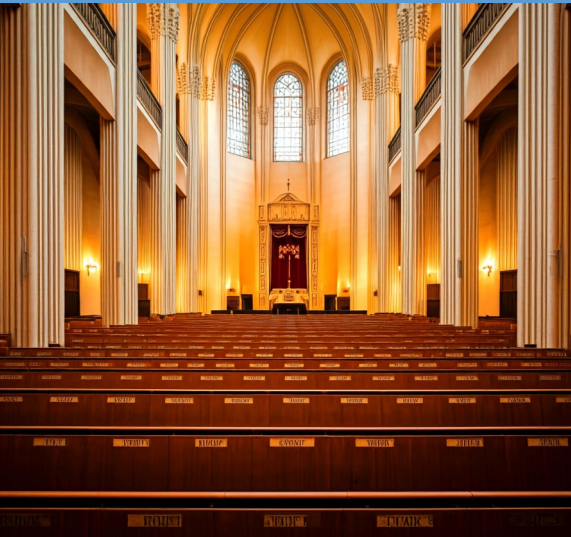




A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



MAN'S LITTLE WORLD

This is the only Shabbos for which there will be no Shabbos table talk. I am therefore faced with the dilemma about which Parsha shall I write. We certainly cannot overlook Yom Kippur, the most sacred holiday of the year. However, chances are that this will become a discussion piece at the Succah table. I hope my choice will satisfy both needs.

Without going through his verse by verse commentary I would like to share Malbim's insight on Chapter 39 of Tehillim. I believe Malbim's insight will help guide us through Yom Kippur and prepare us for Succos.

The Psalmist desires to explore the nature of the Human condition but is reluctant to do so. He knows that there is an element of Gdliness in Man but is afraid to open up a serious examination as that may lead him to ideas that run contrary to what HaShem expects from us. However, his desire to know and understand himself is overwhelming and so he jumps into the self examination of who Man is.

He recognizes that Man occupies two conflicting worlds; the physical material world and the world of intellect and spirituality.

His examination begins by looking at his current environment and sees how he is a member of the material world which comes with material needs and attractions and is bound by his physical limitations. However, he is confounded by his aspirations which transcend those limitations. No sane person aspires to fly like a bird or plunge the depths of the ocean like a fish because it is outside of Man's limits. Aspirations never exceed man's limits. If he is truly a member of the material world which has limits and boundaries he would never aspire to go beyond those limits. Man's desire to conquer the world or to amass limitless material possessions or fame go beyond normal limits. He clearly belongs to the world of intellect which is not limited by space and by time.

KICKING THE GUEST OUT

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Avi, who lived in Israel, purchased seats in his shul for the Yamim Noraim (High Holidays). He was very deliberate about which seat he chose. He struggled with his hearing and wanted to ensure he could hear the rabbi's drashos (sermons) clearly. He chose a seat that was both close to the rabbi, so he could hear him well, and hear the shofar blowing.

On Rosh Hashanah morning, when Avi arrived at his seat, he found someone else sitting in it—a person he had never seen in the neighborhood before. The shul was packed, and there weren't many available

seats left.

Avi faced a dilemma. He felt he had every right to the seat—after all, he had purchased it. He wondered if he should gently and politely ask the guest to leave the seat. There were benches at the back of the shul where the guest could sit.

On one hand, asking the guest to move might hurt his feelings. But on the other hand, if Avi sat on the benches instead, he wouldn't be able to hear the rabbi's drasha at all, and the sound of the shofar would be less clear—audible, but not as good.

He was torn, wondering what the Torah would expect him to do on Rosh Hashanah. Should he let the guest keep his seat and sit in the back himself, missing the rabbi's inspirational talk? Or could he kindly and politely direct the guest to the benches in the back so that Avi could sit in the seat he had purchased?

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 356

MITZVA MEME



After considering his question he looks at the world itself and finds his answer.

The material world is naturally material and is bound by the limits of the laws of nature. However, there is an immortal Being that governs this world Who transcends those limitations. He is able to go outside of those limits in governing His world.

The Psalmist concludes that HaShem created Man in the image of His world. The world HaShem created is bound by the laws of nature but is governed by HaShem who transcends those laws. When necessary HaShem overrides those limits for the benefit of the world.

In a similar manner HaShem created Man as a governor of a miniature world. The environment in which Man finds himself is the miniature world which HaShem created. After creating this miniature world He then planted Man within this miniature world so that he can govern it. Although his body and environment are

bound by the laws of nature, nevertheless, as governor of this world Man can override those laws for the benefit of his world.

Man is responsible to govern his little world in a way that the material attractions and needs do not take his world away from HaShem's Ways. Malbim explains that to the extent that Man succeeds in reigning in his little world and conducts it in a proper manner, to that extent HaShem governs His big world to make sure it runs in a proper manner. In other words, Man's conduct in his little world directly affects how HaShem governs His big world.

Given the Psalmist's insight we can appreciate that Man is not a member of this little world. We were only hired to run this little world for a couple of years and then we are out. It is no wonder that HaShem gives us one day a year to remember that we are really members of the world of intellect and spirituality, where folks do not eat and drink. It is a place reserved only for members of that other plane.

It is no wonder that Yom Kippur is followed immediately by Succos when for a complete week our life moves from its permanent residence in this world to a temporary residence. For one week we move our self perception as no longer being a member of the physical material world.

Have an easy fast, a beautiful Yom Kippur and a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

HONEY BADGERS

In honor of the Yamim Noraaim, we make sure to eat honey. Come, let us learn about an amazing animal that specializes in eating honey straight out of a beehive.

Imagine a creature with the audacity to face lions, the strength to crack open tortoise shells, and the resilience to withstand venomous bites. Meet the honey badger, a small but mighty mammal whose bravery and adaptability make it a true wonder of the natural world. Let's explore the fascinating life of the honey badger and uncover why this remarkable creature has earned its place as one of nature's toughest survivors.

Built Like a Tank. One of the most amazing things about the honey badger is its skin—super thick, loose, and nearly indestructible. Imagine wearing a rubbery suit that's so tough it can withstand the sharp teeth of predators and the stings of angry bees! That's what it's like for a honey badger. Its skin is at least 6 millimeters thick—thicker than a buffalo's, even though a buffalo is about 50 times heavier. This extraordinary skin acts like armor, protecting the badger from bites, claws, and even human weapons like arrows and spears.

But it's not just thick—it's loose too. In fact, their skin is so thick and loose that they can twist and bite back even when caught by a predator. Imagine trying to grab hold of a loose sweater that wriggles and fights back—that's what it's like for a predator trying to hold on to a honey badger!

Although they love honey, honey badgers are always ready to eat whatever the environment offers. Their menu includes insects, eggs, roots, fruits, and small animals. They even have the jaw strength to break through the hard shells of tortoises and the thick skins of fruits like honeydew. Their powerful jaws are not just for chewing through tough food—honey badgers can use their strength to break into locked metal bins or to crush bones, making them formidable even when it comes to getting through barriers. But their diet isn't just about brute force; honey badgers are resourceful too. They've been observed using sticks and rocks to escape enclosures, showcasing their intelligence and problem-solving skills.

Partners in Crime: The Honeyguide. Honey badgers have a unique relationship with a bird called the honeyguide. This clever bird leads honey badgers to hidden beehives, where the badger's strength and persistence come in handy. The honey badger tears open the hive, devouring the rich honey and leaving some behind for the bird. It's a perfect partnership where both the honeyguide and the honey badger get a sweet reward!

A Fearless Fighter. The honey badger's fearlessness is legendary. De-

spite being only about the size of a small dog, it's known to stand its ground against much larger predators like lions, hyenas, and pythons. When cornered, a honey badger becomes a whirling, hissing ball of fury, using its sharp claws and teeth to defend itself. And if fighting doesn't work, it has a secret weapon—its scent. Honey badgers have a gland at the base of their tail that can release a strong, foul odor, enough to make most attackers think twice about pursuing. In 2002, the Guinness Book of World Records even named it the world's most fearless animal, solidifying its place as one of nature's greatest fighters.

Even snakes are not safe from the honey badger's boldness. Honey badgers often hunt venomous snakes like cobras and puff adders. Though they are not entirely immune to venom, honey badgers can withstand the effects of many bites, thanks to special molecular mutations. These adaptations slow down the venom's spread, allowing the badger to recover from bites that would be fatal to other animals. If a cobra manages to land a bite, the badger might pass out for a while—but it often wakes up, shrugs it off, and finishes eating the snake! Scientists studying this adaptation are even looking for clues that might help develop new treatments for snake bites in humans.

Honey badgers are surprisingly fast, using a unique jog-trot gait to chase down prey until it's exhausted. This steady, relentless pace allows them to keep up with animals that might otherwise outrun them, ensuring they don't go home hungry. It's like a marathon runner that never tires, always ready to go the extra mile to find dinner.

Honey badgers have a knack for digging that is second to none. They use their long, powerful claws to dig burrows nearly every day, and they do it quickly. Their burrows can be up to 9 feet long, creating a cool and safe resting spot from the hot sun. Sometimes, they dig these tunnels in minutes, creating a quick escape route when danger looms. And when they're not making their own burrows, they take over spaces like rock crevices, old termite mounds, or abandoned homes of other animals like armadillos and Cape foxes. These burrows aren't just homes—they're hideouts. Honey badgers will retreat into their underground dens to avoid predators or take a break from the heat of the day. Imagine having the ability to create your own underground fortress whenever you need a little peace and quiet!

Yet, beyond the tough exterior, honey badgers are a reminder of the incredible tools Hashem gave animals to survive. They are masters of their environment, using their intelligence, strength, and ingenuity to carve out a life in some of the harshest places on Earth.

Thank you, Hashem, for your wondrous world.

TASHLICH IN MIAMI

Rabbi Pesach Krohn told over the following story.

Nachman was a frum man. He had a cousin, Nati, who was not religious. While Nachman made Aliyah to Eretz Yisrael, Nati did the opposite, leaving Eretz Yisrael to move to Miami. Every once in a while, Nachman would come back to America for business. He would always go to Miami to see Nati. Of course, he couldn't eat in Nati's home. They would go out to a kosher restaurant, or Nachman would buy food from a kosher takeout place, and they'd eat together using disposable paper goods.

One year, Nachman came to Miami, and noticed that Nati's yarmulke was sitting perfectly on his head. Usually, Nachman could tell that Nati had put on the yarmulke just five minutes before Nachman arrived. But this time, it seemed like he had been wearing it all along. Nachman looked around and saw a mezuzah on every doorpost, and there was even a sefer on the table. He asked Nati, "Has there been a change around here?" Nati replied, "Yeah, my wife and I became religious." Nachman couldn't believe it. He hugged and kissed him and said, "How? That's wonderful!" Nati told him an amazing story: He said, "Two years ago, on a hot afternoon, my wife and I were sitting on our front porch when we noticed a group of people heading toward the water. The men were all dressed in beautiful suits, shirts, and ties—not at all like people going swimming. The women were dressed as if it was a holiday. And then I remembered, 'Oh my gosh, it's Rosh Hashanah. These people are going to Tashlich.' I hadn't been to Tashlich in years, not since I was a kid in Eretz Yisrael.

I don't know why, but I decided, 'I'm going to put on my kippah, and I'm going to follow these people.' So, I started walking behind them. People noticed me; I wasn't dressed like them, just this kippah planted on my head. Someone came over to me with a Machzor and asked, 'Do you read Hebrew?' I said, 'Of course, I'm an Israeli.' He asked, 'Would you like to say this prayer?' I said, 'I used to do it as a kid. It's been a long time, but I'm happy to do it.' So, I read the paragraph. Then, another fellow came over to me and asked, 'Did you hear shofar today?' I said, 'No.' He said, 'I have a shofar with me; I'm the baal tokea in the shul. Would you like to hear it? It's Rosh Hashanah.' I said, 'Yeah, I know. I didn't hear shofar today. That would be nice.' He blew the shofar, and everyone turned around because it's not typical to blow shofar during Tashlich. When he finished, I turned to leave, and the man said, 'Wait! My name is Moshe Katz. If you ever want to come to the shul or if you have any questions, you can always call me or the rabbi.' I wasn't really interested; I didn't care what his name was. But as I turned to leave, he insisted, 'Don't forget, my name is Moshe Katz.' I thought, 'Okay, whatever.' When I got home, Zahava asked, 'So, what happened?' I told her the whole story—how this guy came over, introduced himself, and blew shofar for me. And suddenly, Zahava's face turned white.

She said, 'What did you say? Who blew shofar for you?' I replied, 'Moshe Katz. Why does it matter?' She said, 'Moshe Katz—that was my grandfather's name! He was the baal tokea in Bialystok. He blew shofar there. I can't believe that the same name—Moshe Katz—is the person who blew shofar for you. It's like he came back!' Zahava and I felt that this was orchestrated by G-d. It couldn't be a coincidence that the man who blew shofar for me was named Moshe Katz. Shortly after, I decided to go to the shul. We talked with the rabbi, met Moshe Katz, and slowly but surely, we became baalei teshuva." Nachman hugged his cousin again, amazed by the story. Upon his return to Eretz Yisroel he went to see Rav Chaim Kanievsky and told him the whole story and asked, "Rebbe, if Hashem wanted my cousin Nati and Zahava to become religious, why didn't He send Moshe Katz to them years ago? Why did He wait until now?" Rav Chaim responded, "Hashem waits for someone to take the first step. Once Nati put on his kippah and joined the others for Tashlich, Hashem said, 'You took the first step, now I'll send you Moshe Katz.'" Hashem waits for us all Ten Days.



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the person who put the cement block behind the car, Rabbi Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Devarim Page 328) writes as follows. If the store owner can ascertain that the person blocking his path would not listen to the ruling of a Beis Din (rabbinical court), then he would have the right to do what he did. However, if the person would go to Beis Din, then it was wrong of him to take matters into his own hands, and he would have to offer to pay for the damage m'dinei shamayim (according to the laws of heaven)."

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in memory of
Flora Kamenker and Isaak Shapsay
By their children Bella and Eduard Shapsay



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

