

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE CASE OF WINE

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion discusses how Yaakov sent gifts to Esav to placate his anger. This leads to the following true story:

Yitzchak was about to make Kiddush one week when he realized he did not have any wine. He went to his next-door neighbor, Dov, and asked to borrow a bottle. Dov agreed and quickly retrieved a bottle of Bartenura wine. Yitzchak took the bottle home. A few weeks later, he returned with the same brand of Bartenura to his neighbor.

"How did you enjoy the wine?" Dov asked.

"To tell you the truth, I didn't even use it," Yitzchak replied. "What happened was, when I opened it, we smelled it and it smelled bad. We tasted it, and it was totally spoiled; it was vinegar. Therefore, I decided to make Kiddush on Challah that week.



OUR ADVANTAGE

The Parsha opens with Yaakov Avinu returning to Eretz Yisroel when he learns that Eisov is coming to greet him with 400 troops. In describing Yaakov's reaction to this news, the Torah tells us that Yaakov was "extremely frightened and he was troubled". If he was extremely frightened, what more is being added with "he was troubled"?

Malbim lays down a principle "The one who has complete trust in HaShem has no need to fear any person. When Yaakov recognized that he sensed fear, He realized that his trust in HaShem was not complete and could therefore not be confident that HaShem would protect him... HaShem will only perform open miracles for those whose trust in Him is complete."

Malbim explains that in truth there was no need for Yaakov to be frightened because HaShem had promised him to bring him home safely. Nevertheless, Yaakov was lacking in his absolute trust. He felt that perhaps HaShem would not honor His promise because he had fallen short of HaShem's expectations of him. Once Yaakov's absolute trust slipped he became troubled. He was troubled by the fact that he lacked absolute trust. In other words, the very fact that he was frightened was the cause of his being troubled.

The Torah tells us that he immediately split his camp into two groups so that if Eisov would destroy one the other would survive. After splitting the camp in two he turned to HaShem and pleaded that He save him based on HaShem's commitment to Avraham and Yitzchok. For although his own merit was no longer sufficient the merit of his father's would be sufficient.

But let me tell you what happened next. After Shabbos, I called up Bartenura and told them we had received a spoiled bottle of wine. The customer service person was very sympathetic and extremely helpful. He said, 'Because of your discomfort and inconvenience, we're going to send you a whole case of our best brands for free to make you feel better.' Sure enough, the next day, an express shipment arrived with a huge case of Bartenura's best wine. So, one of them was this one, and I'm giving it back to you to replace the one that was spoiled."

Dov thought for a moment, "Just a minute. The truth is, that was my bottle of wine that was spoiled, and I paid for it. Bartenura is trying to placate you for the inconvenience, but really, they should be placating me, the customer who paid for it. I think perhaps all those other bottles of wine should go to me, because it was my wine that I gave to you, which you didn't even end up using, that was spoiled."

But Yitzchak disagreed. "No, they were trying to placate me for the inconvenience. I tasted the wine; and it was horrible. I went through the inconvenience of calling them, and they sent it to me."

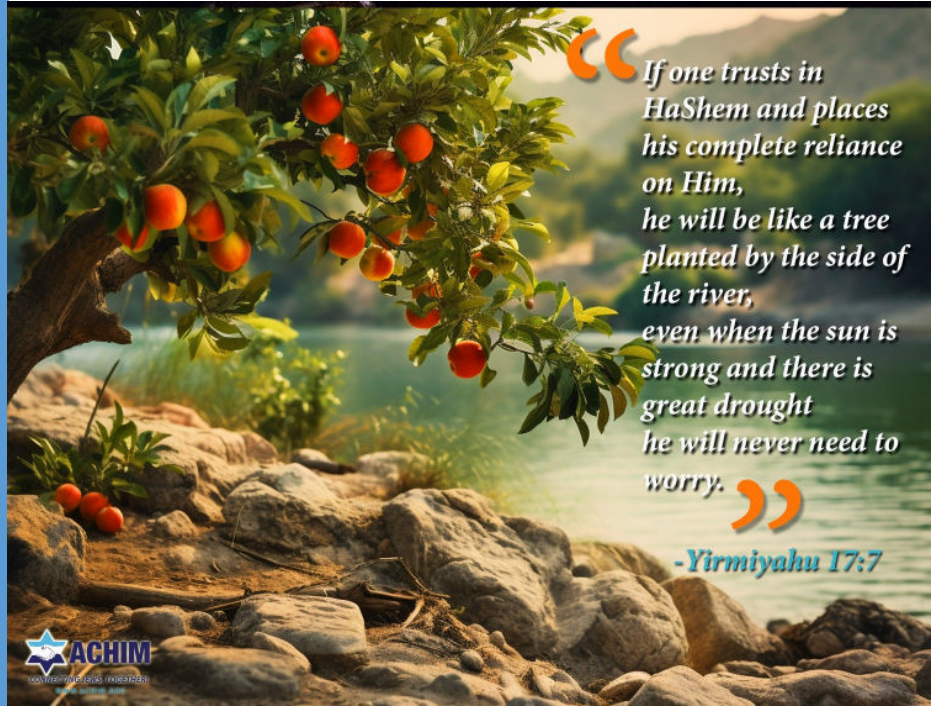
Each of them felt that the whole case of wine should go to them.

What do you think? Should it go to Yitzchak, who suffered tasting the spoiled wine and called the customer service agents?

Or should it go to Dov who was the actual customer who bought the wine?

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Vayikra page 144



Malbim is teaching us an incredible lesson in bitachon. If one's bitachon is absolute and he is confident that HaShem will protect him, then he will be protected even if he falls short of HaShem's expectations of him. One needs to be troubled only if his trust wavers ever so slightly.

How wonderful it would be if all of us could muster up the necessary bitachon that HaShem would bring our current situation to the point of victory! If that would be accomplished the conflict would be neutralized. Not only would the conflict be neutralized but our people would enter a new stage of emunah and bitachon that perhaps would terminate our long exile and He could finally return home.

But if our father Yaakov faltered in his trust can we hope to do better? Perhaps we can. Consider the advantage we

have over Yaakov Avinu.

This was Yaakov's first encounter with a well trained army dedicated to his destruction. He knew that only a miracle could save him. Being that he felt he had not lived up to HaShem's expectations of him he was unsure that Hashem would save him anyway. Naturally, his trust faltered.

We, on the other hand, have experienced many wars in which there were larger, well trained, well armed formidable armies for which only a miracle could save us and we know that we were not living up to HaShem's expectations of us. And nevertheless, we did survive and we actually were quite successful. We have already learnt first hand how in spite of our unworthiness HaShem still stands by us.

As we continue growing in our trust in Him may we merit continued miracles until we finally achieve absolute trust when b'ezras HaShem we will all go out to greet Moshiach tzidkeinu.

Have a wonderful Shabbos

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE DEADLY CASSOWARY

Can you imagine a bird that does not fly, that is taller than a person, and that has deadly dagger-like claws that can kill a person? Please meet the Cassowary, (pronounced kah-suh-weh-ree) also known as the world's deadliest bird. Cassowaries are truly fascinating creatures, and their uniqueness extends well beyond their striking appearance. Let's explore the world of the Cassowary together.

Cassowaries are native to the tropical rainforests of northern Australia and New Guinea, and some islands off the Australian coast, like Fraser Island and Magnetic Island. Cassowaries are remarkable for their size and strength. They are the second-heaviest living birds, after the common ostrich. The largest cassowaries can stand as high as six feet and weigh up to 160 pounds. Some have pointed out that they resemble dinosaurs.

Their distinctive appearance includes striking blue faces and necks, and a prominent, helmet-like structure called a casque, on their heads. Cassowaries are the only birds to have one. What is its purpose? This feature, made of a sponge-like material, is thought to aid in forest navigation and sound amplification. Other scientists explain that the casque primarily serves as a thermal regulator. The casque is adept at dissipating heat in warmer conditions and minimizing heat loss when it's cooler. This thermal management is so critical that cassowaries are observed immersing their casques in water to cool down in high temperatures.

These large birds cannot fly, but their extremely powerful legs propel them at great speeds. They are strong swimmers and can move quickly on both land and water. Cassowaries have been clocked running as fast as 31 miles per hour through the rainforest. Their powerful legs also help them jump high, up to 7 feet straight into the air, a skill that aids in escaping predators.

Their legs are also used for delivering strong kicks, and they can use their sharp, dagger-like claws, (pictured) up to 5 inches long, to slice and puncture any animal that is a threat, as well as humans. They have three sharp claws on each foot, with the inner toe featuring a long, dagger-like claw up to 5 inches long. These claws are not only a tool for defense but also serve in territorial disputes.

The cassowary has occasionally, though rarely been known to kill human beings with slashing blows of its feet. Those attacks that do occur overwhelmingly involve soliciting food from people. A study of 221 cassowary attacks revealed that 150 were against humans. Most of these attacks occurred when humans tried feeding the birds or when the birds were protecting their young. Out of these, 7 attacks led to serious injuries, and there was 1 fatality reported before 2019. When attacking, cassowaries typically jump and kick with both legs at

once, which can be particularly dangerous due to their powerful legs and sharp claws.

In 2012, a tourist in Queensland, Australia, was kicked by a cassowary off a ledge and into a body of water but remained unharmed otherwise. A particularly notable case occurred in 2019 in Florida, where a cassowary attack resulted in the death of a human. One of the most famous attacks (and the only one known to result in a confirmed death) occurred in 1926: one member of a group of teenage boys who were striking the cassowaries with sticks was killed after a cassowary leapt upon him and killed the boy with its long toenail. Cassowaries, along with ostriches, are the only birds worldwide known to have caused human deaths through physical attacks.

As omnivores, cassowaries have a varied diet. They primarily consume fruits, seeds, and leaves but will also eat small animals such as insects, lizards, and snakes. Their feeding habits play a critical role in seed dispersal, crucial for the health and diversity of the rainforest ecosystem. The favorite food of cassowaries is fallen fruit of the rainforest, and their claws come in handy for scraping up the fruit from the forest floor. They can also catch fish by sitting in a stream and spreading their feathers to form a sort of net.

In a rare twist for birds, male cassowaries take on the responsibility of incubating eggs and raising chicks. Females lay 3-8 large, pale green-blue eggs each year, which the males then incubate for about 50 days. After hatching, the striped brown and cream chicks stay close to their father for up to a year, blending into the forest with their camouflage. A cassowary egg can weigh about the same as 10 average chicken eggs!

Cassowaries communicate with a variety of sounds, including grunts, whistles, and rumbles, as well as body language like puffing up feathers or swaying heads. Interestingly, they produce a very low-frequency sound, the lowest known bird call, which is more felt than heard due to its low pitch.

Today, cassowaries face several threats, including habitat loss, collisions with vehicles, and dog attacks. These factors have led to a decrease in their numbers, placing them in the vulnerable or endangered category.

In Aboriginal Australian culture, cassowaries are revered as totem animals and are featured prominently in traditional stories, songs, and art. In New Guinea, they are sometimes domesticated for their meat and feathers.

Thank you HaShem, what a wondrous world!

IT'S TRICK PHOTOGRAPHY

A grandson once showed Rav Avigdor Miller a picture in a newspaper depicting an apparent conflict between two Jewish groups. "It's trick photography," Rav Miller said. "The media loves to drum up conflicts even when there is none. These Jews really love each other, and so we love both groups."

"But they seem to really be fighting," his grandson persisted. "I will explain," Rabbi Miller replied. "The army has many divisions, ground troops, the marines, the navy, the air force, etc. Each is convinced that they are the best and most important, and naturally they feel an animosity toward the other branches. Yet, as far as the rest of the nation is concerned, they appear as one unified army supporting its country. And that is how everyone must look at them, for that is all that concerns them. Every soldier must know where he belongs and stay there — and so should you."

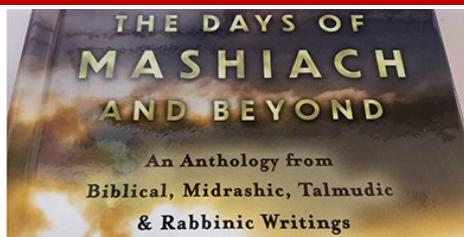
The grandson asked, "Who should I side with?" "You just have to know that you are in the army of Hashem," Rabbi Miller answered, "and continue doing whatever service you are performing, keeping your own position. You don't have to be concerned with the issues of others."

From Rav Avigdor Miller, *His Life and Revolution*, By Yaakov Y. Hamburger, Published By Judaica Press



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the dream, Rav Zilberstein brought a Chida (שם הגדולים מערכת גדולים אות א סימן קצט) where the Chida relates a similar story where the father of the Rosh came to his widow after he passed away on a Friday night and told her to flee because on the next day all the yidden in her area would be killed. She fled on Friday night and indeed the next day there was a massacre and she was saved. There are conflicting sources in Shas whether one should pay attention to dreams or not. It will depend if the dream is relevant to the person himself; if he thinks that it is true and if he is afraid of the dream. Rav Zilberstein concludes that based on this, because it was relevant to the person, he felt afraid and felt



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