



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

The Voice That Did Not Cease

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

The Torah reading for the holiday of Shavuos, on the sixth day of Sivan, recounts the momentous occasion of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. Rabbi Aharon Kotler observes that, despite the enormity of this incredible event, there are no *Mitzvos* (commandments) to commemorate the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. In fact, regarding the holiday of Shavuos, there is no mention in the written Torah that Shavuos is the day on which the Torah was given! Why are there no *Mitzvos* to commemorate this seminal event? This is especially puzzling given the fact that many of the six hundred and thirteen *Mitzvos* commemorate a different historic event in our nation – the Exodus from Egypt.

Rabbi Kotler answers that the Exodus was surely an earth-shattering event, one that we recall every day in a variety of commandments. But it happened in the past. It is something that we recall but do not currently experience. In describing the Revelation at Sinai, however, the Torah states that '*Hashem spoke to His people in a great voice that did not cease*' (Devarim 5:19 according to Onkelos). The Revelation at Sinai continues to this very day! Hashem took the 'great voice' of Mount Sinai and placed it into the Torah itself. The Torah is revealed to us always, constantly – there is no need for a *Mitzvah* to commemorate an event that is still unfolding.

When Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik learned Torah, he was often more animated and vibrant than when he *davened*. When asked why, he explained that prayer involves man speaking to Hashem, but Torah learning is Hashem speaking to man, so he wanted to enunciate Hashem's speech as much as possible. Rabbi Soloveitchik lived with this understanding that Hashem's great voice from Mount Sinai is now reverberating in the Torah we learn even today. May we all feel that lofty voice when we learn Torah as well!

Wishing you a Good Yomtov and a Good Shabbos!

SPONSOR

To sponsor a Shabbos Delights, please contact info@gwckollel.org

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Four times a year the world is judged: On Pesach regarding the grain, on Shavuot regarding the fruit of the tree, on Rosh Hashana all mankind is judged, and on Sukkos regarding water (Rosh Hashana 1:2).

Ezra set up the reading of the Torah, as such, that we read the curses in Sefer Devarim before Rosh Hashana and the curses in Sefer Vayikra before Shavuot. Why? Abaye explained, in order that we should have the year and its curses finish. We understand how the curses in Sefer Devarim accomplish this, since it is read before Rosh Hashana, the Day of Judgment, but why is Shavuot considered to be a new year? Since we are judged regarding the fruit of the tree on Shavuot (Megilla 31b).

As Pesach is also a Day of Judgment, why did Ezra specifically set up the reading this way? He could have considered Pesach to be the beginning of a new year.

Parsha Riddle

Besides Matan Torah, what other two famous events occurred on Har Sinai?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why weren't men under the age of twenty recruited into the army of Bnei Yisrael?

Answer: After one reaches the age of twenty, he has matured in his Torah study and fear of Heaven. Only upon maturing in these areas is one able to enter war, since these are the most powerful tools in fighting an enemy. (Ramban, Toras Ha'Olah)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The upcoming parashah, *Parashas Naso* (5:11-31), contains the laws of the *sotah* ritual, in which a woman suspected of infidelity is given to drink water into which has been erased a scroll inscribed with the curses enumerated in the Biblical text. These curses include instances of the Divine name, and our sages explain that Hashem waives the honor normally due to His name in order "to make peace between a man and his wife" (*Shabbas* 116a, *Sukkah* 53a). (Apparently, the primary goal of the *sotah* ritual is not to punish the guilty but rather to exculpate the innocent and thus restore marital harmony.)

Elsewhere, the Talmud endorses the practice of deviating from the truth for the sake of peace, citing one opinion that this is permitted; another that it is even a *mitzvah* to do so; and a third that Hashem Himself has done so on occasion (*Yevamos* 65b, and cf. *Vayikra Rabbah* 9:9). A couple of folio earlier (63a), however, the Talmud cites an anecdote that seems to reject the legitimacy of dissembling for the sake of peace:

Rav's wife would constantly aggravate him. When he would say to her: Prepare me lentils, she would prepare him peas; if he asked her for peas, she would prepare him lentils. When Hiyya, his son, grew up, he would reverse the requests Rav asked him to convey to her, so that Rav would get what he wanted. Rav said to his son Hiyya: Your mother has improved now that you convey my requests. He said to Rav: It is I who reverse your request to her. Rav said to him: This is an example of the well-known adage that people say: He who comes from you shall teach you wisdom; I should have thought of that idea myself. You, however, should not do so, i.e., reverse my request, as it is stated: "They have taught their tongue to speak lies, they weary themselves to commit iniquity, etc." (Jeremiah 9:4). If you attribute such a request to me, you will have uttered a falsehood.

Various explanations have been offered for the apparent inapplicability of the dispensation to dissemble for the sake of peace. The Meiri explains that this is only permitted when the consequences of telling the truth would be dire, but Rav was able to disregard his wife's harassment. The Maharshal asserts that this may only be done occasionally, but not regularly (*Yam Shel Shlomo ibid.* 6:46).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for three.
2. I am on the fence.
3. Get ready.
4. Purify yourselves

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I equal my kabalas mitzvos.
2. Conversion is learned from me.
3. Both of my husbands died.
4. My grandfather was stabbed in his stomach.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Levium (We did not serve, Therefore, we did serve, Five Shekel replacement, Now we wash the blessers.)

#2 Sivan (I have 5 days before weeks, Third or ninth, Reception happened in me, Did you see the van?)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



Greater Washington Community Kollel wishes all of its friends, supporters, participants, and the entire community, a good Yom Tov!