



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

The Torah's Promise

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

"When I bring them to the land flowing with milk and honey that I promised their ancestors, they will eat, be satisfied, and live in luxury. They will then turn to foreign gods and worship them, despising Me and violating My covenant. When they are then beset by many evils and troubles, this song shall testify for them like a witness, since it will not be forgotten by their descendants..." (31:20-21)

On the last day of Moshe Rabbeinu's life, as he prepares to take leave of his people, he warns them of the potential dangers they will face in the land of Israel. Tasting success and wealth could lead to a weakening in their service of Hashem and toward idol worship. Hashem would act angrily to this and punish them to bring them to their senses. Yet, despite the suffering they may have to endure, Hashem promises that the Torah will never be forgotten from the Jewish people. (See Rashi v. 21)

In our history, we have experienced periods of great persecution and suffering which one would expect would cause a sharp decrease in Torah study and observance of the Mitzvos. It would seem that by now the Jewish people should have lost their connection to Torah and become absorbed into the nations around them. But Hashem promises this will not happen.

Rav Pam zt"l notes that we can see how this promise was fulfilled following the Holocaust, when a thousand years of Jewish life in Eastern Europe was wiped out in but a short time. Some survivors might have thought that Torah-life was over and could never be rebuilt. Yet, Hashem's eternal promise has been fulfilled, and we ourselves are witness to an amazing revival of Torah learning and living.

This should serve to strengthen our Emunah, our faith, that every word of the Torah is true and every prophecy will be fulfilled in its entirety. As we begin a new year of Torah and Mitzvah observance and strive for a complete repentance for our past shortcomings, let this concept strengthen us for the challenge ahead.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a Gmar Chasimah Tovah!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

On Yom Kippur a gravely ill person should eat less than a qualifying amount of food (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 618:6).

The Rambam rules that eating less than a qualifying amount of food is Biblically forbidden even if it does not subject one to punishment by the courts (Rambam *ma'acholos asuros* 14:1). Eating food in an abnormal manner, however, is not forbidden (Rambam *ma'acholos asuros* 14:10).

Why do we rule that a gravely ill person should eat less than a qualifying amount of food? He has still committed a transgression. It would seem more appropriate to have him eat the necessary food in an abnormal manner (as described in the Rambam), in which case there wouldn't be any transgression at all!

Parsha Riddle

What connection is there between Shavuos and Yom Kippur?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

On which date was the world created?

Answer: Rabi Eliezer: 25th of Elul. Rabi Yehoshua: 25th of Adar. (Ran on Maseches Rosh Hashana)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Vayelech (31:10-13) contains the commandment of "*hakhel*":

At the end of seven years, at the time of the Sabbatical year, during the Succos festival, when all Israel comes to appear before Hashem, your G-d, in the place that He will choose, you shall read this Torah before all Israel, in their ears. Gather together (*hakhel*) the people – the men, the women, and the small children, and your stranger who is in your cities – so that they will hear and so that they will learn, and they shall fear Hashem, your G-d, and be careful to perform all the words of this Torah.

Rambam rules:

It is a positive commandment to gather together the entire Jewish people ... and to read so that they hear passages from the Torah that encourage them to perform *mitzvos* and strengthen them in the true faith...

When would they read? On the day following the first day of the holiday of Succos which is the first day of *chol ha-moed* of the eighth year. The king would read so the people would hear...

From which passages in the Torah should he read? He starts from the beginning of the *chumash*: "These are the words..." until the end of the passage *Shema*. He then skips to the passage *ve-hayah im shamo*, and then skips to the passage *asair te-asair*. He then reads from that passage in order until the end of the blessing and curses, i.e., until the phrase: besides the covenant He established with them in Choreb where he concludes." (*Hilchos Chagigah* 3:1-3)

The *Sefer ha-Chinuch* (612) qualifies that this *mitzvah* applies only when "Israel is (resident) upon its land," and this *mitzvah* is not formally practiced in contemporary times, although it is unclear exactly why not. Some explain that the *mitzvah* absolutely requires a Jewish king, although others deny that this is an essential requirement. Others maintain that it requires the existence of the Temple in Jerusalem, and is contingent on the holiday pilgrimages of the Jewish people to the Temple (*aliyah la-regel*), although others suggest that it may be possible to conduct the Torah reading elsewhere in Jerusalem (see *Shut. Mishneh Halachos* 17:234).

Some rabbinic thinkers actually did urge that a form of *hakhel* be practiced even today (the Aderes [in *Zecher le-Mikdash*] and the Lubavitcher Rebbe), although others staunchly opposed this idea (the Chazon Ish – see *Mishneh Halachos* *ibid.*).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for a minyan.
2. I am for confessions (on the day).
3. I am for commandments.
4. I am for fingers.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for Shema.
2. I am for Shem Hameforash.
3. I was on the death-bed.
4. I am the angels' secret.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Sarah Immeinu (Yehoshua grew from me, I was the merit for Esther, I was the first of four, I was to be listened to.)

#2 Shofar (I will be for Moshiach, I am for inauguration, I am for repentance, I cause Hashem to move.)

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Greater Washington Community Kollel wishes all of its friends, supporters, participants, and the entire community, a Gmar Chasimah Tovah!
Kollel Classes will resume the week of Oct. 23.