

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



FORBIDDEN PARKING

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha makes a reference to the mitzvah of tefilla, the mitzvah to pray. The Torah says "And you shall serve Hashem your G-d (Shemos 23, 25)". The Rambam in the Sefar Hamitzvos (Mitzva 6) says that the service of G-d referred to here, is the mitzvah of tefilla.

This leads us to the following true story. Eli lived in a busy Jewish community. He woke up late and scrambled to make the last shacharis minyan in the community. He drove to shul, but the shul parking lot was completely full. He circled around a few times, but there were no open spots anywhere near the shul. He looked at the car clock with frustration and realized that he was going to miss the last minyan.

He then eyed the handicapped parking spot, in the shul parking lot. The handicapped spot was right in front of the shul, and it was the perfect spot. It seemed that it wasn't being used that day, and Eli rationalized to himself that if it was empty, and it wasn't being used, it would be ok for him to park there.

"In the worst-case scenario, if I get a ticket, I



GOING UP

In this week's Parsha the Torah instructs us "You shall be men with a holy calling, therefore do not eat non-kosher meat". The construction of the noun "men" is in the possessive form, indicating that the adjective "holy" is not modifying the noun. Otherwise, it would have stated "You shall be holy men". Instead, the Torah is saying that we should be a people who strive to be holy, even if we have not yet achieved that state. What is holiness?

The Hebrew word kodesh means "designated for". It could refer to anything even if it is not a holy cause. The mere designation of a person, place or thing for something specific makes it kodesh. Unless otherwise indicated, it always refers to a designation for HaShem. Therefore, this verse is instructing us to be a people whose life is designated to HaShem.

It is noteworthy that the instruction to be designated to HaShem finds itself in the context of the meat that we eat. Why is that?

When observing the ecosystem of the food chain we find that every creature serves a purpose as being a part of the food chain. The plants are there to be eaten to provide the herbivores nutrition. The herbivores serve as nutrition to the carnivores. The carnivores, when they die, serve as nutrition for the plants and the cycle continues. While this is an oversimplification of the food chain, it demonstrates how every creature has its unique role in the ecosystem.

On one hand it is genius how HaShem created the world with such intricate com-

MITZVA MEME

will pay the ticket, and that money will show how much I value davening with a minyan". Eli felt a bit conflicted about it, but he bit the bullet and parked in the handicapped spot. He made it in the nick of time for the minyan, and davened a very beautiful shacharis with a lot of kavanah.

An hour later, Eli walked back to his car, and began to drive away. As he was pulling out there was a knock at his window. It was another member of the shul, Mr. Frankel. Eli rolled down his window, and Mr. Frankel said quietly, "I think you might have to daven again, I don't think you fulfilled your mitzvah of tefilla today". "What do you mean?", Eli said.

Mr. Frankel said, "I have a close relative who is handicapped and walks with a walker. To him, the handicapped spots are lifesavers. If someone like my relative came to shul and there was no handicapped spot open, he would either go through great pain and effort to walk to shul or he would turn around and go home. Because you parked in the shul's handicapped spot, it is likely that a handicapped person might either have gone through great pain to enter the shul, or missed davening because you took the spot. Parking in the handicapped spot is an aveira, a sin. Our Sages say that if one does a mitzvah by means of a sin, they do not fulfill the mitzvah. If someone steals a shofar and blows it in the shul no one fulfills their mitzvah.

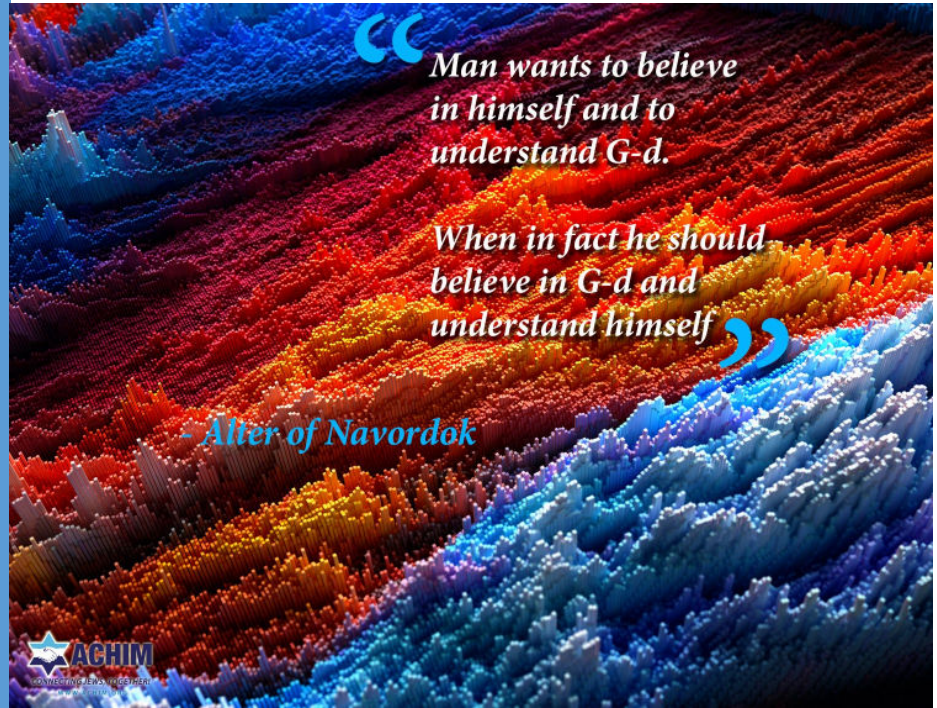
You davened today by doing a sin of taking the only handicapped spot. Therefore I think you should daven again", Mr. Frankel concluded.

Eli felt terrible, but he was not sure Mr. Frankel was right. Did he have to daven again because he davened by parking in a handicapped spot?

What do you think?

This question was asked to Rav Chaim Kanievsky.

See Upiryo Matok Bereishis 93



plexity and there is nothing that is redundant; everyone is important. On the other hand, however, the entire system is circular. What is the purpose of this ecosystem? It just goes around and around seemingly headed to repeat itself. Is there no ultimate function? Following the ecosystem carefully is like traveling for days on a complex road system with many interconnecting highways only to return to the point from where we started and to continue driving the same route! What is the purpose?!

HaShem created two planes of existence; the material world and the spiritual world, or as the Maharal calls it the world of intellect. Although the latter is abstract and from the perspective of the material world it does not seem like a real existence, nevertheless, it is actually the Real World. It is the world where we can begin to understand who the Creator is. Only in this abstract world of intellect do we begin to understand the purpose of why both worlds were created. Only in this world

can all of creation achieve its mission.

All creatures, with the exception of Man, belonging to the material world do not have any relation to the world of intellect. Even their purpose of existence is limited to the material world; to fill their role in the food chain. Man, however, although he is a member of the material world he also exists in the world of intellect.

HaShem designed Man's bi-world existence because he is the only creature who can elevate the material into the world of intellect. How so? With all the intellect with which Man was endowed, his intellect will never be realized if he does not eat breakfast! Yes, that bowl of Cheerios or cup of coffee is what facilitates Man's expression of intellect. Behold! All those coffee trees in Columbia are being cultivated so that some Jew can express his insight on a verse in the Torah! The same is true when he eats dinner and gets his protein from some beef. It is no wonder that the Torah's instruction for us to a people who strive for holiness finds itself in the context of our food.

It is incumbent on us to give direction to the world and bring it to its destiny instead of it going around and around.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

WOUNDS, SCABS & SCARS

This week's Parsha says “verapo yerape” He shall surely heal. The way the body heals itself is truly remarkable. Next time you have a scab on a wound, look at it a bit closer. The processes that are involved in the making of that scab are reminiscent of the skills used by a master plastic surgeon. Let's learn about it.

Doctors have generally divided the process of wound healing into 4 basic stages. 1) blood clotting (technically called hemostasis), 2) inflammation, 3) tissue growth (technically called cell proliferation), and 4) tissue remodeling (technically called maturation and cell differentiation). As soon as the skin barrier is broken, the sequence of these events are set into motion to repair the damage as follows.

Blood clotting: Within the first few minutes of an injury, platelets in the blood begin to stick to the injured site. They change themselves into an amorphous shape, more suitable for clotting. They also release chemical signals that activate fibrin. The fibrin then forms a mesh and acts as "glue" to bind platelets to each other. This makes a clot that serves to plug the break in the blood vessel, slowing and preventing further bleeding. The fibrin threads then begin to form a web-like mesh that traps the blood cells within it. This mesh of blood cells hardens as it dries, forming a clot, or "scab" on the surface of the skin. The scab is eventually broken down and replaced with granulation tissue. The granulation tissue is firm to the touch, slightly shiny and a sign of healthy wound healing. Later this is replaced with collagen. Also during this stage, the blood vessels around the wound narrow to stop the bleeding. This stage of the process should start and finish within a few minutes or less and stop the bleeding.

Inflammation: During this next phase, the damaged and dead cells are cleared out, along with bacteria and other pathogens or debris. This happens through the process called phagocytosis, where large white blood cells called macrophages engulf debris and destroy it. Macrophages take on the role of wound protector. This cell fights infection and oversees the repair process. The body's spleen contains half the body's macrophages in reserve ready to be deployed to injured tissue. Platelets and macrophages then release growth factors into the wound that stimulate cells to speed their rate of division for the next stage. The inflammation of a wound helps to fight infection, clearing debris and inducing the proliferation phase. You might see some clear fluid on or around the cut at this time. That fluid is helping clean out the wound. This stage takes about 2 to 5 days.

Tissue growth: Once the wound is clean and stable, your body can begin rebuilding the site. Oxygen-rich red blood cells come to the site to create new tissue. It's like a construction site, except that your body makes its own building materials.

In this phase, cells form new blood vessels. The reason why new

blood vessels must be formed is because the activity of cells that make new tissue requires oxygen and nutrients. This creates a supply line for the new tissue regeneration. Oxygen is essential for healing. The macrophages that get rid of debris and bacteria, also help break down the old wounded blood vessels and those cells can be repurposed to make the new blood vessels. It's like recycling old construction material. The reason why the tissue near a wound is red is because of the presence of new capillaries, new blood vessels that are built.

Once the blood vessels are created then new tissue is created. This happens when fibroblasts begin accumulating in the wound site. Fibroblasts are the main cells that produce the collagen matrix in the wound site. Collagen is a protein that serves as one of the main building blocks for your skin and which serves as a type of scaffolding that other cells can be built on. Then keratinocytes, which are skin cells, migrate to the wound and go above the granulation tissue but beneath the scab. Why are scabs itchy? Histamine supports skin cell regrowth and is crucial to the body's healing process. But, it can cause a reaction — including itching — similar to an allergy. Finally the fibroblasts close the wound by contracting and pulling the extracellular matrix closed. This process occurs over about 3 weeks.

Tissue remodeling: During the maturation and remodeling stage, collagen is realigned and cells that are no longer needed are removed by programming the cells to die, called apoptosis. The maturation phase can last for a year or longer, depending on the wound type. As the phase progresses, the tensile strength of the wound increases. Collagen will reach approximately 20% of its tensile strength after 3 weeks, increasing to 80% by 12th week. The maximum scar strength is 80% of that of unwounded skin. Since activity at the wound site is reduced, the scar loses its red appearance as blood vessels that are no longer needed are removed by apoptosis. A scar is basically skin that isn't as strong or flexible as original skin. This process can take as long as 2 years but some scars never go away completely.

What can you do to assist your body to heal a wound? 1) Get some rest. Getting a lot of sleep can help wounds heal quicker. 2) Eat your veggies. Healthy food and nutritional supplements can boost your immune response and prompt the wound healing process. 3) Don't stop exercising. Increased blood flow produced by exercise can speed up the healing process. 4) Keep it clean. Be diligent with the cleaning and dressing of the wound. Your skin needs a lot of moisture and warmth to heal well. The wound shouldn't be allowed to dry out. Dry, crusty scabs are like brick walls preventing new cells from migrating to the wound and can also be a food source for bacteria. To prevent the wound from drying out, doctors recommend that a wound should be cleaned with soap and water covered by a coat of petroleum jelly with a bandage on top.

THE PRANK

When Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman was 12, he began studying in Yeshivas Toras Chessed in his hometown of Brisk. Many fine students from Brisk and the surrounding area came to learn there, including the older sons of the Brisker Rav, who also attended the shiur of the Imrei Moshe.

R' Zev Eidelman, a close childhood friend of R' Aharon Leib, told R' Aharon Leib's children that some bachurim in the yeshivah, most of whom were at least 15 years old, resented that Aharon Leib, who was three years younger, was entering Toras Chessed. As a prank, they placed a long, shallow bowl in his dormitory bed, filled it with water, and waited for him to lie down in his bed at night — and get drenched. They waited and waited and waited. When Aharon Leib didn't show up, they went to the beis midrash, where they found him with his head down on the shtender, dozing. This scenario was repeated for several nights until the boys realized that Aharon Leib didn't use his dormitory bed but catnapped in the beis midrash. Seeing his diligence in learning, the older bachurim began respecting the young talmid and didn't bother him again.

Many years later, his grandson, R' Gedaliah Honigsberg, asked R' Aharon Leib if he remembered sleeping in the beis midrash most nights. R' Aharon Leib was evasive and replied that he didn't remember where he slept; he just remembered the joy in learning Maseches Yevamos

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THE ANSWER

Regarding the question of the person who was not invited to the wedding who got sick from the fish, Rav Zilberstein writes that the money was intended only for those who were invited to the wedding.

This week's Table Talk is dedicated as a zechus for a refuah shleima to our friend

Aaron Schwarzbaum

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