus
Epic!



Next Raffle
Drawing
March 31st!

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

***Come join the Kollel for a fascinating 5-minute class on
Orchos Chaim of the Rosh,
immediately following the 9:45 pm Maariv (approximately 10 pm)
given by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman,
Monday - Thursday at the Kollel, 10900 Lockwood Drive.***