

## PARSHA INSIGHTS

***Bnai Yisroel were in the wilderness and found a man gathering wood on Shabbos. (15, 32)***

*The man who was gathering wood on Shabbos was afraid that some may think that the Shabbos laws only apply when Bnai Yisroel would enter Eretz Yisroel and not while they were in the wilderness. He sacrificed his life in order to teach that the laws of Shabbos apply wherever a person may find himself and one is punished with the death penalty for its desecration. (Midrash)*

Upon analyzing this Chazal, it is amazing that one would sacrifice his life to teach Bnai Yisroel an important lesson. In addition, he tainted his name and eternal legacy for the sake of Bnai Yisroel. Doesn't such behavior entitle a person to honorable mention? Why is he remembered as a sinner?

To explain why the gatherer of wood does not deserve honor, we must first examine the result of his desecrating the Shabbos.

*Bnai Yisroel had only observed one Shabbos; on the second Shabbos, the gatherer desecrated it. (Rashi)*

*If Bnai Yisroel had observed two Shabbosos, no foreign nation would have jurisdiction over Bnai Yisroel. (Baal HaTurim)*

The devastating effects of the gatherer's act – the destructions of the Botei Mikdosh, exiles and other hardships – all would have been avoided, had the gatherer not desecrated the second Shabbos. Even though the gatherer acted for the sake of Heaven and Bnai Yisroel, his actions wrought tragedies and calamities upon Bnai Yisroel for generations. Why?

The Otzros HaTorah explains that a person is not permitted to make calculations to improve the observance of Torah without consulting Gedolei Torah. One may think he is performing a deed that will save the Torah and elevate it. However, if it transgresses a Torah command, the act which he considers most virtuous is in truth worthless. Such an act, even if its' purpose is to elevate Torah, only causes hardship and sorrow, destruction and exile.

*But the men who had ascended with him said, "We cannot ascend, for 'it' is too strong for us." (13, 31)*

*(The spies were) hinting that the giants were stronger than Hashem. (Rashi)*

*One is obligated to give up his life and not desecrate Hashem's Name if the desecration will be performed in front of ten Jews – the spies were ten Jews. (Sanhedrin 74b)*

Rav Moshe Feinstein zt'l (Yoreh Deah 70) asked as follows. Since the spies were mumarim (deniers of Hashem's strength), they are not considered Jews and cannot be counted as members of a minyan. If so, how can those blasphemous words be the source for the halacha of a person is obligated to give up his life rather than desecrate Hashem's Name by performing a sin in the presence of 'ten people'?

The Meiri (Sanhedrin ibid) answers that there are two types of 'ten Jews.' 1) The presence of ten 'kosher' Jews 2) Ten Jews who understand what is being performed. A minyan for davning needs the presence of ten 'kosher' Jews. However, in regard to desecrating Hashem's Name, ten people knowing what is transpiring is sufficient for the act to be called a 'public' desecration of Hashem's Name.

Although a mumar is not qualified to be part of a minyan due to his actions, his understanding of a desecration of Hashem's Name occurring is adequate to be considered a public scene. This obligates a person to give up his life when Hashem's Name is being debased.

## TABLE TALK

### PARSHA DILEMMA

***"Send forth men..." (13, 2)***

*Why is the Parsha of the spies juxtaposed to the Parsha of Miriam being afflicted with leprosy? She was afflicted on account of her speaking negatively about her brother, and these evil people saw what occurred and did not take heed. (Rashi)*

If the sending of the spies followed the story of Miriam in chronological order, we can understand the order of its listing. However, if the story of Miriam occurred after the story of the spies, how were the spies supposed to take a lesson from Miriam's experience?

## WHO AM I?

1. I was given by Moshe
2. I used to be for a woman
3. I took two dots from the "Segol"
4. I changed a name into a prayer

**Last week's clues:** We are seven yet we caused eight, The middle was our direction, We were needed, but not really, Replacement of dedicating.

**Answer:** Lights of the Menora

## WHO AM I?

1. I name your bread
2. I could cause death
3. I am for the Kohen
4. I am not at the end of Kabolos Shabbos

**Last week's clues:** We waived, but we were not saying hello, The first-born replacement, We are always (almost) the second, The moving company.

**Answer:** Shevet Levi

## TORAH RIDDLE

How did Yeshoua's future position limit him?

**Last week's riddle and answer:** How many Chumashim are there? (Hint: This week's Parsha)

**Answer:** Seven

Please send "Who Am I" and "Torah Riddle" answers to [onegshabbos@beachwoodkollel.com](mailto:onegshabbos@beachwoodkollel.com) by next Wed.

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The answers will IY"H appear in next week's issue

## A GLIMPSE OF GREATNESS

*For he scorned the Word of Hashem... (15, 31)*

During the funeral of Rav Moshe Feinstein zt'l, a man in Yerushalayim contracted headaches that continued to deteriorate for days after the levaya. After consulting with many doctors, he came away without a diagnosis.

Frightened, he ran to one of the Gedolim in Eretz Yisroel to seek advice. When the Rov heard that these headaches developed during Rav Moshe's funeral, he asked the man if he ever spoke without the proper respect about Rav Moshe. Unable to recall any such episode, the man answered, "no."

The Rov told the man to perform the Gorol HaGra. The posuk that opened was in B'haaloscha (12, 8) that says, "Why were you not afraid to speak negatively about my servant Moshe?" The man then recalled that he had complained during the funeral of Rav Moshe that the festive celebrations of Shushan Purim in Yerushalayim were being disrupted.

The Rov then instructed him to perform the directions described in Shulchan Aruch for one who transgresses the sin of speaking derogatorily about a great person. After following those halochos, the headaches disappeared.

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