



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

The Gift of Time

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

“This month shall be for you the beginning of the months...” (12:2)

On the cusp of redemption from their Egyptian bondage, the nascent Jewish nation is given their first *mitzvah*. This is the *mitzvah* of *Kiddush Hachodesh*, sanctifying the new month. When the new moon was seen by two witnesses, they would go immediately to the central Jewish *Beis Din* (court) and testify to their sighting of the new moon. Once the *Beis Din* thoroughly examined them and found their testimony to be valid, a new month was proclaimed for the Jewish people.

The Seforno wonders why this *mitzvah* was chosen to be the first commandment. He answers that the essence of the *mitzvah* is that the Jews are masters over their time. Dates are not based on a pre-determined calendar, but rather the central *Beis Din* determines when the new month begins and consequently the dates of any holidays in that month.

(In Talmudic times, when *the Beis Din* of Hillel II realized that the existence of the central *Beis Din* was in jeopardy, that *Beis Din* created the calendar we use today, with pre-determined dates that will be used until the coming of Moshiach.)

Slaves are not in control of themselves. Being totally dependent on the will and whims of their masters, they have no time they can call their own. Therefore, only now that the Jewish people were no longer subservient to the Egyptians, were they given this *mitzvah* whose essence is the concept of freedom of time.

This newfound time must be used properly, as wasted time is a loss that can never be regained. The Jewish nation was therefore given this charge right away to utilize the gift of time. We also must recognize this precious gift and maximize it by devoting our time to valuable and meaningful endeavors.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Matzos and bitter herbs you shall eat it (Korban Pesach) (12:8).

One cannot fulfill their obligation with matzah that has not had Teruma and Ma'aser tithed from it (Pesachim 35a).

If all one has is non-tithed matzah, shouldn't the principle that a positive commandment overrides a negative commandment mandate that the positive command to eat matzah override the negative command of eating food that has not been tithed? (Shaagas Aryeh 96)

Parsha Riddle

Pharaoh said to Moshe and Aharon, "Who and who are going?" Moshe said, "With our youngsters and our elders shall we go" (10:8-9).

What was being prophetically hinted to here?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the similarity between the first three of the ten plagues, and the first two of the Ten Commandments?

Answer: Moshe did not perform the first three plagues, and he did not say the first two of the Ten Commandments.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parshas Bo* (12:42), the Torah states:

It is a night of anticipation (*leil shimurim*) for Hashem to take them out of the land of Egypt, this was the night for Hashem; a protection (*shimurim*) for all the Children of Israel for their generations.

The commentaries interpret the two instances of the word *shimurim* in various ways, but the Talmudic interpretation is that it is a night of special protection for the Jewish people. The Talmud cites an objection to the institution of the drinking of the four cups of wine on Passover night from a principle that doing certain activities in pairs is dangerous, since it exposes oneself to sorcery or demons, and it offers several resolutions for this, one of which is that Passover night is a *leil shimurim* – "a night that remains guarded from harmful spirits," (*Pesachim* 109b) i.e., on this night we experience special protection from harm, and we need not be as careful as we normally are. This is the basis for several Passover night customs, including that of not locking doors as securely as normal (Maharil pp. 17a-b). As we have previously (*Pesah* 5775) noted, however, this custom should not be followed where thieves are common, since we do not rely upon miracles.

As we have also previously noted, some authorities understand that the protection of *leil shimurim* is limited to spiritual harm, but does not extend to material harm (they apparently assume that leaving the doors open where thieves are not particularly common entails a risk of spiritual, but not material, harm). Others, however, seem to understand the protection as extending to material harm as well (see the discussion in *Eshkol Yosef* Nissan 5780).

A parallel discussion occurs elsewhere in the laws of Passover. The Talmud (*ibid.* 8a-b) sets forth an exemption from searching for *chametz* in a particular location where performing the search would entail danger, either of scorpion sting or of hostility from a non-Jewish neighbor who will be antagonized by the search. The Talmud objects: **"But didn't Rabbi Elazar say: Those on the path to perform a mitzvah are not susceptible to harm throughout the process of performing the mitzvah?"** and one of the answers it gives is "in a place **where danger is commonplace it is different.**"

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am number eight, not four.
2. I was in a pickle.
3. We finished the leftovers.
4. I defined the borders

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Time sensitive.
2. I cause fasting.
3. I cause redemption.
4. I was deadly.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Kinim/Lice (I was proof of Hashem, I was from a finger, I am tiny, I came from the sand.)

#2 Barad/Hail (I defied nature, I made them go inside, I was suspended, I am waiting for Gog and Magog.)

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