



## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



## LEAVING TEFILLIN BEHIND

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

A man named Moshe once traveled to the USSR, behind the Iron Curtain during the 70's. While visiting the city of Leningrad, he met hundreds of Jews. When he told them he had tefillin, many lined up for the opportunity to put them on. He was able to inspire and teach countless Jews who were deeply thirsty for Torah and their heritage.

Eventually, he had to leave. But he realized that once he left, these hundreds of Jews would no longer have access to tefillin. He



## IN AWE

As Moshe stands before his people one month before his passing, he reviews with them what occurred at Mount Sinai 40 years earlier. He establishes for them how HaShem revealed to the entire nation that He implicitly trusts Moshe to carry His word to the people. It is clear that Moshe's word is to be completely trusted, and they should not waver either to the right or to the left. He then tells his people the purpose of performing the mitzvot: "This is the mitzvah, the chukim, and the mishpatim that HaShem commanded you... in order that you should fear HaShem to observe all His chukim and His mishpatim which I instruct you and your children and grandchildren all the days of your life..."

This needs clarification. He instructs his people to observe the mitzvot in order to fear HaShem, to observe the mitzvot. If the purpose of observing the mitzvot is to fear HaShem, then Moshe should simply state, "in order that you should fear HaShem." Why does he add again, "to observe all His mitzvot"?

Malbim explains that there are two types of fear of HaShem. One is fear of punishment, which leads a person to avoid neglecting the mitzvot. This type of fear is not truly fear of HaShem, but rather fear of the consequences. There is, however, a different kind of fear that arises from a deep understanding of HaShem's greatness. Perhaps a better word for this is "awe." One experiences this awe when standing before the untouched, raw majesty of creation—such as in the remote corners of Norway or before the towering Alps. The breathtaking beauty of the world fills a person with awe for the creation, and thus for the Creator.

did not know of any other tefillin in the city. He began to wonder: Should he leave his tefillin behind?

The problem was that if he did, he wouldn't have tefillin to use during his travels. He would end up missing the mitzvah for at least one day. So he asked Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv: Would it be permitted to miss one day of tefillin so that hundreds of people could put it on for the next hundreds of days, or even years?

Perhaps you could argue that if he missed one day, the merit of all those mitzvos would go to his credit. Or maybe we say that one is not allowed to miss tefillin, even if it enables hundreds of others to fulfill the mitzvah for many more days.

What do you think? Can he miss one day, so that hundreds can gain for many more?

See Veharev Na Volume Four, Hebrew Edition.

Gradually, they move toward becoming truly inspired.

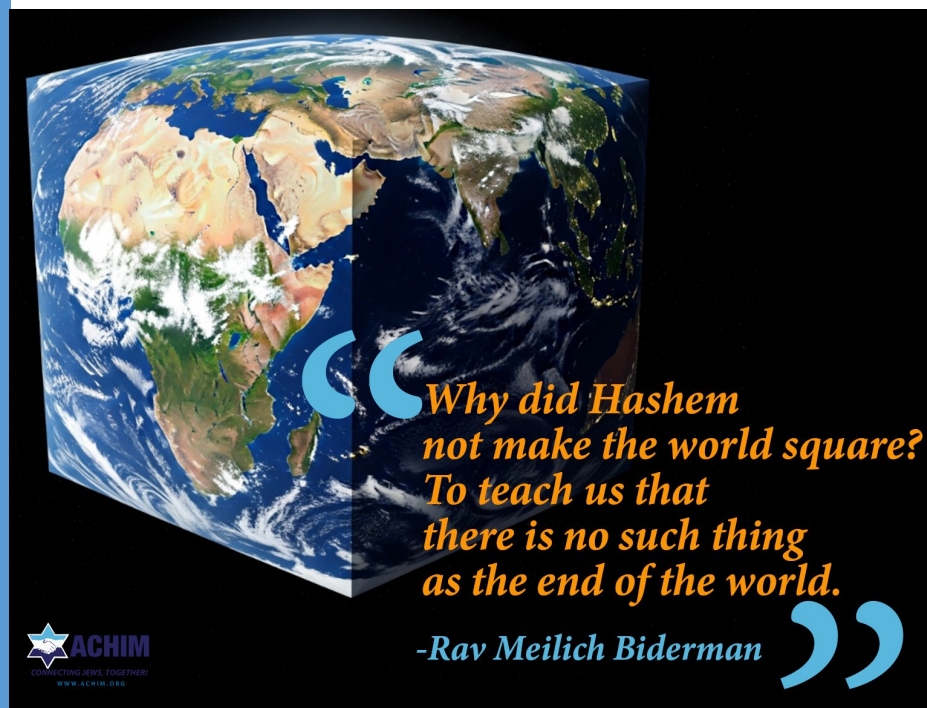
Let us return to Moshe's instruction to his people: "This is the mitzvah that HaShem commanded you in order that you should fear Him"—meaning, become inspired by His awesome greatness—and perform His mitzvos from within that inspiration.

Malbim is pointing out that it is not enough to be inspired by HaShem's greatness. We must act on that inspiration by performing His mitzvos in that state of awe.

Have a wonderful Shabbos,

**Paysach Diskind**

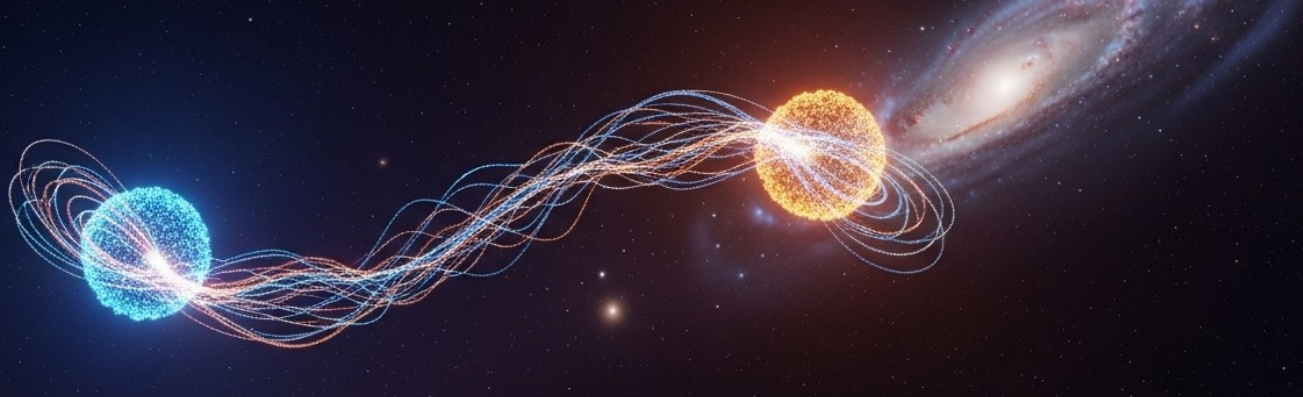
## MITZVA MEME



When Moshe tells us that the purpose of observing the mitzvos is to fear HaShem, he is referring to this second kind of fear. Malbim explains that HaShem's Will is that we, His people, should serve Him out of our understanding of His greatness, from a sense of awe at His unity. The entire world is an expression of His singular existence; there is nothing outside of Him. Just take a look at the science piece on Quantum Entanglement, and we begin to realize how limited our understanding of His creation truly is. When a Jew is filled with awe of HaShem and, in that inspired state, studies a page of Talmud or lights the Shabbos candles to welcome HaShem's Presence, and fulfills the mitzvos in that spirit, then HaShem's Will is fulfilled.

How does one reach that level of inspiration? By performing a mitzvah, even without initial inspiration. That very mitzvah can awaken a person to a higher level of awareness. As one continues to focus on their mitzvos with an open heart, their neshama becomes more sensitive to the spiritual power within them.





# SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

## INVISIBLE THREADS: THE QUANTUM WONDER THAT CONNECTS THE UNIVERSE

Imagine you and a friend have two marbles that always match in color. If one turns blue, the other instantly turns blue, even if your friend is on the Moon. Magic? Not quite. Welcome to the mind-bending world of quantum entanglement, one of the most mysterious and astonishing phenomena in all of nature. Let's go on an adventure, not through a forest or swamp this time, but deep into the strange and beautiful territory of quantum nature!

In the quantum world, things are... well, weird. Particles can be in many places at once. They can spin in two directions at the same time. And when two particles become entangled, they stop being two separate "things" at all. They start to act like one unified system, no matter how far apart they go.

Here's how it works: Imagine two photons, tiny bits of light, are created at the same time. Because of the way they're born, they become entangled. From that moment on, measuring one instantly tells you something about the other. It's not like sending a message; it's more like they're sharing a secret so deeply that knowing one means you already know the other.

And here's the wildest part: It doesn't matter whether they're an inch apart or light-years apart. Their connection doesn't care about space, time, or distance.

Einstein didn't like this idea at all. He called it "spooky action at a distance." But after decades of experiments, scientists now agree, spooky or not, it's real.

So what's really going on?

Entanglement isn't a connection made of string or electricity or even energy. It's a connection made of information. Once two particles are entangled, their fates are linked. They share one wave function, like one big cloud of possibility stretched across space. They don't each have their own individual "story." They're part of the same story.

It's not magic. It's not telepathy. It's quantum mechanics, a set of rules that governs the tiniest building blocks of our universe.

And unlike other connections in nature, entanglement doesn't wear a name tag or give off a glow. You can't "see" entanglement with your eyes. But it's happening all around us, all the time. Think quantum entanglement is rare? Think again!

This invisible connection occurs constantly in nature, especially in the wild, chaotic world of subatomic particles. In the early universe, entangled particles were everywhere. Even today, scientists believe the cosmic microwave background, a faint glow left over from that early time, still carries the fingerprints of these quantum connections.

Cosmic rays, those high-energy visitors from space, crash into atoms in Earth's atmosphere every day. When they do, they can create pairs of entangled particles. That means the sky above you could be sparkling with invisible bonds right now!

Even your own body might host fleeting flashes of entanglement. Atoms in your cells sometimes become momentarily entangled with others, only to lose their link in the noisy bustle of the biological world.

This "breaking apart" is called decoherence. It happens when a quantum system interacts with its environment, kind of like a whisper that gets drowned out in a thunderstorm. But while most natural entanglement doesn't last long, scientists are learning how to stretch these mysterious lifespans longer than ever before.

How long can it last? In a perfect, silent laboratory, with no heat, no sound, and no outside poking, entangled particles could stay connected forever. But in the real world, that's nearly impossible.

Still, researchers have made impressive strides. In 2020, a team managed to keep two quantum bits, called qubits, entangled for over a minute. That may not sound long, but in the quantum world, it's like holding your breath for a day!

Why does it matter? Because the longer we can keep particles entangled, the more we can do with them. In fact, this strange connection is the beating heart of a new revolution in science and technology. Quantum entanglement is actually changing the way we build, communicate, and explore. Take quantum computing, for example. In a normal computer, everything runs on bits, tiny switches that are either on (1) or off (0). But in a quantum computer, qubits can be both at once, and if they're entangled, their powers multiply.

That means quantum computers can solve problems that regular computers couldn't finish in the lifetime of the universe! They might help us design new medicines, unlock the secrets of proteins, or simulate the physics of black holes.

Then there's quantum encryption, which uses entangled particles to create unbreakable codes. If anyone tries to listen in, the entanglement breaks, and the intrusion is instantly detected. It's like having a burglar alarm built right into the laws of physics.

And yes, scientists have even used entanglement for quantum teleportation, not of people, but of information. They've sent the state of a particle from one lab to another without moving the particle itself. In 2017, one team even teleported information from Earth to a satellite orbiting 870 miles above.

What ties all of this together? Entanglement. That invisible thread that binds two particles into one system, across any distance, through no known force.

The world of quantum entanglement invites us to see nature not just as a collection of separate things, but as an interconnected dance. Entanglement isn't a glitch or a curiosity. It's a glimpse into a deeper pattern, a pattern that suggests the universe is more unified than it seems.

This mysterious bond doesn't just inspire scientists. It also speaks to our soul. In the Torah, there's a powerful teaching: "Kol Yisrael areivim zeh lazeh", all Jews are responsible, or more precisely translated, mixed with one another. It's not just a rule; it's a truth about who we are. The souls of the Jewish people are bound together like entangled particles, part of one great spiritual wave.

In this view, when one person does a mitzvah, or says a tefilah, or learns Torah, it doesn't just affect that person. It lifts the whole system. Like a ripple in a quantum field, the impact spreads invisibly but powerfully.

Just as entangled photons are part of one unified system, we too are part of something larger than ourselves. Our actions, choices, and even intentions resonate through a shared spiritual reality. Entanglement in physics and arvus in spirit both remind us: we are not separate. We are deeply, invisibly linked.

Next time you gaze at the night sky, think of those tiny particles zipping between galaxies, some still holding hands across space. Think of the cosmic connections still echoing from the dawn of time. And think of the people you care about, whose lives touch yours even when you're apart. We are all, in some way, entangled. And that might be among the most beautiful parts of Hashem's wondrous world.

A special thank you to my friend Dr. Berel Epstein for inspiring me to write about this.

## IF I MUST DIE, I'M HAPPY IT'S AFTER BECOMING PART OF A GROUP OF BNEI TORAH

Yaakov Wexler's short yet inspirational life was a powerful testament to emunah.

In the 1920s, Mr. Yerachmiel Wexler, a wealthy Jew in Chicago, met Rav Yaakov Volk, who spoke passionately about Eretz Yisrael. Deeply moved, Mr. Wexler stayed in touch with the Rav and was inspired to visit the Holy Land.

In 1928, the Wexlers traveled to Israel, investing in various ventures, including land near Rishon LeZion. During their visit to Chevron, their 16-year-old son Yaakov, a student at the Hebrew Theological College in Chicago, visited the Slabodka Yeshivah and immediately felt at home. **(Pictured:** The Beit Romano Building where the Chevron Yeshiva was housed.) He pleaded with his parents to let him stay, and with assurances from American bochorim to look after him, they agreed.

Yaakov flourished in yeshivah life, studying diligently and even hiring Rav Efraim Sokolover as a tutor to catch up with the level of learning. In a letter home, he wrote: "If life means luxury, I miss that. But by my definition, I am truly happy."

In the tragic Chevron massacre of August 1929, Yaakov took refuge with others in the home of Eliezer Don Slonim. As the mob broke in, Yaakov clung to Rav Sokolover, weeping, and said: "If I must die, I'm happy it's after becoming part of a group of bnei Torah. Thank you for teaching me Torah and mitzvos." An axe blow ended his life.

Crushed with guilt, Rav Volk, who inspired Yaakov to learn in Eretz Yisrael, avoided returning to Chicago, fearing confrontation with the Wexlers—until a chance encounter in New York.

It turned out that Mr. Wexler bore no bitterness at all. "My son had a decree to live 17 years," he said to Rav Volk. "Thanks to you, he spent them learning Torah in Eretz Yisrael and died as a ben Torah. There is no greater merit than that. I remain forever grateful to you for that."

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### THE ANSWER

**Regarding last week's question about the landlord who left the Arab plumber alone, Rav Zilberstein (V'haarev Na, Volume 4, Hebrew Edition, page 50) wrote that the landlord is liable for all of the damages. This is not even considered a grama, and he is liable in full.**

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in memory of Stan Alkhazov  
**Simcha ben Lipa z"l**

By Lipa and Zhanna Alkhazov and family



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