



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

After the flood waters finally subside, Noach and his family emerge from the Ark. Charged with building the world anew, Noach undertakes to create an infrastructure for mankind. The verse describes Noach's first endeavor: "And Noach, the farmer, *began* and planted a vineyard" (9:20). Soon after, Noach becomes intoxicated and shames himself by becoming unclothed.

Rashi translates the word "*vayachel*" (began) midrashically, as "debased." Rashi explains that the Torah is censuring Noach for commencing the rebuilding process by planting a vineyard instead of another tree or plant.

Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz elaborates on Rashi's words. While Noach was surely expected to re-plant vines, it was not proper for him to begin rebuilding the world with the cultivation of grapes. Noach should have begun by planting a staple vegetable or grain, capable of providing nourishment and nutrition to the population. Our priorities are demonstrated by that to which we give precedence, and Noach erred with his choice. Instead of immediately supplying the world with sustenance, Noach grew an intoxicant and indulged his own needs and desires.

Our days are full of a variety of activities and concerns. We should not need a catastrophic event to take the opportunity to re-examine our priorities and to consider if our actions truly reflect those priorities. Each and every morning is a new world, waiting and beckoning to us to make a difference.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

And all the days of Noach were nine hundred and fifty years... (9:29)

If one calculates the years that Noach lived, it was really nine hundred and fifty one years, as he was six hundred at the time of the flood, and he lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. That does not include the year that he lived on the Teiva during the flood. However, since the constellations were not functioning during the flood, that year does not count (Chiskuni).

In all other calculations we do count that year (8:13). Furthermore, the posuk says that the Teiva landed on the seventh month. If that year did not count, how did the months advance?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What is the similarity and dissimilarity between Noach and Moshe?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which creation was given the opportunity to live the longest?

Answer: The human given the opportunity to live the longest was Adam. The animal given the opportunity to live the longest was the Levyson.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

What is the Torah's perspective on the exploration and colonization of space? Discussion of this topic often refers to the episode of the Tower of Babel in *Parshas Noach*, in which men planned to build "a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven ... lest [they] be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Hashem determined to foil their plan by "confound[ing] their language, that they may not understand one another's speech," and thus "scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth" (*Bereshtis* 11:1-9).

Why did Hashem disapprove of their plan? Rashbam and Chizkuni explain that the goal of concentrating all of civilization in one specific geographical region was contrary to Hashem's fundamental charge to humanity of "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it" (*Bereshtis* 1:28). R. Menachem Kasher argues that even if we interpret this verse as limiting human habitation to our planet, perhaps this only restricts permanent colonization, but not temporary exploration. He is, however, concerned about the inherent danger of space travel, as well as the impossibility of fulfilling *mitzvos* on the moon (*Ha'Adam al Ha'Yare'ach*, end of Ch. 6. See also the discussion of R. Nachum Eliezer Rabinovich in *Ha'Darom*, #15 – Nissan [5]762, p. 121).

On the other hand, Ralbag explains that Hashem's problem with the geographical concentration of human civilization is that a major natural disaster, such as a great storm, earthquake, or flood, could cause the extinction of humanity. Accordingly, geographical diversification is a necessary precaution for the preservation of the human race. This idea can be extended into an argument for the imperative of spreading civilization beyond our planet, as a precaution against potential planet-wide extinction events.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I refer to a box.
2. I am not nature.
3. In English I am for Torah.
4. In the end I got stuck in a 'a rut'.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. My name is for non-Jews.
2. I needed gloves not mittens.
3. Was I righteous?
4. I was permitted to eat meat.

Last Issue's Answers:

#1 The sun (I ruled with another; some confuse me with a boy; I referred to Yaakov; when I leave Shabbos comes.)

#2 Chava (I was created from surgery; my title defines my source; my name defines my purpose; I cause pain.)

**Visit gwckollel.org
to submit your answers.**

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

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

*Win a
super
prize*

*Congratulations
to*

*Betzalel
Komarow,
winner of a*

*Shaved Ice
Machine!*

**Stay tuned for info
on the next raffle
date and prize!**

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The subjects are varied, including halachic, theological, and philosophical, and the intersection of these disciplines as they relate to Biblical exegesis. 7:30pm Sunday evenings at KMS.