



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

Total Dependence

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

After the Jewish people leave Egypt and reach the Yam Suf (Sea of Reeds), they look back and see the Egyptian army chasing after them. The Torah relates that the Jews cried out to Hashem that He should rescue them. Rashi explains that this was something they learned from the forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. Rashi elaborates that Avraham instituted the daily morning prayer, Shacharis, Yitzchak instituted the daily afternoon prayer, Mincha, and Yaakov instituted the nightly evening prayer, Maariv. Just as the forefathers prayed, so too the Jewish people prayed at that time.

The connection between the cries of the Jewish people and the forefathers' establishment of the daily prayers seems peculiar. The forefathers' daily prayers were not spontaneous pleas uttered out of desperation, as those expressed at the Yam Suf, but instead prayers recited on an ordinary, routine basis. Why does Rashi compare one to another?

Rav Yerucham Levovitz offers an astounding insight. One of the main ideas of prayer is to realize that our existence is entirely dependent on the kindness of Hashem. Anything and everything that we have is only because He gave it to us. If, for one instant, Hashem would stop sustaining us, we would cease to exist. In reality, our day-to-day life is no different from the situation facing the Jews at the Yam Suf. We are always facing an uncertain future, and we must beg and implore Hashem to have mercy on us and to continue sustaining us in the generous way that He has until now. The forefathers well understood the meaning and ramifications of prayer and therefore established daily prayers that recognize our total dependency on Hashem.

When the Jews left Egypt and felt a little too comfortable with their stability, Hashem wanted to remind them that they were dependent on Him for their security. He caused the Egyptians to chase after them. Their subsequent prayer was a recognition of their need for Hashem's assistance and sustaining power. In this way, they were following in the steps of the forefathers, who always prayed with a recognition that, without Hashem's assistance, they could not exist.

Let us follow that message from our ancestors and add true feeling and understanding to our own daily prayers.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And Bnei Yisrael saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. (14, 30)

The sea spit the Egyptians out, in order that Bnei Yisrael should not be afraid that they would rise from the sea at a different spot and return to attack them. (Rashi)

The Angels told Lot as he was running from Sodom, "Do not look behind you." (Vayeira 19, 17)

You (Lot) were wicked with them. Since the merit of Avraham is the only reason you are being saved, you are not worthy to see their destruction. (Rashi)

When Hashem wanted to destroy the Egyptians, the Angels made a fuss and claimed that both Bnei Yisrael and the Egyptians had served idols. (Zohar 2, 170b)

Bnei Yisrael were not worthy of being saved in their own merit. If so, why were they permitted to see the Egyptians dead?

Parsha Riddle

What is the similarity between a wall and this week's Parsha?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Where does "come" mean "go"?

Answer: The word "Bo" at the beginning of Parshas Bo

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Beshalach* (14:20), the Torah relates that on the eve of the splitting of sea, "one did not draw near the other all the night." While the simple reading of the verse means that the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel did not approach each other all that night, the Talmud interprets it to mean that the ministering angels sought to recite *shirah* (a song of praise) before Hashem, Who retorted: "My handiwork are drowning in the sea, and you are reciting a song before Me?" (*Sanhedrin* 39b)

Although in alternate versions of this midrash, Hashem's objection to the angels' *shirah* was due to the danger that the Jews were currently facing (*Shemos Rabbah* 23:7, *Tanchuma Yashan*), and some have therefore interpreted the phrase "My handiwork" as referring to the Jews (*Torah Sheleimah* #126), the straightforward reading of the Talmudic passage indicates that "My handiwork" refers to the Egyptians.

In any event, a number of *midrashic* and medieval sources explicitly state that the destruction of the Egyptians at the sea puts a damper on our joy. The *Pesikta D'Rav Kahana* (#29) explains that the reason the term "joy" (*simcha*) appears thrice in the Torah regarding Sukkos but not even once regarding Pesach is due to the Egyptians' having died on the latter. It adds that this is also why (full) Hallel is not recited throughout Pesach, unlike Sukkos. Interestingly, despite the fact that the Talmud gives a different reason for the Hallel disparity (*Arachin* 10a-b), a number of *halachic* works cite the *Pesikta's* reason, with some attributing it to the (non-extant) *Midrash Harninu*, and some explicitly connecting it to Hashem's statement that "My handiwork are drowning in the sea, and you are reciting a song before Me?" (explicitly referring to the Egyptians - *Shibolei Haleket*, *Rosh Chodesh* #174; *Kol Bo*, *Seder Tefillah Hamoados* #52; *Maharil*, *Pesach* - *Hilchos Tefillah*).

We do also have a record of a diametrically opposite custom, of referring to the last days of Pesach as the "time of our joy" (*zeman simchaseinu*), rather than the standard "time of our freedom" (*zeman cheiruseinu*), due to the "joy over the drowning of the Egyptians in the sea." (gloss to *Maharil ibid.*) This is not normative, however, and I have never heard of this practice in contemporary times.

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was "Nesiyas Kapayim."
2. I was not for Kohanim.
3. I was a hold up.
4. I directed attention.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Like lead.
2. Like stone.
3. Like straw.
4. We ended up on the shore.

Last Week's Answers

- #1 Parshas Bo** (I am number three, I contain three, I equal three, I am not a decorative knot.)
#2 Blood (Last week I caused wealth, This week I caused survival, Jump over, I was for the mezuzah.)

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 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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