



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Horsepower

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

"To the steeds of the chariots of Pharaoh, I have likened you, my beloved." (Shir Hashirim 1:9)

With the Egyptian army bearing down on the Jewish people, G-d splits the Yam Suf (Sea of Reeds) allowing the Jewish people to traverse on dry land. After the Egyptian army enters the Yam Suf, G-d returns the water to its original state drowning the Egyptians as well as their horses and chariots.

In the first chapter of Shir Hashirim (Song of Songs), Shlomo Hamelech (King Solomon) makes a seemingly strange comparison when he likens the Jewish people in G-d's eyes "to the steeds of the chariots of Pharaoh." What is the nature of this praise that compares us to the Egyptian horses?

Rav Chaim of Volozhin explains that this verse is referencing the tremendous influence that our actions have in impacting both the spiritual realms and the physical world around us. The Midrash (Shemos Rabbah 23) teaches us that although normally a rider has control of his or her horse, at the Yam Suf, the horses seized control and drove their riders into the sea. In a similar vein, although G-d is "*rochev shamayim* - rides on the heavens" (Devarim 33:26), it is "*b'ezrecha* - with your help." He cedes control to us and allows us to determine the direction of the world based on our observance of His *mitzvos*. In this light, as it relates to their ability to drive their drivers, it is indeed a great show of affection from G-d to be likened to Pharaoh's steeds.

This comparison serves as an important reminder of both the tremendous power and the tremendous responsibility that G-d has placed upon us. Every *mitzvah* that one fulfills, every *tefillah* that one prays, and every word of Torah that one learns makes an impact in the spiritual realms and reverberates to positively influence both our personal lives and the world at large. Negative actions make a negative impact. With this in mind, may each of us strengthen ourselves in our fulfillment of G-d's *mitzvos* and do our part in guiding the world in a positive direction.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Vayehi / And it happened when Pharaoh sent out the people... (13:17)

The word *Vayehi* connotes the occurrence of a misfortune (*Bamidbar Rabba* 3:17).

Why is Bnei Yisrael leaving Mitzrayim considered to be a misfortunate event?

Parsha Riddle

Which mitzvah in this parsha was fulfilled in Parshas Ki Seitzei?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

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

Answer: Bo – בּוֹ has a gematria of three which corresponds to the number of plagues in the parsha.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The Song of the Sea contains the phrase "*zeh keili, ve-anveihu.*" One interpretation of the word "*ve-anveihu*" offered by the Talmud is "be beautiful [*hisnaeh*] before Him with *mitzvos*: make before Him a beautiful *sukkah*, and a beautiful *lulav*, and a beautiful *shofar*, beautiful *tzitzis*, a beautiful Torah scroll ..." (*Shabbas* 133b). This is the imperative of *hidur mitzvah*.

There is a debate over whether *hidur mitzvah* applies to aspects of a *mitzvah* that are not visible (to human beings). Rabbeinu Tam rules that the parchment upon which a Torah scroll is written must be scored, in fulfillment of the imperative of "*zeh keili, ve-anveihu,*" whereas that upon which tefillin are written need not be scored, "since they are covered by leather, and beauty is not applicable to them" (*Tosafos Menachos* 32b s.v. *Ha moridin*). It would seem to follow that according to Rabbeinu Tam, there is no need for the writing of the tefillin to be attractive. The *Tur* (*OC* 32), however, directs that tefillin should indeed be written in an even or attractive hand (*ksav me-yushar*), and the *Beis Yosef* explains that this is due to the imperative of "*zeh keili, ve-anveihu,*" which implies that *hidur mitzvah* applies even to aspects of a *mitzvah* that are not visible. Similarly, the *Mordechai* declares that it is a *mitzvah* to beautify the interior as well as the exterior of tefillin (cited in *Darhei Moshe* beginning of *siman* 32).

A fascinating debate related to the above discussion occurred in the course of the great controversy over the mikvah of the Italian city of Rovigo in the early seventeenth century. Some had argued that even if the mikvah in its current configuration was valid, insofar as it was possible to reconfigure it in a more ideal fashion, it was obligatory to do so due to the imperative of "*zeh keili, ve-anveihu.*" The Venetian rabbi R. Yehudah Leib Saraval, however, rejected this argument, on the grounds that the imperative of "*zeh keili, ve-anveihu*" is limited to aesthetic appearance, and with regard to mikvaos, all that matters is their effectiveness, and as long as they are *halachically* valid, there is no difference between one mikvah and another (*Mashbis Milchamos* p. 49, and cf. *Sdei Chemed* Vol. 2 p. 348).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. A question is my name.
2. I was Heaven sent.
3. I came in dew time.
4. I had a melt down

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am one of ten.
2. As of now there are nine of me.
3. This week I am a wall.
4. My last will be male.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Makkas Bechoros/Plague of the Firstborn (I threatened Pharaoh, I am called a makka, I cause fasting, I cause redeeming.)

#2 Tefillin (I am square, but not for your credit card, I have you tied up, I contained Hashem's name, I am for between the eyes.)

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