

## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



## THE CRUSHED ASTON MARTIN

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Eli lived in Israel and owned a very rare model of an Aston Martin. The car was a limited edition and quite expensive. One day, Eli started having engine trouble, so he brought the car to a mechanic. The mechanic said, "Your car is so rare that we don't have the parts. I'm sorry, but I won't be able to fix it."

Eli was frustrated because he wasn't able to use the car for a while. One day, someone mentioned to him that another person, who lived a few neighborhoods away, also had an Aston Martin. Perhaps that person could guide him on where to get repair parts. Eli was excited to hear this, so he looked up the person's address and made his way there.

When he found the Aston Martin, it was covered in dust, and all the tires were deflated. It looked as if it had been abandoned and sitting there for years. Eli then noticed a sticker from the municipality on the car. The sticker said, "This car has been abandoned. Unless it is

## HEART REFLECTIONS

Tisha b'Av is the day that is dedicated for us to remember HaShem's dissatisfaction with us and mourn our being tossed out of our Land and losing the closeness we had with HaShem. After spending an entire day exclusively mourning our loss of HaShem and being removed from our Land one is filled with a yearning to return back to that previous state of closeness to HaShem and to be in our Land.

We can appreciate how appropriate it is that the first Parsha we read following Tisha b'Av is the Parsha which begins with Moshe pleading with HaShem to allow him to enter the Land. Moshe who, as the Ohr Hachaim explains, carries the root of every Jew's soul, yearns to enter the Land and he does not stop praying for that opportunity. Perhaps Moshe's prayers and Moshe's yearning is what embedded into the heart of every Jew to yearn and to pray to return home.

Once Tisha b'Av passes and our mourning is over we begin the process of returning. For the next seven weeks we read chapters of consolation from Yishayahu (Isaiah) where the prophet tells us how HaShem will take us back and will place His Presence among us. These seven weeks will carry us to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur where HaShem will grant us atonement.

In his commentary on Yirmiyahu 31:17 the Malbim explains that there are two ways in which HaShem moves us to teshuva. The first is through punishment. HaShem allows punishment to reign down upon us until we realize that He is expecting us to change our ways. Such a teshuva is called teshuva mi'yirah, because it is inspired by the fear and the awe of HaShem. The second way He moves us to teshuva is through miracles that He does for us displaying His intense love for us. The heart of Man is like a mirror. When you smile at another he will smile back. When we see HaShem's display of love

removed, it will be towed to a car recycling center and crushed for scrap metal." Eli took note of the sign and the date and time the car was scheduled to be towed and crushed. The date was a few months in the future.

Eli returned to the car on the day it was scheduled to be towed. Just before the tow trucks arrived, Eli took a wrench and removed the engine parts he needed. Then, he watched as the tow truck drove up and pulled the car away.

A few weeks later, the owner of the towed Aston Martin, Donni, returned home. He had been living in America, which was why he hadn't been taking care of his car. Donni couldn't find his car, and neighbors told him it had been towed and recycled by the city. Someone mentioned that a fellow had come by before it was towed and removed some parts. Donni was given Eli's name and called him up.

"Hi, my name is Donni. I'm the owner of the Aston Martin. I heard that you took some of the engine parts from my car before it was towed. I don't have anything left, but I'd like you to please pay me for the parts you took."

Eli responded, "I'm really sorry about your car, but it was about to be towed and crushed. I just took parts from a car that had no value. What value does a car that's about to be crushed have?"

Donni didn't see it that way. He believed that the parts from his car had value and that Eli owed him for taking them.

What do you think? Does Eli have to pay Donni for taking the parts from his car?

See Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 266

“A man should guard his wife's honor with care, For blessings in his home are found when she is there.”

— Based on Bava Metzia 59a



to us we will reflect it back to Him. When this moves us to teshuva it is called teshuva mi'ahavah, because it is inspired by our love for Him.

As we keep the past hundred years in sight, let us look back at 1924, appreciating what the Jewish people anticipated in that coming decade. Let us then move along to the next decade starting in 1934 watching the decline of our standing in Europe followed shortly by Kristalnacht and the quick decline to the mass extermination of our people, the likes of which are perhaps unparalleled.

Let us pause a moment at 1944 and contemplate what we should anticipate in the coming decade. The state of Yiddishkeit in America was plummeting. Reb Yaakov Kamenetsky, who emigrated to America in 1938 said "I davened that my children should keep Shabbos, but that they should be Torah scholars, I could not contemplate." And in our Land what could be hoped for where the political situation was unstable and the Arabs were quick to murder Jews.

In that decade from 1944 -1954 our people received a life-giving blood transfusion of Torah and America started building Yeshivos and communities based on our Torah. Eretz Yisroel also became accessible with the seeds of many Yeshivos and communities being planted there as well.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel less than 80 years ago Israel has been engaged in 17 military conflicts sponsored by their neighbors. With close to 500 million Arabs looking to our Land in hopes that the seven million Jews living there be eliminated, it is nothing short of a fantastic miracle that we continue to live, to thrive and to build bastions of Torah. With every conflict we see miracles from small ones involving individual people to enormous ones where we are able to vanquish armies that are much larger and more powerful than ours.

As we continue turning to HaShem in our current conflict we daven that He continues demonstrating His infinite love for His dear people and moves us to demonstrate our love for Him.

השיבנו ד' אליך ונשובה חדש ימינו כקדם

Have a wonderful Shabbos Nachamu.

**Paysach Diskind**



## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### SORVAGSVATN: THE LAKE THAT FLOATS ABOVE THE OCEAN

Imagine standing on the edge of a cliff, looking out over the deep blue expanse of the North Atlantic Ocean. But wait! Just below, something astonishing catches your eye—a lake, serene and beautiful, seems to float high above the ocean's waves. Welcome to Sorvagsvatn, the largest lake in the Faroe Islands, and one of nature's most captivating optical illusions.

Sorvagsvatn, also known as Leitisvatn, lies on Vagar Island, the third largest island in the Faroe Islands. Covering an area of 3.4 square kilometers, this lake is a significant part of the Faroese landscape, a natural wonder that both locals and visitors hold dear. It's more than just a body of water—Sorvagsvatn is a symbol of the rugged beauty and mystery that defines the Faroe Islands.

The Faroe Islands, an autonomous territory of Denmark, are located in the North Atlantic Ocean, roughly halfway between Scotland and Iceland. These islands are known for their dramatic landscapes, shaped by volcanic activity and glaciers over millennia. The Faroe Islands' rugged terrain, subpolar oceanic climate, and remote location have preserved much of their natural beauty, with Sorvagsvatn standing out as a prime example. The islands are shaped by ancient volcanic activity and the grinding power of glaciers, giving rise to dramatic cliffs, steep slopes, and a coastline that's nothing short of breathtaking. These islands are home to just about 50,000 people, and their lives are closely intertwined with the land and sea around them. The Faroe Islands have a subpolar oceanic climate, heavily influenced by the North Atlantic current, which brings mild winters, cool summers, and frequent rain.

What makes Sorvagsvatn so extraordinary is its incredible optical illusion. When viewed from certain angles, especially from the top of the Traelanipa cliff, the lake appears to be floating high above the ocean. The illusion is so convincing that it almost feels like magic, but it's actually a wonderful trick of perspective.

But how does this illusion work? The answer lies in the lake's elevation and the steep cliffs surrounding it. Sorvagsvatn sits about 100 feet above sea level, and its surface slopes gently toward the ocean. The cliffs that rise from the ocean below are so steep that they prevent the lake's water from spilling into the sea, except through the Bosdalafossur

waterfall, which connects the lake to the Atlantic Ocean. When viewed from specific angles, these geographical features create the illusion that the lake is floating above the ocean, when in reality it is on the side of the ocean. (See bottom picture)

Traelanipa, which means "slave cliff" in the Faroese language, is the best spot to witness this phenomenon. The cliff gets its name from Viking times, when it was said that slaves were thrown from its heights into the sea below. Today, it offers a far less grim but equally dramatic view—a panoramic scene where the lake, ocean, and sky seem to merge into one.

On clear days, the illusion is even more pronounced, with the lake appearing to float serenely above the waves. But even in less favorable weather, when mist and clouds obscure the horizon, the sight is no less magical. There's a sense of mystery that pervades the air, a feeling that you're standing on the edge of the world, looking out over something truly extraordinary.

Sorvagsvatn's illusion is a powerful reminder of how perspective shapes our experience of the world. From one angle, the lake looks like it's perched high above the ocean; from another, it appears as a tranquil body of water nestled in the island's hills. This duality is part of what makes Sorvagsvatn so fascinating—it's a natural wonder that constantly challenges your perceptions.

Unsurprisingly, Sorvagsvatn has become a favorite subject for photographers and nature enthusiasts. The lake's surreal appearance, coupled with the dramatic backdrop of Vagar Island, makes it an irresistible target for cameras. Whether you're a professional photographer or not, it's almost impossible to take a bad picture of Sorvagsvatn.

During World War II, the British built an airfield near Sorvagsvatn to support seaplanes, highlighting the lake's strategic importance. The first aircraft to land on the lake was from the RAF Coastal Command in 1941. This historical significance adds another layer to the lake's story, intertwining it with global events that shaped the 20th century.

Thank you Hashem for your wondrous creation!

## THE GUARANTOR

Rabbi David Ashear related the following story.

Around forty years ago, a wealthy Jewish philanthropist in London suddenly lost his fortune. He didn't tell anyone what had happened because he didn't want those in need to hesitate to approach him for help. He loved giving and didn't want to stop, even after his financial collapse.

The man went to a prominent, wealthy Jew in Manchester and requested a loan so he could continue helping people. He explained that he had several investments that would mature in two years, so he asked for a two-year loan of 2 million British pounds, which was roughly equivalent to 4 million dollars. The man from Manchester was prepared to provide the loan but asked if he had a guarantor. The man from London explained that he didn't want anyone to know about his reversal of fortune. He would need to approach at least ten different people to find a guarantor, so he preferred borrowing without one.

"You are asking me to do the impossible," the man from Manchester said. "How can I lend you so much money without a guarantor?"

"I am doing this l'shem Shamayim," the man from London explained, "in order to help people. I know Hashem can be the Guarantor."

The man from Manchester, with complete faith in Hashem, responded, "You are correct. Because this money is needed l'shem Shamayim, we will name Hashem as the Guarantor." And he gave him the sum he requested.

Two years later, the man from London returned to Manchester without the money. He explained that he did not yet have the funds to repay the loan and needed another two months. The man from Manchester began to think he would never see the money again, so he went into his private room and spoke to Hashem. "You are the Guarantor for this loan," he said, "and the time has come for it to be repaid. But I don't want the money. I have a daughter who is already of age and has not been able to find a shidduch. Please send her a husband, and I will consider that as payment of the loan."

The man's daughter was engaged less than three weeks later. He also closed a profitable business deal that yielded almost the complete sum he had lent.

Two-and-a-half months later, the man from London returned, ready to repay the loan. But the lender refused, explaining that the "Guarantor" had already repaid the debt in full, and the man did not owe him anything. However, the man from London insisted, saying that he didn't accept free gifts and was intent on repaying the money he borrowed. An argument ensued, with each party insisting that the other keep the money.

Remarkably, they brought the case to a beis din in Israel. One of the judges who presided over the case, Rabbi Zickerman, who later related this story, said that the judges were all in tears, overcome by emotion at seeing the honesty and sincerity of these two men. They ruled that the money should be returned to the "Guarantor," to Hashem. It happened to be a shemittah year, so the money was given to a special fund set up to assist farmers in Israel who observed shemittah.



## THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about using the seforim in the bookstore, Rav Zilberstein (U'Piryo Matok , Devarim page 254) wrote that because of the context we can assume that the owner would allow the rabbi to look at the seforim in order to answer the urgent question. This is because "kol Yisrael arevim ze la'ze", so the store owner also has to be concerned for this questioner to get his answer.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in memory of the yahrzeit of my only son  
**Igor, Israel ben Nachum, Berenstein**  
who tragically passed away on August 10,1994, at age of 23.

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