



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.***

Seven weeks from the start of the Pesach holiday, we find ourselves approaching the Yom Tov of Shavuos. This preparatory period is called the *sefirah*, meaning "counting." From the second day of Pesach, Jews around the world count 49 days, culminating on the day we received the Torah, Shavuos.

The genesis of this mitzvah — to count each day — originated over thirty-three hundred years ago. When the Jews left Egypt, Moshe informed the Nation of Israel that, in fifty days' time, they would receive the Torah on Mount Sinai. It would be the most glorious and influential day in the annals of mankind.

So significant and stellar was this impending milestone, and so deep was the yearning and anticipation of the momentous event, that the very holiday was called Shavuos, meaning "Weeks." This name refers to the seven weeks we count between Pesach and Shavuos and highlights the very underpinnings and foundation upon which our historical adherence to and reverence of the Torah is predicated.

Our reception of the Torah on that wondrous day of Shavuos was the climax of meticulous preparation and passion, spanning 49 days. The love, energy, and zeal with which we embraced Torah on that day are what have sustained the progeny of that great assemblage even to this very day. Embedded in the DNA of our *neshamos* (souls) is that latent passion for and love of Torah, expressed thousands of years ago and transmitted to all of our people until the end of time.

We need but believe in ourselves and in our Torah. As King Solomon so eloquently reminded us (Proverbs 4:2): "For I have given you a precious gift, my Torah do not forsake."

***Have a wonderful Shabbos and Yom Tov,
Rabbi Menachem Winter***

TABLE TALK

POINTS TO PONDER

Count the sons of Levi... every male from one month of age and up... (3:15)

From one month after they are out of the category of a neifel... as we see this tribe is counted from the womb. Yocheved was counted in the count of seventy people coming down to Mitzrayim, even though she was born as they crossed the border... (Rashi)

If the source to count the Leviim at a younger age is from Yocheved, they should be counted from when they are in the womb, or at least from birth. Why do we give the source as Yocheved, and then wait until the child is a month old to count them?

PARSHA RIDDLE

Besides Matan Torah, what other two famous things happened on Har Sinai?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How does the letter "vav" guarantee the coming of Moshiach?

Answer: Yaakov Avinu took the letter "Vav" from Eliyahu. Five times Eliyahu's name appears without a vav and Yaakov's appears with an extra vav, as a pledge that Eliyahu will ensure the coming of Moshiach.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In the censuses of *parashas Bemidbar* and *parashas Pinchas*, the population totals for almost all the tribes are multiples of one hundred, except for those of the tribe of *Gad* in the former census and the tribe of *Reuvein* in the latter. Several commentators assume that these figures are not exact, and that the Torah is rounding (*Meshech Chochmah* 3:16, *Tosefes Brachah* to *Bemidbar*). The earliest known proponent of this view, R. Yeshayah of Trani (cited in *Penei David*), provides two other Biblical examples of rounding: the Torah (*Devarim* 25:3) prescribes the punishment of a sinner to be forty stripes, but the Oral Tradition explains that only thirty-nine are actually administered, and the Torah (*Vayikra* 23:16) commands us to count fifty days between *Pesach* and *Shavuos*, but of course, we only count forty-nine.

The Rosh (at the end of *Pesachim*) asserts one other example of this latter sort of rounding, where a number one less than a multiple of ten is rounded up by one to the multiple of ten: the Torah (*Bereishis* 46:27) relates that "all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten" (but only sixty-nine are enumerated). This claim that the discrepancy can be understood as the product of rounding is problematic, however, as the same discrepancy is manifest with regard to the subtotal of thirty-three that the Torah gives for the descendants of Leah, while only thirty-two are enumerated. Here the idea of rounding is inapplicable, and we must seemingly resort to one of the other suggestions offered by the Talmud and the various commentators: the totals include Yocheved, who was born just they entered Egypt (but not earlier, and so is not mentioned in the earlier enumeration – *Bava Basra* 123a-b), or Yaakov himself (Ibn Ezra, as well as many of the Tosafists), or even Hashem Himself (*Da'as Zekeinim Mi'Ba'alei Ha'Tosafos*).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for three.
2. I am on the fence.
3. Get ready.
4. Purify yourselves.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I equal my kabalas mitzvos.
2. Conversion is learned from me.
3. Both of my husbands died.
4. My grandfather was stabbed in his stomach.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 Arachin (I am 50 and 30; I am 20 and 10; I am not less than a month; I am worth it.)

#2 Maaser Beheima (I am for ten; I could be for nine or eleven; I cause painting; single file line please.)

*The next raffle
is June 21st.*

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can – each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning.

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



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The Kollel wishes all of its supporters, participants, and the entire community a wonderful and joyous Shavuos!