

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE NEW KITCHEN

By Rabbi Yitzi Weinr

Ari and his wife, who lived in Israel, once went to a kitchen remodeling showroom to look at display kitchens. They arrived at the showroom and were shown around by one of the employees. Ari's wife eventually found a display that they liked, and they wanted to buy it. They approached one of the store associates and asked him for the price. He said it would cost 20,000 shekels to redo the kitchen with this set. Then he lowered his voice and said, "For you, I have some inside information: very soon, a new kitchen remodeling store will be opening up down the block, and they will give you this exact same set for 20% off. So that'll be a savings of 4,000 shekels".

Ari and his wife looked at each other, shocked. It seemed strange that the store associate would share this information, essentially giving sales away to a competitor, but they took his advice and decided



PASSION - THE EXPRESSION OF THE HEART

Our people had a great fall at the end of last week's Parsha with the daughters of Moav by serving the idol of Pe'or. The 'kinah' of HaShem flared up. In spite of the over one hundred eighty thousand people who were killed and who died in the plague, HaShem's anger was not to be settled. Had it gone unchecked the entire nation would have been destroyed.

When the Zimri, the prince of Shimon stood in front of Moshe and mocked Moshe and Aharon in the presence of his tribe creating a tremendous chillul HaShem, Pinchos killed Zimri together with Cozbi and HaShem's wrath settled and the plague stopped and the Jewish people survived. In the merit of this great act, Pinchos was awarded the covenant of Shalom.

How did Pinchos' act reverse HaShem's decision to destroy His people?

There are times when the Torah identifies HaShem's wrath as 'ka'as' and other times as 'kinah' The former is translated as anger and the latter is translated as jealousy. Our Sages teach that there is a sharp distinction between the two. When HaShem's anger is expressed as Ka'as, HaShem may practice patience with the perpetrators and delay any punishment. If, however, when the anger is an expression of Kinah then HaShem does not practice His patience.

When does ka'as apply and when does kinah apply? Furthermore, we need to understand what determines when HaShem will apply His patience.

The Ramban explains that kinah applies to HaShem's reaction to idol worship and ka'as applies to His reaction to all other transgressions. Even though with every transgression there is an element of rejecting our relationship with HaShem, nevertheless the wrongdoing was not predicated upon rejection, it was predicated on wanting something that is forbidden. Idol worship, in contrast, is a direct breach of our relationship with HaShem. HaShem chose the Jewish people to be His beloved people. He separated us from all the other nations to be ex-

to wait two weeks for the new store to open.

Sure enough, two weeks later, the new store opened. Ari and his wife went into the store, and who do you guess was the owner? It was that very same store associate. He greeted them warmly and said, "I remember you. I remember exactly the kitchen model you were looking at. Here you go, the price for you is 16,000 shekels."

Ari and his wife were very excited to get such a huge discount. But then they thought about it. Was it right for this employee to tell them this information, essentially stealing them as customers from his former boss? Was it right for him to say, "Don't buy it here, buy it from me later on"? If he did the wrong thing, was it right for the couple to facilitate his wrong behavior? But on the other hand, even if it was wrong, did they have to spend an extra 4,000 shekels just to avoid this problem?

So what do you think?

Were Ari and his wife allowed to purchase this kitchen model for 16,000 shekels, saving 4,000 shekels by purchasing it from this competitor? On one hand, you could say they did not do the wrong thing; it was the associate who did wrong. But on the other hand, you could say they were facilitating his wrongdoing. And finally, perhaps it was not wrong at all for the associate to do what he did. He was helping people save a lot of money.

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Devarim, Page 236.



“After being introduced to Torah...
I learned that I am not a cordless model; I need to remain plugged in to HaShem in order to work properly.”

ACHIM
CONNECTING JEWS TOGETHER!

An individual who experienced this epiphany”

clusively His. We have responsibilities to HaShem in this relationship. When we turn to other forms of power and pledge our allegiance to others, that is a direct challenge to that relationship.

Although HaShem is a just GD and people get what they deserve for the good and for otherwise, nevertheless as it relates to punishment He is not quick to punish. He will often overlook some wrongdoing. While nothing is totally overlooked and everything is recorded, HaShem will not take action because He sees that this person has so many positive qualities and in their merit the person will be spared. The reason He practices patience with His beloved people even when they may not deserve it is because they are His beloved people. His enduring love that He has with us and with our ancestors expresses itself through this patience.

It is no wonder why HaShem does not practice His patience with idol worshippers. When His people turn to other forms of power and breach their relationship can we expect that HaShem will practice patience when His patience is a function of His relationship with us?

Given this insight, how did Pinchos settle HaShem's kinah?

There are many emotions and behaviors that can be artificially engaged. For example, a person can be kind and caring towards a person who he dislikes. One can act with great respect towards an individual for whom he does not respect. In many cases this might be the correct thing to do. However, with regards to passion, Man is incapable of being passionate for a cause that he does not believe in. Passion is an expression of the deepest beliefs that lie in the core of his essence. The degree of passion one has for something can be measured by how far is he willing to go to express that feeling.

When Pinchas killed Zimri it was a daring act for which Pinchas could have lost his life many times over. Zimri, the Prince of Shimon was killed in the presence of his tribe. They could have easily killed Pinchas. Even after he killed Zimri, Pinchos was ridiculed for what he had done. He knew it was not a popular act but in the deepest recesses of his heart he was not able to tolerate the desecration to HaShem's Name.

Pinchos' total commitment to HaShem with no other motive is what settled HaShem's kinah. Through Pinchos' act it was evidence that the relationship with the people was preserved. His patience was activated.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

HICCUPS

It feels like science has explanations for everything, but the truth is that all that science knows about the world (which is indeed an enormous amount) is just the very tip of the iceberg. In fact, there are common phenomena that still leave scientists baffled, such as dreaming and yawning. Another similar phenomenon that science cannot fully explain is hiccups. Let's dive into the curious world of hiccups, where we'll discover what they are and why we get them.

What are hiccups? Imagine your body as a campsite, and the diaphragm as your tent's flap, usually moving smoothly to let air in and out. But sometimes, this flap snaps shut unexpectedly, and that's a hiccup! Scientists call this sudden snap "singultus". This snap creates the "hic" sound when your vocal cords snap shut as air gets pushed out. Hiccups involve a complex reflex arc that starts with an involuntary contraction of the diaphragm followed by the abrupt closure of the vocal cords, which causes the "hic" sound. This process can happen several times per minute when you're hiccuping. Interestingly, this reflex involves several parts of the body, including the brain stem, which plays a central role in managing this reflex. Did you know that our hiccup journey begins much earlier than you might expect? Yes, hiccups can occur even in utero! Ultrasound technology has shown that fetuses hiccup in the womb, suggesting that hiccuping plays a developmental role, possibly helping to train the muscles involved in breathing before birth.

So, why do we even hiccup? It turns out scientists do not know. One theory is that hiccups might be an old leftover trick from our baby days. When babies hiccup in the womb, it might be their way of practicing breathing for when they enter the world. And for newborns, hiccups might help them keep milk down without getting a tummy ache.

Sometimes, hiccups serve as a sort of alarm, hinting at deeper health issues. For instance, they can be the initial symptom of more serious conditions such as myocardial infarction (heart attack) or kidney failure. Even certain central nervous system disorders, like multiple sclerosis or meningitis, can present hiccups as a symptom, highlighting their link to our body's complex system.

What triggers hiccups? While we often experience hiccups without any clear reason, certain triggers are known to set them off. Eating too quickly, consuming spicy foods, or drinking carbonated beverages can lead to hiccups. Even emotional triggers like stress, excitement, or laughter can bring on a bout of hiccups, showing how sensitive our bodies are to both physical and emotional changes.

The word "hiccup" itself is pretty old and comes from the sound it makes, "Hic," and the word "cough." Originally people thought hiccups were related to coughing, but that was a bit of a mix-up.

Did you know that hiccups aren't just a human thing? Animals experience them too! Cats, rats, rabbits, dogs, and even horses are known to hiccup. Although hiccups are usually harmless and resolve on their own, persistent hiccups that last more than 48 hours can be a sign of underlying health issues. These can range from minor conditions like gastroesophageal reflux to more serious problems like central nervous system disorders or issues with the metabolic system. If hiccups persist, it's important to consult a healthcare provider to rule out these possibilities.

Now, if you're in the middle of a hiccup bout and looking for a way out, here are some widely suggested home remedies that might just do the trick: Holding Your Breath: Increasing carbon dioxide in the lungs can relax the diaphragm and stop the spasms. Holding your breath for a few seconds can often reset your diaphragmatic rhythm.

Drinking Water: Sipping cold water slowly or drinking a glass of water quickly can interrupt the hiccup cycle. An intriguing variation involves drinking water from the opposite side of the cup, which requires leaning forward, adding a physical distraction component to the cure.

Eating a Spoonful of Sugar: Placing a teaspoon of sugar on the back of the tongue can stimulate the vagus nerve and make the body forget about hiccuping. The graininess of the sugar is thought to affect nerve endings in the throat.

Scaring or Surprising the Individual: One of the oldest tricks in the book, giving someone a good scare, is thought to interrupt the hiccup cycle by shocking the nervous system into focusing on a sudden, unexpected stimulus.

For those rare cases where hiccups are relentless and resist home remedies, medical treatments are available. Medications that affect the nervous system such as gabapentin or baclofen can be prescribed to help manage severe hiccups. In extreme cases, techniques like vagus nerve stimulation, which involves sending mild electrical impulses to the brain, have been used to control persistent hiccups.

Hiccups can sometimes go on a bit longer than we'd like. There's a tale of a man named Charles Osborne who started hiccuping in 1922 and didn't stop until 1990—that's 68 years of hiccuping! He even made it into the Guinness World Records.

SELFLESSNESS DURING AIR CONDITIONING SEASON

The Sherman family rented a house on the top floor, while another family rented the bottom floor of the same house. There was only one A/C and heating unit upstairs that controlled the entire house. The upstairs got very hot and required a lot of air conditioning, while the basement apartment became very cold and uncomfortable.

One day, the basement family asked to raise the temperature because they were too cold. That night, a family member upstairs couldn't sleep well due to the heat. He debated whether to turn the A/C higher or leave it as it was, knowing the people downstairs would be very cold. Eventually, he decided instead to turn on a fan in his room and placed it randomly next to the dresser. Although it was still very hot, he managed to go back to sleep.

Over the next couple of days, no one moved the fan from its place. Early one morning, while everyone was sleeping, a little child upstairs was busy playing in the parents' room. The child opened all six drawers of the dresser and decided to climb to the top to play with some knickknacks. As the child climbed, there was a loud noise as the dresser started to fall forward. The mother awoke in horror, watching everything unfold.

Miraculously, as the dresser fell, it suddenly stopped, allowing the child to run away to safety. The mother looked around in disbelief and saw that it was the fan, which her husband had used to keep the downstairs neighbors comfortable, that had saved her child's life. Baruch Hashem, the little child was saved!

This story serves as a powerful lesson about being mevater, (and a reminder to secure all furniture to the wall, even short dressers.)



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about whether a girl can say untrue things in order to break a harmful friendship, Rav Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Devarim Pg 227) writes as follows. The Ksav Sofer writes that this is exactly what Aron Hacoheh would do. It says that he was ohev shalom and rodef shalom, he loved peace and pursued peace. What is being added by the term "Pursue peace"? The Ksav Sofer says this means that Aron was rodef shalom, to try to destroy the peace. That when Aron saw shalom between people who were causing a harmful influence, he would try to break up the friendship. He would try to break up the friendship in exactly the opposite way that he would bring peace. He would say to each person that really the other isn't really their friend. Therefore, in theory, this can be applied. However, it must be applied very carefully, only with the careful guidance of a Rav. One cannot make this decision on their own, but there is such a concept that sometimes you can use this practice in order to break a harmful friendship.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated with gratitude to
HaShem
for the miracles and wondrous kindnesses that He does for us each and every day

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