



The Greater Washington Community Kollel
**SHABBOS
 DELIGHTS**
 Sponsored by the Cypess Family Foundation

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

The Path to Mashiach

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Director
From our archives

Megillas Rus (The Book of Ruth), read on Shavuot, tells the story of Rus, a Moavite princess who converts to Judaism and ultimately becomes the great-grandmother of Dovid Hamelech (King David). After fleeing Israel because of famine, Avimelech, his wife, Naomi, and their two sons settle in the Land of Moav. After the untimely deaths of Avimelech and his sons, Naomi is left alone with just her two Moavite daughters-in-law, Rus and Orpah. Ready to return to Israel, Naomi is able to convince Orpah to remain behind, but Rus cleaves to Naomi and travels to Israel with her. Hungry and broke, Rus finds herself collecting charity in the field of Boaz, who takes notice and treats her with extra kindness. After overcoming a number of obstacles, Rus and Boaz marry and have a son, Oved. Oved will have a son named, Yishai, and Yishai will have Dovid, King of Israel.

The Nachlas Yosef asks a pointed question. Why did the Navi (prophet) feel the need to publicize that Dovid came from Rus? Additionally, the Torah considers the nation of Moav to have such low ethical standards that their males are not permitted to marry Jews even after conversion. By recording this story for posterity and reading it annually on Shavuot, we are simply reminding ourselves that there was nobody in Israel more fitting to produce the line of kingship in Israel than Rus the Moavite. Why is that necessary?

The Nachlas Yosef answers that the Navi is teaching us what is truly important. There is one thing upon which all hope for the world rests: *chessed* – acts of kindness. With great sacrifice, Rus accompanies Naomi back to Israel and helps support her. With great sacrifice, Rus agrees to marry Boaz, an older man, about which Boaz declares, "your latest act of kindness is greater than the first." (3:10) Boaz, in turn, treats Rus and Naomi with tremendous generosity. His agreeing to marry a Moavite convert, despite the associated stigma, shows great humility and sacrifice, particularly considering his wealth and position as a Torah leader. Such a union, steeped in acts of kindness and generosity, can produce a king of Israel and eventually the Mashiach.

The lesson of Megillas Rus is that the path to Mashiach is through acts of *chessed*. Not necessarily massive deeds that turn the world upside-down, but small personal acts of *chessed*. When each individual acts kindly towards their fellow, putting the needs of others before their own, then the entire world can be transformed. This was the path to producing the dynasty of the House of Dovid and this same path can, with G-d's help, bring about the coming of Moshiach Ben Dovid speedily in our days.

Wishing you a Good Yomtov and a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

The Sages taught: On the sixth day of the month of Sivan, the Ten Commandments were given to the Jewish people. Rabbi Yosi says: On the seventh day of the month. (Shabbos 86b)

According to R' Yosi, how could we celebrate Shavuos on the sixth of Sivan – the wrong calendar day?

Parsha Riddle

Name the 5 customs Ashkenazim have on Shavuos.

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

The leading tribes of the four encampments of the Jewish people were: Reuven, Yehuda, Yosef, and Dan. How did Yaakov Avinu hint in his brachos (in Parshas Vayechi) that they would be unique? Answer: These were the tribes whom he spoke to directly in second person. (Baal Haturim 2:2)

HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

From our archives

In Megilas Rus (4:7), it is recorded that: "Formerly, this was done in cases of redemption and exchange transactions to validate any matter: One would draw off his shoe (na'alo), and give it to the other. This was the process of ratification in Israel." The above translation (by ArtScroll) of "na'alo" as "his shoe" follows the usual meaning of na'al, but some maintain that the word here means "his glove." (Targum here; Bechor Shor Shemos 3:5)

While many have understood this verse as referring to the chalitzah ceremony described in parashas Ki-Seitzei (Antiquities of the Jews; cf. Abarbanel Devarim 25:5), this interpretation has almost no adherents within the rabbinic tradition, which understands it as a form of kinyan (a formal action that halachically ratifies a transaction) called chalipin or kinyan sudar, and includes a debate over who gave his shoe to whom (unlike with chalitzah, where the Biblical text is explicit that it is the woman who removes the man's shoe):

The verse is interpreted: "**Redemption**"; that is a sale. ... "**Substitution**"; that is the transaction of exchange. ... With regard to the phrase "**To confirm all matters; a man drew off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor,**" the *baraita* asks: **Who gave the shoe to whom? Boaz gave his shoe to the redeemer**, the closest relative of Elimelech, who had the right of first refusal to the land that Naomi, Elimelech's widow, was planning to sell. The redeemer was transferring that right to the land to Boaz, who was acquiring it by means of his shoe. **Rabbi Yehuda says: The redeemer gave his shoe to Boaz.** (Bava Metzia 47a).

The halachah follows the former view. Since the chalipin ceremony is described only in Rus but not in the Pentateuch, there is considerable dispute over whether it is a Biblical law or a rabbinic institution (see S'dei Chemed volume 2 pp. 406-07).

One notable exception to the traditional rabbinic consensus that the ceremony described here has nothing to do with chalitzah is Chizkuni, who explains ("according to the plain meaning of the text") that the chalitzah ceremony itself is really a form of chalipin, having to do with the transfer of the inheritance of the dead brother (perhaps a ratification of its relinquishment by the brother who is declining to perform yibum, since he would otherwise become his brother's sole heir!)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. We are "fence" days.
2. On us all may shave.
3. On us all purified themselves.
4. Get ready for the Torah.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I am weeks.
2. I am milky way.
3. You sleep less on me.
4. I am after seven sevens.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Degalim/Flags (We were from the funeral, We were for the camps, We flagged you down, We were grouped in three.)

#2 Sivan (I contain "weeks," They arrived on my head, I am third of ninth, "Did anyone see a van?")

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Greater Washington Community Kollel wishes all of its friends, supporters, participants, and the entire community, a good Yom Tov!