



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

### Seek Truth to See Truth

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

***"And Hashem said to Moshe, come to Pharaoh and say to him...send my nation...for if you refuse...Hashem's Hand will be against your livestock...a very heavy pestilence. And Hashem did this thing the next day and all of the livestock of Egypt died...and Pharaoh sent and behold none had died from the Israelite livestock until one...and he did not send the people." (9:1-7)***

One of the plagues that *Hashem* brought upon the Egyptians was pestilence, through which *Hashem* destroyed Egypt's livestock. The Torah relates that in the aftermath of the plague, Pharaoh sent people to survey the land and determine if any Jewish livestock had died too. The surveyors reported that none of the Jewish livestock had died "until one". The Malbim explains the difficult expression "until one" to mean that there was, in fact, a single animal that died, which belonged to a man born of a Jewish mother and an Egyptian father. Prior to the giving of the Torah, such a person was considered to be an Egyptian. Nevertheless, Pharaoh considered him to be Jewish and used the death of a "Jewish" animal as "proof" that *Hashem* had not truly brought the plague of pestilence upon the Egyptians, but also upon the Jews. According to the Malbim, Pharaoh similarly grabbed at straws throughout all of the plagues, refusing to accept the clear and inescapable truth.

The lesson for us is simple. It is a common human foible to see things as we wish to see them. This allows us to arrive at the conclusions that are convenient for us. It is our job, however, to view matters objectively, arrive at the correct conclusions, and learn the appropriate life lessons. May we all strive to adopt this mindset and, in doing so, truly grow through life's experiences.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**The river shall swarm with frogs and they shall ascend and come into your house... and into your ovens... (7, 28)**

Where did Chananya, Mishoel and Azarya get the courage to throw themselves into a fiery furnace? They took a lesson from the frogs in Egypt. Even though frogs are not commanded to sanctify Hashem's Name, they jumped into the ovens for His sake. We, who are obligated to sanctify Hashem's Name, all the more so must jump into a fiery furnace to sanctify His Name. (Pesochim 53b)

Terach told Nimrod that Avraham had smashed his idols. Nimrod threw him into a fiery pit. (Rashi Noach 11, 28)

Why did Chananya, Mishoel and Azaryah need to learn the lesson of mesiras nefesh from the frogs? Why didn't they learn from Avraham that one must allow himself to be thrown into a furnace in order to sanctify Hashem's Name?

### Parsha Riddle

**What is the longest word in the Torah?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**Where do we find that wood ate something?**

**Answer: 147**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Three times in *parashiyos Shemos* and *Va'eira* (3:18, 5:3, 8:23), the Jewish people's request of Pharaoh to leave Egypt is described as a request for a trip of three days. Most commentaries assume that the Jews did not actually intend to return to Egypt after three days, and they offer various explanations and justifications of the disingenuous request, including the following:

- This was a shrewd way to request permission to leave (i.e., more likely to be granted by Pharaoh than a request to leave outright). (*Rashbam* 3:11)
- It was a devious plot to entice the Egyptians to chase them into the sea and then be drowned there. Had the Egyptians released them unconditionally, they would not have subsequently pursued them to recapture them; they only did so since they believed that the Jews had broken their promise to leave for only three days, and that they were scheming and acting dishonestly on their own initiative, and not following Hashem's instructions. (*Shemos Rabbah* 3:12, *Derashos Haran* #11)
- It was not an outright lie: the Jews merely stated that they intended a three-day trip – but they never explicitly said that they would return afterward! (*Ibn Ezra* 10:10)

R. Yosef Bechor Shor (14:1-4) explains that the Jews did indeed begin to return to Egypt after three days, but Pharaoh then pursued them with intent to attack them, and so they were forced to flee from him and were unable to return. Their failure to return to Egypt was therefore Pharaoh's fault, not their own.

The *halachah* certainly allows disingenuousness in order to forestall oppression. (*Nedarim* 27b-28a) Despite this, R. Yehudah Hachassid prohibits Jews who were seized by an oppressive ruler and released upon their oath not to flee the region from breaching their promise. Even if they annul their oath (via *hataras nedarim*), this will nevertheless result in the desecration of Hashem's name, and furthermore, the ruler will no longer trust Jewish oaths, and will refuse to parole any future captive of his. (*Sefer Chassidim* #423)

R. Yaakov Emden rejects the first argument, arguing that there will be no desecration of Hashem's name since even the non-Jewish ruler will understand that an oath taken under duress is void. (*Migdal Oz, Even Bochein pinah* 1 #114)

PRESENTED BY  
**RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH**

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I was first.
2. I am red.
3. I am not brainless.
4. I caused thirst.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. We got burnt.
2. We got swallowed.
3. We got baked.
4. We got hit.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Snake** (I pushed, I swallowed, I was copper, I was a sign.)

**#2 Aleph** (I am the first, This week I am quintuple, I am one, I am a thousand.)

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

**WIN a Claw Machine Arcade Game**



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 raffle has been postponed until after the shuls are reopened. We are still accepting entries to the raffle.*

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