

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



SELLING THE EXTRA BUS SEATS

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Dovid was newly engaged and planning a beautiful wedding in Yerushalayim. He was studying at a yeshiva in Haifa, in northern Israel, and wanted to make sure his friends had transportation to attend the wedding. So, Dovid gave money to his friend Meir and asked him to rent a 50-seat bus to bring everyone down on the day of the wedding.

Meir did as promised—he ordered the bus and spread the word around the yeshiva that he was reserving seats for the trip. However, when the day of the wedding arrived, only about 35 of the 50 seats were reserved. It turned out there was another event that conflicted with the wedding, so not everyone could make it.

With only 35 out of 50 seats filled, Meir and his friends set out for Yerushalayim. Along the way, they saw a large group of yeshiva students waiting at a bus stop. Meir had their bus stop and asked the students what they



IT'S NOT ABOUT ME

Our Parsha opens with HaShem appearing to Avraham as he was recuperating from his Bris Milah at the home of his friend, Mamre. The Midrash explains that Mamre merited to have HaShem rest in his home because he advised Avraham to do the Bris Milah as HaShem commanded him. The Midrash indicates that Avraham's two other friends, Oneir and Eshkol advised him against having the Bris Milah.

The Sefas Emes explains that Oneir and Eshkol rejected the Bris Milah because they understood that this would separate Avraham to become more dedicated to HaShem than the rest of Mankind. They felt threatened that with his personal covenant with Hashem, Avraham would be removed from them. In order to keep their friend close to them, they advised Avraham against performing the Bris Milah.

Although Mamre also shared their concern and wanted to keep Avraham close to himself, nevertheless he advised Avraham to perform the Bris. He told Avraham, "If Ha-Shem, the One Who saved you from the fire of Nimrod and saved you from the Four Kings and spared you in your travails with Pharaoh, wants you to perform the Bris Milah you must certainly do so."

This mighty act of supporting Avraham's performance of the Bris Milah at the cost of losing his closeness to Avraham generated the merit that HaShem should rest His Presence on his property. Behold! Mamre's readiness to lose his closeness with his great friend created a new closeness with HaShem! Certainly, once Mamre was elevated to the level of hosting HaShem's Presence in his home, his closeness to Avraham deepened as well.

The Sefas Emes concludes with the lesson this Midrash teaches us. When one is ready

were waiting for. They replied that they were waiting for a regular bus to take them to a wedding in Yerushalayim. When he asked which wedding hall, they mentioned a location near the hall where they were headed.

Meir said, "I'll be honest with you—we have 15 extra seats. If each of you pays 50 shekels, you can have a spot on our bus." The students agreed, and 12 of them joined, collectively paying Meir 600 shekels.

The trip was uneventful, and they arrived in Yerushalayim, with everyone heading to their respective wedding halls. A couple of days after the wedding, Meir went over to Dovid and handed him the 600 shekels, saying, "This belongs to you. We had 15 extra seats, and we were able to sell most of them, so since you rented the bus, the money should go to you."

But Dovid replied, "Thank you so much, I don't think it belongs to me. I was fine with having 15 empty seats. You took the initiative to sell those extra seats, so the money should go to you."

Meir insisted, "No, I think it belongs to you. You rented the bus, and anyway, you could use the money."

Each of them thought the other deserved the money. So, they agreed to bring the question to a rabbi: Who is entitled to the money? Is it Dovid, who rented and paid for the bus, or Meir, who took the initiative to sell the extra seats?

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 445



to concede their own honor for the honor of HaShem then HaShem's Honor is elevated and their own honor is elevated accordingly.

In other words, the more committed one is to giving up his own self and his own ego to HaShem, the more he gets back. It is actually paradoxical because if he truly gives up his entire ego then there is nothing left of himself. How can he become elevated? If he has so completely self-effaced then he practically ceases to exist. How can he then enter into an elevated state?

The answer to this paradox is that true elevation comes when one recognizes that there is nothing but HaShem, even his own existence is nothing but HaShem. Every person exists only as the expression of HaShem's Will.

In a discussion about Reb Shraga Feivel Mendelovitch, the director of Yeshiva Torah Vadaath, Reb Yaakov Kamensky shared the following insight "Every Rosh Yeshiva thinks that his yeshiva is

the best yeshiva and this is natural and to be expected. For this reason, every Rosh Yeshiva is careful that his best students should not leave his yeshiva. The better the students are, the better the yeshiva will be. Reb Shraga Feivel was the exception. He did not care about his yeshiva any more than any other yeshiva. In fact, when Reb Aharon Kotler arrived in America to found the Lakewood Yeshiva, he spoke to Reb Shraga Feivel and asked him to help build the Lakewood yeshiva. Reb Shraga Feivel took his two best students, Reb Elya Svei and Reb Moshe Eisenmann (from Vineland) and sent them with Reb Aharon. Reb Shraga Feivel cared only for HaShem and His Torah. There was no self. His 'self' was not his and his yeshiva was not his."

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind

(As a side note, Reb Yaakov Kamenetsky explains that Avraham had no question regarding doing the Bris Milah. HaShem instructed to do it - there was no question. However, he was debating whether or not he should publicize his Bris Milah. Just as he did not publicize the Akeida, perhaps he should perform the Bris quietly as well. Regarding this question his friends weighed in with their varying opinions.)



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

WATERSPOUTS

Last week, we learned about whirlpools—swirling waters in the ocean. But can you imagine a tower of swirling water, sometimes filled with fish, reaching all the way up to the clouds? Meet the waterspout—a swirling column of air and water mist that dances across oceans, seas, and lakes. These watery wonders form when specific weather conditions align just right, creating breathtaking and often mysterious spectacles that have captivated human imagination for centuries. Let's dive into the fascinating world of waterspouts and uncover some of their most amazing secrets!

What exactly is a Waterspout? A waterspout is essentially a rotating column of air and water mist that resembles a tornado, but it forms over a body of water. The process begins when warm, humid air near the water's surface rises into cooler air above. This interaction creates a powerful, rotating vortex that can extend from clouds down to the water, making it look like a funnel touching the surface. There are two main types: fair-weather waterspouts and tornadic waterspouts.

Fair-Weather Waterspouts form under developing cumulus clouds and are generally less intense, with wind speeds typically ranging from 40 to 80 mph (64 to 129 km/h). They're relatively harmless and often occur in calmer conditions.

Tornadic Waterspouts are essentially tornadoes that either form over water or move from land to water. These can be significantly more powerful, with wind speeds often exceeding 100 mph (161 km/h) and are linked to severe thunderstorms.

Advancements in satellite imagery and Doppler radar have improved our ability to detect waterspouts. However, fair-weather waterspouts—those that aren't part of thunderstorms—remain elusive. Visual sightings are still often the most reliable way to detect these peaceful but powerful phenomena.

Waterspouts are powerful enough to lift small marine animals like fish or frogs into the air. In rare cases, this results in "fish rain" when the waterspout dissipates over land, dropping its small aquatic passengers. These incidents have been recorded throughout history, adding to the allure and mystery surrounding waterspouts.

How big are waterspouts, and how long do they last? Waterspouts can vary greatly in size and duration. Some span only a few feet

in diameter, while others stretch over 300 feet across. They typically last between 5 and 20 minutes, although under ideal conditions, some have persisted even longer.

One of the most powerful waterspouts ever recorded was the 1953 Flensburg Waterspout. It struck near Flensburg, Germany, in 1953. This waterspout was intense enough to cause significant damage onshore, wreaking havoc on coastal structures and nearby boats. Unlike most waterspouts, which are relatively short-lived and harmless, the Flensburg waterspout displayed exceptional power, showcasing just how destructive these formations can be under the right conditions.

Where can you see waterspouts? While waterspouts are common in tropical and subtropical regions like the Florida Keys and the Mediterranean Sea, they can surprise us in unexpected places. For instance, the 2003 New England waterspout highlighted how these phenomena can form even in cooler, less-expected regions. Late summer and early fall are peak times for waterspouts since warm water temperatures fuel their formation.

In some cases, you might see multiple waterspouts occurring together, creating what's known as a "family" of waterspouts. This happens when atmospheric conditions are particularly favorable, leading to the formation of several waterspouts in a single area—a stunning sight for anyone lucky enough to witness it!

The earliest recorded waterspout dates back to 1456 near Ancona, Italy, when observers believed it to be the work of mythical sea creatures. Waterspouts were once shrouded in superstition, with many ancient cultures attributing them to supernatural forces.

Though waterspouts are usually less destructive than their land-based counterparts, they're still a hazard for anyone in their path. Boaters are advised to steer clear and navigate away at a 90-degree angle from a waterspout's apparent movement. For aircraft, however, waterspouts can be deadly. Low-flying planes, especially helicopters, can experience severe turbulence when flying near a waterspout, making it critical for pilots to avoid them.

With their dramatic, swirling forms reaching toward the sky, waterspouts are a favorite among photographers and storm chasers. Their dynamic beauty offers some of the most awe-inspiring scenes in

HIS SENSE OF HUMOR SHONE THROUGH IN HIS INTERACTIONS

Rav Yaakov Moshe Kulefsky was the Rosh Yeshiva of Ner Yisrael. Rav Kulefsky's methods were far from conventional, and his sense of humor shone through in his interactions with his children. One morning, he walked into his son's room holding a newspaper and exclaimed, "Oh, my! Mickey Mantle [a famous baseball player for the Yankees] died!" His son jumped out of bed in shock, only to find out that Mickey Mantle was actually very much alive. Rav Kulefsky smirked and said, "Okay, now that you're out of bed, you can go to minyan."

During a time when his eyesight was severely compromised, Rav Kulefsky attended a bar mitzvah where someone passed him the serving plate. Because his vision was so impaired, he mistook it for his personal plate and started eating straight from the platter. When someone pointed out the mix-up, he immediately stopped. Instead of becoming upset or embarrassed, he chuckled. Later that night, Rav Kulefsky shared the story with his family, saying, "You have to hear this—the funniest thing happened to me today." This was more than just an amusing anecdote; he was using his remarkable sense of humor to keep himself from becoming disheartened by his difficult circumstances.

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THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the person who sold the free sefarim, Rav Zilberstein (in Upiryo Matok, Devarim, page 437) answered that, according to the strict letter of the law (m'ikar hadin), he may keep the money because the sefarim were considered ownerless (hefker). However, it would be a form of hashavas aveida (returning lost property) to use the money to purchase new sefarim and distribute them for free to those who will study from them.

L'zecher Nishmas

HaRav Meir Shraga ben Eliyahu

HaRabanis Fraida Miriam bas HaRav Elozer Beinisch Zywica

R' Eliyahu Yosef ben HaRav Meir Shraga Esther Miriam bas R' Tzvi Moshe Zywica

Leah Brocha bas HaRav Elozer Beinisch Friedlander

HaRabanis Aviva bas HaRav Shmuel Yaakov Weisbord

May their Neshamos have an Aliya and may they be "Gutta Beters" for our Mishpocha and Gantz K'llal Yisroel.

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