



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Our Parsha begins with the story of Yisro, Moshe's father-in-law, joining the Jewish nation in the desert. Upon hearing the wondrous reports of G-d's miraculous intervention to save the Jews from Egypt and split the Red Sea, Yisro, a former idolatrous high-priest, is inspired to leave his homeland in Midian and attach himself to the Jewish people. This weekly Torah portion is referred to eponymously as Yisro.

In the Talmud (Zevachim 116a) there is a disagreement whether the above narrative occurred before Matan Torah - the giving of the Torah at Sinai - consistent with how the Torah relates it, or whether it actually transpired after Matan Torah but was recorded earlier.

Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe zt"l asks: Why is this Parsha, which includes the momentous event of the giving of the Torah, named for Yisro, a newly-minted convert? Should it not be named for Moshe, who ascended to the Heavens to bring down the Torah? Furthermore, according to the opinion that Yisro's narrative happened only later, why would the Torah relate it earlier?

Rabbi Wolbe answers: The lesson we learn from Yisro is a cardinal prerequisite for accepting the Torah. Many thousands throughout the ancient world heard of the unprecedented miracles G-d wrought on behalf of His people, and were appropriately awed. Kings and princes trembled at the reports of G-d's manifest might. Whole nations were astonished at the news of the Jews' salvation from a powerful foe.

Only Yisro, however, took the report to heart and was moved to transform his belief system, uproot himself from his home, and join a people camped in the desert. Only Yisro drew the necessary conclusions from what he heard and readily implemented them. The lesson of a relentless search for truth, irrespective of where it may lead, which is personified by Yisro, is a true and necessary precursor to accepting the Torah. This lesson is eternalized for all time when we reference the Parsha in Yisro's name.

Messages about the sacredness of life, our obligations to man and G-d, and our special responsibilities as G-d's children abound – from our teachers, global affairs, and everyday events. To hear these messages, we must open not only our eyes and ears, but our hearts and minds as well.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

Moshe ascended to G-d (Elokim) and Hashem (Ykvk) called to him... (19:3)

When Moshe is ascending the mountain, the posuk refers to Hashem as Elokim, and once Moshe reaches the top, and Hashem begins to speak to him, Hashem is referred to as the name Yud hay vav and hay. Why is the name referring to Hashem changed?

PARSHA RIDDLE

For which mitzvos does the Torah tell us the reward that one will receive in this world for their fulfillment?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which mitzvah in this parsha was fulfilled in Parshas Ki Seitzei?

Answer: To write down the command to destroy Amalek.

TIMELESS WISDOM

And you shall be to Me a kingdom of ministers and a holy nation (19:6).

Bnei Yisrael had just emerged from Mitzrayim at an extremely low spiritual level. They had succumbed to the sins and the impurity of Mitzrayim, to the extent that the angels asked Hashem what the difference between Bnei Yisrael and the Egyptians was. Yet Hashem's charge to Bnei Yisrael was a positive and uplifting aspiration for the future.

Rav Yehoshua Sklar would often be invited to ask the boys questions on their studies in school. There was one boy in particular whose answers and sharp mind Rav Yehoshua enjoyed. On one of his visits, Rav Yehoshua noticed that this boy was not there. After asking about him, the principal related the following incident.

"This boy unfortunately fell into a bad group of boys, and was caught red-handed on a robbery, breaking into someone's house on Yom Kippur, when they knew the residents would be in Shul. Feeling terribly embarrassed about his behavior, the boy would not come back to school, and would not walk outside. So his parents sent him to a school in a different neighborhood, where he could start anew."

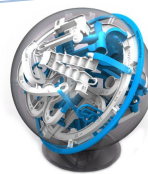
Rav Yehoshua felt the boy's plight and when he got home he sent a letter for this boy at his new school. He wrote: "I was at your old school today and I missed your sharp mind. I asked about you and I was told you switched to a different school. I want to hear from you, so please write me back a good question or answer relevant to your studies in school. I am also enclosing some spending money for you..."

The boy received his letter and was overtaken, and broke down in tears. Certainly this Rav had been told about his troublemaking, and he still believed in him. He thought to himself, "If the Rav believes in me, I will not let him down" and with that he began a monthly correspondence with the Rav with Torah questions and answers. Eventually this boy grew and married and became a well known educator in Eretz Yisrael.

The Rav took a lesson from Hashem. Sometimes it is worthwhile to forget the past, and try to build a bright future.

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

Win a
Perplexus
Epic!



Next Raffle
Drawing
March 31st!

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. See what is heard
2. Hear what is seen
3. Under the mountain
4. Death and Reviving

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I was a priest
2. My name is extra
3. I advised Pharaoh
4. I advised Moshe

Please see next week's issue for the answers.

Last Issue's Answers

#1 Mon /Manna: (A question is my name, I was Heaven sent, I came in dew time, I had a melt down.)

#2 Shira / Song: (I am one of ten, As of now there are nine of me, This week I am a wall, My last will be male.)

**Congratulations to
Ya'kov Baars
and to all those who answered
correctly this week!**

Visit <http://www.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.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

A Shabbos of Friendship and Brotherhood

The Kollel invites the community to join us for Parshas Mishpatim, February 13-14, for a special Shabbos focused on the themes, laws, and hashkafa of interpersonal relationships. Join us for a sumptuous and ruach-filled Friday night dinner, a spirited oneg, and insightful classes from Kollel Scholars and Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Yitzi Weiner!

Register at www.gwckollel.org