



Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Our Personal Exodus

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Scholar

"Remember this day on which you left Egypt, from the house of slaves" (13:3)

In the aftermath of the deliverance from Egypt, after Pharaoh and the Egyptians rush the Jewish people out of the land, Moshe exhorts the Jewish people to constantly remember the redemption from Egypt. The Sages understand that this commandment requires us to recall the Exodus explicitly every day; a directive that we fulfill when we recite the third paragraph of the Shema, which ends with the verse: "I am Hashem your G-d who took you out of Egypt."

This, however, isn't the only commandment whose purpose is tied to remembering the exodus. Tzitzis, Tefillin, Mezuzah, Shabbos, and honest business dealings, among others, are also commandments that serve to remind us about G-d's delivering us from the bondage in Egypt. What is so significant about remembering the exodus that we need so many disparate commandments to remind us of this event?

The Nesivos Shalom explains that the exodus was not just a one-time event that occurred to the Jewish people as a whole; rather, each individual can have his own personal exodus. Every person has their own challenges that can be holding them back from fulfilling their goals and potential. Sometimes it seems that we're shackled and "enslaved" to our limits and we can't go beyond ourselves to strive to become better individuals. The message of the exodus from Egypt was and is that we do have it within us to free ourselves from those confines. The salvation of the Jewish people from the servitude in Egypt symbolizes that every single Jew also has the ability to overcome the challenges and tests they face, day in and day out.

It is for this reason that there is such a plethora of references to the exodus. The Torah wants to drill home the point that the message of the exodus is applicable at all times. No matter the type of struggle we may encounter, the message to us is that we can definitely achieve success.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

Every firstborn in Mitzrayim shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the firstborn of the slave woman who is behind the millstone... (11, 5)

It was midnight and Hashem smote every firstborn in Mitzrayim, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was sitting in the dungeon... (12, 29)

When the Torah warns about the plague of the firstborn, it refers to the captive's firstborn as one who sits behind the millstone. However, when they were killed, the Torah refers to them as those who are sitting in the pit. Why did the Torah find it necessary to change their description?

PARSHA RIDDLE

And I shall pass through Mitzrayim on this night, and I shall strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt... (12, 12)

I and not a messenger. (Pesach Haggadah)

What halacha is derived from this statement?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: 1) The fifth cup represents the Final Redemption which will be heralded by Eliyahu. 2) The Sages debate if there is an obligation to drink a fifth cup. Since it is an unresolved dispute, which will be decided by Eliyahu (Teiku), the fifth cup is called the cup of Eliyahu (Vilna Gaon).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Bo contains the commandment of *pidyon ha'ben*. Elsewhere (*Bemidbar* 18:15), the Torah specifies that the right to perform the *pidyon* ceremony shall be the prerogative of Aaron's descendants.

Certain Jews are assumed (by themselves and by others) to be *kohanim*, i.e., descendants of Aaron. But what is our level of confidence in this status? This question is raised by numerous authorities, in a variety of *halachic* contexts. With regard to *pidyon ha'ben* in particular, R. Yaakov Emden strongly endorses the custom of "many *kohanim*" to return the *pidyon* money to the father after the performance of the ceremony, arguing that since the status of our *kohanim* is merely presumptive, but not authoritative, they have no right to keep the father's money. Additionally, he suggests that a father should ideally perform the *pidyon ha'ben* ceremony multiple times, with "all the *kohanim* that he is able to find", since he may thereby encounter an authentic *kohein*, and that a *pidyon* should be performed even for the son of a female *kohein* or *levi* (but not for the son of a male *kohein*), due to the general uncertainty about the parents' status (*Sheeilas Yaavetz* 1:155). [*Shut. Chasam Sofer YD* end of #291 cites R. Emden's responsum and tersely remarks that he disagrees, but does not elaborate further].

There is a tradition that the Gaon of Vilna performed a *pidyon ha'ben* upon himself (despite his father having performed the ceremony for him in the normal fashion), and some understand that this was due to the concern articulated by R. Emden: the unreliability of our presumptions of *kehunah* status. Some report hearing that he performed the ceremony with a member of the Rapoport family, since the *kehunah* status of that family was particularly reliable (*Aliyos Eliyahu os* 6); others record a tradition that it was with a grandson of R. Naftali Ha'Cohen (author of the *Smichas Chachamim*) "who had a written genealogical record going back to Eli Ha'Cohen" (*Hilchos Ha'Gra U'Minhagav* p. 193).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. Wrap me
2. To remember the exodus
3. One for one
4. Four for one

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am the first.
2. I am the sixth.
3. I am not an Altima.
4. Hachodesh heralds me.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 *Ten* (Plagues; Red Heifer; Songs; for Kaddish)

#2 *Plague of Blood* (Started by Aharon; I'm not from a cut; I killed fish; I'm first.)

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

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

Upcoming Events

"Fertility Treatments: Playing G-d or Implementing G-d's Wishes": A DC Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman. Jan 22, Noon - 12:45 pm at Morgan Lewis. Complimentary lunch served, RSVP required to info@gwckollel.org.

GWCK/YISE Shabbaton with Baruch Levine! ✨ Thought-provoking lectures led by our Kollel scholars ✨ Elegant, enjoyable catered Friday Night family dinner (reservations required) ✨ Open to all: mini-learning sessions AND a delicious dessert buffet and ruach-filled Oneg Shabbos immediately following the Friday night seudah ✨ Inspiring tefillos (Friday night and Shabbos) and zemiros by special guest baal tefillah and singer Rabbi Baruch Levine

For more info visit gwckollel.org