



## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



## SHABBOS, THE LIFE SOURCE

This week's Parsha introduces us to Shabbos. We know that the world was created in seven days. However, a simple reading of the Parsha will reveal that the world was created in six days and on the seventh day HaShem rested. If He rested on the seventh, why do we identify the seventh day as a part of the creation? Our Sages explain that Shabbos brought menucha, rest, to the world. Without menucha the world would be missing an integral component. Therefore Shabbos is the final touch on the creation of the world.

What is menucha and why must the world have it to be completed?

The Midrash teaches us that with the arrival of Shabbos, 'tohu and vohu were removed from the world. What is tohu and vohu?

The second verse of Breishis the Torah states that at the beginning of creation the world was tohu and vohu. Tohu and vohu is defined as emptiness and chaos. Perhaps we may define it as purposeless and meaningless.

The Midrash would thereby be stating that with the arrival of Shabbos purposelessness and meaninglessness were removed. With Shabbos everything now had purpose. There was not a single member of the creation that did not have its role and purpose.

This reflects the passage in Pirkei Avos 4:3 "There is nothing in the word that is unnecessary, because everything has its unique role." How did Shabbos bring meaning and purpose to the world?

When HaShem introduced the mitzvah of building the Mishkan He also instructed us to observe the Shabbos. "Shabbos is the sign between Me and My people that HaShem created the world in six days and on the seventh day He rested and 'vayinafosh' ". Vayinafosh translates as 'rested'. However, this creates a redundancy, as the transla-

## THE THIEF'S TOOLS

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha makes a reference to the prohibition against stealing. The Torah says, "from all the trees of the garden you may eat." Our Sages teach, this is a reference to one of the commandments of the Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach, the prohibition against stealing. This leads us to the following true story:

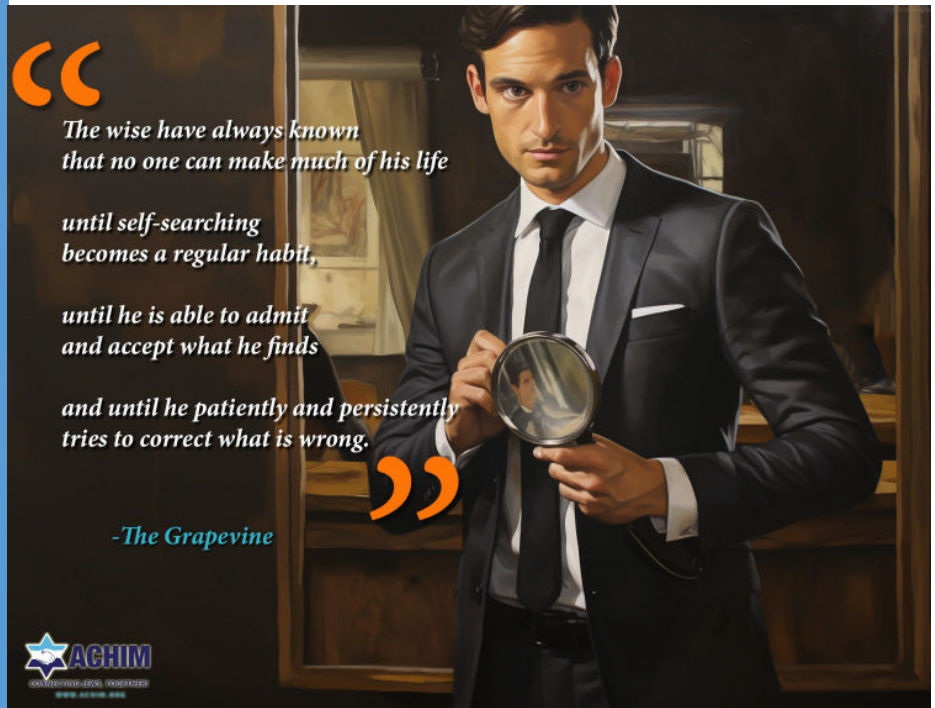
Michoel, who lived in Israel, was once awakened by sounds coming from his garage. He quickly ran to the garage and peeked in the window. Looking into the garage, he saw a thief

with wire cutters, lock cutters, and an electric saw, trying to break into his car. He quickly called the police. The police were very responsive and arrived within a minute. As soon as the thief saw the police, he dropped his tools and ran for his life. The police were much faster, caught him, subdued him, and he was arrested.

After the thief was booked, Michoel learned that the thief was Jewish. The thief, a fellow Jew, had left these expensive tools in his garage. Among them were an expensive electric saw that could cut through locks and an expensive wire cutter. Did Michoel have a mitzvah to return the tools to the thief? Should Michoel keep them? Could he sell them and keep the money?

What do you think? Did Michoel have a mitzvah to return the tools, or could he keep or sell them?

See Upiryo Matok Vayikra page 61



tion would read that 'HaShem rested and He rested.'

The commentaries explain the final word to mean "and He became the nefesh, the soul of the world". In other words, with Shabbos HaShem became the soul of the world.

This is parallel to the creation of Adam. HaShem first formed Adam from earth and after his body was complete HaShem breathed into his nostrils a breath of life. Until that breath of HaShem was blown into Adam, none of the components of his body had any purpose. However, with HaShem's breath, suddenly there was no part of Adam's body that was meaningless. So long as there is life in the body, every component has purpose.

In the first six days HaShem created the body of the world with all its myriad of components. When Shabbos arrived HaShem became the soul of the world.

Hence, the Midrash is saying "Once Shabbos arrived, tohu and vohu were removed. Everything was filled with purpose. There

was not an organism in the world, no blade of grass and no grain of Star Sand that didn't have its purpose. The world became alive.

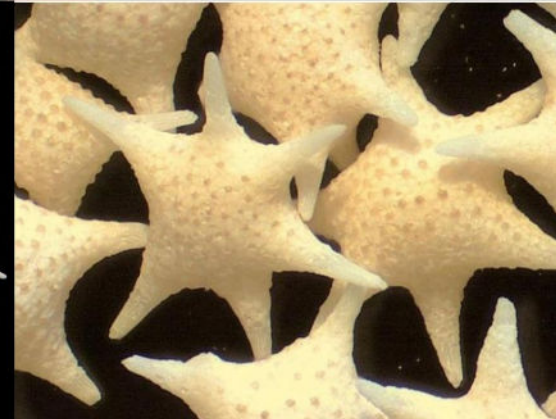
We can appreciate the connection of Shabbos to the Mishkan. HaShem is telling His people that He is the soul of the world and with the Mishkan in their midst He will now reside among them.

To quote a verse from last Parsha "How fortunate are the people of Israel, who compares to you, a people saved by HaShem, the shield of your help..."

May we all see HaShem's final return speedily in our days.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**



## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### STAR SANDS

We know that the Jewish people are compared to the stars and the sand of the sea. Would you believe that there is sand of the sea that looks just like stars?

Tucked away in the picturesque region of Taketomi, Japan, lies a natural wonder that has mystified and attracted visitors from all around the globe - the Star Sands of Hoshizuna-no-Hama. The Star Sands of Hoshizuna-no-Hama are a unique natural marvel. These white sands are composed of 5 and 6 pointed stars. In fact, the name Hoshizuna-no-Hama translates to "Star Sand Beach" or "Sand in the Shape of a Star."

How does this sand have a star shape? The sand's star shape comes from the exoskeletons of microscopic creatures known as Foraminifera, specifically the *Baclogypsina Sphaerulata* species. These tiny protists, microscopic organisms, reside on the ocean floor, often in the sea grass, and measure just a millimeter in size. These particles are not related to starfish. When they die, their calcium carbonate shells persist, and over time, the tides wash these remnants ashore, creating the unique starry texture of the sand. Marine biologists call these organisms "living sand." The star-shaped grains are only a few millimeters in size and stick to fingers and toes.

This phenomenon isn't widespread. The only places on Earth that are known to produce the star-shaped grains are found at Hoshizuna-no-Hama and the neighboring islands of Iriomote and Hattoma, along with two specific beaches on Taketomi Island—Kaijihama and Aiyaruhama.

Why is Taketomi unique in that these star sands appear there? Typhoons play a significant role in the visibility and abundance of star sands. The typhoon season in Okinawa runs from June to November. Most of the star-shaped creatures become visible af-

ter a typhoon, as the strong waves bring more of the sand ashore. The storms churn the ocean, bringing a plethora of star creatures ashore through the waves. It's during these months that the beach is at its starriest, making it the best time for visitors to experience this natural spectacle. Despite the disruptions typhoons can cause to services and local life, they do enhance the experience for those wishing to witness the star sands in their full glory.

The beach's fame has surged in recent years, drawing more tourists. Unfortunately, this popularity comes at a cost. Many visitors, captivated by the beauty of the sands, take them home as souvenirs. Local authorities have now forbidden this act, but the damage is palpable. The star-shaped sand is disappearing faster than the ocean can replenish it, posing a challenge to both conservationists and local communities.

The sands, beyond their visual appeal, have garnered interest for potential environmental solutions. A 2014 study led by the University of Tokyo explored the possibility of breeding Foraminifera artificially. The goal? To counteract the rising sea levels threatening coastlines and coral reefs. The research, conducted in an artificial environment mimicking the Tuvalu coastline, achieved the first-ever successful reproduction of foraminifera in such conditions. While the technical challenges of this method remain, the potential implications are vast. Protecting and understanding the star sands could pave the way for innovative solutions to solving the challenges posed by rising sea levels.

To us Jews, these star sands can be a constant reminder of the People who Hashem has compared to sand and stars. Thank you Hashem for your wondrous world!

## WHY HE REFUSED TO HELP ALL THE WAY

Reb Chaim Soloveitchik would often take walks in the streets of Brisk, engrossed in a sugya. He would not walk with his rabbinic frock. Rather he would dress like an ordinary Jew, wearing his long coat, with his big yarmulke on his head. His route took him to the riverbank on the other side of the city. Sometimes Rav Simcha Zelig (the Dayan) would accompany him and they would sit down on a bench, engrossed in an atmosphere of holiness.

One day when Reb Chaim was out walking alone, he met a Jew who was not a resident of the city. The man, unaware of whom he was addressing, asked him how to get to a certain place. Reb Chaim gave him directions, but he saw that the man was unsure and he was afraid he would lose his way. Reb Chaim therefore decided to accompany the man to his destination, which was on the other side of the city.

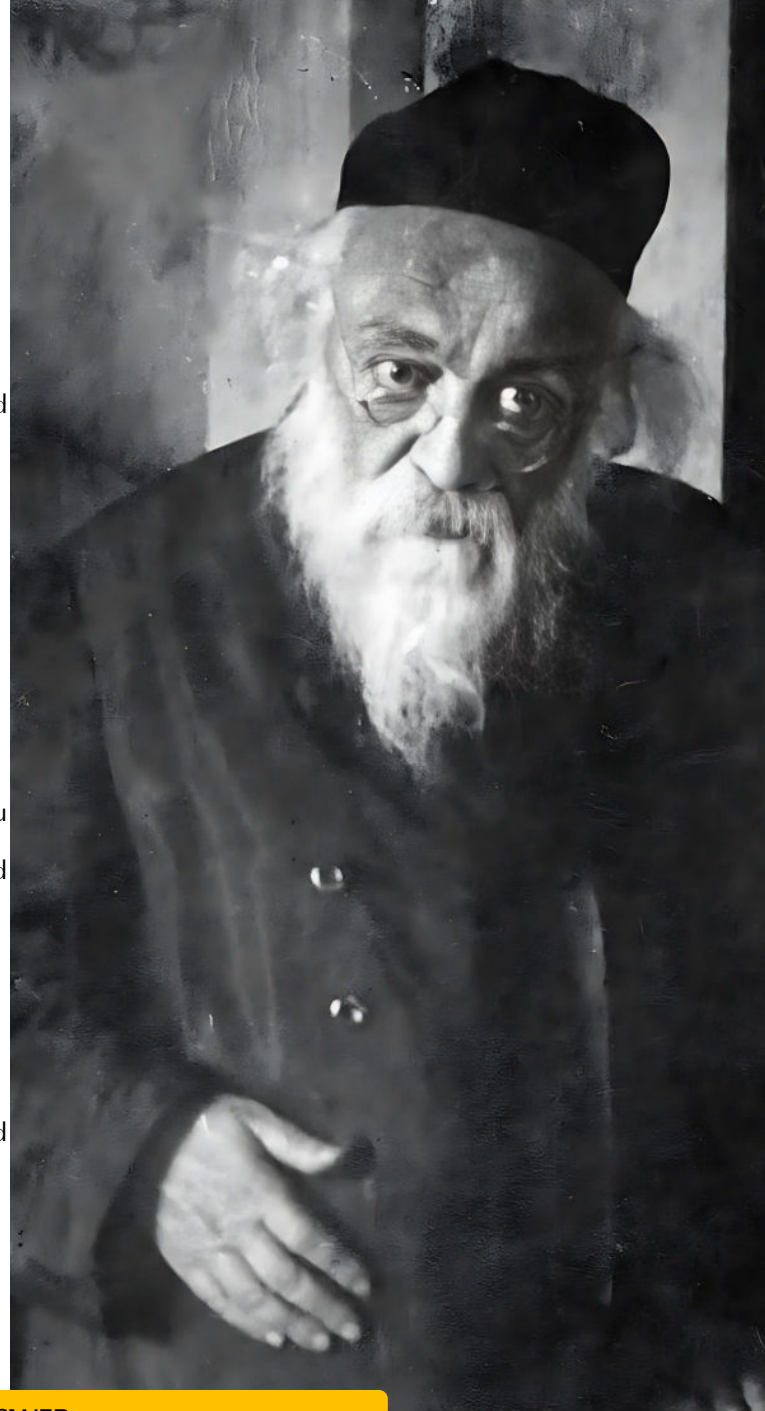
They had been walking together for a while when the man stopped, apologizing that his bag was very heavy and he could not go further. He asked whether Reb Chaim would be so kind as to carry it for him to his lodgings. Reb Chaim carried the suitcase for quite a while.

"Perhaps you'll take a turn for a few minutes?" Reb Chaim asked when he felt he needed a break. "I have no strength for it," the man answered, explaining that he had come a very long way, adding, "It won't hurt you to help me a little bit with my burden." The dialogue repeated itself several times until they were very close to the end of their long walk. At that point, Reb Chaim put down the suitcase and pointed to the house, turning to leave.

"Nu," said the man, "if you've already taken me this far, perhaps you will take the bag into the house?" But Reb Chaim refused, said goodbye and left. Only the next day did the visitor learn why his benefactor had not finished the job. His host had suggested that he go meet the rav of the city and pay his respects. When he came into the rav's house, he was mortified, wishing the ground would open up and swallow him. The man whom he had taken advantage of and had shlepped his suitcase was none other than the revered rav of the city. The visitor immediately asked forgiveness for the terrible dishonor he had shown to the rav, but Reb Chaim only smiled, unperturbed, as if he had not been involved in the events at all.

Now the visitor could not hold himself back from asking why he had refused to carry the suitcase the last few steps. Reb Chaim answered him, "Indeed, I really should have completed the mitzvah, but I was concerned that your host might see us coming in and yell at you for having the chutzpah to trouble the rav of the city. I decided that it would be better to leave you some distance from his home than to expose you to terrible shame."

(From Reb Chaim Brisker, By R' Shimon Yosef Meller, Published By Feldheim, and Reprinted With Their Permission.)



### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the hitchhiker who left the car to daven mincha, Rav Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Vayikra page 45) wrote that the hitchhiker is liable to pay the fine. This is because the hitchhiker can be considered to be a shomer sachar, a paid watchman, who is liable even for a grama, an indirect damage. He is being "paid" to watch the car with the free ride. In addition, the hitchhiker, the paid watchman, stands in the place of the owner. Because the car was parked in a no-parking zone, and the hitchhiker was responsible for it while there, the hitchhiker is liable for any damage or fines that come because of the illegal parking. Rav Zilberstein wrote that the hitchhiker should have ideally told the car owner that he needed to daven mincha before the owner left, but if not, he should have stayed sitting in the car, and davened mincha alone, while sitting.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated to the memory of our dear parents

ר' נפתלי יהושע אהרן ז"ל  
רוח בת אברהם ז"ל  
ר' יוסף אהרן בן יצחק מיכל ז"ל  
לאה בת ר' מנחם מנדל ז"ל

By Akiva and Linda Wagschal



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

