



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives. The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L, in 2010.

In this week's Torah Portion of Va'eira, we read of the onset of the ten plagues. Pharaoh, in his great cruelty and haughtiness, refuses to come to terms with his fate and the fate of his nation. All the might and array of the plagues did nothing to impact and impart upon Pharaoh a change of heart and mind. However, with the seventh plague of hail stones raining down upon Egypt, destroying all cattle, plant life, and people that remained in the field, Pharaoh has a genuine, heartfelt moment of contrition and recognition of G-d. The verse in chapter 9:27 states "This time I [Pharaoh] have sinned, G-d is the Righteous One and I and my people are the wicked ones." What a wondrous statement by Pharaoh, encompassing not only his own guilt, but G-d's justice and mercy. How are we to understand this change of heart amidst the utter destruction of all life in the field? The great commentator, the Riva, explains that it lies in the fact that G-d had forewarned Pharaoh and his people to take in all their possessions from the field in advance of the plague (chapter 9:19). G-d had given the Egyptians an opportunity to protect themselves before the seventh plague and as a result, Pharaoh was moved in a very special way. Not by might, but by kindness. All the might of G-d did not move Pharaoh. Self-preservation did not achieve its objective. However, G-d's kindness, given to this ruler of consummate cruelty, was totally disarming.

We learn such a powerful and important lesson. We are far better served in reaching and influencing people with kindness than intimidation or other devices. If the stone heart of Pharaoh could be pierced by benevolence, how much more so ordinary people will be touched by kindness and good will.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Kalman Winter

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

Therefore, say to Bnai Yisrael, "I am Hashem, and I shall take you out from under the burdens of Mitzrayim, I shall rescue you from their service, I shall redeem them with an outstretched arm..."
(6:6)

On Rosh Hashana, the servitude in Mitzrayim stopped (Rosh Hashana 11a).

It is understandable why there is a separate promise of redemption for the stopping of slavery (service) and being taken out of Mitzrayim. However, what is the first promise, "I shall take you out from under the burdens of Mitzrayim"? Prior to Bnai Yisrael stopping to work as slaves, what redemption took place?

PARSHA RIDDLE

What is the Torah's secret recipe to achieve calmness and peace?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last issue's riddle:

Where is shna'im mikra v'echod targum (the obligation to review the pesukim of the parsha twice and the targum once) alluded to in this parsha?

Answer: The words "v'aile shemos" stand for vchayav adaam likro haparsha shnaim mikre vechod targum

TIMELESS WISDOM

A person came to the Divrei Chaim and complained that, across the street from his store, someone had opened up a similar store. "Now my store is empty. I am not making any money, and I cannot support myself..." The Divrei Chaim gave him a bracha for success. "But Rebbe, can you curse the other store owner that he should close?" The Divrei Chaim was aghast, "Curse another Jew?" The man continued, "Can the Rebbe just curse the store that it should not do well?"

The Divrei Chaim responded, "If you watch a horse go take a drink from a clean stream of water, it first kicks it with his leg, and then once it is dirty, it will drink from there. Do you know why? When the horse bends his head to take a drink, he sees another horse also trying to drink. He is upset that another horse is trying to drink the water, and that there will not be enough for himself. So the horse kicks the water, and once it is muddy, and there is no reflection, he thinks his competitor is gone. Obviously, that is not true. Let me ask you this. In Mitzrayim, how did the water know that when a Jew held it, it should be water and when an Egyptian held it, it should be blood? The answer is because Hashem has designated for everyone what he needs and what he is supposed to get. I blessed you with success, so there is therefore no need to try to crush your competitor. Hashem has parnassa for you, and the store across the street will not impede your livelihood. If you think it does, you are just like the horse."

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I caused people to be boiling in the winter.
2. I was from ash.
3. I was for man and animal.
4. I blossomed but I am not a flower.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I was in Mitzrayim.
2. I was for the splitting of the sea.
3. I caused a standstill.
4. I allowed snooping.

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

#1 Sand (I protected Moshe; Moshe could not harm me; don't confuse me with a hurricane; Bnai Yisrael are compared to me.)

#2 Serpent (I swallowed Moshe; I was from a staff; I caused eating from the Eitz Hadaas; I was also copper.)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Penina and Yehuda Green

Please see next week's issue for the answers to this week's questions.

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

Win a
Remote Control Quadcopter !



Please visit www.gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

The next raffle will be held on January 27th.

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

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