



## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



### THE BABY BATHTUB MIRACLE

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha talks about the Choshen Hamishpat, the breastplate worn by the Kohen Gadol. Our Sages teach that the Choshen would atone for errors in the laws of Mishpat, and dinim. This leads us to the following story.

Chaim lived in an apartment building in Eretz Yisrael. On the first floor of his apartment building there was a store that specialized in baby and toddler products. They sold carriages, cribs, baby clothes, and baby bathtubs.

As is common in Eretz Yisrael, the store owner, Yisrael, would put out a few sample items on the sidewalk in front of his store. There was still room for people to walk by, but the samples did take some space from the sidewalk.

For some reason, the fact that Yisrael was dumping his stuff on the sidewalk really bothered Chaim. Chaim asked Yisrael repeatedly to bring his stuff in, but Yisrael insisted that it was a common practice and that he had a right to do it.

Chaim, in frustration, took Yisrael to a Jewish court, to a Din Torah, to force him to



## AMALEK'S WAR

In addition to reading Parshas Tetzave this week we will also read Parshas Zachor in which the Torah instructs us to remember how Amalek attacked us when we left Egypt. These instructions also include the mitzvah to destroy Amalek. Who is Amalek and why do they deserve such an attitude?

We await the arrival of Moshiach for the world to reach the moment of its destiny. When that occurs, the nations will also celebrate that moment. They too will finally reach their intended destiny as they will serve HaShem in the manner that is appropriate for them. The only nation that will not celebrate is Amalek. As Bilam says 'Amalek is the first nation to fight against Israel and their destiny is complete destruction'. While every other nation will achieve their destiny Amalek will be destroyed because that is their destiny!

The manner in which Bilam associates Amalek's war against us with their destiny of destruction seems to indicate that the reason for their tragic destiny is because they waged war against us. This is very difficult to understand since the entire world (almost) has fought against us at some time or other. Someone had to be first. Why is Amalek worse than the others?

HaShem made an ecosystem in which every creature and every plant has its role. Without fleas the ecosystem would fail. There is one creature, however, who plays no role in the ecosystem, Man. This begs the question; why was Man created? To suggest that Man was created to make the world a better place is lacking because quite frankly, the ecosystem would be better off without Man. To answer that Man can make the world a better place for Man himself would be circular and the question would remain - why was he created. What function does he serve?

Of course, the answer is that Man was created to connect the material world to Ha-

refrain from selling his wares on the sidewalk. The Beis Din heard the case and sided in favor of Yisrael, saying that he had a right to continue putting his wares on the sidewalk. Although the Beis Din supported Yisrael's position, Chaim never really got over the issue and he would continually complain to Yisrael about his wares on the sidewalk.

A few months later, Chaim was on his porch. His porch was three flights up. Chaim's two-year-old daughter, Tzila, was playing on the porch and somehow she climbed up to the railing. Before Chaim could do anything, he watched in horror as his sweet daughter fell down, off the porch, onto the pavement three flights below.

Chaim ran to the railing in a panic, but he saw what he thought could only be a miracle. His daughter Tzila had fallen into a stack of three infant bathtubs that were placed there by Yisrael. The bathtubs were plastic and had foam on the bottom. Tzila was frightened but she was very much alive and she suffered nothing more than a few scratches. The very wares that Chaim had spent so much energy arguing about, saved his daughter's life.

Chaim ran down and picked up his daughter, and hugged her. He looked at the bathtubs; the plastic of the first two tubs was broken because of Tzila's fall.

Chaim tearfully went to Yisrael, the owner, and offered him money for saving his daughter. But Yisrael would not accept it. Chaim said, "At least take the money for the damaged tubs." But Yisrael wasn't sure that Chaim had to pay for the damage caused by his daughter's fall, as it wasn't quite Chaim's fault. Yisrael graciously said he would not accept any payment unless the halacha ruled that Chaim had to pay for the damage.

This question was brought to Rav Zilberstein. Does Chaim have an obligation to pay Yisrael money for saving his daughter? Does he have to pay for the broken tubs?

See Upiryo Matok Shemos 258



*"The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them."*

- Ralph G. Nichols

Shem. This is why only Man is able to yearn for something transcendent. Dolphins have no desire to go outside of their water nor cows outside their barn, they are satisfied with their station.

This reason explains why the Jewish people were created as they are the ones whom HaShem chose to serve Him, and are therefore able to elevate the material world to the spiritual realm. What about the other nations?

Every nation has its unique talents, insights and experiences all of which can add a depth of beauty for the Torah. The reason HaShem created all of Mankind was for them to add their contribution for the Torah which could not have been achieved without them.

Until Moshiach arrives those nations use their talents, insights and experiences to the detriment of Torah. The ancient Greeks whose talent was intellect used their talent to reject Torah. With the arrival of Moshiach their intellect will contribute an incredible beauty to the Torah.

When one reads the Shiras Hayam that was sung by our people after the splitting of the Red Sea, it is astounding to see how the entire world was frozen in fright of HaShem and the people whom He led. Only Amalek dared to challenge them. Why? Because Amalek chose no other role in this world other than to reject HaShem. They live to bring the rejection of HaShem. Amalek faced an existential threat with the splitting of the Red Sea. The world was on the cusp of total acceptance of His Sovereignty. Amalek could not tolerate such an attitude and waged a war to demonstrate to the world that anyone who wishes can challenge HaShem and His people.

Amalek's war against our people demonstrated their absolute commitment to eradicating the acceptance of HaShem. The talents, insights and experiences of Amalek all lead to its role of rejecting HaShem. It follows therefore that once the time arrives when the world will be filled with the understanding of HaShem as water fills the ocean (this is the metaphor used by Yishayahu 11:9) Amalek will no longer have any role to play. Hence, his nation will become extinct.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**





## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### THE CUTTLEFISH

This week, let us learn about another potential candidate to be the chilazon, the cuttlefish. The Radziner Rebbe, Rabbi Gershon Henoch Leiner, felt strongly that the chilazon was the cuttlefish. The cuttlefish is a truly fascinating creature.

Cuttlefish are in the same family as squid, octopuses, and nautilus. Cuttlefish have large, unique W-shaped pupils in their eyes. Cuttlefish have a total of ten limbs. They have eight arms plus two tentacles covered with suckers, with which they hold their prey. The difference between arms and tentacles is the positioning of the suckers. Arms generally have suckers that run throughout the whole length of the limb, while tentacles typically only have suckers near the end.

Cuttlefish range in size from 6 to 10 inches, but the largest species, the giant cuttlefish, can reach as much as 20 inches and 23 pounds. The typical life expectancy of a cuttlefish is about 1–2 years. Some scientists say that there are indications that cuttlefish are among the most intelligent invertebrates. Cuttlefish also have one of the largest brain-to-body size ratios of all invertebrates.

The cuttlefish has an organ called a siphon, which is a tube-like structure that releases a unique brown pigment when it is alarmed. The ink can be ejected to create a "smokescreen" to hide the cuttlefish's escape. It also uses it in a different way. It releases the ink as a pseudomorph of similar size to the cuttlefish, which acts as a decoy while the cuttlefish swims away. This fluid was called Sepia by the Greeks and Romans and was used to create a reddish-brown ink. The Greco-Roman world valued the cuttlefish as a source of sepia ink. It remained in common use as an artist's drawing material until the 19th century. Even today, the word sepia refers to a reddish-brown coloring or tint. Although the Greeks used it to make reddish ink, the diverse composition of cuttlefish ink and its deep complexity of colors allows for dilution and modification of its color. Cuttlefish ink can therefore be used to make non-iridescent reds, blues, and greens.

Cuttlefish are mostly shallow-water animals, although they can go to depths of about 2,000 ft. They are found along the coasts of the Mediterranean as well as the coasts of East and South Asia, Western Europe, as well as all coasts of Africa and Australia. Interestingly and perplexingly, they are totally absent from the Americas.

The cuttlefish's unique-shaped eyes are thought to be fully developed before birth, and they start observing their surroundings even while still in the egg. **(Right picture.)** As a consequence, they may prefer to hunt the prey they saw before they hatched.

The blood of a cuttlefish is an unusual shade of green-blue because it uses the copper-containing protein haemocyanin to carry oxygen instead of the red, iron-containing protein haemoglobin found in human blood. Interestingly, the cuttlefish has three separate hearts. Two hearts pump blood to the cuttlefish's pair of gills, one heart for each gill. The third heart pumps blood around the rest of the body. One reason why they need three hearts is that cuttlefish blood must flow more rapidly than that of most other animals because haemocyanin carries substantially less oxygen than haemoglobin.

Cuttlefish have a unique internal shell called the cuttlebone. This is a unique structure that is not made out of bone but rather the element aragonite, which is a type of crystal. Imagine a crystal growing inside an octopus! Why does the cuttlefish have a crystal inside of it? It uses it to control its buoyancy and to float up or down in the water.

Cuttlefish have an incredible ability to rapidly alter their skin color. This can occur within one second. Not only do they change color, but they also change the texture of their skin and the shape of their skin. Its skin can take the shape of little spikes, bumps, or flat blades. This can help with camouflage when the cuttlefish becomes texturally as well as chromatically similar to objects in its environment, such as kelp or rocks.

**(Center picture)** Cuttlefish can even turn completely transparent. They can quickly switch from being a solid color like black to completely transparent. What is even more puzzling to scientists is that cuttlefish can take on the color, texture, and contrast of their environment even in total darkness, where they cannot see the color.

The camouflage of cuttlefish is not only a defensive tool but is also used as an offensive tool to hunt and capture prey. During the night, they hide and sneak up on potential prey. They move slowly behind their prey to take aim. Once the prey is within reach, they use their fast-extending tentacles to grab them.

In addition to having fins and arms, cuttlefish can also move through jet propulsion. They fill up their mantle cavity with water and quickly expel it through a siphon, which propels the cuttlefish through the water. Cuttlefish can control the direction of the siphon, as well as the amount of water they eject. This grants them the ability to propel themselves in different directions and speeds. They use their fins and arms to steer and stabilize themselves. It's interesting to note that cuttlefish can also use this water jet-like ability to uncover prey animals that are hiding in the sand.

Thank you Hashem for your wonderful creation!



## ITS A DEAL

I am currently in Eretz Yisroel and am in awe of the hundreds of thousands of families who have dedicated their lives to the studying of the Torah of our people. Many of these families have chosen this path despite the limited income they have as a result. There are opportunities for them to expand their income and to live more comfortably but they nevertheless chose this way because of their absolute commitment to Torah study.

One such example I know first hand about my nephew who has chosen this path. He is a great talmid chacham whose lifestyle is extremely simple. A few more shekels a month would make life more comfortable for him. A number years ago an outstanding kollel who paid significantly more wanted him to join them.

There was one caveat, his chavrusa would not be able to join him. In order to join the new kollel he would have to give up his chavrusah. Giving up his chavrusah for someone else would have meant that his learning would have been somewhat compromised.

When his friend learned of this opportunity, he was very happy for him. Nevertheless, in spite of this chance to bring home more shekels without giving up his Torah study, he rejected the offer. He explained to his friend that if he wanted to earn more shekels he could have done so years ago. The reason he stayed in kollel was to study the Torah of HaShem. "Should I compromise that Torah study by giving up my chavrusah just to earn a few more shekels?!"

HaShem, in His infinite chesed, engineered the current Jewish demographics in a way that while these hundreds of thousands of families give up so much for the sake of HaShem's Torah, so many of us in America are blessed with the resources to support those in Eretz Yisroel to do so. With His genius arrangement all members of Klal Yisroel are able to participate in bringing honor to HaShem and to His Torah.

Written by Paysach Diskind in the streets of the Old City of Yerushalayim



### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the man who got a cheap repair on a car, and the car ended up causing a huge pile-up with a lot of financial damage, Rav Zilberstein wrote that because it was a grama, the man did the damage indirectly he would not be liable midinei adam, and would not be forced to pay in court. However, midinei shomayim, between him and Hashem, he would have an obligation to pay, because it was his responsibility to make sure that the car got fixed completely and perfectly.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated to the memory of Khava Minevich  
**Chava Genya bas Yosef**  
on the occasion of her fifth yartzeit

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