

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



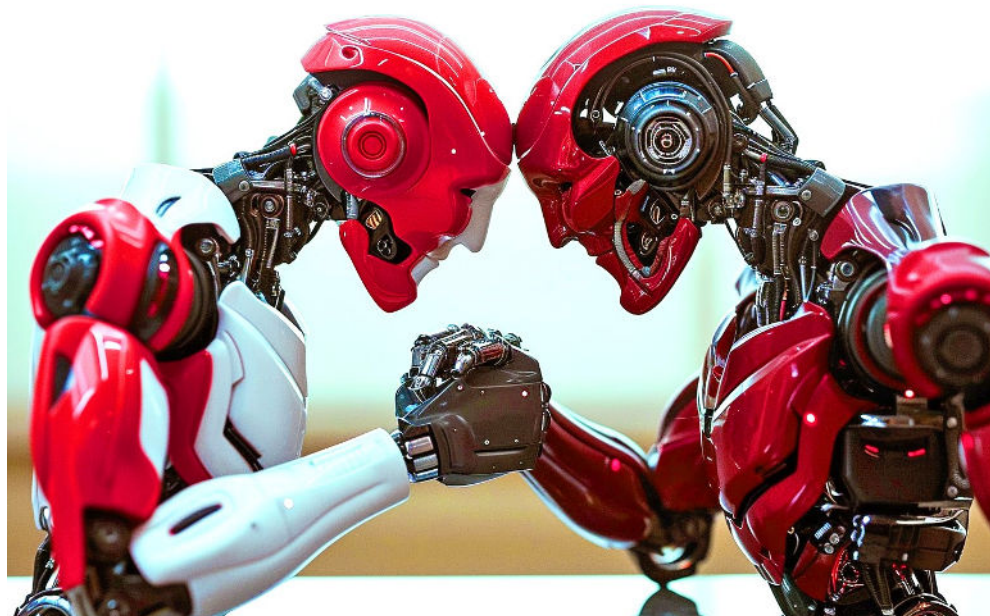
LET ME PAY TO CUT THE LINE

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Last week, we discussed a story about barbershop drama. Here's another story that occurred in the barbershop.

Avi owned a barbershop. One day it was busy with five customers waiting for their haircuts. Suddenly, a large man in a wrinkled suit and greasy, slicked-back hair came into the barbershop. He seemed very distressed and perturbed. He turned to Avi and said, "I'm in a big hurry. I'll pay you double for the haircut. I'll pay you \$40 for the haircut instead of \$20 if you let me skip the line and give me the next haircut."

Avi turned to the man and said, "My good sir, it's not up to me. There are five people before you. You'd have to ask them if they would let you cut in line. If you cut in line, you'll be wasting their time." So the man turned to Avi and said, "Okay, that's fine. You'll be making \$20 for each of them, but I will pay for their haircuts and double it. I will pay you \$40 for each of the five, so you'll make \$200 instead of \$100. I'll pay for the other haircuts if you let me cut in line."



THE ARM WRESTLE

Gleaned from the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh

After we crossed the Red Sea our nation sang the Shiras Hayam which expressed the revelation that they experienced. The Shira opens "I will sing to HaShem for He is exalted above the exalted ..." The commentators explain that this is a reference to HaShem's greatness as being greater than Pharaoh. The first 'exalted' is referring to HaShem's exaltation which is greater than the second 'exalted' being Pharaoh. In other words, HaShem is more exalted than Pharaoh.

Is this not strange? Is this a part of their revelation that HaShem is more exalted than Pharaoh? Pharaoh is a mortal being and HaShem is his Creator! Furthermore, where do we even find that Pharaoh had any level of exaltation? To answer the second question, we do find that Pharaoh had the arrogance of one who considered himself more exalted than HaShem. However, there was no basis for his feeling this exaltation, he simply suffered from grandiose delusions. While he believed that he was greater than HaShem, that was totally unfounded so how can we attribute any genuine sense of exaltation to Pharaoh?

Allow us, for a moment, to sneak into Pharaoh's psyche. Speaking from inside Pharaoh's distorted thinking it would go as follows. "I have experienced the intense greatness of HaShem. And yet, in spite of His apparent absolute power over nature as He controls light and darkness to make darkness for my people and light for His people and all the other incredible demonstrations that illustrate His control, nevertheless He is unable to release His people without my permission. With every strike against me He begs for my permission to release His people. Evidently, I, the great

Avi then turned to the men and said, "He's offering to pay for your haircut. You'll get a free haircut if you let him go first, and he'll pay me double for them. Do you mind if he goes first?"

All five men looked at each other and agreed, "It's worth waiting a few extra minutes for a free haircut," they said. So they let the man go first.

The big man sat down, got his haircut, and then pulled out a \$20 bill, saying, "Thanks for the haircut, man," and he quickly left.

Avi and all the other men realized that they were duped. The man had promised to pay \$240 but only paid \$20.

So, the five customers said, "Well, we hope you'll keep your end of the bargain. You promised us that we'd get a free haircut if we let him go first. We did. We kept our end of the bargain; he went first. Now, we hope you'll be giving all five of us a free haircut."

But Avi wasn't so sure. "I don't know. I only told you that because I thought he was going to pay, but now that he didn't, why should you get it for free?"

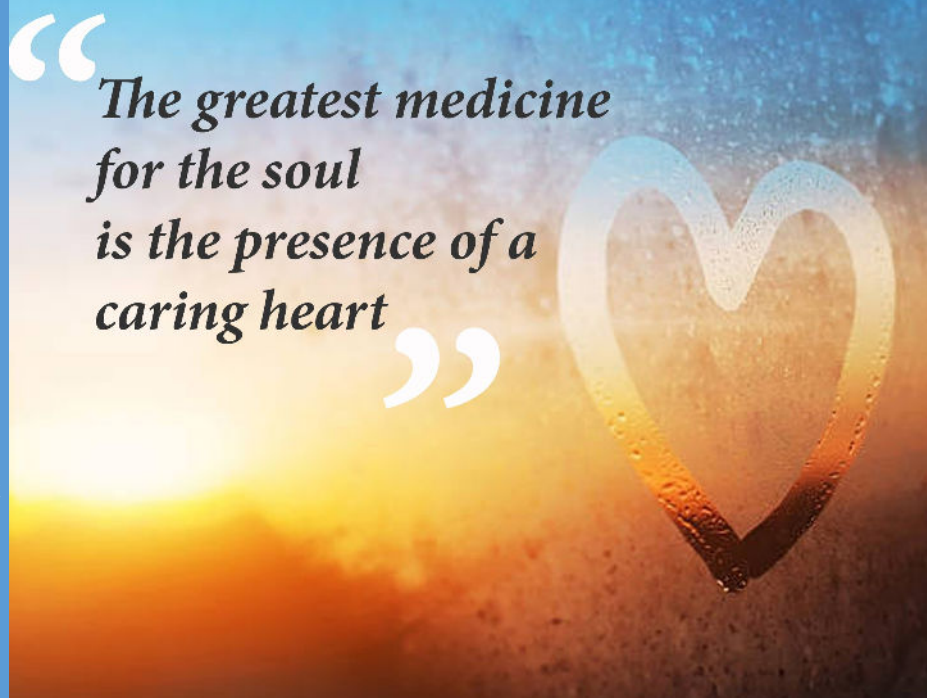
But they said, "No, you have to keep your word. Your word is your word. You said if we let him go first, we'd get it for free. You never made it conditional on the fact that he's paying."

So, this question was brought to Rav Zilberstein.

Does Avi have to give the five customers a free haircut even though he never got paid? Or do the five have to pay for their haircuts because the only reason Avi made the promise was because he thought he would get paid. Now that he didn't, perhaps he would not have to give it to them for free.

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Vayikra Page 236



*The greatest medicine
for the soul
is the presence of a
caring heart*

Pharaoh, have greater sway over His people than He does."

Behold! There is a rationale to justify Pharaoh's exaltation. It was granted to him by HaShem Himself. HaShem created the circumstances to allow Pharaoh to reasonably think that he had greater control over the Jewish people than HaShem! It was only at the grand finale that HaShem showed Pharaoh how all of his fantasy greatness was but a mirage.

At the Red Sea our people recognized HaShem's Absolute Power; He even allowed his enemies to believe they are greater than Him for over a year and only at the end of the game does the truth emerge.

Let us present the following illustration to best depict this point.

When two folks sit down to have an arm wrestle, they sit oppo-

site each other and their hands grasp each other with both their arms straight up. At this position each fellow has an equal chance to win. As one fellow bears down on his opponent's arm, it becomes much more difficult for the opponent to move the former's arm back up because the latter's arm has more pressure on it going down than the former. If, however, the latter was very much stronger than the former he could allow the former to force his way to 99% of the way down. At the last 1% the latter would then reverse the direction and capture the game. The latter's strength is best demonstrated when he performs such a feat.

When we experienced the total demise of the Egyptian empire that was brought about through Pharaoh's arrogance our people recognized the strength of HaShem. They recognized that HaShem could even let his enemies feel more powerful than Him and use their distorted sense of strength to destroy them.

HaShem is exalted above the exalted!

May the day come soon when we, too, will recite that ultimate Shira and recognize HaShem's infinite Exaltation.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Recently, our family enjoyed frozen brussels sprouts that we bought from Seven Mile. We wondered why they are called brussels sprouts. And we wondered if brussels sprouts were really just tiny heads of lettuce or cabbage. So, I dove into the rich history, unique genetic makeup, amazing attributes, and some lesser-known facts about the brussels sprout.

Why are they called brussels sprouts? They are named after Brussels, the capital of Belgium, where they gained popularity in the 16th century. They began as an ancient Roman crop. The ancestor of modern brussels sprouts was a crop in Ancient Rome, brought to Europe in the 5th century. They were cultivated near Brussels by the 1200s and became widespread in the Southern Netherlands during the 16th century. French settlers in Louisiana introduced brussels sprouts to North America in the 18th century.

Brussels sprouts are closely related to cabbage. They are not just small cabbages, though they often resemble miniature versions of them. Both brussels sprouts and cabbage belong to the Brassicaceae family, which also includes broccoli, cauliflower, and kale. Although their cultivation and appearance are distinct, they share many similarities in terms of taste and nutritional content due to their common genetic lineage. Both are high in vitamins K and C and provide dietary fiber, though the specific nutrient levels vary.

Here are some key points about their differences: Cabbage forms a single large head from its leaves, while brussels sprouts grow as multiple small buds along a central stem. Cabbage leaves are softer and more flexible, whereas brussels sprouts have tighter, more compact leaves. In terms of flavor, cabbage tends to be milder and sweeter, making it versatile in various culinary preparations. Brussels sprouts, on the other hand, have a stronger, more distinctive taste that can become more pronounced when overcooked. Furthermore, brussels sprouts are known for their higher levels of glucosinolates, compounds that contribute to their bitter flavor but also offer potential health benefits, such as reduced cancer risk. In cooking, these two vegetables are used differently – cabbage is often eaten raw in salads, sautéed, or added to soups, while brussels sprouts are commonly roasted,

steamed, or grilled to enhance their nutty flavor.

Why are brussels sprouts so divisive, with some people hating them and others loving them? There is actually a science behind it, and it is based on your genes. The TAS2R38 gene plays a pivotal role in determining one's perception of brussels sprouts. This gene controls the ability to taste the bitterness in sprouts. If you have that particular gene, brussels sprouts will taste bitter to you. Also, avoiding overcooking is crucial: to prevent the sulfur-like smell, it's important not to overcook brussels sprouts. This odor is a sign of overdone sprouts.

Brussels sprouts come in varieties of color and size, ranging from marble to golf ball size. They also come in purple, thanks to a hybrid developed from purple cabbage.

Brussels sprouts are a nutritional powerhouse. Containing the antioxidant zeaxanthin, brussels sprouts are beneficial for maintaining eye health. The sulforaphane in brussels sprouts contributes to their unique flavor and is known for its cancer risk-lowering properties. Steaming brussels sprouts enhances their cholesterol-lowering abilities, making them a heart-healthy choice. These vegetables deliver four times the vitamin C of an orange, making them a diet-friendly nutrient bomb. Research suggests that eating brussels sprouts can protect DNA in white blood cells, thanks to their unique enzyme-blocking properties. They were considered so healthy that, along with oranges and lemons, Captain Cook fed them to his crew to help prevent them from developing a vitamin C deficiency – scurvy.

During both World Wars, brussels sprouts were promoted in the UK for their high nutritional value and ability to be grown in home gardens. When grown in gardens, brussels sprouts benefit from being planted near herbs like rosemary and thyme, which can enhance their growth and flavor. They have a natural resistance to some common garden pests, making them a favorite among organic farmers and gardeners.

Thank you Hashem for your wondrous world!

YOU'LL FEEL SO GOOD ABOUT IT

Rabbi David Ashear relates the following story:

About forty years ago, a man from our community, whom we'll call Freddy, was involved in building an organization that helps care for the sick. At one point, he was trying to convince his friend David to accompany him to visit a sick patient in the hospital. "That's really not my thing," David replied, "visiting a total stranger." But Freddy persisted. "You'll make his day. You'll feel so good about it." Finally, David agreed to go.

They walked into the room of an elderly patient and tried to make conversation with him. But the gentleman remained stone-faced. They tried to make jokes, they tried to sing and do whatever they could to get a reaction, but the man did not move a muscle. After over thirty minutes of trying, the two visitors decided to leave.

Freddy felt bad because he had told David that it would be an uplifting experience. As they walked the elevator, David realized he had left his bag in the room. He retraced his steps and, when he got to the door, he overheard the patient talking to a nurse. "Did you see those two men who were here? They're from my community. They came all the way here to visit me. Yes, they came just to visit me," he said, repeating it several times.

David derived much satisfaction from those words, which gave him the encouragement to continue visiting sick people and trying to cheer them up. David could have left the hospital that day feeling as if he had wasted his time, but Hashem gave him the chizuk that inspired him for the rest of his life.



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question of the man who was embarrassed to go to work because of his cut payos, Rav Zilberstein wrote that the barber was indeed required to give the worker shelves, worker's compensation. He also writes that the barber has to help the man do a mitzvah that he was unable to do in the past, like purchase a mehudar tefillin or mezuzah. This is to rectify all the mitzvos that he made the haircut recipient miss.

In honor of Rabbi and Mrs. Diskind with love, admiration and appreciation for all that you do for your family and the community.

May you continue to have kochos and hatzlacha in your avodas hakodesh.

-Anonymous



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