



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

A Window to the World

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

As part of His instructions for how to build the *teivah* (ark), G-d commanded Noach to make a "tzohar." (6:16) Rashi cites two explanations for the word *tzohar*: "Some say it was a window and some say it was a beautiful stone that provided light." The Chizkuni reconciles these two opinions. He explains that the instruction was to make a window opening and to place a translucent stone in it. That would allow light to pass through but keep out the rain water.

The Menachem Tzion offers a homiletic explanation. Although Noach was a *tzaddik* (righteous individual) in his own right, he was unsuccessful in influencing others to improve their ways. The window on the *teivah* was to serve as a reminder for Noach, and for us, that a person can't just live in a box without looking outward. Many of us possess untapped potential to inspire and influence others around us. Oftentimes, however, sitting confidently and comfortably in our "*teivah*," we fail to take advantage of our opportunities to positively impact those around us. The *tzohar* of the *teivah* serves to remind us that we must take heed of the spiritual needs of those we come in contact with.

The Talmud (Brachos 34a) states that one should not pray in a synagogue that has no windows. The reason for this is that windows remind us to include those outside of the synagogue in our prayers. May we all merit to see beyond ourselves, take notice of both the material and spiritual needs of those around us, pray for those needs and reach out with a helping hand and an inspiring word.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And Terach died in Charan... (11, 32)

Why did the Torah place the death of Terach before the departure of Avraham to Eretz Yisroel (which took place before Terach's death)? So that the matter should not be publicized to the public, because they would say that Avraham did not fulfill the obligation of honoring his father and abandoned him at an advanced age. (Rashi)

Is a person obligated to honor his father if he is a wicked person? No (Tosafos Yevamos 22b). Chizkiyahu dragged his father's bones on a bed of ropes, in an embarrassing manner, because his father was a wicked person (Rashi Sanhedrin 47a).

If there is no obligation to honor one's wicked father, what would be wrong if Avraham left Terach at an advanced age?

Parsha Riddle

Why do some have the custom to repeat Adon Olam after davening?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which creature 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 Levyoson (leviathan).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Noah (9:5), Hashem warns Noah: "However, your blood which belongs to your souls I will demand." The rabbinic tradition understands this to include a prohibition against suicide, but a very terse and cryptic midrashic comment carves out an exception for circumstances such as those faced by King Saul (Bereishis Rabah 34:13), who committed suicide on the battlefield upon suffering a catastrophic defeat, out of fear that the Philistines would "come and stab [him] and make sport of [him]." (I Samuel 31:3-5; II Samuel 1:1-16)

There are numerous suggestions offered to justify Saul's suicide:

- The simplest explanation takes the Biblical text at face value, that it was justified by the fear of being tortured and "made sport of" (see Radak, Yefeh Toar).
- Some explain that Saul knew that he would die in the battle, since he had been told so by the prophet Samuel (ibid.).
- R. Shalom Shabazi explains that Saul had actually already been mortally wounded by an enemy arrow (Chemdas Yamim).
- One Tosafist school of thought apparently understands that Saul feared that he would succumb to torture and give in to temptation (i.e., violate the Torah), although an opposing Tosafist view interprets the midrash to actually consider Saul's suicide improper (Tosafos al Hatorah, and cf. Semak and Hagahos Semak mitzvas aseh #3).
- Maharshal proposes that had Saul been captured alive and tortured and "made sport of", the Jews would have likely found this intolerable and been unable to resist mounting a rescue effort, which would have resulted in the death of "many tens of thousands of Jews"; Saul therefore killed himself to forestall this eventuality, particularly in light of the fact that his death had been prophetically foretold (Yam Shel Shlomo Bava Kama 8:59).
- An alternate suggestion of Maharshal is that the torture, humiliation, and execution of the king anointed by Hashem would have constituted a desecration of the Divine name.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was the "refugee."
2. The reason I was saved made Moshe afraid.
3. I came from the "fallen."
4. My knockdown was at the 30 mark.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was "pitched" all over.
2. My smaller version was not smelly.
3. I am not the Aron Kodesh.
4. I topped Ararat.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Sun (I ruled with another, I am not a male child, 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 caused pain.

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

WIN a
DIXIT
Game



THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
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