



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Keep Your Head in the Clouds

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

"And he (Yaakov) dreamed and behold a ladder was standing on the ground and its head was reaching the heavens; and behold angels of G-D were ascending and descending on it." (28:12)

As Yaakov begins his journey from his parents' home in the land of Canaan to his uncle Lavan's home in Charan, he stops for the night to rest. He dreams of a ladder which is "standing on the ground" and has its head "reaching the heavens." What is the significance of this ladder? Why does it make its appearance at this particular point in Yaakov's life?

Rabbi Simcha Schorr offers this beautiful explanation: Yaakov had spent his life thus far as the "simple man who dwelled in the tents," a secluded individual of purely spiritual pursuits. Now he was venturing out into the world to build a family and earn a livelihood. Yaakov would have naturally felt anxiety about entering such a world. He may well have been thinking, "Will I be able to maintain the lofty spiritual level upon which I have lived thus far?" Hashem responded by sending Yaakov the vision of the ladder, whose message was that it is okay for your feet to be "on the ground" — it's okay to engage in the worldly matters of everyday life — as long as your head is "in the heavens" and your goals and aspirations remain lofty.

We spend many hours, perhaps most of our day, working to make a living, but this need not prevent us from being spiritual people. If we keep in mind that we are working in order to maintain our health and that of our families — so that we can fulfill Hashem's will, to provide our children with a Jewish education, and to be able to help the needy — then our work itself becomes a spiritual pursuit. Similarly, if we remember that the most significant part of our day is not the eight hours spent at work but, rather, the one or two hours spent studying a Torah volume or attending a Torah class, then our entire existence becomes a spiritual one. This was Hashem's message to Yaakov, and it is one that is certainly relevant to us as well.

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

Identify the stories of kfitzas haderech (miraculously shortened journeys) found in Sefer Bereishis?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why should I be bereaved of both of you on the same day? (27:45)

How is this this prophecy fulfilled?

Answer: Yaakov and Esav both died on the same day.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayeitzei*, the Torah relates that Rachel stole her father Lavan's "terafim" as she fled from him. What were these mysterious *terafim*, and what was Rachel's motive and justification for stealing them? The *midrashim* and classic commentators offer two general approaches:

- The *terafim* were magical devices capable of speech, and Rachel stole them to prevent them from revealing to Lavan the flight of Yaakov and his household (*Tanchuma* #12, *Chizkuni*).
- The *terafim* were idols of Lavan, and Rachel stole them to cure him of idol worship (*Bereishis Rabah* 74:5, Rashi).

The latter approach seems to imply the legitimacy of theft as a means to prevent someone from sinning. R. Moshe Shternbuch does indeed adduce Rachel's action in support of the permissibility of destroying property that is being used in the commission of sin, although he subsequently points out that Yaakov apparently disagreed with her decision, and that Rachel was eventually punished by death for her action (*Shut. Teshuvos Vehanhagos* 1:368).

In the course of his analysis, R. Shternbuch cites a dispute between the *Ketzos Hachoshen* and the *Nesivos Hamishpat* over whether the Talmudic rule approving the use of force to prevent someone from sinning (*Bava Kama* 28a) is limited to the courts, or endorses even vigilante action by private citizens. R. Shternbuch sides with the *Ketzos* that the authority to use force is the sole prerogative of the court, but he seems to overlook the fact that the *Ketzos* subsequently clarifies his position and concedes that even a private citizen may use force to prevent someone from actively violating a prohibition (such as eating non-kosher food), and it is only the use of force to compel someone to act in fulfillment of a positive commandment (such as taking the four species) that is limited to the court (see *Ketzos*, *Nesivos* and *Meshoveiv Nesivos* at the beginning of *siman* 3).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was older.
2. I cried.
3. I had six boys.
4. I knew the signs.

#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 *Esav* (Dovid's resemblance; made; gripped heel; hairy)

#2 *The Kol of Yaakov* (I defeat Esav; "Rise up, please"; I sound; davening and learning.)

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

win a
LASER PEGS
HELICOPTER SET



Congratulations to Yoseph 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!

THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
DECEMBER 26th.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Tuesday
Nights
with
GWCK

For Women - *Tehillim: An In-Depth Analysis* with Mrs. Sara Malka Winter >> 8:15pm @ GWCK, 10900 Lockwood Dr.

For Men - *Torah Topics* with Rabbi M. Winter >> 8:15pm @ YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave.

Shivti: In-Depth Halachic Topics with Rabbi Y. Grossman and Rabbi Y. Zakem >> 8:15pm (Mon. - Thurs.) @ YISE

Appreciating Providence with Rabbi Y. Musicante >> 8:15pm @ GWCK

The Battlefield: Strategies to Confront Life's Challenges with Rabbi C. Biberfeld >> 9:00pm @ GWCK

Home Beis: D.C.'s Beis Medrash Program for Young Professionals led by Rabbi H. Shaps