



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

After enduring G-d's wrath and the effect of the Ten Plagues, Paroh's arrogance and intransigence are finally broken. Humbled, he urges Moshe to leave Egypt and take his nation to their coveted freedom. The nation leaves Egypt and camps by the Yam Suf (Sea of Reeds). Paroh, however, regrets his decision to let Israel go and assembles his army to pursue his former slaves. Seeing the Egyptian army drawing near, the Jews become frightened and panicked, exclaiming to Moshe "it would have been better to serve in Egypt than to die in the wilderness" (14:12). Moshe placates them and assures them of G-d's imminent salvation.

The Ibn Ezra wonders why a nation of 600,000 fighting-age men would be so cowered. Why didn't they prepare themselves for battle to protect themselves and their families against the approaching enemy? He answers with a wondrous insight. The Jews were raised as slaves and conditioned to be submissive to their Egyptian masters. As such, they were not able to summon the courage to battle their erstwhile masters. It was this "slave mentality" and feeling of inferiority that precluded the Jewish nation from raising up arms against their oppressors.

Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz comments that this same phenomenon is prevalent in our everyday struggles. When we attempt to confront our bad habits or negative traits, we lose heart, remembering their "mastery" over us. We should rather contemplate the enormous reservoirs of strength and greatness within us, which leave us well equipped for these internal battles.

And of course, let us not forget the denouement of that famous encounter at the Yam Suf - "And on that day G-d saved the Jewish Nation from the hand of the Egyptians..."

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

Rabbi Menachem Winter

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

It was when Pharaoh sent out the nation... "Perhaps the nation will reconsider when they see a war, and they will return to Mitzrayim"... So Hashem turned the nation... Bnai Yisrael were armed when they went up from Mitzrayim (13:17 - 18).

Why does the Torah first refer to those who left as the "nation" and then change and refer to them as "Bnai Yisrael?"

PARSHA RIDDLE

How many months have something special on the fifteenth of the month? What are they?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last issue's riddle:

Pharaoh said to Moshe and Aharon, "Who and who is going? Moshe said, "With our youngsters and our elders we shall go" (10:8 & 9).

What was being prophetically hinted to here?

Answer: "Who and Who" refers to the two individuals who merited going into Eretz Yisrael – Yehoshua and Calev. "Our elders and youngsters" refers to the fact that only those above 60 and those below 20 at the time of the spies entered Eretz Yisrael.

TIMELESS WISDOM

They had faith in Hashem, and in Moshe, His servant (14:31).

The Bais Halevi was well-known for his incredible integrity. Every word that left his mouth was the height of veracity. When he was Rav in the city of Slutsk prior to accepting the rabbanus in Brisk, the beginnings of the Haskalah - Enlightenment - were taking root in the community. One day, a group of communal leaders came to him lamenting the fact that apostasy was beginning to seize the community. The Rav looked at them with serious eyes and said, "What do you expect? Truth always wins out." Incredulously, they asked, "What is the Rav saying? How can the Rav give credibility to kefirah, heresy?" The Rav looked them straight in the eyes and said, "I never said that they were correct. No! They are absolutely wrong in their beliefs, but they are sincere and truly believe in what they expound. Their heresy is founded in truth. They are true apostates! Therefore, they are successful. Regrettably, many of those among us are not really true yirei Shomayim, G-d-fearing. They are only acting outwardly as devout and pious Jews, but internally they do not really believe."

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was unknown.
2. I was a test.
3. I am remembered with Challah.
4. Don't keep me around.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am said daily.
2. I indicate resurrection.
3. My prophecy was greater than the Prophets.
4. I appear as a wall.

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

#1 Arbeh/Locust (I am number 8, not 4; I was in a pickle, I defined the borders; we finished the leftovers.)

#2 Makas Bechoros (Time sensitive; I cause fasting and redemption; I was deadly.)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Meir Schwartz & Malka Schwartz

To see the complete list of those who answered correctly, visit the Kollel website.

Please see next week's issue for the answers to this week's questions.

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to

Win a
500 LEGO GIFT CARD!

Please visit www.gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

The next raffle will be January 21st

Answer as many as you can because each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chance of winning!

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