



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives. The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L.

In this week's Torah portion of Yisro, the Torah shares the thinking of Yisro (father-in-law of Moshe) that inspired him to become a religious convert. Yisro lived as the religious head of Midian, a man of great wealth and honor, who left all his fame and fortune to join the Jewish nation in a barren wilderness. The Torah in chapter 18 verse 11, addressing Yisro's mind-set and motivation, writes: "Now I know that Hashem is the greatest of all gods, for in the very matter in which [the Egyptians] had conspired against them..." The key phrase to understand is the following: "which [the Egyptians] had conspired against them..." Yisro understood, from the events at the Red Sea, the magnitude of the magnificence of the G-d of Israel. The Shira - the Song of the Sea - that the Jews sang in tribute to their salvation, records the three similes (in chapter 15 verses 5, 7, and 10) used to describe the demise of the Egyptians as stones, straw, and lead. Rashi says that the cruelest of the Egyptian taskmasters perished at sea as straw, cast about in a slow, agonizing death. Those not as cruel went down as a rock - a less tormenting death. The best of them sunk into the depths as lead, dying immediately.

Yisro observed the intimacy of G-d's involvement in the affairs of man that even the wicked and cruel people of Egypt were given "designer" deaths calibrated precisely to the measure of their cruelty. Yisro understood this was the G-d that he was always seeking. A G-d who does not reside above alone, rather One who is involved in the daily affairs of each of His creations in a very personal fashion. Yisro leaves all, for he beheld a G-d who did not atomize the Egyptians as one, but rather exacted judgment to the measure which the "Egyptians conspired against the Jews."

After a lifelong search to find the true G-d, Yisro comes home. How much more so we, born into the aristocracy of the Jewish nation, should feel the privilege, honor and responsibility bestowed upon us as a "kingdom of ministers and a holy nation."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

"...they shall bring every major matter to you, and every minor matter they shall judge..." (18:22)

"The difficult thing they would bring to Moshe and the minor thing they themselves would judge..." (18:26)

Why does the Torah change the terminology from "major" to "difficult"?

Parsha Riddle

What similarity is there between Shimshon Hagibor and Matan Torah?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How many months have something special on the fifteenth of the month? What are they?

Answer: Five: Tishrei - Sukkos, Shevat - Tu B'Shevat, Adar - Purim katan, Nisan - Pesach, Av - Tu B'Av.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The last of the *Aseres ha-Dibros* ("Ten Commandments"), as formulated in *parshas Yisro* (20:14), is:

You shall not **covet** your fellow's house. You shall not **covet** your fellow's wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, nor anything that belongs to your fellow.

In *parshas Va'eschanan* (*Devarim* 5:18), the wording is somewhat different:

And you shall not **covet** your fellow's wife, you shall not **desire** your fellow's house, his field, his slave, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your fellow.

While the *Semag* (*lav* 158) maintains that **covet** and **desire** are synonyms, the Rambam (*Gezeilah* 1:9-11) and other authorities understand that they denote two distinct prohibitions: the prohibition against **coveting** an item involves pressuring its owner "with friends and requests until he agrees to sell it to him," whereas the prohibition against **desiring** an item is violated when "he thinks in his heart, 'How is it possible to acquire this from him?' and his heart is aroused by the matter."

Some understand that even the prohibition against **desiring** an item is only violated if one contemplates pressuring or persuading its owner to sell it to him, but not if he merely desires the item without considering how to obtain it (*Aruch ha-Shulchan CM* 359:8), or even if he desires it and intends to purchase it should the owner wish to sell it, but does not intend to induce him to do so (see *Rav Berachos* pp. 95-96 and R. Osher Weiss, *Lo Sachmod* 5776). The *Sefer ha-Chinuch* (416), however, seems to imply that even desire itself without any intention to acquire the desired item, violates the prohibition. (The Ibn Ezra [*Yisro ibid.*] implies that even the prohibition of **coveting** is violated by mere desire, but R. Osher Weiss explains that this is merely an instance of Ibn Ezra's exegetical approach of explaining the Biblical text according to its simple and overt meaning (*peshat*) without reference to the *halachic* tradition.)

The prohibitions against coveting and desiring apply only to items that are not for sale (*Minchas Pittim CM* 359:10). Some suggest that even if one is not sure whether a particular item is for sale, it may be permitted to ask its owner if he wishes to sell it (*Pischei Choshen Geneivah* p. 32).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was two yet I was four.
2. I am in the front of the Shul.
3. I was rock hard.
4. I am not just like an ipad.

#2 WHO AM I?

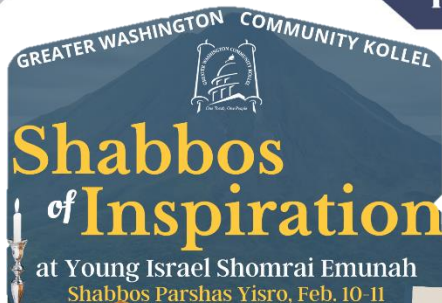
1. Smokey.
2. Quaking.
3. Lightning.
4. Noisy

Last Week's Answers

#1 Mon(Manna) (I was unknown, I was a test, I am remembered with Challah, Don't keep me around.)

#2 Az Yashir (I am said daily, I indicate resurrection, My prophecy was greater than the Prophets, I appear as a wall.)

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Greater Washington Community Kollel invites the entire community to a **SHABBOS of INSPIRATION** at Young Israel Shomrai Emanah. Shabbos Parshas Yisro - Feb 10-11

Join us for inspiring tefillos led by Simcha Leiner, thought-provoking lectures and divrei Torah and a ruach-filled kumzitz!