



A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE RESCUER

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

We are soon going to begin the season of Pesach. Consider the following fascinating story.

Yehuda lived in Eretz Yisrael, and he had a large warehouse filled with wholesale food items. Every year he would sell his chametz to a kind Arab man who he had a relationship with.

One day Yehuda was driving on a road that he had never been on before. He took a wrong turn and realized that he was in an Arab village and everyone was staring at him. Suddenly his car broke down and people began to surround his car. Yehuda got out of the car and started to run. Sinister looking men began to chase him. Yehuda ran for his life and hid in an alley. Suddenly an Arab man jumped in front of him.

"I recognize you", the Arab man said. "You own that large food warehouse not far from here. Your life is in great danger. I will save you on one condition. My name is Khalil. I know the person that



SHABBOS; KEEPING THE WORLD ALIVE

This week's Parsha, Vayakheil-Pikudei, opens with HaShem's instruction to Moshe to instruct his people on keeping the Shabbos. "Six days shall your work be done and the seventh day shall be kodesh to HaShem" The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh asks why the Torah instructs us to work six days, there is no mitzvah to perform work on the weekdays. He also notes that the Torah does not say we should work six days but rather that our work should be done on those six days. Why does the Torah not say to work six days?

The Ohr Hachaim references the Midrash that when HaShem created the world, the universe was trembling and precarious, until Shabbos. Once Shabbos came everything was firm and established. What was the cause of the shakiness of the world until Shabbos and how did Shabbos resolve it? The Ohr Hachaim explains that Shabbos is the soul of the world. Just as the organs of the human body may be in perfect working order, nevertheless, until the neshama is placed within nothing will work. At the end of life people who, G.D forbid, are brain dead can still breathe on ventilators with a pumping heart, but it is difficult to say that they are alive. So it was with the world; before Shabbos the entire world was ready to operate everything was finished but it was precarious because the world was missing her neshama. Once Shabbos came everything was established and firm. The world was alive.

With this understanding the Ohr Hachaim explains that our Parsha teaches us that during six days of the week our work will be done only if Shabbos is holy to HaShem.

you sell your chametz to every year before your holiday of Pesach. He makes a nice profit from the sale. I will save you if you swear to me that for the rest of the time that you own that warehouse, you will sell the chametz to me instead”.

Yehuda, fearing for his life quickly agreed to Khalil's bargain. True to his word, Khalil hid Yehuda in his home. A few hours later Khalil helped Yehuda fix his car and helped Yehuda return home safely.

Yehuda kept his bargain and every year after that, he sold his chametz to Khalil, and paid him a nice profit afterwards for his efforts.

After ten years of this arrangement Yehuda tried to reach Khalil to sell his chametz before Pesach. Yehuda was unsuccessful in getting together with Khalil despite trying numerous times.

Finally it was three days before Pesach and Yehuda was unable to get in touch with Khalil. He decided that with no other recourse he would sell his chametz to someone else.

But as he picked up the phone he stopped. He had sworn to Khalil that he would only sell it to him. How could he break his oath? He must try to find him at all costs.

But on the other hand he thought, perhaps his oath was not really binding because it was only said under the threat to his life.

Yehuda wanted to know how much effort he had to put into tracking down Khalil in order to keep his oath. Was his oath even binding in the first place?

A similar question was brought before Rav Zilberstein. What do you think?

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then these verses are strikingly clear. With the conclusion of the sixth day all of HaShem's work was done, everything was created and ready to go. There was nothing left to be done in the world. On the seventh day, when HaShem implanted Shabbos into the world as its neshama, He finished or He completed the work that He did on the first six days.

The Talmud discusses a situation where a person lost track of time and did not know which day was Shabbos. The discussion is which day should he observe as Shabbos. The ger tzedek who was close to the Vilna Gaon asked on this Gemara “everything you see appears different on Shabbos, how could someone not know when Shabbos is?”

When I first heard this story I thought that this ger tzedek had Ruach Hakodesh to be able to see Shabbos. However, after learning this Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh, I realized from where the ger tzedek was coming. One who looks at the face of someone who has deceased can tell immediately that he is not sleeping. The difference between a world with a neshama and a world without a neshama is easily discernible.

Have a very safe and very wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind

MITZVA MEME



*The message of
Passover remains as
powerful as ever.
Freedom is won not on
the battlefield but in
the classroom and in
the home.*



*Rabbi Jonathan Sacks
In An Article In Huffington Post*



If, G.D forbid, the Shabbos is not holy to HaShem our work will not be done during the six days, the six days of the week will have no neshama.

With this he explains the first two verses of the second chapter in Parshas Bereishis. Immediately following the conclusion of the sixth day the Torah states “And the heavens and the earth were finished. And HaShem finished on the seventh day the work that He did”

The first verse implies that all of creation was concluded with the end of the sixth day. The second verse implies that He finished His work on the seventh day. If His work was already finished at the end of day six what was done on day seven?

If we understand Shabbos as the arrival of the world's neshama,



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

HORSERADISH

Think you are familiar with maror? Let's look at it a bit deeper. We normally eat just the root of the horseradish that grows underground, but horseradish is really a green leafy plant that grows as high as 5 feet tall.

Horseradish is probably indigenous to temperate Eastern Europe. We know horseradish as Chrein, but that word comes from the Slavic name Khren. Both the root and leaves of horseradish were used as a traditional medicine during the Middle Ages. It was believed to cure ulcers. Fascinatingly, In the American South, horseradish was rubbed on the forehead to relieve headaches.

It may have originated in Eastern Europe, but today the Horseradish Capital of the World is actually in the US, in Collinsville, Illinois, which supplies roughly 60% of the world's horseradish production.

We eat ground horseradish as a type of topping on our gefilte fish on Shabbos. But eating ground horseradish at meals goes way back. Ground horseradish is a primary ingredient in a British sauce called Tewkesbury mustard. Shakespeare, who lived in the 1500's talks about Tewkesbury mustard in Henry IV. Falstaff says: "his wit's as thick as Tewkesbury Mustard".

Before the name "horseradish", the plant was known as "stingnose". Sting Nose. Makes sense.

The obvious question is why is it called Horseradish, do horses eat it? The truth is no! This plant is, in fact, poisonous to horses.

Instead there are two theories as to the origin of the name Horseradish. One theory is that in early times the plant grew wild in European coastal areas. The Germans called it meer rettich, or sea radish. The German word meer sounds like mare, a horse in English. Perhaps mare radish eventually became horseradish.

Another theory is that the word "horse" came from the word coarse, as in rough or strong, it meant the strong or sharp radish. Coarse radish eventually morphed into horseradish.

We see that the words sting nose and coarse radish make a ref-

erence to the sharpness of the horseradish root. What causes this very distinctive experience? The sharpness comes from the release of allyl isothiocyanate. This is a substance that irritates the mucous membranes of the sinuses and eyes. This is a defense mechanism and any animal that eats the root is immediately repelled.

What is fascinating is that allyl isothiocyanate is harmful to the horseradish plant itself.

Hashem created an ingenious system that allyl isothiocyanate is stored in the harmless form of the glucosinolate, separate from the enzyme myrosinase. Only when an animal chews the plant, crushing the flesh of horseradish, is the enzyme myrosinase released and acts on the glucosinolate sinigrin and the allyl isothiocyanate is released, repelling the animal. After the animal leaves, the Allyl isothiocyanate doesn't hurt the plant because it is an unstable compound, and it degrades over the course of days.

For those who like sushi, you may notice that wasabi tastes very similar to horseradish. That is because both wasabi and horseradish are members of the plant family Brassicaceae.

Aside from chrein in gefilte fish and maror on Pesach, does horseradish have other uses?

Well, in Ukraine and Russia they use it to make a type of strong vodka called Hrenovuha. It has a bitter taste, being made from horseradish, often with different spices, such as pepper, peas and garlic.

Horseradish has some unique scientific uses. The enzyme horseradish peroxidase (HRP), found in the plant, is used extensively in molecular biology and biochemistry primarily for its ability to amplify a weak signal and increase detectability of a target molecule. Basically it helps a molecule to be spotted. In addition HRP has been used to visualize the permeability of capillaries under a microscope, particularly those of the brain.

How wondrous is your creation HaShem!

HASHEM ALWAYS SENDS MESSAGES TO EVERYBODY; SOME PEOPLE OPEN UP THE MESSAGE AND OTHERS IGNORE IT

The power of inspiring a fellow Jew to become more connected to Ha-Shem and to His Torah is not the exclusive talent and ability unique to Kiruv professionals. When any sincere Jew lives their life in the way Ha-Shem expects them, they will inspire those around them. I would like to thank Eugene and Marina Vurgaftman for allowing me to share their story with the TableTalk readers.

In 2004, when Eugene and Marina Vurgaftman decided it was time to move from Owings Mills to Pikesville they engaged Dora to list their home. The market was slow and Dora was interested in getting people to see their home. They were approaching Memorial Day weekend so Dora mentioned that she would like to post their house on Saturday. Eugene and Marina were relatively new to shmiras Shabbos but they knew that it would not be appropriate to sell their property on Shabbos. They told Dora not to post their house till after Shabbos. When she asked them what the problem was they explained to her that since Shabbos was the day upon which HaShem does not want us to do work, her efforts would certainly not bear fruit. She accepted their request and waited to post the house until Sunday.

Remarkably, within that week they landed a contract, in spite of the slow market.

Several years later Eugene met Dora and asked how she was doing. She told him that she no longer works on Shabbos. She explained that since that discussion about posting the house on Shabbos, she started checking the work she did on Shabbos to see if, in fact, those efforts bore no fruit. She noticed how accurate that assessment was. Nothing she did on Shabbos panned out. She decided that there must be something to this and began observing Shabbos which led to other mitzvos as well.

When I expressed my wonderment to Eugene he told me, "Rabbi Paysach, this is nothing extraordinary. HaShem always sends messages to everybody. Some people open up the message and others ignore it."



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the mishloach manos tin, Rav Shuchatowitz answered as follows: The governing rule is that only the owner needs to be tovel and only the owner can be tovel the container. Hence, Chava bought the tin for her cousin and therefore does not need to be tovel it. The cousin on the other hand owns the tin and needs to be tovel. By sending her cousin this tin she transgressed lifnei iver since her cousin would not be tovel. Once it was done she should use common sense whether or not to tell her cousin what to do. Rav Tzvi Berkowitz answered as follows: If the tin is something that is typically used as a cookie jar, it needs tevila. If it is typically used only as a "package" for cookies, then it possibly may not. See Igros Moshe Y.D. chelek 2.

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