



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

A Holy Land

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

In Parshas Eikev, Moshe describes the uniqueness of the Land of Israel, first highlighting its physical traits – “a good land, a land with brooks of water, fountains and depths... a land of wheat and barley, vines and figs and pomegranates...” (8:7-8) and later its spiritual qualities – “a land the Lord, your G-d, looks after; the eyes of the Lord your G-d are always upon it...” (11:12) Just before he begins to describe the Land, Moshe tells them, “You shall know in your heart, that just as a man chastises his son, so does the Lord, your G-d, chastise you.” (8:5) Based on the juxtaposition of this verse immediately preceding the description of the Land of Israel and the promise, “For the Lord your G-d is bringing you to a good land,” the Talmud (Brachos 5a) draws the following conclusion: *the Land of Israel is only given to us through yisurin – suffering.*

Our ancestors had to overcome forty years of trials and tribulations as they wandered from place to place in the desert before they could attain the Land of Israel and the difficulties to acquire and hold onto the Land have continued until today. What is the reason that we had to experience *yisurin* and continue to do so in order to acquire the Land of Israel?

The commentaries explain that the tribulations that we endure in order to possess the Land of Israel are intended to test the intent behind our desire to dwell there. Is it to eat from its fruit or to experience its holiness and unique *mitzvos* which can only be performed there? If one is simply after the positive physical qualities of the Land, it would seemingly not be worth the suffering involved. One could find these qualities in other places as well and avoid the trials and tribulations. If, however, our interest is in the unique spiritual qualities and special *mitzvos* of the Land, these are things that cannot be attained anywhere else. By continuing to pursue the goal of dwelling in the Land of Israel despite all the suffering involved in achieving that dream, we show that our desire to dwell there stems from a yearning for the holiness and unique *mitzvos* of the Land.

Let us each try to internalize this message and focus our desire for a secure Land of Israel on the hope to be able to experience its holiness and perform its special *mitzvos*. Let us pray that we see no more suffering and that we merit to return to a safe and secure Land of Israel and a rebuilt Yerushalayim and Beis Hamikdash.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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**This week's Shabbos Delights is sponsored l'iluy nishmas
Essia Bas Chaim Halevi a"h (Yahrzeit 21st of Av), mother of Diana Ruchelman.**

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

...and I stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights, bread I did not eat and water I did not drink (9:9).

Humans ate the bread of angels... (Tehilim 78:25)

Rebbi Akiva taught, "From here we learn that angels eat (if angels do not eat, how could Dovid HaMelech say that 'humans eat the bread of angels?') Rebbi Yishmael said, "Go tell Akiva that he erred, because Moshe said that when he was in heaven he did not eat. There is no proof that angels eat" (Yoma 75b)

The Sfes Emes asks as follows: Since Moshe informed us that he did not eat while in heaven, it implies that angels do eat in heaven! Furthermore, humans cannot survive without food. If Moshe remained a human while in heaven, how did he survive without eating for forty days?

Parsha Riddle

Why do we place the Tefillin on the weaker hand? What lesson does this teach us?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How was Moshe compared to one who loves money?

Answer: The Gemara in Makos (10a) connects the verse (Koheles 5:9) "One who loves money will never be satiated with money," to Moshe. Moshe knew that the three cities of refuge on the east side of the Jordan would not provide refuge until the three inside Eretz Yisrael were designated. Yet he chose to designate the three on the other side of the Jordan before he died out of his desire for mitzvos.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Eikev* (6:26), the Torah commands: "And you shall not bring an abomination into your home and become banned like it; you shall surely loathe it and you shall surely abominate it, for it is banned." The precise meaning of "[bringing] an abomination into your home" is not entirely clear: The Mishnah (*Avodah Zarah* 1:9) states that one may not rent a house to a Gentile for use as a residence, "because the gentile will bring objects of idol worship into it, as it is stated: 'you shall not bring an abomination into your home,' and this is still considered the house of a Jew." The Tosafists (*ibid.* 21a s.v. *Af be-Makom*) take this Mishnah at face value, that the Biblical prohibition is violated by the mere bringing of an idol, even by a Gentile, into a house owned by a Jew. The Ramban, however, understands that the Biblical admonition prohibits only "benefit derived from any aspect of idol-worship — the idol itself, its appurtenances, its offerings, and its ornaments" (Commentary to *Devarim* 6:25), i.e., it prohibits a Jew himself from bringing an idol into his house, since it is forbidden to derive benefit from idols, but the prohibition against renting homes to Gentiles because they will bring idols into them is merely Rabbinic (Commentary to *Avodah Zarah ibid.*).

The Tosafists note that Jews in their time and place did rent homes to Gentiles, in apparent violation of the clear Mishnaic prohibition, and they suggest several justifications for this, including the following:

- Some maintain that the prohibition only applies to bringing an idol into a house on a regular, constant basis, and the Gentiles of their time only brought idols into their houses when someone was dead or dying.
- R. Chaim Cohen and the Ri assert that the prohibition (at least on the Biblical level) applies only to homes in *Eretz Yisrael*, and not to those outside *Eretz Yisrael*. (According to this approach, renting homes to Gentiles in *Eretz Yisrael* would indeed be prohibited.)
- The Rosh (*ibid.* 1:22) explains that since in his time and place, non-Jewish property rental laws granted tenants the status of (temporary) owners, rented houses in his time were considered by *halachah* as well to be the property of the tenants and thus not subject to the prohibition against bringing idols into Jewish homes.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am similar to koof.
2. I am derived from "what."
3. I bring salvation.
4. I am blessing.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the snake.
2. I am misused on Mitzvos.
3. Yaakov's grasp.
4. I am not for a doctor.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Tu B'Av (I am the end of tree cutting, Bo'ee Kallah, I caused dancing, I am not a double father.)

#2 Ten Commandments (I have ten, I include all 613, Now I have my second showing, I am divided.)

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