



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.

As we begin Genesis, we are introduced to struggles, conflicts, temptations, righteousness, and courage of many individuals, and draw strength, wisdom, and guidance from their collective experience and behavior.

The parsha of Noach speaks of the great deluge that engulfed the entire world, wiping out all life, save the eight members of the family of Noach and representative species of all animal and plant life. Upon the termination of the flood, Noach sends forth the raven (chapter 7, verse 7) to test the waters. If the waters had receded sufficiently, some form of plant life would now exist and the raven would return with it "in hand." The Torah records that the raven kept "going and returning" until all the waters had subsided upon the earth. The Rabbis comment that the raven never did fulfill its mission. It circled the ark the entire time, never going forth to advise Noach of the status of the receding waters. It was left to the dove to complete the task.

The Chofetz Chaim draws a great lesson from the conduct of the raven. As hard as Noach had tried to elicit from the raven the information he desired, he did not succeed. One needs merit to be an instrument for good. The raven, cruel by nature, did not have the privilege to be instrumental in the earliest stages of the rebuilding of the world. Similarly, man needs merit to have the privilege and opportunity to assist and provide for others in both communal and personal matters. When the opportunity knocks to do good, we should seize it and see it as a confirmation and validation from Above of oneself, that we have been so chosen. Having done the deed, we should be infused with humility and gratitude, never with conceit and false pride. As the Rabbis comment: G-d brings merit through the meritorious.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

(After the flood) "The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heaven were closed..." (8, 2)

When they were opened (at the onset of the flood) it says, "All the fountains." Here (after the flood) "all" is not written. Why? (After the flood) some remained open - those for which the world had a need, such as the hot springs of Teverya and the like. (Rashi)

The flood did not affect Eretz Yisrael. (Gemara Zevachim 113a)

If the flood did not reach Eretz Yisrael, it means that at the beginning of the flood the fountains were not opened in Eretz Yisrael. If so, how can Rashi give the hot springs in Teverya as an example of fountains that remained open after the flood?

Parsha Riddle

Where do we find in this week's parsha the prohibition to hunt just for sport?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What similarity is there between Yom Kippur and Asara B'Teves?

Answer: Neither is ever pushed off.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Noach* (9:27), Noach declares: "May G-d extend Japheth (Yaft Elokim le-Yefes), but he will dwell in the tents of Shem." The above translation, from ArtScroll, follows Onkelos and Rashi; the Talmud, however, explains the verse differently. The Mishnah (*Megillah* 1:8) records the opinion of R. Shimon b. Gamliel that the only language in which Torah scrolls may be written (other than Hebrew) is Greek, and the Talmud derives this from our verse:

Rabbi Abbahu said that Rabbi Yohanan said: The halakha is in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. And Rabbi Yohanan said: What is the reason for the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel? He based his opinion on an allusion in the Torah, as the verse states: "May G-d extend Japheth, but he will dwell in the tents of Shem," indicating that the words of Japheth shall be in the tents of Shem. The language of Javan, who is the forbear of the Greek nation and one of the descendants of Japheth, will also serve as a sacred language in the tents of Shem, where Torah is studied. (*Megillah* 9b)

The Rambam, however, rules that this *halachah* is not currently applicable:

Tefillin and mezuzot may be written only in Assyrian script. Permission was granted to write Torah scrolls in Greek as well. That Greek language has, however, been forgotten from the world. It has been confused and has sunk into oblivion. Therefore, at present, all three sacred articles may be written using Assyrian script alone. (*Tefillin, Mezuzah, and Sefer Torah* 1:19)

Elsewhere, the Talmud extends the special status of Greek to the reading of the *Megillah*. Although in general, while the *Megillah* may be read in any language, this applies only to those who understand the language in question, Greek is an exception:

Rav and Shmuel both say: The Greek language is acceptable for everyone, i.e., anyone who reads the *Megillah* in Greek has fulfilled his obligation, even if he does not understand Greek. ... They agree with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. ... (*ibid.* 18a)

The Rambam codifies this *halachah* without qualification (*Megillah* 2:3), and it is not entirely clear whether he would maintain that it as well is not currently applicable (see *Lechem Mishneh* and *Mirkeves ha-Mishneh* (Alfandari) there and *Mirkeves ha-Mishneh* (Chelm) in both places).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I may have been a window.
2. I may have been the first light bulb.
3. I did not need electricity.
4. Don't confuse me with the Zohar.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. You sing about me.
2. I could be your name.
3. I was not swallowed by a fish.
4. I discovered dry land.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Viduy (I make you bend, I make you bang, I am for the mouth, I am for the heart.)

#2 Amidah/Shemoneh Esrei (Most days I am three times, Some days I am four times, This Shabbos I am five times, My name is one off.)

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Rabbi Hillel Shaps

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