



A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



FLYING FIRST CLASS

Rabbi Epstein was the head of a prominent yeshiva in Israel. Every year, he would travel to the United States on a fundraising trip. Due to his extremely busy schedule, he developed the practice of flying first class for these trips. Being in first class allowed him to prepare his lectures, talks, and other important material, making the most of his travel time. He considered this a worthwhile use of the yeshiva's funds.

One year, as usual, Rabbi Epstein purchased a first-class ticket for his upcoming fundraising trip. On the day of the flight, however, when he arrived at the airport, the clerk informed him with great regret that the flight was overbooked and no first-class seats were available. She offered him a full refund for the first-class ticket and a complimentary coach-class seat instead.

Rabbi Epstein accepted the refund and the coach ticket. Although the experience was less comfortable, he did his best to prepare his lectures during the flight. When he arrived in the U.S., he began his usual fundraising meetings.

During one of these meetings with a well-known, generous donor, the donor asked him a direct question:



BACK TO THE FUTURE

This week's Parsha begins the saga of the sale of Yosef as a slave to Egypt by his brothers. The greatness of the personal character of the shevatim, the 12 sons of Yaakov, was so great that we have no frame of reference by which to appreciate it. To illustrate this; we can use the distance between Cleveland and Akron to describe how far away Denver is from Cleveland. The answer is that it is 31 times farther. (Cleveland is 40 miles away from Akron and 1,333 miles from Denver.) However, it would be impossible to use those 40 miles to describe how far away the sun is from its closest star? (It is 4.25 light years away.) It is impossible to use those 40 miles as a frame of reference in appreciating that distance. When it comes to those distances we earth dwellers have no frame of reference to relate to them. In a similar way it is impossible for us folks living in the 21st century to relate to the astronomical greatness of the sons of Yaakov. It is therefore beyond our comprehension for us to begin appreciating their level of righteousness. So the question remains; how did these giants come to sell their brother into slavery?

Malbim as well as many others explain that HaShem blinded the brothers and led them to believe that Yosef was actually trying to destroy the destiny of the Jewish people. Given this perspective they were justified in eliminating Yosef in order to guarantee the future of the Jewish people. Selling Yosef as a slave to Egypt would accomplish the same effect as eliminating him. This is the reason for their decision.

There is a mitzvah to give your friend the benefit of the doubt when you see him doing something inappropriate. The reason for this is because every Jew must be assumed as upstanding and would not commit an act that is inappropriate. We must therefore assume that there is some valid justification for him to do what he did. There is no question that the brothers of Yosef practiced this mitzvah as they observed all the mitzvos. If after paying attention to giving Yosef the benefit of the doubt they still maintained that he was a danger to the future of our people, we must assume that Ha-

MITZVA MEME

"Tell me, Rabbi, what class did you fly in?"

Surprised, Rabbi Epstein responded, "Why do you ask? What difference does it make?"

The donor insisted, "Please, Rabbi, just answer the question. What class did you fly in?" Rabbi Epstein replied honestly, "I flew coach."

The donor smiled with satisfaction and handed him an extremely generous donation of \$50,000.

Later, curious about the donor's unusual question, Rabbi Epstein asked a mutual friend why the donor had been so concerned about his flight class. The friend explained: "My friend has a personal principle. If the head of a yeshiva flies first class, he refuses to give them a penny. He believes that donating to an organization that uses money on such luxuries is a waste of his money."

Rabbi Epstein was relieved but also began to wonder. Normally, he did fly first class; it was only by chance that he had not do so on this trip. The donor's exact question had been "What class did you fly in?" — not "Do you usually fly first class?"

This raised the question: Was Rabbi Epstein obligated to inform the donor that, under normal circumstances, he does fly first class — even though doing so might cost the yeshiva a large donation?

On one hand, the donor never asked what he normally does. But on the other hand, had the donor known the truth, he might have never given such a large donation.

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 479



Shem purposely skewed their perception and confused their judgement. This was done because HaShem wanted Yosef to become a slave in Egypt in order to prepare that country for the eventual arrival of Yaakov and the family. The purpose of having Yaakov descend to Egypt was in order to begin the period of Egyptian slavery which was necessary for our people to receive that Land of Israel.

Although the hatred of the brothers toward Yosef was caused by HaShem blinding them, nevertheless, it created a stain on our people from which we suffer until today. Our Sages teach us that we are currently in exile due to the hatred that still exists between one Jew and his friend or between one group and another group. That original exile, the Egyptian exile, which was built upon the baseless hatred of the brothers, was the harbinger of our current exile. If we wish to speed up the arrival of Moshiach we must keep a focus on eradicating such hatred. How do we accomplish that?

If only we could go back in time to the period of the brothers and

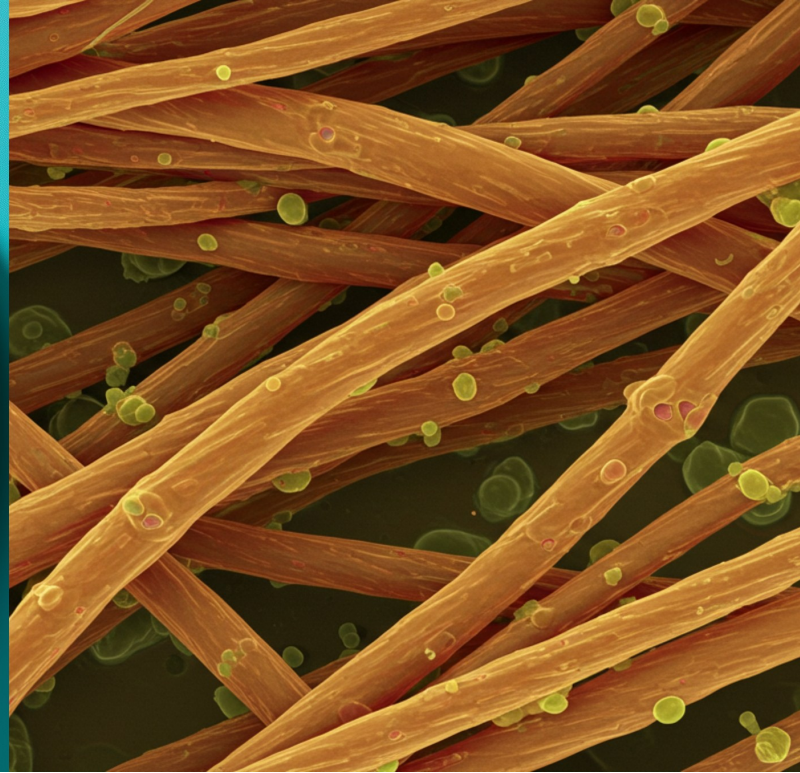
Yosef and explain to the brothers exactly why Yaakov gave special attention to Yosef, and if only we could explain to Yosef how his brothers will react if he would share his dreams with them, we would be able to prevent so much misunderstanding and they would never have sold him as a slave. They would have actually honored him and given him much respect. Of course, HaShem wanted them to blunder in order to facilitate the sale of Yosef.

So, although it is only fantasy to be able to go back in time to change the outcome of history, it is nevertheless, a wonderful exercise for us to practice today. So often we perceive the actions of a friend negatively; we will say "he was motivated by self-serving reasons" when in reality, it was a completely selfless action. While we may judge our friend as being selfish he may, in fact, be selfless.

Although we cannot go back in time to fix the past, we are able to be present now to fix the future.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

FIBER: AN ESSENTIAL, PARADOXICAL NUTRIENT WE CANNOT DIGEST

Last week, we learned about minerals that we eat and which are absorbed by our bodies. But there is another nutrient that is not digested at all by our bodies, passes through our entire digestive system, yet is extremely healthy. Imagine that! We need to eat this nutrient, even though our bodies cannot digest it. This nutrient is known as fiber.

Fiber may seem like a simple nutrient, but it's a powerhouse when it comes to keeping your body healthy. Found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans, such as apples, broccoli, and lentils, fiber supports digestion, heart health, weight management, and even the immune system. Although your body can't digest fiber, that's precisely what makes it so beneficial. Fiber can be classified into two main types: soluble fiber, which dissolves in water, and insoluble fiber, which does not. Let's explore how fiber works its wonders.

Heart Health: A diet high in fiber can be a lifesaver for your heart. Soluble fiber, found in foods like oats and beans, binds to LDL ("bad") cholesterol in the gut, preventing it from entering the bloodstream. This process helps to lower overall cholesterol levels and reduces the risk of heart disease. Fiber is a bit like a sponge that cleans up and absorbs bad cholesterol in your body. In a similar way, fiber helps remove other toxins from the digestive tract by binding to harmful substances and aiding their elimination from the body. Fiber may also help reduce chronic inflammation, which has been linked to cardiovascular conditions. Some studies suggest that a high-fiber diet can even help to lower blood pressure, further supporting heart health.

Blood Sugar Control: Fiber also plays a critical role in managing blood sugar levels. High blood sugar levels can be dangerous and may cause long-term negative health effects. Soluble fiber dissolves in water, forming a gel-like substance that slows down digestion and sugar absorption. This helps to prevent sudden spikes in blood sugar after meals, keeping energy levels steadier. In the long term, a fiber-rich diet can improve insulin sensitivity, helping the body use blood sugar more effectively. This makes fiber particularly beneficial for people with insulin resistance or type 2 diabetes. Even people without diabetes can benefit from fiber's blood sugar-stabilizing effects, supporting steady energy throughout the day.

Weight Management: Fiber is a powerful ally for anyone looking to maintain a healthy weight. Fiber-rich foods are typically low in calories but take up more space in the stomach, making you feel fuller for

longer. Some types of fiber can suppress appetite by releasing hormones that signal fullness to the brain, making fiber a natural appetite suppressant. This helps to control calorie intake and supports long-term weight management. By slowing digestion, fiber extends the feeling of fullness, potentially reducing overeating and unhealthy snacking.

Digestive Health: Fiber is famous for promoting a healthy digestive system. As it travels through your gut undigested, fiber interacts with water, forming a viscous gel (particularly soluble fiber), which adds bulk to your stool and makes using the restroom easier. Fiber also helps to maintain a healthy water balance in the gut. Some types of fiber provide an extra benefit by feeding good gut bacteria—a process known as the prebiotic effect. When these bacteria break down fiber, they produce short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) like butyrate, which fuel colon cells and may help reduce inflammation. Additionally, fiber is associated with a reduced risk of colon cancer, potentially by speeding up waste removal and promoting a healthier gut environment.

Hidden Benefits: Fiber's benefits go beyond digestion and heart health. A healthy gut, supported by fiber, may contribute to a strengthened immune system by promoting a balanced microbiome. The gut and brain are closely connected, and a healthy gut microbiome, supported by fiber, can positively affect the brain and influence mental health. This may lead to reduced feelings of anxiety and improvements in overall mood.

Fiber is much more than just a digestive aid—it's a nutritional hero that supports your entire body and promotes heart health, blood sugar control, weight management, digestive health, and even mental well-being. Because of all of its benefits, people who consume high-fiber diets tend to live longer due to reduced risks of major diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. Adults are generally recommended to consume 25-30 grams of fiber per day. So load up your plate with nature's best offerings and let fiber be your body's secret health hero! Start your day with a high-fiber cereal, add beans to your salads, swap white flour for whole grain flour, and snack on fruits and vegetables. Making small changes to incorporate more fiber into your diet can make a big difference for your overall health.

Thank you, Hashem, for your wondrous world!

WE'RE OBLIGATED TO CONSOLE HIM, TOO, IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS AGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Reb Shmuel Aurbach was once men-achem avel at the home of a family following the loss of their father. Noticing that one of the niftar's sons was a young child, Reb Shmuel took him aside.

"Yeled, do you happen to have building blocks we can play with?" The little one ran to fetch them, and he and the Rosh Yeshiva got down on the floor to spend time building an impressive toy edifice together.

Afterward, when someone wondered aloud whether this was in keeping with the Rosh Yeshiva's kavod, he replied that it wasn't any more demeaning than it is for the Borei Olam to concern Himself with the inanities that so often preoccupy us adults. "And besides," Reb Shmuel added, "How then exactly shall we console this child? With a ma'arachah from Reb Akiva Eiger? We're obligated to console him, too, in accordance with his age and understanding."

(From Reb Shmuel, Written By R' Eytan Kobre, Published By Judaica Press)



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the baby gift, Rabbi Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 471) answered that it was permitted to give the baby gift. This is because it is clear to everyone that she is giving the gift for business purposes, and it is not seen as any opinion related to the boss's marriage.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated to the memory of
Uncle Leonid Spivak
לייב בן שלמה ז"ל

By Felix and Alla Shraga



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