



DELVING DEEPER

He is Everywhere

Hashem said to Avram, "Go—for yourself—from your land, and from your upbringing, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you." (12:1)

THERE ARE MANY WHO ASK, ABOUT THIS COMMAND of Hashem, why? Why was it necessary for Avram to leave everything and go to a new, unfamiliar land?

The Bobover Rebbe (Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam, of blessed memory) explains why, based on a thought from the Baal Shem Tov.

For behold, Your enemies, Hashem—for behold, Your enemies will be destroyed. (T'hillim 92:10)

Asks the Baal Shem Tov: Why does this verse repeat itself?

The answer, he says, is that the Holy One, blessed be He, created a world filled with countless pleasures and materialistic pursuits, all of which can lead a person astray from the service of Hashem.

If so, what did Hashem create all these pleasurable things for?

RABBI MOSHE FUCHS



Were they only created for the wicked? Impossible! Mishlei (Proverbs) clearly says that all of Creation is for His honor.

Everything Hashem made is for His sake. (16:4)

However, we must understand where all the physical pleasure fits in. Where is honor for Hashem in these things?

The answer is that, when used in the proper fashion, all things can bring honor to Hashem. When a pious person comes across a worldly pleasure, he contemplates: Where did this great taste, this heavenly smell, this sweetness come from? From Hashem! He realizes that their source is the Creator of all. This appreciation won't just prevent a person from being led astray; on the contrary, he will be drawn closer to the service of Hashem.

This is the meaning of the verse in T'hillim. "For behold, Your enemies, Hashem..." When a person realizes that Hashem Himself can be found in the pleasures of this world—which can also be "enemies" of Hashem, because worldly pleasures can lead a person away from Him—that will bring him to a state where "Your enemies will be destroyed," and the improper desires within him will be nullified. Instead, his heart will forever seek the light of Hashem.

We can now understand better why Avram was told to leave his homeland.

The *Divrei Chaim* of Sanz explains that

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A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

YOU SHALL CIRCUMCISE THE FLESH OF YOUR FORESKIN, AND THAT WILL BE THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT BETWEEN ME AND YOU. AT EIGHT DAYS OLD, ALL OF YOUR MALES SHALL BE CIRCUMCISED, FOR ALL GENERATIONS... (17:11-12)

Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 264:2) rules that even though, strictly speaking, a *B'ris Milah* (circumcision) can be performed with any sharp object (even stone or glass), the custom is to use a metal knife. That knife is usually referred to as an *izmal*—a contraction of the Hebrew words *az mal*. The numerical value of *az*

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TIDBITS OF CINCINNATI JEWISH HISTORY



RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On 7 Cheshvan, 5706 (1945), a World War II memorial was erected at Covedale Cemeteries, honoring Jewish servicemen from Cincinnati who had lost their lives overseas and hadn't been brought home for burial. Listed on the back of the monument are 61 names. The Covedale Cemeteries served, then as now, many Orthodox congregations in Cincinnati, including Golf Manor Synagogue and Kneseth Israel. Approximately 550,000 Jewish men and women served in the United States armed forces during WWII; 4.23% of all service members were Jewish. Tragically, of the 38,000 Jewish casualties, 7,000 were combat deaths. The Cincinnati area, as a whole, sent almost 100,000 people to the armed forces, with almost 2,300 casualties.

A RIDDLE FOR YOU

Over which mitzvah does one recite two blessings that include the words "Who has sanctified us with His commandments?"

The answer will appear in two weeks.

LAST WEEK'S RIDDLE:

Q What, besides the *mon* (manna), tasted like *mon*?

A The matzah that the Children of Israel took with them when they left Egypt. (Talmud, Kiddushin 38a)

UPCOMING CLASS

Kollel Women's Learning presents "What Drove Avraham Avinu?" with Rabbi Chaim Heinemann—Wednesday, November 1, at 7:45pm.

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as a source of merit for his father, Tuvia Tzvi ben Shmuel Dovid, of blessed memory

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A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

CONTINUED

(spelled *alef-zayin*) is eight; thus, *az mal* means "He performed the circumcision on the eighth day." (*Sefer Mat'amim*)

The traditional *izmal* is sharp on both edges. There are several reasons given for this custom, as well as for why we circumcise specifically with metal knives, and not with anything else.

Sharp on both sides

- In order to eliminate the possibility of hurting the child by cutting the foreskin with a blunt edge. (*Derech Pikudecha*)
- Homiletically, a double-edged knife is referred to in the verse (T'hilim 149:6) "...A double-edged sword is in their hand." (*Derech Pikudecha*)

Specifically a metal knife

- *Aruch haShulchan* (264:15) explains that this is based on the verse (Y'hoshu'a 5:2) "G-d said to Y'hoshu'a, 'Make for yourself sharp knives, and once again circumcise the Children of Israel.'" If Hashem commanded Y'hoshu'a to use a knife, that is obviously the ideal implement. This is not contradicted by the fact that Tziporah circumcised her son with a stone (Sh'mos 4:25)—they were traveling, and it was the only sharp object available.
- *P'risha* (Y.D. 264:7) bases the preference for metal on a Midrash, which states that the future King David took five sharp stones, when he confronted Goliath, in order to pierce Goliath's iron helmet. The guardian angel of metal, lobbying on behalf of the helmet, did not want to yield to stone until Hashem pledged that, as a reward for his submission, the Jews would circumcise their children with metal knives. 🥂

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

THERE WAS ONCE A SERIOUS DROUGHT IN A desert country. The local ruler heard of a tradition that Jews have the power to pray for rain, and he ordered the Jewish community to do just that—threatening that if there were no rain in the next thirty days, he would expel all the Jews from his territory.

The frightened Jews began holding public fasts and special prayer days, but to no

At the Kollel

EVERY DAY

EVERY WEEK

Sunday *Free brunch!*

👉 **Beginner's Halacha & More** (skills-building)
Rabbi Moshe D. Zeffren... 9:30–10:30 AM

👉 **Shivti** (Self-contained learning, geared toward practical halacha)
Rabbi Avrohom Weinrib.... 10 AM–NOON

Monday

👤👉 **Torah Treasures for Seniors at the Mayerson JCC**
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis 10:30–11:15 AM

🥂 *Homemade refreshments served*

KEY: 👉 Beginners 👤 Intermediate 👤 Advanced 👤 for men and women

Chavrusos are available for private and group learning—
speak to Rabbi Chaim Heinemann! weekdays noon–1 PM • Sun.–Thurs. 8–9:45 PM

DAVENING TIMES CAN BE FOUND AT CINCYKOLLEL.ORG/MINYAN-SCHEDULE/

Tuesday

👤👤👉 **Partners in Torah at the Mayerson JCC**
Rabbi Michael Soroka..... 8 PM

Wednesday

👤👉 **Downtown Lunch-n-Learn at Strauss & Troy**
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis 12–1 PM

Thursday

👤👉👉 **Yehoshua/Shabbos** in the former Back Office
Rabbis Michael Soroka and Moshe Dovid Zeffren..... 9:10–10 PM

He is Everywhere CONTINUED

when Avram first recognized the existence of a Creator, he distanced himself completely from all worldly pleasures. Avram thought it wouldn't be possible to connect with Hashem while having any benefit from this world—which is very understandable, owing to the fact that he was raised in a home where all things material were used to satisfy physical urges. It did not occur to him that these things can also be used for holy matters.

Therefore, Avram was told, "Go! Leave this land, where the physical is only used for base things, and go to the land that is holier than all others—and there you will learn to use the pleasures of this world in holy pursuits."

Indeed, this concept separates the Jews from the nations of the world. Yes, we enjoy this world, but for a different purpose—a higher purpose: For serving Hashem. 🥂

"plugging away" at night seder



avail. As the days passed, the sky remained a brilliant blue.

The last day dawned without a cloud in the sky, and the congregation once again began to raise their voices in prayer. As the day went on, their prayers became more and more emotional, with the threat of expulsion looming over their heads, but the sky remained as clear as ever. Despair began to grip the congregation.

At that point, one of the local shopkeepers walked to the front of the shul, carrying the scales from his store. "Master of the World!" he cried out, "You are my witness that I have always been honest with my scales, and never once did I cheat a customer! In that merit, please bring us rain."

Within a few minutes, clouds could be seen on the horizon. Within hours, rain came down from the heavens. 🥂