



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives. The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L, in 2011.

A final thought on Pesach as we sit down together at the Seder and endeavor to experience the joy of our freedom. The Seder formally begins at nightfall, forty-five minutes after sunset. This would place the onset of the Seder about 8:30 PM. It appears, initially, to be quite a late hour to begin, especially if our objective is to engage our children in the rich history of events from Abraham, our patriarch, through our Exodus. Why not begin at a more convenient, earlier hour when all participants will remain fresh to enjoy the Seder to its fullest?

The answer is given by the author of the Haggadah itself, in the unit which speaks of the fourth son, who does not have the capacity to formulate his question. The verse quoted there reads: "And you should tell your child on that day, saying 'Because of this did G-d take us forth from Egypt'". The author comments on the words of the Torah "because of this"; this, meaning that one can only recount the events of the Exodus when there is matzah and marror (bitter herbs) before you. The Exodus can only be told at a time when the matzah and marror can be eaten. Jewish law requires that matzah and marror can only be eaten after nightfall. The mere story alone without the accompanying commandment of eating the matzah and marror does not suffice.

As such the message to our children at this late hour is specific and instructional. Jewish continuity is the product of thought and deed. Tell them we wait, for without doing the mitzvot, the commandments of the evening, the story of the Exodus will fall on deaf ears. Similarly, as the Jews prepared to leave Egypt, G-d commanded His Jewish children to do two mitzvot: sacrifice the lamb, the god of the Egyptians and circumcise themselves. The bloods, commingled, were placed on the doorpost of every Jewish household. G-d, observing the performance of these commandments, enacted with sacrifice and love, passed over the Jewish homes. (Hence is the name of the Holiday - Passover.) The condition for our redemption was the active performance of these commandments.

If we are to imbue our sons and daughters with a spirit and a passion for Judaism, it will require an appreciation and a commitment that we are more than the People of the Book. We must put our muscle to our brain. There must be observance of Jewish law and tradition, with kashrus in our daily diet and Shabbos in our weekly activity. So, when we sit at the late hour this Monday evening, ponder and transmit the true message of freedom. There is no freedom without responsibility and no privilege without commitment.

Wishing all my dear readers of the Torah Minute a chag kasher and sameach - a kosher and joyous Festival.

Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Kalman Winter

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

You were bare, and I passed over you and I saw you wallowing in your blood, and I said, "through your blood you will live..." (Haggada shel Pesach)

Hashem said, "The time has arrived for me to fulfill the promise I made to Avrohom, that I will redeem his sons, but they are bare from mitzvos, therefore I will give them two mitzvos – bris mila and korban pesach – that they circumcised themselves that night" as it says, "Wallowing in your blood" (Mechilta Bo).

A korban pesach that is slaughtered for an uncircumcised person is invalid (Pesachim 61a).

If Bnai Yisroel were only circumcised that night, how could they have had a korban pesach slaughtered on their behalf? They were uncircumcised at the time of shchita.

PARSHA RIDDLE

What does the number 15 and the seder have in common?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last issue's riddle:

When did Tzoraas come as a reward instead of a punishment?

Answer: On the homes in order to reveal the hidden treasures.

TIMELESS WISDOM

The dear ones of Yerushalayim would escort the goat and the designated man (Yoma 6: 8).

Why were these people given the title "Dear ones"? The designated man would walk alone until the cliff. No one should have wanted to accompany him because during his trek with the goat to the cliff all of the avoda in the Bais Hamikdosh was being performed. Yet, those who were willing to give of themselves in order to assist their fellow Jew who was in need, entitles them to the title "Dear ones" of Yerushalayim.

In Radin, there was a young man who, as a young boy, had fell ill. Although he fully recovered, there were some permanent external signs of the illness that made it difficult for him to find a shidduch (match). Year after year, he would totally involve himself in the sea of the gemora (Talmud), burying his sorrows in a deep sugyo (Talmudic topic).

One year after Maariv on Yom Kippur night, after everyone left the Bais Medrash to go to sleep, this young man was left alone in the dark room. He was feeling very depressed. Suddenly, he heard that he was not alone; the Chofetz Chaim had come to visit him. Not to give words of comfort – the young man had heard enough of those – but rather to commiserate. The Chofetz Chaim began to enumerate all of the difficulties he himself experienced as a young boy. How he had been orphaned at a young age, and was left to fend for himself in the big city where he learned. How he had to run away from the maskilim who were trying to snatch his soul, and how he had gone without food. So sat the Chofetz Chaim for hours on the holiest night of the year.

A man as holy as the Chofetz Chaim surely had more spiritual matters to attend to, but instead he spent it providing companionship to this downtrodden boy.

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. My mitzvah is to speak.
2. I am mentioned daily.
3. Praiseworthy for more.
4. I am not only for day.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. Don't confuse me with aliyo.
2. I was for the slaves.
3. I was sun baked.
4. I am not to find.

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

#1 Tzoraas (I could destroy your house and make you homeless; I could shave you and could ruin your clothes.)

#2 The anointment on the ear & thumb (I am for the ear, toe, and thumb; I was bloody and oily.)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Rabbi Biberfeld's 4th Grade Boys

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 super prize

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

The next raffle will be May 27th!

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

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

The Greater Washington Community Kollel wishes our friends, supporters, and the entire community a wonderful and joyous Pesach!