



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

### This Land is Our Land

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

In Rashi's very first comment on the entire Torah he quotes the following question and answer in the name of "Rav Yitzchak." Why was it necessary for the Torah to begin with an account of the creation of the world rather than with the first *mitzvah*, a practical instruction for how we are to conduct ourselves? *It is for the reason alluded to in the verse in Tehillim (111:6) "He declared to His people the strength of His works (i.e. He gave an account of the work of Creation), in order to give them the inheritance of the nations." For should the nations of the world say to Israel, "You are robbers, because you took by force the lands of the seven nations of Canaan", Israel may reply to them, "All the earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He; He created it and gave it to whom He pleased. When He willed He gave it to them, and when He willed He took it from them and gave it to us."* In other words, by teaching us that G-d created the world, the Torah affirms the Jewish nation's right to the Land of Israel, since G-d, Who created and owns everything, gave it to the Jewish nation.

Rav Yosef Salant (Be'er Yosef, Parshas Shelach) questions the logic behind this argument. No nation can successfully conquer another nation without G-d allowing it to happen. Couldn't any nation that conquers another land claim "*When He willed He gave it to them, and when He willed He took it from them and gave it to us?*" Couldn't the Greeks, the Romans, the Turks, and every other nation that ever took possession of the Land of Israel make the same claim?

Rav Salant answers that when a nation conquers the land of another under natural circumstances and warfare, this does not indicate that G-d has *given* them the land – only that G-d has allowed them to possess it at the moment. Had the Jewish nation conquered the Canaanite nations in such a fashion, we would not have proof that G-d had *given* it to us. The Jewish nation, however, did not conquer the land naturally – they were accompanied by open miracles of G-d. This was a clear indication that G-d was *giving* them the Land of Israel.

This truth has only been reaffirmed in the modern State of Israel. The continued survival of the Jewish people in the 75-plus years since the State's inception has come about through countless miracles. These miracles serve as a reminder that G-d has *given* us this land – not just allowed us to possess it at the moment.

When the nations of the world (and sadly some of our fellow Jews) challenge our right to the Land of Israel, we must be ready with a response proving our right to the land. Will they accept our claim? Probably not. But perhaps our response is not meant to convince them of our right but rather to remind ourselves. As the verse states, "*He declared to His people the strength of His works.*"

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**"Of every tree of the garden you may eat" (2, 16)**

"From every tree" you may eat but not from stolen items. (Sanhedrin 56b)

**When a man among you brings an offering to Hashem (Vayikra 1, 1).**

Why does the Torah refer to man as Adam? To teach us that just like Adam did not bring a korban from stolen items because everything was his; so too, one should not bring a korban from stolen items. (Rashi)

If everything in the world was Adam's and the concept of stealing didn't apply, why did Hashem warn him not to steal food for eating purposes?

### Parsha Riddle

**Which creation was given the opportunity to live the longest?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

**Last week's riddle:**

**Which mitzvos does a person perform with his or her entire body?**

**Answer: Purifying oneself in a Mikvah and the Mitzvah of Sukkah**

## HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Bereishis (4:23-24), the Torah relates:

And Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, give ear to my speech: Have I slain a man by my wound and a child by my bruise? If Cain suffered vengeance at seven generations, then Lamech at seventy-seven!

The *midrashim* and commentators offer a variety of interpretations of this mysterious exclamation of Lamech; Rashi cites the following from the *Tanchuma*:

**Hear my voice.** For his wives separated from him because he had killed Cain and Tubal-Cain, his own son. Lamech was blind and Tubal-Cain used to lead him. The latter saw Cain and thought him to be an animal. He therefore told his father to draw the bow, and thus Lamech killed him. As soon as he learned that it was his forefather Cain, he smote his hands together, struck his son between them and so killed him too. His wives thereupon separated from him, and he endeavored to appease them.

**If Cain suffered vengeance at seven generations.** In the case of Cain who killed with premeditation the punishment was suspended for him until the seventh generation, in the case of myself who slew inadvertently does it not necessarily follow that it should be suspended for me until many seven generations?

The very first *parashah* in the Torah thus contains references to three acts of homicide: Cain's murder of Abel, and Lamech's accidental killings of his ancestor Cain and his son Tubal-Cain.

Lamech's argument that he was not culpable for his homicides since they were inadvertent – in modern terminology, they constituted involuntary manslaughter rather than murder – is echoed in two *halachic* responsa dealing with accidental killings by firearms. R. Moshe Isserles and R. Meir Eisenstadt both rule that the rigorous penance traditionally prescribed for the sin of murder was not necessary in the cases they discuss, since the perpetrators were not really at fault in their cases. R. Isserles nevertheless prescribes for the perpetrator in his case what he considers to be a relatively mild (!) penance of exile for a year and a course of fasting, weeping, and the recitation of *vidui* (confession) and supplications (*Shut. Rema* 37). R. Eisenstadt is more lenient, since he considers the perpetrator in his case to have been even less at fault than the one in R. Isserles's case (*Shut. Panim Meiros* 1:85).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. Two Mondays and a Thursday.
2. Holiday desecration caused me.
3. Some fast for me.
4. Pray for sick children.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I am two.
2. I am with or in.
3. I begin the beginning.
4. I sound like a house.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Arba Minim (The 4 Species)** (I am for your heart, I am for your lips, I am for your spine, I am for your eyes.)

**#2 Schach** (Earthly produce, I must be detached, Mostly shady business, I must be made.)

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