



Greater Washington Community Kollel
**SHABBOS
 DELIGHTS**

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Not Just Another Rest Stop

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz

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In Parshas Masei, the Torah lists all of the 48 encampments that made up the Jewish People's 40-year journey from Egypt to the Land of Cana'an. It is clear, both from the verses of the Torah and the teachings of our Sages, that the Jews really could have traveled from Egypt to the Land of Cana'an with far fewer stops along the way. Why did Hashem have the Jews stop in so many places?

The *Ohr Hachaim* writes that the Jews needed to stop in all of these different places in order to gather the "sparks of holiness" that existed in each place. While the idea of gathering "sparks of holiness" is a very mystical concept, we may be able to understand it on a simpler level as meaning that each place provided a lesson for the Jews to learn, or an opportunity for spiritual growth.

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* commented on our Parsha that just as the Jewish People had 48 encampments in the desert, so too every Jew has "48 encampments" throughout his or her lifetime. The *Matnas HaLevi'im* suggests that in light of the above explanation of the *Ohr Hachaim*, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* can be understood to be saying as follows. Just as the Jewish People were brought to those precise places so that they could learn a very specific lesson and be afforded the necessary opportunity for spiritual growth, so it is with each individual.

It is easy to get caught up in the minutia of mundane life. It is often tempting to think of a challenging situation as something to "make it through" and "get over with." We must remember, though, that Hashem puts us into such situations for a purpose, and each challenge presents a profound opportunity for growth. Let us make sure that we are paying attention and that we take advantage and make the most of these opportunities.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

POINT TO PONDER

Moshe spoke to the people, saying, "Arm men from among yourselves" (31:3).

The word 'men' means righteous men (Rashi).

Women do not wage war and therefore the posuk did not need to specify men. Therefore, Rashi says that the word "men" is extra and means that the people who are going to war should be righteous (Sifsei Chachamim).

The premise of the Sifsei Chachamim that women do not fight in war is qualified. Although women do not participate in voluntary wars, the Mishna (Sota 44b) says that a bride from under her chuppah does take part in a war which is a war for a mitzva. If so, the word 'men' is not extra!

PARSHA RIDDLE

What is a person allowed to harvest regularly during the Shemita year?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Is it possible for a living person to become tamei even though he didn't come in contact with anything tamei?

Answer: Yes - 1) If one entered a tent in which a dead body is lying. 2) The kohen who sprinkled the Red Heifer on a person who was tamei also became tamei, although he wasn't in contact with anything tamei.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Masei contains the laws of the blood avenger: the relative of a murder victim who avenges the murder by killing the murderer. The Ramban counts blood vengeance as one of the six hundred and thirteen commandments (*Hasagos Ha'Ramban al Sefer Ha'Mitzvos Le'Ha'Rambam, shichchas ha'esin* #13). The Rambam does not, although he does explicitly rule that it is a mitzvah (*Hilchos Rotzeach* 1:2); the commentators explain that he considers it a particular of the general commandment to impose capital punishment (*Zohar Ha'Rakia* #53, *Dina De'Chayei esin* #75).

Some authorities rule unequivocally that the law of blood vengeance remains in effect in contemporary times (*Shut. R. Yisrael Mi'Bruna* #265), although others argue that it does not, due to the impossibility of satisfying certain essential procedural formalities (*Shut. Chavos Yair* #146; *Urim Ve'Tumim siman 2 Urim s.k. 2; Ketzos Ha'Choshen ibid. s.k. 1*). Various medieval rulings, however, indicate that blood vengeance was still practiced then (*Shut. Ha'Rosh* 57:2; *Shut. Mahari Weil Dinin Ve'Halachos* #61; *Maharam Mirzburk s.v. Din de'goalei ha'dam*).

Various authorities maintain that beyond the actual direct killing of the murderer, the commandment of blood vengeance obligates the blood avenger to strive to avenge the murder (especially if committed by a non-Jew) by any means possible (such as the judicial system), even if this entails financial cost (*Piskei Maharash Mi'Lublin* #88, who notes that people are "very meticulous" to do so; *Shut. Tzemach Tzedek* #111).

Additionally, various authorities invoke the imperative of blood vengeance in support of the idea that we can tolerate a forensic autopsy of a murder victim if necessary to bring the perpetrator to justice (*Shut. Divrei Malkiel* 5:60, and cf. *Shut. R. Yedidiah Tiah Weil YD* #100). The normal prohibition of dishonoring a cadaver is overridden by the value of avenging the murder (cf. *Imrei Shefer* (Kalatzkin) end of #82; *Shut. Meoros Nasan* #79; *Gesher Ha'Chaim chelek 2 perek 27 os 3*).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

WHO AM I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am a traveling stick.
2. Inheritance and my promises is my law.
3. I am double.
4. I end with strength.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. A half was added to me.
2. To get me you need to lead the fight.
3. I had more pasture.
4. I am the other side.

Last Week's Answers:

#1 The words Sholosh Regalim (Sometimes I mean three times; from me you know 'only if you can walk; on me you see to be seen; I was in last week and this week.)

#2 The appointment of Yehoshua (I was a hands-on job; I was because of staying in the tent; I was a moonlike event; I was in front of everyone.)

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

Win



Science Inventions Kit!

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

Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

THE NEXT
RAFFLE WILL BE
AUGUST 22nd.

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

The Kollel summer intersession begins Monday, July 24th.

Stay tuned for exciting upcoming programming in the Elul Semester!