

## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



### SMASHING THE GETAWAY CAR

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion, Yisro, discusses the Aseres Hadibros, the Ten Commandments. We know, of course, that one of the Ten Commandments is the prohibition against coveting. Coveting means to desire something belonging to another and extract it from them. This leads us to the following fascinating true story.

Zev owned a jewelry store that sold jewelry as well as precious stones, gold, and silver. One day, during the period of Selichos, when it's customary to wake up very early, Zev was walking through the streets to shul. On the way to the synagogue, he passed by his jewelry store. He was shocked by the following scene: There was an expensive sports car parked right in front of the shop, and the door was wide open. Two thieves were emptying out his store of all the gems and jewelry and putting them into the sports car.

Zev was filled with anger at their brazen attempt to steal all of his merchandise. Looking at the surroundings, he then thought of the following fascinating idea: There was some construction being done on top of his store. He quickly and secretly climbed up to the roof of his store, where there was a construction site. There, he found a pile of loose cinder blocks. It happened to be that the car



### SHABBOS; OUR FAITHFUL SPOUSE

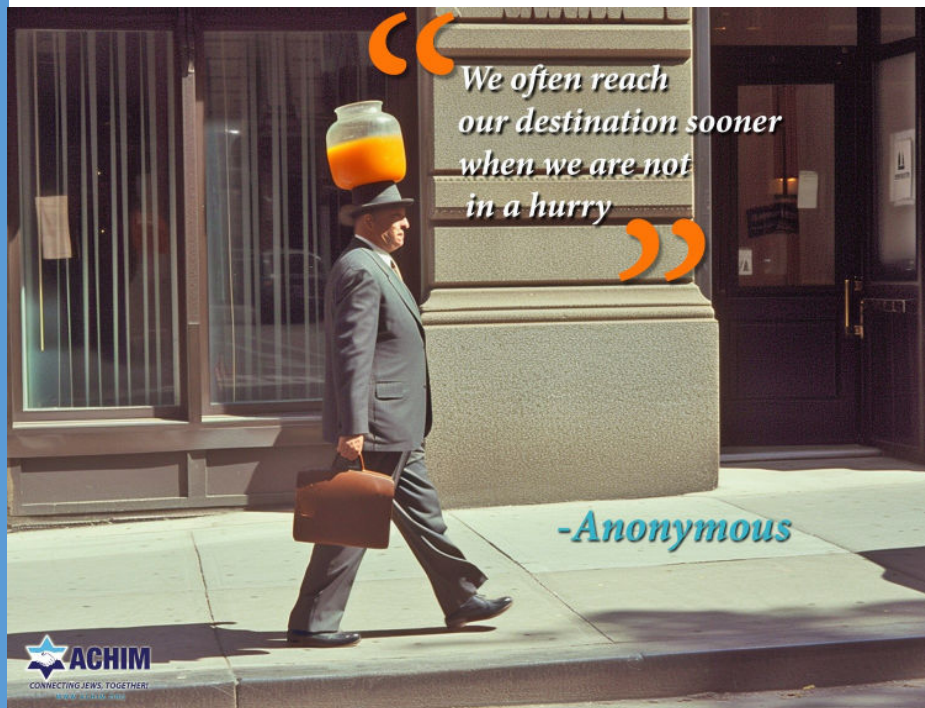
There are many prohibitions that Chazal instituted on Shabbos for the sake of maintaining an atmosphere of 'rest'. These include the prohibition of having a non-Jew perform melacha for us as well as various types of muktza and other activities. Without these limitations we would be able to run our businesses on Shabbos without desecrating the laws of Shabbos. Therefore, in order to maintain the spirit of Shabbos these limitations were instituted.

The basis of this "spirit of Shabbos" comes from the mitzvah of 'tishbos', to rest on Shabbos. The intention of this 'resting' was to rest from the worldly activities that distract us from our spiritual activities. The 'resting' was intended for the neshama who is a spiritual creature and is attracted to spiritual activities. During the week when Man must work and be involved in worldly matters the neshama has no time for herself. She is placed in a world that she is not really part of. It was for her welfare that HaShem gave us Shabbos and Yom Tov, to give the neshama a chance to 'rest' and catch up with her needs.

The question is if HaShem wanted the Shabbos and Yom Tov to be days of 'rest' why did the Torah not create those parameters needed to maintain the necessary atmosphere of 'resting'? Why was this the responsibility of the Sages?

The Midrash tells how when Shabbos was created she came to HaShem and said that the other six days of creation each have their respective spouse, but I

## MITZVA MEME



was parked right underneath the cinder blocks. With all his might, he pushed the cinder blocks down. The cinder blocks smashed the hood of the car. Just as Zev had hoped, smoke and steam started to come out of the car. Apparently, the blocks hit a major component of the car, perhaps the engine block or the radiator. In either case, it was clear that there was serious damage done to the car. Now the thieves would not be able to escape. The thieves looked at the smashed car and realized that somebody had spotted them. They jumped into the car and tried to start it, but as Zev had hoped, it was to no avail. The car was damaged and would not start. Realizing that they were about to be caught, they quickly dropped everything and ran away. Thanks to Zev's quick thinking, he was able to rescue all of his possessions.

Shortly afterward, the police came and surveyed the scene. It turned out that this car didn't belong to the thieves but was actually stolen from another person that night. The car belonged to another Jew named Eliezer.

After the car was returned, Eliezer reached out to Zev. He told him, "I heard that you scared away the crooks and you helped me find my car. But the truth is, the damage that was caused to my car was extreme and extensive. I had to replace the engine, the radiator, and a lot of the internals. That cost more than \$10,000. You were able to save your store from getting cleaned out, but you virtually destroyed my car. I think you owe me money for the damage caused to the car."

Zev understood and was very sympathetic to Eliezer's plight, but he didn't feel like he had to pay him. He felt that by chasing off the robbers, he actually helped Eliezer get the car back. Perhaps if he had not done that, Eliezer would have never gotten any part of the car back and then he would have had to get a totally new car. They brought this question to Rav Zilberstein.

What do you think? Does Zev have to pay for the damage done to the car?

Or would you say that Zev chased away the thieves, and that allowed the car to be returned to Eliezer? Had he not interceded, perhaps Eliezer would have never gotten his car back. What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Vayikra 249

was barren and so on.

Let us appreciate Shabbos' concern; "I am the day that is designated as the day of kedusha, who will be my spouse?" Shabbos was concerned that her kedusha will not be propagated and what purpose will she serve. To which HaShem told her that her spouse will be Klal Yisroel. They will propagate your kedusha. Your kedusha will fill the world through the Jewish people.

Perhaps HaShem wanted Chazal, the representatives of Klal Yisroel, to be the ones who will create those parameters which allow the Jewish people to expand their spiritual reach. It was the job of the spouse, not of HaShem.

It is no wonder that we find throughout our history how Shabbos protects those who protect her. She is our spouse. We protect her and she protects us.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**

am alone who is designated for me? HaShem responded that Klal Yisroel will be your spouse. In explaining this strange Midrash, Rabbi Shlesinger explained which day was married to which other day. Sunday was the day on which HaShem created light and dark and Wednesday was the day on which HaShem designated the Sun to rule the day and the Moon and stars should rule the night. Hence, Sunday is married to Wednesday. Monday was the day that HaShem split the waters; the lower waters and the upper waters, the atmosphere and on Thursday the birds who populate the upper waters and the fish who populate the lower waters were created. Hence Monday is married to Thursday. Tuesday was the day on which dry land was exposed and Friday was the day on which all land animals were created. Hence, Tuesday is married to Friday. Behold! Each day has a spouse to bring about the potential that lies in them. Until Thursday came around, Monday's creation



## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### THE MALE CABOT'S TRAGOPAN

The Male Cabot's Tragopan, is a bird of unparalleled beauty, endemic to southeastern China. Let's explore this unique and beautiful bird together. The Male Cabot's Tragopan is also commonly referred to as the Chinese tragopan or the yellow-bellied tragopan. How did it come to be called Cabot's?

It was named to commemorate ornithologist Samuel Cabot III (pictured bottom right). Samuel Cabot III was an American abolitionist, physician, surgeon, and ornithologist, who contributed significantly to the ornithology field during the 19th century. While studying at Harvard and in Paris, he avidly hunted for birds and traded American bird skins for European and Asian species. His collections, including several new scientific discoveries, were key to the growth and interest in ornithology in the United States. Although his medical career curtailed his ornithological publishing in the 1850s, his lifelong passion for birds culminated in his extensive bird and egg collection being donated to the Boston Society of Natural History and subsequently to Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology after his death. Though not widely recognized outside ornithology circles Cabot was honored by his contemporaries in the field of ornithology by naming the Cabot's Tragopan after him.

The word "Tragopan" has its roots in Greek mythology and language. It is derived from the combination of two Greek words: "tragos," meaning "goat," and "pan," referring to "Pan," a legendary figure with legs and horns of a goat. The connection to goats in the name "Tragopan" is a reference to the fleshy, horn-like wattles found on the heads of the birds in this genus. These wattles, which can be brightly colored and are used in courtship displays, make the bird resemble a goat, thereby giving the genus its distinctive name.

The male of the species boasts a distinctive appearance and physical features. It has a dull golden breast with a speckled back of black, brown, and white. Its head is a striking combination of scarlet and black, adorned with a bright blue lappet, a decorative flap. Males are notable for their blue and red inflatable lappet and horn wattles on their heads. In contrast, females are rich brown with small white speckles, less colorful than their male counterparts.

In terms of size, males average two feet in length and weigh around 3 pounds, whereas females are slightly smaller, averaging 20 inches and 2 pounds. Their diet is primarily herbivorous, including flowers, seeds, fruits, and occasionally small invertebrates. A particular favorite is the fruit and leaves of the plant *Daphniphyllum macropodum*. (It has no generally ac-

cepted common name. Pictured center.) Cabot's Tragopan have a life expectancy of 15-18 years. Their habitat is primarily in forests, primarily at altitudes of 600 to 1,800 meters. These birds do not migrate and endure winter in their home range. They have thick, insulating feather layers that protect against cold and moisture. They are known for their territorial calls featuring rapid bursts of 5-25 notes. They share their habitat with species like the red panda.

Breeding season for the Male Cabot's Tragopan spans from March to May. Males engage in a flamboyant mating display, inflating their lappet and spreading wings to attract females. Their nests are built in trees or on the ground, sometimes utilizing abandoned nests of other species. Females lay 2-6 eggs per clutch, with an incubation period of 28 days. Chicks remain in the nest for three days post-hatching before venturing out to forage with their mother. Chicks are capable of flying soon after hatching.

Let's focus a bit more on the fascinating red inflatable lappet of the Male Cabot's Tragopan. This lappet plays a crucial role in the bird's breeding and communication behaviors. The lappet is essentially a fleshy, brightly colored ornament that can be inflated and displayed during courtship rituals. The primary function of the red inflatable lappet is to attract females during the breeding season. The bright color and the ability to inflate this ornament make the male more noticeable and potentially more appealing to potential mates. The size, color intensity, and the male's ability to inflate the lappet might signal his overall health and genetic quality to females. In environments where the males have well-developed, brightly colored lappets, it suggests a healthy population with good nutrition and low levels of stress and disease. This is common in many bird species, where physical ornaments are used as indicators of a mate's suitability. During courtship, the male Cabot's Tragopan performs an elaborate dance, which includes inflating the lappet. This dance is a complex ritual and is crucial for attracting a mate. The inflated lappet adds a visual component to this performance, increasing its effectiveness. The lappet may also be used for visual communication with other males, especially in the context of establishing and defending territory. Inflating the lappet can make the male appear larger and more intimidating, which can be an advantage in interactions with rivals.

The Male Cabot's Tragopan faces a declining population, currently estimated at less than ten thousand individuals in the whole world.

AMAZING!

## SHE VOLUNTEERED TO WAIT AT THE PHONE FOR 24 HOURS

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein related the following story:

Rabbi Mattisyahu Salomon was honored by the Lakewood Yeshiva at the Brooklyn Marriott about 20 years ago. When he went up to speak at the dinner honoring him, he said, "This is not a dinner to honor me. This is a dinner to honor my mother. Without a doubt, I want to tell you why HaShem has given me the zchus to be the mashgiach of Rav Aharon Kotler's Yeshiva."

You see, in 1941, Rav Aharon's Yeshiva had to relocate to Vilna because of the war. The Vaad Hatzalah had a deal in place to rescue Rav Aharon, but they didn't know whether it was going to be to America or to Israel. If Rav Aharon would be going to America, he would be going through England.

Meanwhile, this was during the Blitz of 1941 when England was being bombed nightly by Germany under Hermann Goring. They were dropping hundreds of bombs and incendiary devices nightly. Someone from the Vaad Hatzalah in England needed to be waiting at the phone at the designated date in case the call would come in that they would be able to rescue Rav Aharon via England.

It was finally identified that the designated date would be on a Friday night, on Shabbos. They needed somebody to wait in a secured bunker at a secured phone in the black of the darkness of the night of the bombing, in case a call would come in detailing how to save HaGaon Rav Aharon Kotler.

Despite the dangers, a young lady, Etel Salomon, volunteered. She volunteered to wait at the phone for 24 hours over the Shabbos in a secure, dark bunker, during the Blitz, in case the phone would ring to save Rav Aharon.

More than 75 years later, Etel Salomon's son, HaRav Mattisyahu Salomon, declared that the merit of his mother who waited on that Shabbos for 24 hours by the phone in case they needed to save Rav Aharon, in the merit of his mother, her son, was zocheh to become the Mashgiach of Rav Aharon Kotler's Yeshiva.

What we do in this world makes a difference. The decisions we make, make a difference. The choices we make reverberate. The Conductor of the world has empowered us to be conductors in this world. Our choices, and our decisions, and our actions, and our thoughts, and our words, reverberate forever. They affect our lives. They affect the lives of our children. And they will continue to affect the lives of our descendants forever.



### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the man who wanted to cut in line at the barber, Rabbi Zilberstein answered that the five people would still have to pay the barber for the haircut. This is because when the man asked to cut in line, the deal was not really between the man and the barber, but rather between the man and the five people waiting. He was essentially paying them for their rights to that spot. Since it was a deal between the man and the five people waiting, it was the responsibility of the five people waiting to ask the man to pay before he got the haircut, and to make sure the barber gets paid. Since he didn't pay before, he still owes the money to the barber and therefore the five should pay the barber.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated for the merit of a speedy recovery for  
**Leib ben Maria**

May HaShem grant him a refuah shleima b'soch sh'ar cholei Yisroel

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