



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

A Light in the Darkness

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This Motzei Shabbos marks the beginning of Chanukah. Upon returning to the Temple after defeating the Greeks, the Maccabees found only enough uncontaminated oil for just one night. Making the best of what they had, they lit the oil. A miracle took place and it proceeded to burn for eight nights. In celebration of the defeat of the Greek oppressors and the subsequent miracle of the oil, we light candles each night. After we light the candles, we recite *Haneiros Hallalu*, in which we declare "*haneiros hallalu kodesh hem*," these lights are sacrosanct.

Interestingly, for no other holiday do we make a special declaration regarding the sanctity of the candles that we light. This begs the obvious question as to what is the significance of our declaring these Chanukah candles sacred?

Our Sages created the holiday of Chanukah because they felt that commemorating what had transpired was crucial to maintaining the existence and identity of the Jewish people. The message and lesson of Chanukah is necessary to inspire the Jewish people during the darkness of Exile, in a world without a Beis Hamikdash and the open revelation of the Divine presence. In a world devoid of the inherent holiness of the Temple and its services, Chanukah teaches us that we have the ability to create our own man-made sanctity. This is our mission while we live in a state of exile, to imbue the mundane environment in which we find ourselves with the light of *kedusha*. These Chanukah lights, the results of a man-made festival, are sacrosanct.

Chanukah falls out during the darkest period of the year, in which the nights are long and the light of the sun is scarce. It is specifically in this time, in the heart of the night, that we kindle our own light in the darkness.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

Yaakov settled in the land of his father's sojourning... (37:1)

Yaakov sought to dwell in tranquility but then the ordeal of Yosef came upon him. Righteous people seek to dwell in tranquility. But Hashem said, "... but they seek to dwell in tranquility in this world, as well" (Rashi).

We find righteous people who lived in serenity and were not disturbed, such as "Rebbi lived calmly" (Rashi Toldos 25:23). Why did Hashem choose not to disturb Rebbi's peaceful life, while Yaakov's desire for quiet was disrupted?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What was the last Halacha that Yaakov learned with Yosef, before he was sold?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Two issues involving Yaakov concerned him regarding his ability to overcome Esav. What are they?

Answer: Yaakov was afraid that his lack of honor for his father while working for Lavan and his marriage to two sisters would be reasons to lose the battle with Esav.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Vayeishev describes two pairs of dreams: Yosef's dreams of the sheaves and of the sun, moon and stars, and the dreams of Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker of wine and bread, respectively. The Biblical narrative clearly implies that all these dreams were actual portents of the fates of the respective dreamers: Yosef's ascension to the position of ruler of Egypt, the chief butler's reinstatement to his position, and the chief baker's execution.

The Jewish tradition is deeply ambivalent regarding the significance of dreams in general. Many passages in the Talmud and later authorities dismiss them as being "false" and "worthless" (*shav* and *hevel*), and the *halachah* contains an established ruling that one is free to ignore a dream alleging that certain moneys are *maaser sheni* ("the second tithe"), and therefore restricted to being spent in Jerusalem), since "the words of dreams do not matter" (*Sanhedrin* 30a). On the other hand, G-d Himself declares that He speaks with His prophets via dreams (*Bemidbar* 12:6, *Berachos* 55b); the Talmud asserts that a dream is "one sixtieth of prophecy" (*Berachos* 57b); and one who is excommunicated in a dream must have the excommunication nullified by ten people, for "since a dream is a sort of prophecy, he should worry about [impending] punishment" (*Nedarim* 8a, *Tosafos ibid.*). [For various resolutions to these contradictions, see *Chidushei Ha'Ran Sanhedrin ibid.*; *Shut. Tashbatz* 2:128; *Shut. Shivas Tzion* #52.]

In the realm of *halachic* discourse, some authorities occasionally adduce dreams as evidence for or against various *halachic* positions, while others dismiss out of hand the possibility of establishing *halachah* via dreams, due to the aforementioned skepticism about the reliability of dreams (see *Shach CM siman* 333 s.k. 25 and *siman* 336 s.k. 2; *Shut. Noda Be'Yehudah tinyana* YD #30). There is even an entire medieval compendium of *halachic* rulings received via dreams, the *She'eilos U'Teshuvos Min Ha'Shamayim*, although some indeed reject its authoritativeness in part due to the principle that "the words of dreams do not matter" (*Shut. Yechaveh Daas* 1:68, and cf. 5:39).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I increase in Holiness.
2. I'm a bright guy.
3. I equal 36.
4. Do not use me.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Sometimes we were bundles.
2. Yet other times, animals.
3. We could be prophetic.
4. We were the stars.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *The 400 men accompanying Esav* (I am equal to the "doubles" purchase; we caused division; we were the Red army; we instilled fear.)

#2 *The sinew called Gid Hanashe* (I am not a sin for you rather a ...; I am a limping prohibition; I was an angelic grip; the sun was my remedy.)

All children
13 and under
who answer a
"Who Am I?"
correctly will
be entered
into a raffle to
**Win a
JUMBO
BANANAGRAMS
GAME!**



THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
JANUARY 25TH!

*Congratulations to Naphtali Tzvi Graham
and others for answering last week's questions correctly!*

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can - each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

THIS MONDAY, THE 3RD NIGHT OF CHANUKAH:

7:00 PM AT THE KOLLEL

**BRING YOUR FAMILY TO CELEBRATE CHANUKAH
WITH THE GREATER WASHINGTON COMMUNITY KOLLEL FAMILY!**

**SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER RABBI ARI STORCH, KOHL'S COMEDY MAGIC
FOR KIDS, LIVE MUSIC, DANCING, AND HOT CHANUKAH REFRESHMENTS!**

