



A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



GIVING A HEADS UP

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Parsha, the Torah says (Shemos 6,23) that Aharon married Eli-sheva, the daughter of Aminadav, the brother of Nachshon. Why does it mention that she was the brother of Nachshon? Our Sages explain that this teaches us that when one wants to marry a woman, he should check and inquire about her brother.

This leads us to the following true story.

Yehuda was riding on a bus in Eretz Yisrael. In front of him was a middle-aged man talking on the phone. The man was talking out loud; "Chani, as you know, there was a shidduch redt for our daughter to a boy named Yisrael Berman. Before they go out, I will go to his yeshiva, Yeshivas Ohr Eliyahu, to observe him and see how he acts among his friends, how he learns, and



BASE TEN

HaShem brought His world into existence through the utterance of ten statements. These include "Let there be light", "Let there be rakia" and so on. The purpose of the creation of this world was to give Man the opportunity to serve HaShem by keeping and protecting the observance of His Torah.

If the purpose of creation was the keeping and protecting of the Torah, once Yaa-kov and his family became a nation why didn't HaShem give us the Torah. Why did we have to go through the Egyptian exile and the subsequent exodus?

Furthermore, the first Commandment is to know that HaShem is the One Who took us out of Egypt. Why does the exodus find its way to the top of list? If the purpose of the world is that Man should keep and protect the Torah, would it not have been more appropriate to begin the Commandments with knowing HaShem is the One Who created the world?

The Gemara states that "HaShem wants our heart". The Gemara is teaching that it is not sufficient for us to keep and protect HaShem's Torah on the surface. Rather, HaShem wants us to be impassioned with a commitment to keep and protect His Torah. HaShem wants our commitment to His Torah to be an expression of a relationship. The Torah is not meant to be nothing more than a set of laws which must be observed. It was meant to be the vehicle by which we can develop an enduring love of HaShem and express it to Him.

Relationships develop through experience. For us to develop a relationship that would express itself through the Torah, we needed to be personally touched by HaShem. The reason HaShem waited for the Egyptian exile and its exodus before

how he davens. I will be home later tonight.”

Yehuda, who was sitting behind the man, knew Chaim Berman from Yeshiva Ohr Eliyahu. He often sat next to him in the dining room.

Yehuda had a plan. He was going to get off the bus right away and run ahead of the man. Then he would tell Chaim about the fact that the man was planning to watch him the whole day.

Yehuda found Chaim and said, “Your possible future father-in-law will be coming to the yeshiva to watch how you act, how you daven and how you learn. You better be on your best behavior.” Chaim greatly appreciated the heads up and told Yehuda that he intended to act his best.

But later, Yehuda felt conflicted about his choice. The man on the bus wanted to see how Chaim Berman acted when no one was watching. He didn’t want to watch a “show.” Perhaps it was wrong to tell Chaim about the fact that he was going to be observed. Perhaps he was contributing to misleading the man and the girl.

Yehuda sent this question to Rav Zilberstein. Was it wrong of him to give Chaim the heads-up that the man was planning to watch him?

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Shemos 126

MITZVA MEME



giving us the Torah was because our relationship with Him was going to grow from that experience.

The nature of any experience defines that relationship. So, for example, if I experience the generosity of a wealthy man who pays up all my credit card debt, my relationship with him will be built upon his generosity. If I experience the courage of the man who saved me from captivity my relationship with him will be built upon his courage and strength and so on.

HaShem wants our relationship with Him to be built upon His being Ein Od Milvado, ‘there is nothing other than He’. HaShem wants us to develop a recognition that within the entire world, there is nothing that has true existence other than He. Nothing has its own power, nothing can do and create without HaShem. Everything that exists in this world will sooner or later end its existence. HaShem is the only Being that cannot cease to exist. He has no beginning and has no end because He is Existence.

The function of the ten plagues was twofold. They were meant to punish the Egyptians and they were meant to demonstrate the absolute Existence of HaShem. Egypt was the greatest empire of its time. They had great military prowess, they had the greatest economy. Following what Yosef did for them, they were by far the wealthiest nation. With every one of the plagues HaShem demonstrated the absolute powerlessness of Egypt. Their mighty Nile, the source of their economic and agricultural greatness could be turned into a foul blood bath and so it was with every plague.

Our experience of being liberated from the Egyptian bondage by HaShem was built upon our recognition that nothing in this world has its own existence. Every power, every creature, even light and time are all governed by HaShem. Our relationship with HaShem was built upon His being ‘Ein Od Milvado’.

Perhaps the plagues came in the number ten to correspond to and to bridge the ten statements of creation to the ten Commandments.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE TRANSPARENT SURGEONFISH

Look at this image of a transparent fish. Is this real? Is that a hoax?

It is real. It is the juvenile stage of a surgeonfish. Some suggest that it is transparent because it makes the fish nearly invisible underwater when it can't defend itself. When the fish gets older, however, it has a powerful method of self-defense. Let's look at the fascinating surgeonfish together.

Why is it called a surgeonfish? Is it a doctor? The surgeonfish has the scientific name of Acanthuridae. The scientific name is derived from the Greek words *akantha* and *oura*, which loosely translate to "thorn" and "tail," respectively. The fish is called a thorn-tail. This refers to the distinguishing characteristic of the surgeonfish, which is that a fin near the tail is extremely sharp, like a thorn. More precisely, it is actually as sharp as a surgical scalpel, and that is why it got the name surgeonfish. They have scalpel-like scales, one or more on either side of the tail (**pictured, bottom right**). The extremely sharp scalpel near their tail is used to defend themselves. Any predator that dares to mess with the surgeonfish may get viscously slashed. The spines are dangerously sharp and may seriously injure anyone who carelessly handles such a fish. Though they don't usually attack humans, a human who annoys a surgeonfish can suffer a serious cut that may need stitches to close up. These are surely 'look but don't touch' fish. A quick swipe of a surgeonfish tail and you might need a surgeon-human to sew you back up.

Surgeonfish can grow to as long as 6.5 feet long. Most, however, are smaller and are between half a foot to around 2 feet long.

Surgeonfish are in the same family as tangs and unicornfishes. They usually live in tropical seas, usually around coral reefs. Many of the species are brightly colored.

Adult surgeonfish have beautiful colors. People admire the surgeonfish for its beauty. Many surgeonfish species have jewel-like colors and nearly psychedelic patterns. Like we learned last week with the marine iguana, male surgeonfish also change colors when they're ready to breed. Seeing the beautiful colors of the surgeonfish almost makes you forget that they have a razor on their back that can shred things to pieces.

Surgeonfish may have the ability to be vicious, but they are actually gentle vegetarians. Like the marine iguanas we learned about last week, they primarily eat algae. Their mouths are small and have a single row of teeth perfect for grazing on algae. Surgeonfishes often travel and feed in schools. Eating algae in schools is their trick for overwhelming the highly aggressive defense responses of small territorial damselfishes that vigorously guard the patches of algae on coral reefs.

The truth is that the surgeonfish help the coral by eating the algae. Surgeonfish serve as a sort of clean-up crew by keeping algae manageable in the coral reefs where they live. It helps to maintain the overall health of a coral or rocky reef system.

What is fascinating is that some surgeonfish species have an organ in the gut that's filled with bits of sand and coral. They purposely swallow sand and coral pieces. Why do they do this? This helps the fish grind down its food after they swallow it whole.

YEHUDAH MEANS TO EXPRESS THANKS

Rabbi Yaakov Bender, the Rosh Yeshiva of Darchei Torah of Far Rockaway called Zev Cohen, who runs a home security company. He asked Reb Zev to please install a camera at the entrance of his father-in-law's apartment. Rabbi Bender's father-in-law, Rabbi Yehudah Elchonon Diskind, who taught fourth grade in the Yeshiva of Eastern Parkway for many decades, lived in a Flatbush apartment on the second floor and was unable to walk down the steep flight of steps to allow guests in. Zev installed a wired system by which Rabbi Diskind could see who was at the door and, with the press of a button, could allow them to enter.

Just a few days ago I met Zev for the first time and told him my name. When he heard my name was Diskind, he asked me if Rabbi Yehudah Elchonon was my uncle. He proceeded to share with me a special hanhaga that my uncle had. For many years, several times a year, usually on erev Yom Tov, Rabbi Diskind would call his house. Most of the time Reb Zev's wife answered the phone. My uncle would tell Mrs. Cohen, "Please tell your husband how grateful I am to him for putting that camera by my door. Nowadays it is seldom that I go out. I rarely see people other than my family. By using that camera I am able to see out onto the street and feel somewhat part of society."

He always expressed his appreciation for the gifts he had been granted, no matter how many times.

Told By Rabbi Paysach Diskind



THE ANSWER

Regarding the question of whether a person who would not step on a picture of a Jordanian king can step on a page of Gemara to save it, Rav Zilberstein answered as follows. The halacha is that saving the Gemara page from potentially being lost is the way to show respect to Hashem. Therefore, if necessary, one is allowed to step on it to save it.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated for the zechus for a Refuah Shelama, min haShamayim for

Basya Kayla bas Amalea Malka and Aaron ben Basha Kayla

Alex and Malka Barron

Rosenbloom
PEST-CONTROL
TOTAL CUSTOMER DEDICATION

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.

