



# The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

### Inspiration Check

**Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects**

Parshas Masei begins with Moshe recounting the numerous travels of the Jewish people during their forty years in the wilderness. While enumerating their journeys, Moshe adds an assortment of details and anecdotes related to their travels. What is striking is the apparently random choice of episodes with seemingly minor consequence. While omitting or glossing over major events — the ten plagues, the splitting of the Sea of Reeds, and the giving of the Torah at Sinai — Moshe records in detail that the Egyptians were burying their dead when the Jewish people left Egypt and that, upon their arrival at Elim, the Jews found twelve springs and seventy date palms. Additionally, only once does the Torah chronicle the distance of any of the journeys, mentioning that the Jews traveled three days after crossing the sea to encamp at Marah. Why are these episodes singled out? What message is Moshe imparting to the Jewish people?

Rabbi Shimon Schwab explains that Moshe was highlighting the specific episodes in which the people had an opportunity to become uplifted and inspired — to be truly elevated — but did not rise to the occasion. While departing Egypt, the Jews saw the Egyptians burying their dead. As they usually embalmed their dead in service to their gods, this signified that the Egyptians had given up on those deities. Despite this example of outright rejection of the Egyptian gods, the Torah specifically states that the Jews camped “before Baal-zephon,” conveying some degree of acknowledgement of this Egyptian god. Just *three days* after witnessing the tremendous miracle of the splitting of the sea, the people displayed a lack of trust in G-d by complaining at Marah. Finally, after arriving in Elim and finding exactly twelve springs — one for each tribe — and exactly seventy date palms — one for each of the elders — the people found no inspiration in this and simply “camped there.”

Moshe’s lesson to the people — and to us — is twofold: First, we must allow ourselves to be inspired. We must take careful note of even the minor miracles and signs of G-d’s hand in our lives and allow ourselves to be moved by them. And when we experience such a moment of inspiration, whether from a miracle large or small, we should both internalize it and actualize it, by dedicating ourselves to new levels of service to G-d.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**Moshe sent them, a thousand from each tribe for the legion, them and Pinchas, son of Elazar, the Kohen, to the legion... (31, 6)**

The tribe of Levi was separated from the ways of the world. They do not wage war, as the rest of Bnai Yisroel ... (Rambam Shemita V'Yovel 13, 12)

Since Kohanim are from the tribe of Levi, why was Pinchas sent to war?

### Parsha Riddle

**How could someone be forced to go to the City of Refuge without having accidentally killed someone?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

**Last week's riddle:**

*In this week's parsha there is a hint that one should wake up a bit later on Shabbos morning than one wakes up during the week. Which verse alludes to this matter?*

**Answer:** Regarding the daily Tamid, it says, "In the morning". In regard to the Shabbos Tamid, it does not say "In the morning." This is a hint that one should wait until after the morning. (Rema Orach Chaim 281: 1)

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parshas Mattos (31:23), Elazar the Kohen commands the Jewish soldiers who had returned victorious from the battle against Midian, regarding the Midianite utensils that they had plundered: "everything that comes into the fire - you shall pass through the fire and it will be purified ... and everything that would not come in the fire, you shall pass through the water". The Talmud understands that the concern here is that the Midianite utensils had absorbed the 'taste' (taam) of non-kosher food that had been cooked therein, and would subsequently exude this taam into any kosher food cooked therein (Pesachim 44b). This is initially proposed as a Biblical basis for the principle of taam ke'ikkar (the presence of the mere taste of a food is equivalent to the presence of the substance of the food itself), although the Talmud, addressing the existence of an alternate view that the principle of taam ke'ikkar is merely Rabbinic, explains that Elazar's command may have been unique to this particular situation (chiddush). Medieval authorities, too, debate whether to accept the view that the principle of taam ke'ikkar is Biblical or the view that it is Rabbinic, but normative halachah ultimately rules that it is Biblical (Shulchan Aruch YD 98:2 [see Biur Ha'Gra #10]).

There is a further Talmudic debate over whether taam that injures, rather than improves, the taste of the food into which it is absorbed (nosein taam lifgam) is halachically significant; normative halachah follow the view that it is not (SA YD 103:1). Furthermore, there is a presumption that taam absorbed in a utensil degrades after twenty four hours (eino bas yoma - ibid. 103:5) to the point that it is subsequently nosein taam lifgam. Why, then, did the Midianite utensils pose a problem? The Talmud raises this question, and answers that "the Torah only prohibited a pot that is a bas yoma (within twenty four hours of its use)", and the prohibition of using non-kosher utensils that are not benei yoman is merely Rabbinic (Avodah Zarah 75b-76a). [It is unclear whether the Talmud really means that Elazar's injunctions were limited to those utensils that had actually been used within the previous twenty four hours - see Pleisi siman 103 s.k. 6, Haamek She'eilah 137:2.]

PRESENTED BY  
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I am tribes and travels.
2. I am double.
3. I am not an M&M.
4. I finish In the Wilderness.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I am not between Mitzrayim.
2. Nazir like.
3. I banned the band.
4. I go from fast to fast.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Tzelafchad (Mikosheish)** (Sticks and then stones killed me, Boycotted, I did not join Korach, I taught Shabbos importance.)

**#2 Elyahu Hatishbi** (I have a special chair, I did not die, I have my own Tish, I will escort Moshiach.)

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

Win a  
Ripstik!



Congratulations to Levi Bluming and others on answering last week's questions correctly!

Visit [gwckollel.org](http://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!**

THE NEXT  
RAFFLE WILL  
BE July 31<sup>st</sup>.

## KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

**Men and women of the community are invited to a special Tisha B'Av Kinot Program**  
**Mourning and Meaning with the Teachings of Rav Soloveitchik zt"l**

An elucidation of the Kinot based on the commentary of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik zt"l -  
presented by Rabbi Yosef Singer and scholars of the Greater Washington Community Kollel

**Sunday, July 22 - Shacharis: 8:00am - Kinot: 9:00am - Young Israel Ezras Israel of Potomac, 11618 Seven Locks Road**