

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



A SHOT IN THE LEG

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Eliezer had a job, but wasn't making enough money to support his family. He tried various ways to supplement his income, but things were extremely difficult, and he wasn't able to make ends meet. At his wit's end, he made an appointment to visit his Rosh Yeshiva. Eliezer met with his Rosh Yeshiva and discussed his struggles. The Rebbe listened very empathetically and prayed to Hashem that he would have a substantial and meaningful parnassah (livelihood), and that his financial situation would greatly improve. The Rebbe also promised him that he would see a yeshua and have parnassah in the near future.

Eliezer left the meeting uplifted and confident. He made a neder (vow), saying, "Hashem, if I indeed get a parnassah that allows me to support my family, I vow that instead of giving the usual 10% of my income for ma'aser (charity), I will give 20% of my income to my Rebbe's yeshiva, out of gratitude."

Shortly after, Eliezer was waiting at a bus stop in Eretz Yisrael. Tragically, the bus stop was attacked by a terrorist. The terrorist began firing



THE REMARKABLE RELEVANCE OF THE GREATEST ANTIQUITY

As Moshe nears his final days he tells his people "Today HaShem commands you to do these mitzvos and you should do them with all your heart and all your soul." These words were spoken 40 years after the giving of the Torah. What does Moshe mean by saying that HaShem commands you today?

Our Sages address this question in two variations. One explanation is that Moshe is telling us that the words of Torah should be sweet and dear to us as if they were just given to us today. This would be Moshe's message for every Jew that reads this passage in every century that follows. The words of Torah should be dear to every Jew in every period of history in which he finds himself as if it was just given to us today by HaShem. If, in fact, HaShem opened up the Heavens and gave us this Torah today it would certainly be very dear to us.

In a slightly different variation our Sages explain that Moshe is telling his people that they should see the Torah as always fresh and new, always relevant. It should never be perceived as a book of antiquity that has no relevance today. Their attitude towards Torah should be as fresh as the most modern up-to-date guide to living.

Rabbeinu Bachya explains that both variations are necessary.

indiscriminately at innocent civilians. Miraculously, no one was killed, but Eliezer was shot twice in his legs. He was rushed to the hospital and, before long, patched up—almost as good as new.

While he was recovering in the hospital, a man came in with an envelope. He explained that he represented an international organization that supports victims of terror and that they conduct annual fundraising efforts for victims. The man handed Eliezer a check for 1,000,000 shekels. Eliezer couldn't believe his eyes. The man reassured him, "There are no strings attached. This is for you to use in any way you wish."

Eliezer was overwhelmed, having never held so much money before. He decided to invest it and live off the dividends.

But then he remembered the blessing he had received from his Rebbe and the vow he had made. He realized that, according to his neder, he should immediately set aside 200,000 shekels for the yeshiva. However, he hesitated. This wasn't what he had meant when he made the vow. He had expected to earn a good job to support his family, not to receive money after being shot in a terror attack. He would have much preferred not to get shot and not to receive the money. This wasn't a gain.

Furthermore, this was a very rare occurrence. This is not what he had in mind.

Now Eliezer faced a dilemma: on one hand, he had made a vow, and here was the money. On the other hand, this wasn't the kind of income he had in mind when he made the neder. He wondered if he was really obligated to give 200,000 shekels to the yeshiva under these circumstances.

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 317



“*When you show kindness in deeds that you do mercy from Above comes back to you*”

The perspectives and attitudes of a person develop based on his experiences and what he sees. It therefore follows that as times change, so will people's perspectives and attitudes change. This is why the worldview of the 21st century Man is quite different from that of the 20th century Man. In three generations the worldview has changed in such fundamental ways.

How then can Moshe expect this unchanging perspective of the Torah's relevance from the descendants of his people who will live 100 generations later in a world where all of their experiences will be diametrically opposite from those of the Torah?

If the words of Torah are sweet and dear to the holders of the Torah they will remember from where they re-

ceived this Torah. They will remember the history that is tied to their receiving this Torah. They will remember their exodus and the signs and wonders that HaShem performed in which He demonstrated in front of the entire civilized world that it is He Who governs the world. It is He Who directs history and it is He Who is always present. We will know that it was He Who created Adam and it was He Who judged the world 1600 years later by the Flood. It was He Who was so beneficent to Avraham and it was He Who sent Yaakov's family into slavery. We will know that He is aware of every change that will occur and it is He Who taught us how to live our lives.

So long as the Torah is sweet and dear to us, our perspectives will not be swayed by the currents of change that rush through the world. We will always recognize the relevance of our Torah in the face of every change.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE ANKOLE WATUSI COW

As we approach Rosh Hashana, let's explore an animal with really fascinating horns.

Imagine standing in the golden grasslands of East Africa. There, silhouetted against the setting sun, is one of nature's most magnificent creatures: the Ankole Watusi cow, often called the "royal family" of the bovine world. The story of the Ankole Watusi begins over 5,000 years ago along the fertile banks of the Nile river in Egypt. Back then, these cows were known as Egyptian Longhorns, and they were revered by the people who lived in what is now modern-day Egypt and Sudan. Pyramid pictographs of ancient Egypt show depictions of these striking animals.

As time went on, these cattle began to spread southward, mingling with other breeds and developing new traits. By 2,000 BCE, they had moved into southern Africa. One of the most remarkable things about the Ankole Watusi's journey is how it adapted to its new environment. These cows grew more resilient, surviving the scorching heat, enduring long periods of drought, and thriving in the challenging conditions of the African savanna.

While Ankole Watusi cattle are found throughout East Africa, they hold special significance in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. Here, they are known as Ankole or Watusi, and they are more than just livestock—they are part of the cultural identity of many tribes. In fact, in some tribes, Ankole are still used as dowries and gifts during marriage ceremonies. The more cattle a man owns, the more powerful and influential he is considered to be.

Imagine being a herdsman in ancient Rwanda, leading your cattle to graze in the fields, their massive horns gleaming in the sunlight. These horns are not just for show—they serve an important function, helping the cows regulate their body temperature in the searing heat. Blood circulates through the horns, dispersing excess heat and keeping the cows cool. It's a perfect example of how Hashem has equipped these animals to thrive in their environment. This ability to disperse heat makes the Ankole Watusi one of the most heat-tolerant cattle breeds in the world, capable of surviving in temperatures ranging from 20 to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

These horns can grow to extraordinary lengths, sometimes

reaching up to six feet from tip to tip! Some bulls have horns with a circumference of over 40 inches, a true testament to their incredible size. In fact, Ankole Watusi horns hold the Guinness World Record for the largest horn circumference ever recorded.

Surviving in the grasslands of East Africa is no easy feat, but the Ankole Watusi is perfectly adapted to its environment. One of the most remarkable things about these cows is their ability to survive long periods of drought. This breed can endure harsh conditions where food and water are scarce. The Ankole Watusi's diet is another fascinating aspect of this breed. While many cattle breeds struggle to find enough food during times of drought, the Ankole Watusi is a master forager. They will eat just about anything they can find, from dry grass to scrubby plants that other animals wouldn't touch.

Their digestive system plays a key role in this survival. Ankole Watusi cows can extract the maximum amount of nutrients from the little food they consume, making them highly efficient grazers. Even during the driest months, when vegetation is sparse, these cows can survive on the limited resources available, giving them a significant advantage over other cattle breeds.

The Ankole Watusi is also a fascinating social creature. These cows live in herds, where they display strong bonds and protective instincts. At night, the herd forms a circle, with the calves huddled safely in the center. An adult cow stands guard, always alert for potential predators. It's an extraordinary behavior, one that highlights the importance of community and survival in the wild.

In the modern world, the Ankole Watusi continues to be a valuable breed, both in Africa and beyond. In the early 20th century, European zoos began importing Ankole Watusi cattle, drawn by their striking appearance and unique characteristics. By the 1960s, they had made their way to the United States, where a herd was established in New York State. In fact, today, about 80% of the world's Ankole Watusi cattle can be found in the U.S., where they are prized for their low-fat, low-cholesterol meat.

Thank you Hashem for your wondrous world!

BECAUSE OF YOUR HONESTY, I WANT TO OPEN UP A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF BUSINESS FOR YOU HERE

Rabbi David Ashear shared the following story: Eli, a businessman who deals in various lines of brand-name merchandise, told me about an order he received from a customer in Algeria for 10,000 pieces of Samsonite luggage. Eli typically doesn't ship goods before receiving full payment. The check for the Algerian order arrived, and it was for \$833,000. Eli deposited it and then called his customer to acknowledge receipt and inquire about when and where to ship the merchandise. The customer did not answer his phone. Eli continued trying to contact him by phone and email, but there was no response.

Nearly two weeks later, Eli received a phone call from the owner of a large chain of stores, who said he was expecting to receive the luggage from Eli's customer in Algeria. Unfortunately, the man had passed away suddenly. The store owner then asked, "May I buy the luggage directly from you for the price I was going to pay your customer? The total was about \$900,000." "No problem," Eli replied. Once again, he waited to receive the check and then proceeded to ship the luggage. At that point, Eli had \$833,000 sitting in his account, of which no one was aware. However, Eli did not want to keep the money. He consulted his Rabbi, who quoted the Shulchan Aruch and said, "This is a great opportunity to make a kiddush Hashem." That's exactly what Eli wanted to do. He called the wife of his deceased customer in Algeria and told her that he wanted to return some money that belonged to her late husband. She thanked him and, somewhat oddly, asked if they could continue their conversation via Skype because, even though Eli had called her, she was being charged for the call. Eli gladly initiated the face-to-face computer conversation, happy that the woman would see him and his large kippah. "Oh," she said, "I see you're Jewish." "Yes," he replied, "and I'm very happy to return this money to you." When he told her the substantial sum, she couldn't believe her ears. She thanked Eli profusely, and he mailed her the check.

About a week and a half later, a stretch limousine pulled up in front of Eli's office. A man entered and practically prostrated himself on the floor before him. Eli was bewildered. "What is this about?" he asked, helping the man to his feet. The man explained that he was from Dubai and a first cousin of the woman to whom Eli had returned the payment. "You're an angel," he said. "I'm very wealthy, and I have many rich friends in Dubai. Because of your honesty, I want to open up a whole new world of business for you here."

And that's exactly what happened. Over the past few years, Eli has made numerous multimillion-dollar sales to people in Dubai whom he had never met before. He has earned far more than the \$833,000 he returned. Recently, he received an order from one of those customers for \$11 million. Eli received and cashed the check, then called the customer to discuss shipping. However, he prefaced the conversation with a question. "I hope you don't mind me asking," he said. "I'm just curious. You've never met me, and I live on the other side of the world. How can you send me a check for \$11 million, trusting that I'll send you the goods? I could just take the money and run." The man on the other end of the line replied, "Listen very carefully to what I'm about to tell you. You didn't take the money of a dead man. Do you expect me to suspect that you're going to take the money of a live man?"

Eli has earned a great reputation. Dozens of non-Jews in Dubai are singing the praises of the Jewish people because of Eli's honesty. This is a true kiddush Hashem, and Eli has gained both in This World and the Next!



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about changing the scale, Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Devarim, page 306) answered as follows: While there are cases in halacha where one is allowed to use deception to protect themselves from someone trying to steal from them, this would not apply in the case of weights. Our Sages teach that changing weights is equivalent to a judge perverting justice, and this cannot be done simply to save money.

Rabbi David and Debbie (of Remax fame) Finkelstein dedicate this week's TableTalk in honor of their new grandson **Binyamin Aharon** born to Avi and Devorah
May he grow to be source of much nachas to his parents, grandparents and to the entire Klal Yisroel



K&F
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
406 W. Pennsylvania Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

Brad E. Kauffman Esquire and Kauffman and Forman P.A.
specializing in corporate and construction law,
estates, wills and trusts and business litigation.

