



# The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

### Luminaries of Purpose

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

**"Give ear, oh heavens and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth." (32:1)**

With the opening words of *Parshas Haazinu*, Moshe enjoins the heavens and earth to bear testimony between Hashem and the Jewish people regarding Hashem's warnings as to the consequences of abandoning the Torah and its *mitzvos* (Rashi). What does it mean that the heavens and earth, two lifeless entities, should bear testimony?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein explains that the heavens and the earth, and all of the many wondrous creations that they contain, bear testimony to the existence of the Creator and His Divine providence over our world. Just as Avraham Avinu came to the realization that Hashem created and runs the world by studying the heavens and earth, so they are to serve as a reminder to us in all generations that the world is not a place of random happenstance. The world has a purpose, and we are responsible for doing our part to bring about that purpose.

As we come to Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, the days of judgement that determine the direction of our lives and the world at large for the year, it is critical that we focus on the message of *Haazinu*. We can see it from creation, we can see it from history, and we can certainly see it from current events – the world is going somewhere and what happens on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur matters. Let us strive to truly use these days as an opportunity to renew our commitment to serve Hashem as we should, to come close to Him, and may we merit a year full of joy and blessing.

**Wishing you a Good Yom Tov and a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**"He (Hashem) discovered him (B'nei Yisrael) in a desert land... He encircled him, He granted him discernment, He preserved him like the pupil of His Eye (32:10)."**

He encircled him, with the Clouds of Glory, and with flags on their four sides, and He surrounded them under the mountain, when Hashem held the overturned mountain on top of their heads (Rashi).

The mountain was held above the heads of B'nei Yisrael. How does the terminology "surround" apply to this? Furthermore, this verse seems to be describing Hashem's loving care for B'nei Yisrael. However, the mountain that was overturned was a threat to kill them. How does that show Hashem's loving care for B'nei Yisrael?

### Parsha Riddle

**Give ear, O Heavens and I will speak. (32:1) Where is there a hint to the 613 mitzvos in this verse?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**What are the different names for Rosh Hashana? (We have 5)**  
**Answer: 1) Rosh Hashana 2) Yom Hadin, 3) Yom Teruah 4) Yom Hazikaron 5) Keseh [6) Yom Haras Olam]**

## HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Haazinu opens with the verse: "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and may the earth hear the words of my mouth." The commentaries give various interpretations of this address to the heavens and the earth; Rashi offers two, the first of which is the following:

And why did He call heaven and earth as witnesses against them? Moses thought: "I am a being of flesh and blood; tomorrow I shall be dead. If the Israelites will once say, 'We have never accepted the covenant', who can come and refute them?" Therefore he called heaven and earth as witnesses against them — witnesses that endure forever.

According to this approach, heaven and earth were called to witness – and potentially testify about – the Israelites' acceptance of our obligations to Hashem. The Talmud, however, relates that in the future (in response to a challenge by the Gentiles) Hashem will call upon them to testify to our fulfillment of these obligations: **"The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to them: Heaven and earth will testify about them that they fulfilled the Torah in its entirety."** (Avodah Zarah 3a, but see Yaavetz there)

The Gentiles, however, will object to this testimony: "The nations **say before Him: Master of the Universe**, in this matter the **testimony of heaven and earth is tainted by a conflict of interest, as it is stated: "If My covenant be not with day and night, I would not have appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth"** (Jeremiah 33:25). **And** concerning this verse, **Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish says: What is the meaning of that which is written: "And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day"** (Genesis 1:31)? **This teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, established a condition with the acts of Creation, and said: If the Jewish people accept My Torah at the revelation at Sinai, all is well, but if they do not accept it, I will return you to the primordial state of chaos and disorder."** (The Talmud implies that the Gentiles' objection will be sustained.)

The rule that a witness with a conflict of interest is ineligible to testify is indeed a key *halachah* of civil procedure, as codified by the Rambam: "Whenever a person will benefit from giving testimony, he may not give such testimony for it is as if he is testifying concerning himself." (Edus 15:1)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the morning.
2. I am for an aliya.
3. I "ascribe greatness."
4. Ahava Raba works.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I do not drive you.
2. I move Him.
3. I remind Him of Akeidas Yitzchak.
4. I am for sitting and standing.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Selichos** (I am not excuse me, I arouse you, I include the thirteen, Put your head down.)

**#2 Rosh Hashana** (I am the head, I am double, After me, you blew it, I am a birthday.)

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