

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



BUMPER TO BUMPER TRAFFIC

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha talks about the travails the Jewish people faced during their travels in the wilderness. This leads us to the following true story.

Yehuda had an important event he had to attend. A car was unavailable, so he called a taxi to drive him to the event. It was a 15-minute drive, and the cab should have cost less than 50 dollars.

Yehuda told the cabbie where to go, and they agreed to use the meter. The taxi ride went smoothly. However, the ride slowed down after the taxi went to the highway. Traffic slowed to a crawl. Eventually, traffic stopped entirely. It was literally like a parking lot. They were just sitting there. The taxi's meter was going up, and it was getting later and later. Yehuda was getting very anxious that he was missing his event.

The taxi driver turned on the traffic report on the radio and heard that there was a major accident up ahead, and traffic was going to be entirely stopped for a while un-

FILLED WITH GRANDEUR

In our Parsha, Va'eschanan, we will read the single most cherished proclamation that every Jew who prides himself as being a Jew proclaims; Shema Yisroel HaShem Elokeinu HaShem Echod. Hear O Israel HaShem is our Guide HaShem is One. This is followed immediately with the verse which instructs us to love HaShem with all of our being. What is the direct connection of the first statement to the second? Why does our recognition of HaShem being One lead one to loving Him?

When we proclaim that HaShem is our Guide we are saying that this Omnipotent and Omnipresent Creator is our personal Guide. His entire attention is focused on every single Jew. This is not the same attention that is given to the other creations or even to the other nations. The rest of the world is guided by HaShem through the mechanism of Nature. The nation of Israel is not subject to the laws of Nature. In fact, this is how we continue to survive and to thrive through the millennia as a wandering homeless nation throughout the world surrounded by enemies with no allies. According to the laws of Nature it could never happen. Our very existence is testimony that HaShem is our Guide.

When we proclaim that HaShem is One we are saying that every corner of existence is His handiwork. There is no other artist, no other engineer. It is all His.

Let us consider HaShem's universe, from the very smallest particles that are known to Man with all the secrets that they contain to the enormous celestial stars and planets that orbit at astronomical speeds and distances. Consider the Milky Way which is only one galaxy out of 100 to 200 billion other galaxies. To draw a map of Earth on the top of a desk is possible. However, if we were to draw a map of our

til the accident was cleared. The report suggested that it could take more than an hour.

Finally, after waiting for 45 minutes, stuck on the highway, Yehuda decided that it would be faster for him to walk to the event, or at least walk closer and take another cab when he got closer.

Yehuda told the driver that we would pay the amount on the meter and that he was going to walk the rest of the way. The meter suggested that he owed 100 dollars.

But the driver wasn't happy.

"Hey buddy, I fully understand that you want to get out. But we agreed at the beginning that I would take you all the way to your event. Based on the traffic reports, I will be stuck here for another hour or two because of your ride. Normally when a passenger gets out, I can just get another passenger. But not now. I can't accept 100 dollars because I will be in the car for more than an hour or more. I'd like to take you all the way to the event like we agreed, or else I'd like you to pay 200. That would cover my time."

Yehuda understood the driver's argument. But that didn't sound fair.

He wondered what the Torah's perspective was on this.

On the one hand, he should pay 100 dollars because that is the amount of time he used the taxi.

But on the other hand, maybe he should stay in the car until he arrived at the event as they agreed. Or, perhaps if he gets out, he should pay 200 because the driver would be driving all the time, stuck in traffic because of him. The driver could not just turn around and find another passenger like he normally would when a passenger stepped off.

What do you think?

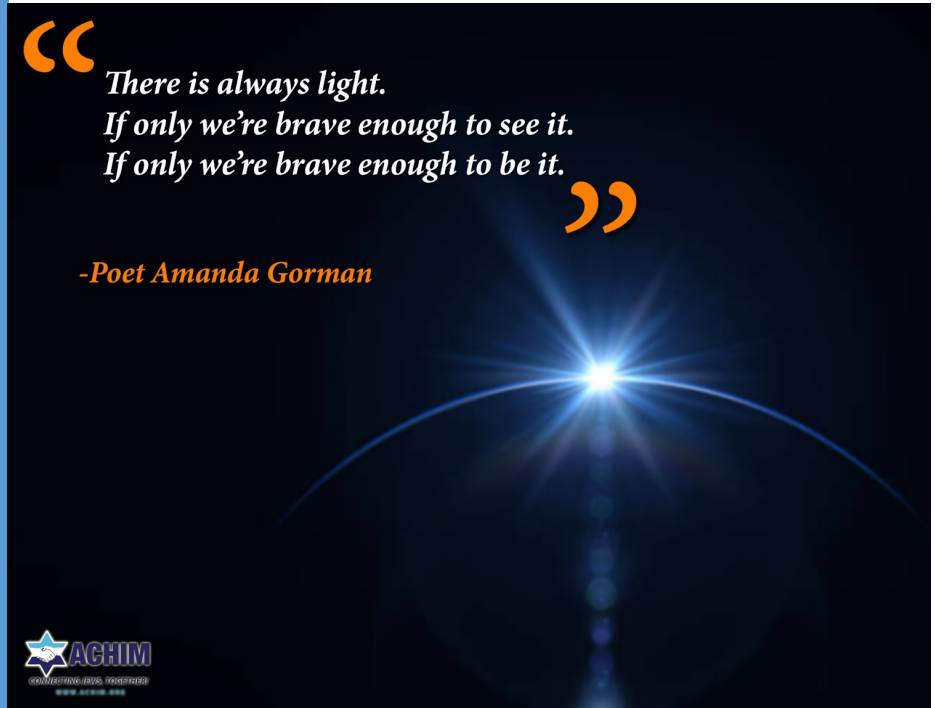
See Upiru Matok Bereishes Page 340

“

*There is always light.
If only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it.*

”

-Poet Amanda Gorman



galaxy in a similar scale it would not fit in the space between Earth and Sun.

On the other side; consider that every one of the 37.4 trillion cells in the human body contains 42 million protein molecules, 50,000 genes along with much more stuff is beyond imagination.

Why did HaShem create such a complex universe? Perhaps we can explain the necessity of the mosquito as it plays a role in the ecosystem. But how do we understand the need for 200 billion galaxies? Why does the Milky Way have to have more than 100 billion stars? Considering that the focus of the entire universe is Man and specifically HaShem's people as we are charged to bring the universe to its destiny, why so much extra stuff, why not make it simple?

In the mid-1700's Catherine the Great, the empress of Russia

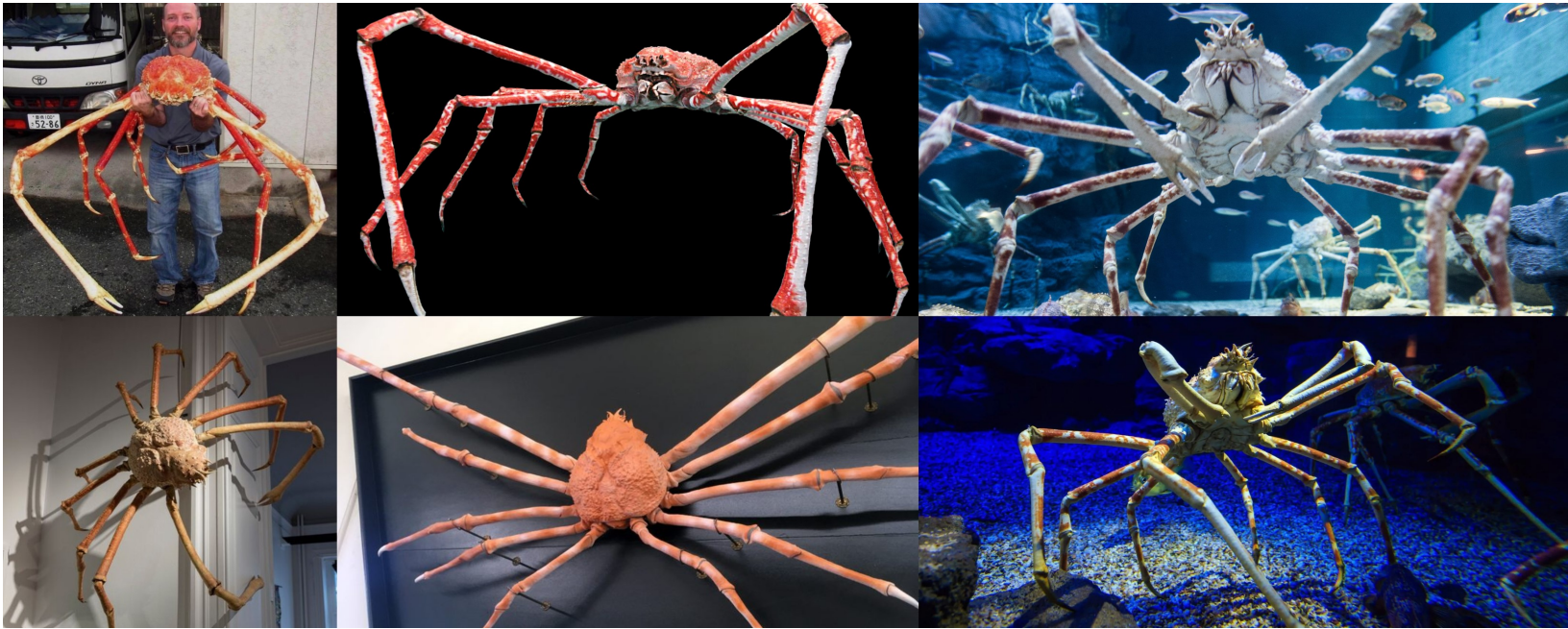
built the Hermitage as her royal palace. As the years passed later Czars built on additions and filled it with thousands of sculptures and tens of thousands of paintings. Even the moldings on the walls and the ceilings are most extravagantly designed and created by world famous artists. Just to walk around in the Hermitage without looking at the artwork is breathtaking. What possessed the royal family to go so far in building this?

This is Malchus! The grandeur of Malchus expresses itself in every corner of the palace. The greater the Malchus the greater the palace. The higher intelligence of the Malchus, the greater the genius will be evident. If HaShem created a universe in which His people were going to accomplish their mission of bringing Honor to HaShem, then this universe has to be Grand. Every corner must demonstrate His Omnipresence, His Omniscience and His awesome Omnipotence. From the largest celestial objects to the smallest cells everything must proclaim the Greatness of HaShem, each piece in its appropriate manner.

After considering all of the above and realizing that HaShem created this most incredible universe for us and for our people to be at the center to bring honor to Him, how can we not be filled with the love of HaShem!

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE GENTLE GIANT, THE JAPANESE SPIDER CRAB

The Japanese spider crab is a species of marine crab that lives in the waters around Japan. It was originally described by Western science in 1836 by Coenraad Jacob Temminck. It has the largest leg span of any arthropod, reaching more than 12 feet from claw to claw. Arthropods are invertebrate animals having an exoskeleton like insects, spiders, crabs, and lobsters. While the spider crab is not a spider, because both crabs and spiders are arthropods, this means that they are related to each other.

Like a spider, the spider crab has eight legs. It also has two hands (called chelipeds) covered with claws, called chelae. These claws are very powerful, and spider crabs can use them to tear their food apart.

But while they may look like a monster from a fantasy story, Japanese spider crabs are actually gentle giants and are very gentle to people. Despite its ferocious appearance, it has a gentle disposition. They are slow-moving crabs who generally don't hunt, preferring to scavenge for dead animal or plant matter. However, they can eat live fish or crustaceans.

They have mottled orange-and-white bodies. The body may grow to 16 inches in carapace width, and the whole crab can weigh up to 42 lb. The round shells and long legs give Japanese spider crabs a spider-like look. These animals also have spines behind and in front of their short eye stalks. Males are larger than females and have larger chelipeds, the legs that hold their claws, though females have wider abdomens to hold their eggs.

Although they grow to be enormous, these animals start out tiny. They hatch from eggs that are just .03 inches each. The carapace, or hard upper shell, of Japanese spider crabs, caps at 16 inches once it reaches adulthood. Their legs, however, keep on growing and elongating.

They thrive in temperatures of about 50 degrees. They live at depths of between 160 and 2000 feet. They like to inhabit vents and holes in the deeper parts of the ocean.

They are considered a delicacy in Japan. The Japanese name for the spider crab is "taka-ashi-gani," which means "the tall-legged crab."

Aside from its large size, there are a few other features that make it very unique. Japanese spider crabs possess the longest lifespan of any crab. They live between 50 and 100 years.

Also, Japanese spider crabs can regenerate their legs if one gets torn off. If a predator like an octopus or a trawl net cuts off one of its legs, the missing legs can regrow when the crab molts. This is an

enormous blessing. Because their legs are so long, it is common for spider crabs to lose their legs to fishing nets or predators. Their long legs are also weak and fragile. A study found that three-quarters of surveyed crabs were missing at least one limb.

Another unique feature about spider crabs is that they decorate their shells with other organisms like sea sponges and sea anemones. Because of this, it is part of a group known as decorator crabs which adorn their exteriors with other species for camouflage. The way in which a spider crab can pick up and cover itself with such organisms is unique. The spider crab picks up the object with its claws by twisting and tearing the organism off the surface the organism is living. Once the material is picked up, it is brought to the crab's mouthparts to shape it precisely. Then it is attached to the spider crabs' exoskeleton with special secretions that act like glue. After the material is attached to the crab, the sponge or anemone can regenerate and colonize on top of the crab. The Japanese spider crab does not specifically look for matching colors to blend into its environment; it simply camouflages in a way that disguises its entire structure to avoid predators.

This dress-up is done primarily by young juvenile Japanese spider crabs. However, once the crabs become adults, they move to much deeper waters with very few predators. Adults don't have to dress to impress.

Who are the predators of these giant crabs? Octopuses. The spider crabs' armored exoskeleton helps to protect it from octopuses. It also uses camouflage. The crab's bumpy carapace blends into the rocky ocean floor. Japanese spider crabs are most vulnerable to predators right after molting — after they shed their exoskeleton and before the new shell hardens.

What does a spider crab eat? Unable to swim, they spend much of their time crawling on the sea bed, foraging for food. The Japanese spider crab is an omnivore, consuming both plant matter and animals. It also sometimes acts as a scavenger, consuming dead animals. Some have been known to scrape the ocean floor for plants and algae, while others pry open the shells of mollusks. They can eat algae, plants, mollusks, and small fish, catching and tearing up the meat in their powerful pincers.

Female Japanese spider crabs can lay up to 1.5 million eggs in a season, but only a few survive. The female crab carries the fertilized eggs attached to their abdominal appendage, called an apron until they hatch into tiny planktonic larvae. The eggs hatch in 10 days.

THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER

Rabbi Manis Mandel was the beloved principal of the Yeshiva Of Brooklyn. In 1969, Rabbi Mandel's in-laws Mr. And Mrs. Pinchas Delman, visited Eretz Yisrael. Sadly, a few days after their arrival in Eretz Yisrael, Mrs. Delman suffered a massive heart attack and passed away shortly thereafter.

Before Mrs. Delman died, she instructed her husband to return to the States after the burial for the shivah. His flight took off from Tel Aviv and was due to land in New York minutes before Shabbos. There would not be time to get from the airport to Brooklyn, so the family packed food, cots, and blankets, and headed to Kennedy Airport to spend Shabbos with Mr. Delman. However, as candle-lighting time approached, it was apparent that the plane might touch down on Shabbos, depending on when its pilot would receive clearance to land.

Rabbi Mandel phoned Kennedy Airport, explained that he was a rabbi, and asked if it was possible to speak with the air traffic controller to explain the importance of giving the plane clearance to land as soon as possible. Incredibly, the call was put through. Rabbi Mandel proceeded to explain to the air traffic controller about the importance of Shabbos in Orthodox Jewish life and that there was an Orthodox Jew arriving from Israel who was in danger of landing on Shabbos. "Do you know about Shabbos?" Rabbi Mandel asked the man. The air traffic controller replied, "Of course I know about Shabbos! I'm Jewish, in fact I attended Talmud Torah in Brooklyn as a kid.

Rabbi Mandel asked the man's name and immediately recognized it. He was speaking to one of his old talmidim! Rabbi Mandel's joy at discovering a long-lost talmid was indescribable. The man excitedly told him, "Rabbi, I will make sure that this plane is the first to land." He gave priority clearance to Mr. Delman's plane and it landed before Shabbos.

From Rabbi Manis Mandel, A Legendary Mechanech and Tzadik. By Rabbi Shimon Finkelman, Published By Artsroll Mesorah. Preprinted With Permission From The Copyright Holders.



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the ultrasound, Rav Yosef Elyashiv answered that although the doctor did the wrong thing regarding revealing the gender, nonetheless he properly did his job of checking if the baby was healthy and therefore the doctor needs to be paid.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in honor of the
Bar Mitzvah of our son
Akiva Weinberg
Dr. Aaron and Mrs. Alana Weinberg

