

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE LONG AWAITED BOOKS

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Torah portion, Parshas Mishpatim, we have many social mitzvos, mitzvos Bein Adam Lechaveiro. However the Parsha also talks about the mitzva to avoid doing forbidden work on Shabbos.

This leads us to the following interesting story.

There was an organization active in Kiruv and teaching Torah that needed to run a fundraiser. Reb Pinchas, the leader of the organization, turned to his partner and said, "Reb Yossi, I have a great idea. For this year's campaign, let's announce in our weekly Shabbos newsletter that the first volume of our long awaited book will be available for anyone who gives a significant donation".

Reb Yossi turned to Reb Pinchas and said,



THERE ARE COINS AND THERE ARE COINS

In this week's Parsha, Mishpatim, the Torah states "Do not hurt the feelings of the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." The 'stranger' referred to in this verse is the convert. The person who was born to Italian parents who chose to become Jewish.

Why does the Torah not give a sharper reason "for you must be kind to strangers". The implication is that one might feel justified for not being sensitive to the feelings of the stranger. What justification could there be?

The Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh explains that the neshama of the Jew comes from a higher spiritual source than that of his non-Jewish neighbor. It is for this reason that we have many more obligations and restrictions. There is nothing at all wrong for the non-Jew to eat beef that was not slaughtered properly whereas the Jew may not. The Jew is required to wash his hands according to the halachic specifications when he wakes up in the morning and his non-Jewish neighbor has no need to. The Jew's neshama is more delicate and he must care for that sensitivity.

Much like the difference between rare coins and other coins. One must avoid touching rare coins with bare hands and he should certainly not throw them into his pocket to bang around with other coins. Rare coins must be handled

“I’m not sure that would be permitted. It would be like using the Shabbos newsletter to sell books and you can’t sell books on Shabbos”.

Reb Pichas replied, “I’m not sure you are right, Yossi. We know that you are allowed to commit to give tzedakah on Shabbos. We also know that you are even allowed to sell aliyos on Shabbos. That is permitted because it is raising funds for tzedakah.”

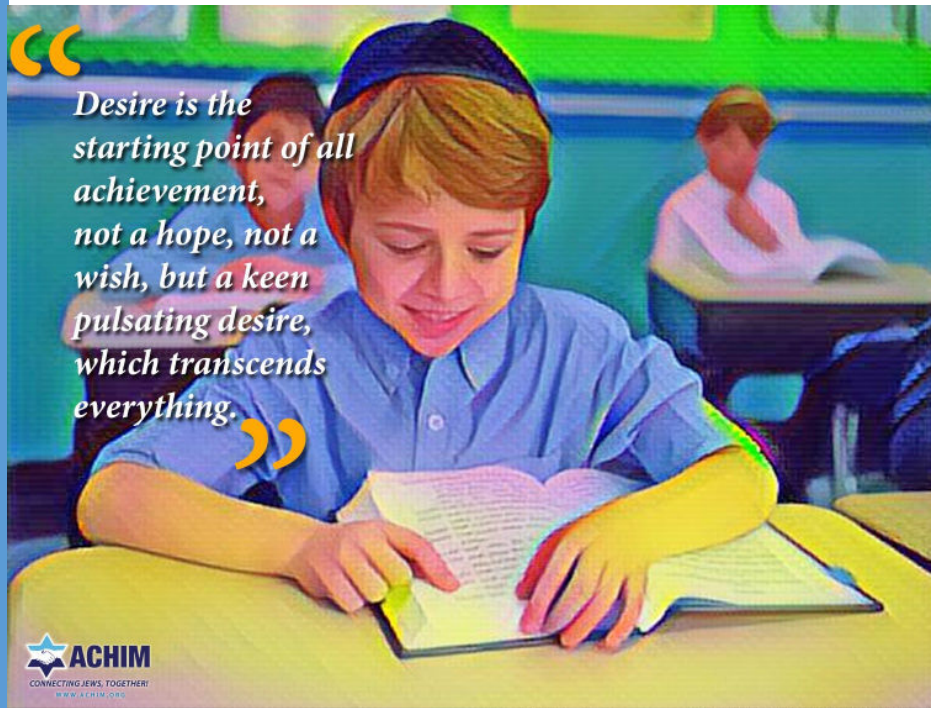
Reb Yossi replied, “I’m not sure selling books is the same as selling intangible aliyos. We know that shuls are not allowed to sell seats in the shul on Shabbos, and they can’t sell leftover esrogim on Shabbos, even if it is a fundraiser. I think when it’s a physical item you can’t sell it on Shabbos even if it’s for tzedakah”.

Reb Pinchas responded, “Announcing in the newsletter that the book is available to those who give tzedakah is not really selling. It’s just letting people know that it is available”.

They decided that they would bring this question to a Rav.

What do you think?

Can one announce on Shabbos that a book will be given to anyone who gives a given amount to this organization? Is that like selling aliyos on Shabbos, or is it perhaps like selling esrogim and shul seats on Shabbos?



“Desire is the starting point of all achievement, not a hope, not a wish, but a keen pulsating desire, which transcends everything.”

with great care while ordinary coins require almost no care at all. The nature of finer material is that they have stricter requirements for their care. The Jewish neshama is certainly no different.

There is a natural lack of self confidence that most foreigners have. They feel that they do not belong and they see themselves as inferior in their new environment relative to their neighbors. This inferiority complex becomes compounded when they recognize that their neighbors’ neshama is superior to their own.

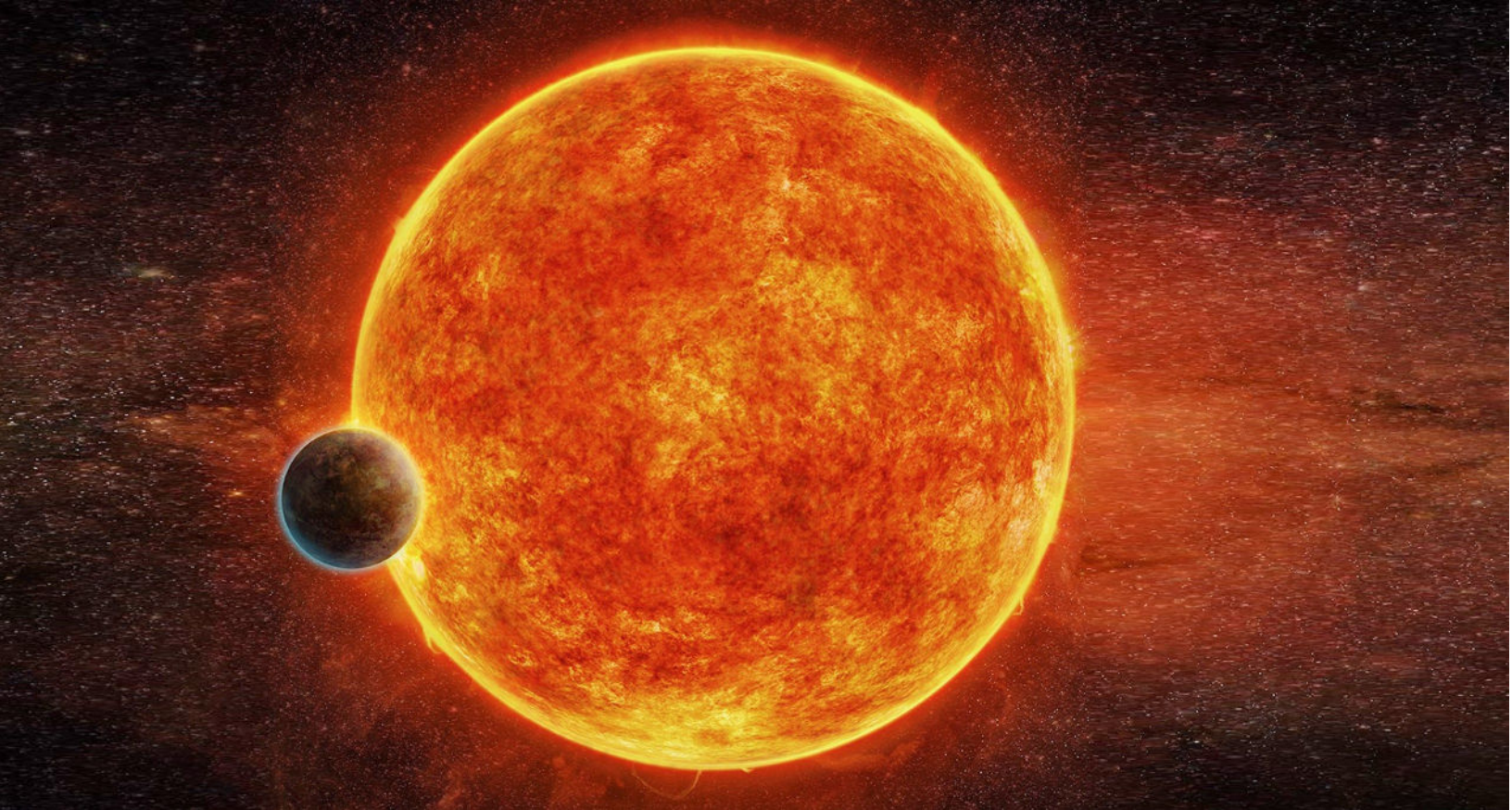
In truth, however, once our Italian friend converts and he enters into the covenant of HaShem by accepting His Torah and following the proper protocol he is now a complete

Jew with the very same neshama as every other Jew. There is no difference whatsoever.

Perhaps we can shed a new insight on our verse. Let us rephrase the verse. “Do not allow the stranger to have bad feelings about his inferior neshama because you, too, were strangers in the land of Egypt”. The Torah is reminding us that the Jewish neshama which we have was accorded to us only after we ourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt. Egypt, explains the Ohr HaChaim, was a land which sullied the neshama of its inhabitants. When we were living in Egypt our neshamos were not on the refined neshamos that we currently have. It was only at Mount Sinai that we acquired this neshama. It was at Mount Sinai that we entered into the covenant of HaShem and accepted His Torah and followed the proper protocol that we received our Jewish neshama. There is no justification for any member of our people to feel that his neshama is superior to the neshama of the convert. We are all connected to the Source.

Have a very safe and very wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE SONG OF THE EARTH

The Earth. The Eretz.

Eretz can refer to the song of Planet Earth. What is the song that Earth sings?

The Earth is saying: "The earth and everything in it are God's; the inhabited area and all that dwell within It," (Tehillim 24:1) And it is saying: "From the wings of the land we have heard song, glory to the righteous." (Yeshaya 24:16)

Planet earth is truly remarkable. It has just the perfect temperature and atmosphere to allow life to survive. There are millions of other planets and celestial bodies in the universe but they do not have the right conditions to sustain life. Planet earth is truly an anomaly in the universe.

Scientists say that had the earth been a bit closer to the sun it would have been too hot for us to survive. Had it been a bit farther away it would have been too cold for us. Had carbon dioxide been a slightly larger percentage of our atmosphere, the world would have gotten too hot for us to survive.

The entire earth sings about Hashem's kindness.

Rav Chaim Kanievsky points out that that verse in Iyov 26,7 says, "[HaShem] hangs the earth on nothingness". It feels like Earth is stable. But it is really a ball suspended by nothingness in space, trapped in an orbit around the sun. What is holding Earth where it is? Orbits do not have to last forever. Space objects constantly fall out of orbit. What is stopping Earth from falling out of its orbit and tumbling through space or tumbling into the sun? It is HaShem's kindness. The

earth sings about the incredible power of HaShem that He can safely suspend planet Earth in space.

Rav Nossan Sherman writes that the song of the earth is making an additional point. It sings that, "The earth and everything in it is HaShem's". On the surface, it may appear that things are random and that things occur randomly. But the earth sings and reminds us, nothing is random and HaShem is constantly guiding the world toward a beautiful and perfect destiny.

Finally, the earth sings and reminds us that the earth belongs to HaShem. Some people think that we control the earth and can exploit its resources in any way we want. The earth contradicts that and says, No, the earth belongs to HaShem. Humans were given the earth by HaShem to use in accordance with His Will. We cannot do whatever we want with the earth. We must follow its Creator's rules. We cannot needlessly waste trees and needlessly waste any resources. We cannot needlessly harm or cause any pain to any of HaShem's creatures. We are to be stewards of the earth and not its spoilers.

Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch writes that this is the same message that Shabbos teaches us. When we cease from doing acts of creative labor on Shabbos we demonstrate that the world does not belong to us to use as we see fit. Rather, HaShem is the creator, and it is His world and we are to live in it in accordance with His rules.

How wondrous are Your creations HaShem.

A VIDEO ABOUT THIS CAN BE SEEN AT [BIT.LY/PEREKSHIRA2](https://bit.ly/perekshira2)

THE EVERLASTING IMPRESSION

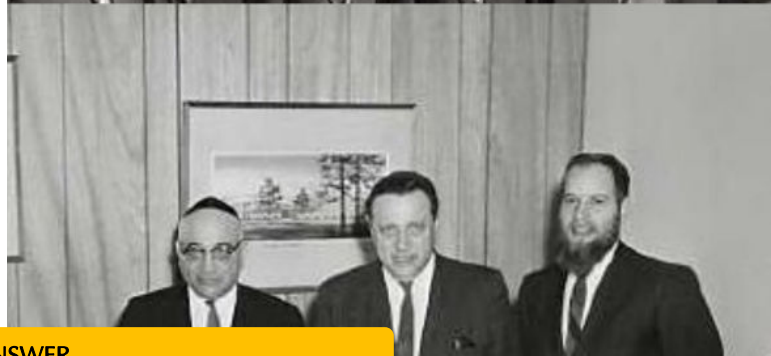
The Jewish Observer recounted the following story about Rav Naftali Neuberger.

With the Islamic revolution in 1979, the Iranian Jews were placed in physical as well as spiritual peril. Rabbi Neuberger immediately focused his energies to help Iranian Jewry escape to America and Eretz Yisrael. Rabbi Ruderman was insistent that the Iranians maintain the customs of their communities, and encouraged them to make a separate Shabbos minyan according to minhagei Paras (Iranian customs). Rabbi Neuberger had assigned Rabbi Yosef Tendler the responsibility to apply for visas for the young Iranian men and women who wanted to leave their country. Halted in his tracks by bureaucracy and resistance to aiding immigration, Rav Tendler reported back to Rabbi Neuberger that he had been totally unsuccessful.

Rabbi Neuberger instantly called a government contact in Washington, and explained the problem. The man lacked the power to assist him personally, but gave him the name and number of a colleague, a high-ranking bureaucrat who was in a position to expedite visas. The Rabbis quickly arranged an appointment to petition him in person, but to their chagrin, this pivotal official was indifferent, and could not be induced to involve himself in the plight of Iranian Jewry. The case seemed hopeless. There was a sudden, unexpected knock at the door of his office, and the official that Rabbi Neuberger had originally called walked in, hugged Rabbi Neuberger and expressed his warm and genuine appreciation for him. Witnessing this, the second bureaucrat, whose office they were in, did a total about-face. From that moment until approximately four years later, he opened the floodgates of Iranian emigration, allowing thousands of Jewish youth to come to these shores.

Curious about what had transpired, Rabbi Tendler inquired as to why the first contact, a non-Jew, had been so motivated to help Rabbi Neuberger that he orchestrated such a dramatic scene in order to influence his colleague to fulfill Rabbi Neuberger's request. It seems that some thirty years earlier, Rabbi Neuberger had struck up a conversation with this gentleman while attending a conference. In his typical caring manner; he discovered that the man was suffering from a severe medical condition. After ascertaining the details, Rabbi Neuberger did some research, referring him to an accomplished physician who ultimately cured him. Rabbi Neuberger's altruistic intervention made a lasting impression on his beneficiary, to the extent that when he ascended in the ranks of the government in Washington, he always put himself at Rabbi Neuberger's disposal to express his gratitude.

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THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the popsicles for Kiddush, Rav Zilberstein writes that Kiddush cannot be made on them because you can't swallow the Kiddush at one time. However he writes that the Bracha that would be made is Hagefen and not Shehakol. Please consult with your own Rav for any matters of practical Halacha.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated

By Murray and Baila Jacobson in memory of:

Murray's mother, Rose Jacobson, Chana Raizel bas Ezra Yehuda 3 Adar II

Baila's Grandmother, Chana Labovitz, Chana bas Chaim Yehuda 16 Adar II

Baila's Grandfather, Menachem Labovitz, Menachem Mendel Zev ben Herschel 18 Adar II

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