



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel

From our archives

G-d tells Moshe that His promise to the Patriarchs will soon be fulfilled and His nation would soon be free. Moshe relates the message, but the Jews are too demoralized and dispirited to take the message to heart. Moshe wonders aloud how he could effectively communicate the message to Paroh if his own tribesmen won't listen to him. Additionally, Moshe worries that his speech impediment would interfere with his ability to convey G-d's message to Paroh. G-d assures Moshe that after enduring the plagues, Paroh would send the nation to freedom. To assuage Moshe's concern over his speech, G-d appoints Aharon as a spokesman. The Torah goes on to delineate the genealogy of Moshe and Aharon and concludes the account with the verse "This is Aharon and Moshe to whom Hashem said 'Take out the Israelites from the land of Egypt, according to their legions'" (6:26).

The sages note that at times, like in our verse, Aharon precedes Moshe, whereas in other verses Moshe precedes Aharon. The Midrash tells us that this is to teach that Moshe and Aharon were equal. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein comments that it is startling to claim that Moshe and Aharon were of equal stature. The Torah itself declares that Moshe was the greatest prophet (Devarim 34:10) and it was through Moshe, who ascended to the heavens, that the Torah was given to Israel. Rabbi Feinstein suggests two approaches to understand this equality of Moshe and Aharon. First, Aharon is described as an equal because of his crucial role in assisting Moshe in securing the nation's freedom. True, Moshe was greater. Nevertheless, the exodus was brought about only with Aharon's partnership, thus giving him equal merit.

A second approach offered by Rabbi Feinstein is that Aharon, just like Moshe, fulfilled his maximum potential. Although Moshe was gifted with greater potential, G-d only expects from us according to our capabilities.

As we take stock of our past successes and look to the future for opportunities to serve our fellowman, we should allow these two powerful ideas to serve as a guide and inspiration. We do not need to erect towering edifices singlehandedly to attain greatness. When we make ourselves part of a team, we are wholly credited with its success. In addition, we need not concern ourselves with whether we measure up to the perceived accomplishments of those around us. Rather, we must only make certain that we are fulfilling our own personal mission.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

The seven day period ended after Hashem struck the river. (7, 25)

The plagues lasted a quarter of a month. The other three quarters of the month, Moshe would forewarn and caution the Egyptians. (Rashi)

It seems from Rashi that all the plagues afflicted the Egyptians for seven days. However, it seems from the verses otherwise. The plague of pestilence (*dever*) lasted only one day, as the verse says, "...the next day all the livestock of Mitzrayim (Egypt) perished." (9, 6). In addition, the plague of the death of the first borns lasted only for a moment - midnight.

PARSHA RIDDLE

Why is the fifth cup of wine at the Seder called Kos Shel Eliyahu?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Where is there a hint in the Parsha to the custom of decorating a Shul with flowers and greenery on Shavuot?

Answer: Moshe was placed on the bank of a river on the sixth day of Sivan - Shavuot. Plants are similar to a bank of a river.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

As we noted last year, the *midrash* (*Shemos Rabah* 9:11) relates that "Israel became wealthy from the plague of blood", explaining that any water procured by the Egyptians during the plague transformed into blood, and the only way they were able to obtain water was by purchasing it from Jews. Although the Egyptians obviously richly deserved this comeuppance, we noted several *halachic* considerations raised by price gouging in general, including the question of the validity of a deal made under pressure.

The Talmud (*Bava Kama* 116a) rules that if a fugitive promises a ferryman an exorbitant sum for conveying him across the river, he is not liable for more than the normal price for the trip, since he may claim that he did not seriously intend his commitment ("*meshateh ani bach*"). The Ritva (*Kidushin* 8a) infers from this that a desperate buyer who agrees to an exorbitant price for an item that he needs, such as medicine for an illness, is not responsible for more than the item's normal price, and he rules that even if the buyer has already paid for the item, he is entitled to a refund. [The Ritva does concede, however, that a commitment to an exorbitant price for a physician's services must be honored, "since he has sold him his wisdom, and it is priceless".]

The *Ketzos Ha'Choshen* (*siman* 227 s.k. 1) disagrees, on two grounds. First, he notes that the ability to declare "*meshateh ani bach*" in the case of the fugitive and the ferryman is limited to where the fugitive has not yet paid, but where he has already done so, he is not entitled to a refund. Second, he suggests that it is limited to a hire, where there is a mere verbal commitment, but no *kinyan* (formal solemnization of a transaction). The right to claim *meshateh ani bach* does not apply where a *kinyan* has been made, even if the customer has not yet paid.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Plagues
2. Red Heifer
3. Songs
4. For Kaddish

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Started by Aharon
2. I'm not from a cut.
3. I killed fish.
4. I'm first.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 **Six** (For Mishna I am orders; in Mitzrayim I was babies; I am the week before Shabbos; for Shabbos I am challoos.)

#2 **Name/Sheim** (I call you; I am not shame; write me on your tests; I am this week's parsha.)

All children
13 and under
who answer a
"Who Am I?"
correctly will
be entered
into a raffle to
*Win a 3-D
Night Edition
Puzzle
of the
Empire State
Building*

*Congratulations to Isaac & Yael Chinn
and others for answering last week's questions correctly!*

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

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

THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
MARCH 6th.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Men's Programming:

Thursday
Nights
with
GWCK

Yesodei Hatorah: Talmud Skills Building with Rabbi A. Sussman
8:15 PM @ YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave.

Inspired Avodah: Developing Spiritual Pathways through the Parsha and Alei Shur with Rabbi Y. Scher
8:15 PM @ YISE

Shivti: In - Depth Halachic Topics with Rabbi Y. Zakem and Rabbi Y. Grossman
8:15 PM (Mon. - Thurs.) @ YISE

Michtav Me'Eliyahu with Rabbi Y. Sternman - 8:15pm @GWCK, 10900 Lockwood Dr.

Sugyos B'Iyun Chaburah with Kollel Scholars - 9:00pm (Mon. & Thurs.) @ GWCK