



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"ל

Transformative Thinking

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

The students of the Yeshiva of Lomza, Poland once paid a visit to the Rabbi of the town, Rabbi Aharon Bakst. They found him pacing back and forth repeating the same question over and over: "What was Pharaoh thinking as he witnessed all the miracles and wonders of the plagues brought against him and his people?" Suddenly, the Rabbi stopped, turned to the students, and declared, "He wasn't thinking anything! Only someone who isn't thinking can witness such wonders and not be affected by them!"

The Torah is replete with commandments that commemorate the Exodus from Egypt – *zecher l'yetzias Mitzrayim*. The Ramban explains that the miracles that our ancestors witnessed in Egypt testify to three important tenets of belief in G-d. *First*, that G-d created the world and has the ability to alter creation on a whim. *Second*, that G-d is aware of everything that goes on in the world. *Third*, that G-d directly involves Himself in the world's affairs and didn't abandon the world to operate by happenstance.

The Ramban explains that when a person fulfills one of the *mitzvos* that commemorates the Exodus, whether it involves putting up a *mezuzah*, the *mitzvos* of *Pesach*, the *mitzvah* to mention the Exodus twice a day, or any of the many others, he or she testifies to these tenets, as well as to the great kindness G-d performed for our ancestors.

While performing the commandments themselves may serve as testimony to these tenets, their impact can be exponentially more profound if we consider what we are commemorating as we perform them. If we consistently recall the miraculous events witnessed by our ancestors and passed on from generation to generation, and contemplate their messages, our relationship with G-d and his Torah will be completely transformed. As Rabbi Bakst told the young students, "Only someone who isn't thinking can witness such wonders and not be affected by them!"

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

This month is the beginning of the months... (12, 2)

When Rosh Chodesh is two days, the first day of Rosh Chodesh is the end of the previous month, meaning the thirtieth day of the month, and the second day of Rosh Chodesh is the beginning of the new month. (Orach Chaim 427, 1)

Why do we refer to both days as Rosh Chodesh and celebrate them as such? The first day should be Sof Chodesh - the end of the month - without Hallel or any celebration?

Parsha Riddle

Where does "come" mean "go"?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the longest word in the Torah?

Answer: U'b'misharosecha – וְבַמִּשָּׁרֶתְךָ (Shemos 7:28)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Bo, Hashem repeatedly commands the Jewish people to eat matzah on Passover. The mishnah states that to fulfill this mitzvah, the matzah must be made from (one or several of) the following grains: *chitim*, *se'orim*, *kusmin*, *shifon*, and *shibolei shu'al*. There is general agreement that the first four are wheat, barley, spelt, and rye respectively, but the identity of the fifth has been the subject of great controversy. Many medieval scholars understood it to be oats (*avena sativa* - Rashi), although some interpreted it as *segala*, or two-rowed barley. (Aruch)

There is a long standing custom to make matzah exclusively from wheat. (Rema 453:1) The standard reason given for this preference is that wheat is the tastiest grain, and wheat matzah is therefore the ideal way to perform the mitzvah (Mishneh Berurah *ibid.* s.k. 2), although others explain that other grains become chametz faster than wheat, and their use should therefore be avoided. (Hagahos Maharsham to Orchos Chaim *ibid.*) But despite this custom, the practical ramifications of the debate over the identity of *shibolei shu'al* is still quite significant. It is difficult for people with wheat allergies or celiac disease to eat wheat matzos, and spelt (for the former) and oat (for both groups) matzos are produced as alternatives. Some authorities object to the consumption of any non-wheat matzah due to the concern for accelerated chumtza (Shut. Minchas Yitzchak 9:49), but even to the extent that non-wheat matzah is acceptable, some question the use of oat matzah (for the fulfillment of the mitzvah) in particular due to the dubiousness of its identification with *shibolei shu'al* of the mishnah.

The strong consensus of modern authorities does allow the use of non-wheat matzah in general, and even oat matzah in particular. R. Hershel Schachter, however, recommends that oat matzah should only be used for the fulfillment of the mitzvah in cases of great need, by one who cannot eat other grains, but not by one who is able to do so. (Grey Matter Vol. 1 p. 239; Shiur #4 in Pesach Topics, YUTorah Online)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I am number three.
2. I contain three.
3. I equal three.
4. I am not a decorative knot.

*WIN a
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Parsha Explorations with Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

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Thursdays – 9:00pm

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