



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Waiting For That Moment

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

"It is a night of *shimurim* (watching) for Hashem, to take them out of Egypt" (13:17)

The Torah refers to the night that Hashem brought the Jewish people out of Egypt as a night of "*shimurim*." The root of the word *shimurim* is *shin-mem-reish* – ש.מ.ר which means watching or waiting. The expression that the night of the Exodus is a night of *shimurim* suggests that Hashem had been carefully watching and waiting for the most appropriate time to take the Jewish nation out of their bondage. This actually implies that there was no fixed time for the redemption; had there been, Hashem would simply have redeemed them when that time came, instead of waiting to see if any given moment would be the appropriate time.

Based on this, Rav Pam points out that the four hundred years of exile and servitude that Hashem had foretold to Avraham was not inflexible. Under certain conditions, the time could be shortened. This is why Hashem "watched" for the most auspicious time. Since there was a possibility that they would be ready to be redeemed sooner, Hashem did not simply wait for the four-hundred-year deadline.

Just as the Egyptian exile was flexible, the duration of our current exile is not fixed. It is in our power, and our obligation both as a people and as individuals, to make ourselves worthy to bring the redemption in the near future. May Hashem bring it soon, speedily in our days.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Please speak in the ears of the people: Let each man request of his fellow... silver vessels and gold vessels. (11:2)

The B'nei Yisrael carried out the word of Moshe, they requested from the Egyptians silver vessels, gold vessels and garments. (12:35)

B'nei Yisrael were commanded to ask the Egyptians for vessels. Why did they ask for garments? Furthermore, B'nei Yisrael merited the redemption because they kept their dress code, and did not adopt the Egyptian one. Why would they now want their clothing?

Parsha Riddle

How does the name of the parsha hint at its content?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Which two plagues were not completed in Mitzrayim?

Answer: The remainder of the Barad (Hail) fell in the days of Yehoshua and some is being saved for the War of Gog and Magog (Midrash Rabba). One day of Choshech (darkness) was saved for the Yam Suf (Midrash Rabba).

HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Bo* (12:15), the Torah commands: "For a seven-day period shall you eat matzos." Several verses later (v. 18), it commands: "In the first [month], on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening shall you eat matzos, until the twenty-first day of the month in the evening." Based on a hermeneutical analysis of various other Biblical formulations of the commandment to eat matzah, however, the Talmud (*Pesachim* 120a) concludes that throughout Passover, eating matzah is "optional" – i.e., while one certainly cannot eat chametz, one need not eat matzah and may subsist on other foods, whereas on the first night, at the seder, eating matzah is obligatory.

Despite the Talmudic characterization of eating matzah throughout Pesach as "optional," various authorities maintain that one who does so fulfills a *mitzvah* (*Chizkuni* 12:18 [see *Chasam Sofer* YD 191]; *Ma'aseh Rav* 185; *Aruch ha-Shulchan* OC 475:18). The Maharil (*Hilchos Succos*), however, does not consider eating matzah throughout Pesach to be a *mitzvah*. In response to the question of why a blessing is not recited whenever one eats matzah throughout Pesach, just as one is recited whenever one eats in a succah throughout Succos, the Maharil explains that unlike eating in a succah throughout Succos, there is actually no *mitzvah* to eat matzah throughout Pesach.

Regardless of whether eating matzah throughout Pesach is considered a *mitzvah*, the nearly unanimous *halachic* consensus is that a blessing is only recited at the Seder (as assumed by the Maharil). The Maharsham records that some people (following the guidance of a certain individual "who was called a *tzaddik*") did indeed recite a blessing upon matzah throughout Pesach, but he strongly rejects this custom (*Shut. Maharsham* 1:209). The *Sdei Chemed* (*Chametz u-Matzah* 14:10) records that while in Jerusalem (the city of his birth) and "a great city of scholars" (presumably Constantinople, based on his biography), a blessing was only recited on matzah on the first two nights of Pesach, "in this city" (Kara-Su-Bazar [modern day Bilohirsk], Crimea), some recited a blessing throughout Pesach, and some throughout the first two days of the holiday. He was quite perplexed by these customs, and corresponded with a number of the leading scholars of the day on the matter, including R. Yosef Zechariah Stern, R. Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin (the Netziv), and R. Shlomo ha-Cohen of Vilna.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I threatened Pharaoh.
2. I am called a makka.
3. I cause fasting.
4. I cause redeeming.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am square, but not for your credit card.
2. I have you tied up.
3. I contained Hashem's name.
4. I am for between the eyes.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Dam/Blood (I am one of the seven, I was for the doorposts, I was the first of ten, I am not dumb.)

#2 Shchin/Boils (I caused people to be boiling in the winter, I was from ash, I was for man and animal, I blossomed but I am not a flower.)

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