

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



"STEALING" THE NEIGHBOR'S COOKIES

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion talks about the mitzva not to eat Chametz on Pesach. (Shmos 13,3)

There is a mitzva to burn Chametz on Erev Pesach. One lesson behind this mitzva is that we should remove from our homes and hearts anything that can cause a spiritual or moral hazard.

This brings us to the following true dilemma. Yackov once took his family to a large public burning of Chometz, Yackov brought a large box filled with many packages of cookies with him. In front of his children, he threw the large box of cookies into the fire. Shortly after the box was thrown in, a Jewish person watching, looked at the box and took it out of the fire.



THE BLUEPRINT

Every Shabbos generates its unique energy. That energy is reflected in the weekly Parsha. This week we read the Parsha of Bo, in which HaShem continues the process of the Exodus which began in last week's Parsha. In an attempt to gain a taste of this Shabbos's energy I would like to share a Zohar.

The Zohar asks why did HaShem use the word BO which means "to come to Pharaoh" and not LECH which means "to go to Pharaoh". The answer given is that BO is spelled beis alef, the beis is first letter of the Creation in the beginning of the Torah and the Alef is the first letter of the Aseres haDibros, Anochi. HaShem was telling Moshe that I am going to take My people from the beis of Breishis to the alef of the Anochi. They were going to come to Me from Breishis to Anochi.

To appreciate the answer to the Zohar's question Rav Ahron Lopiansky explains that we must understand that there are two types of knowledge. To illustrate this let us compare a group of physicists who live in the 1850's to fifth graders living in 2017. Someone presents the former with a blueprint of an airplane (that has never been invented) and they are asked if this machine could fly. After studying the draft of the machine and reviewing the relevant laws of physics they confirm that such a machine ought to be able to fly. Let us now show the latter an airplane and ask them if this machine can fly. Their answer will be an unequivocal YES!

"Why did you take my chametz out of the fire?" Yackov asked.

"These cookies are actually kosher for Passover". The man answered. "I know that my family would appreciate these kosher for pesach cookies".

Yackov was about to ask the man to return the box, but then felt torn inside. On one hand he wanted to ask the man to give him the cookies back. He thought they were chametz but he was mistaken. Had he known that they were kosher for pesach he never would have tried to burn them. But on the other hand by throwing the cookies into the fire he was being mafkir them, relinquishing his ownership over them, so maybe he didn't have a right to ask for them back.

Yackov wanted to know if he had a right to ask the man to give the cookies back to him.

What do you think?

See Chashukei Chemed Pesachim page 370.

Answer to last week's dilemma "Giving Deadly Intel to Terrorists"

This question is discussed in See Chashukei Chemed Pesachim page 199

Rav Zilberstein writes that according to the Chazon Ish, one would be required to die rather than reveal the information. That is because giving the information is akin to actual murder.

But according to the Yaavetz one should give the information rather than die, particularly because it is not an absolute certainty that anyone will die because of this information.

of physics which perpetuate the running of the universe proclaim loudly of the existence of a Creator. However, that proclamation is only an intellectual analysis it is not experiential.

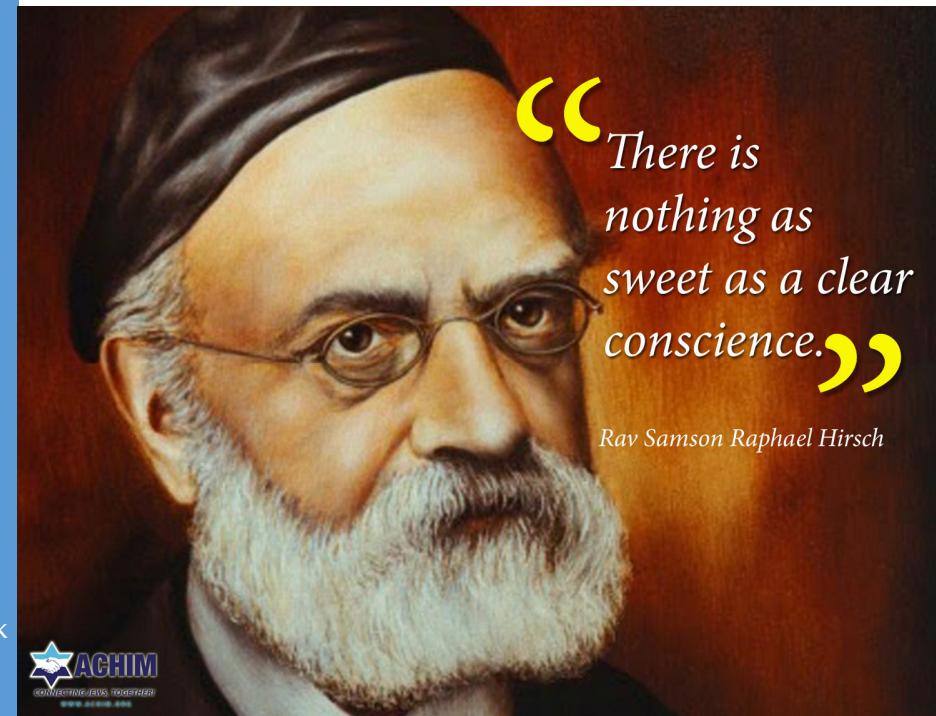
Before HaShem delivered His people from the womb of Egypt He wanted them to have experiential knowledge of their Creator. He wanted to be their personal Director, He wanted to be their Father, He wanted us to be His beloved people. He wanted to establish an eternal relationship with which He and His nation would travel together throughout all of history. Such a relationship required experiential knowledge. HaShem therefore told Moshe BO, take My people from their awareness of Me through Creation to a greater awareness by which they will experience Me in Anochi. The function of our Exodus was to take us from knowing Him from the beis of Breishis to the alef of Anochi.

How fortunate we are to be the people who know HaShem so intimately that we can rely upon Him, count on Him and know that He is always with us!

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind

MITZVA MEME



Is this not amazing! The small children understand instinctively that a plane can fly and the scientists have to contemplate and consider before they answer. The distinction between the two types of knowledge is that the former is knowledge based on analysis and the second is experiential. The former may indicate a greater level of intelligence but the latter allows for greater reliance and application. The scientists will not board that plane until they see it fly successfully. The children will not hesitate a moment.

Before we experienced the Exodus, our awareness of HaShem was based on an intellectual analysis. HaShem was only evident through the genius of his creation. The deeper one looks into nature and science the greater that revelation is. The genius of nature and all her laws



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

Pit vipers detect heat using specialized pit organs located between the eyes and nostrils.

Many animal "sixth senses" help animals find food. For example, snakes known as pit vipers and pythons, as well as some boas, use infrared detectors called pit organs. On pit vipers these organs look like an extra pair of nostrils between the eyes and nostrils, but on pythons and most boas the pits are located on the upper lip. These specialized pit organs can "see" infrared radiation.

Every object with a temperature above absolute zero has heat. Some of the heat is emitted as infrared radiation, a type of light that cannot be seen with the naked eye. Heat receptors at the back of the pit organ detect infrared much the same way that photoreceptors (rods and cones) in your eye detect visible light. Pit organs detect temperature variations with great precision, as little as 0.0054 F (0.003 C).

Pit vipers often hunt at night, waiting for warm-blooded prey to pass by. Since animals give off infrared light, the snake can "see" with its pit organs, even in the dark.

Snakes need help from several senses to distinguish food from warm but inedible objects. Pit vipers don't want to bite warm rocks! Amazingly, they can ignore background infrared radiation (from rocks and other inedible sources). This is partly due to a skill called adaptation,

VIPER INFRARED VISION

the ability to ignore certain unchanging stimuli. Your skin relies upon this skill as well. Your brain is not always conscious of the clothes touching your body unless something changes significantly in the texture, pressure, or weight. Similarly, the pit viper is alerted by movement and contrasting temperatures. When a warm-blooded mouse wanders by, it sticks out like a sore thumb against the cooler background.

Distinguishing heat sources is a bit difficult, so many pit vipers prefer to find a cooler place to sit and wait for dinner to come by. This explains why they often hunt at night, when it is cooler and the prey's warm body stands out more sharply.

These bonus senses might sound like science fiction, but Hashem has designed the animal kingdom to exhibit these wonders abundantly every day.

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STRENGTH TO SAY "I DON'T KNOW"

One of Reb Yaakov Kamenetzky's talmidim related: "Prior to Pesach he was in some doubt as to the kashrus of one of the ingredients of a particular medicine. He made an educated guess based on the substance's Latin name, but not wanting to rely on 'himself, he took his question to a pharmacist. The pharmacist began searching through his numerous textbooks and after a long while told Reb Yaakov that the preparation did not contain any trace of chametz and could be taken on Pesach. Judging from appearances, however, it seemed that he had not managed to find the information he had looked for in all his books but was simply too embarrassed to admit that he didn't know... Reb Yaakov commented that this demonstrated to him the difference between-a pharmacist and a Rav. A pharmacist must give an answer and if he doesn't know what it is he invents something... A Rav who renders halachic rulings is different. When the Beis HaLevi was appointed rav of Brisk he was reputed to be a towering scholar, thoroughly knowledgeable in every area of Torah. No sooner had he been appointed when a very difficult question was brought before him and instead of giving a ruling he said, "I don't know." The questioners were surprised and left. Curiously, this happened again with the second question he was asked. The community began to feel somewhat disappointed but, for the time being, nobody said anything. After this happened a third time, the laymen held a meeting to discuss the situation. "We heard that the Rav is the genius of the generation in Torah," said one of the notables, "yet it turns out that he can't answer our questions." "Perhaps he's indeed a great scholar," another said, "and could serve as a rosh yeshivah and deliver wonderful shiurim but we need a Rav who can rule on our questions." After some further discussion they reached the conclusion that there it was no choice but to ask the new Rav to leave. When the communal leaders came to the Beis HaLevi and expressed their disappointment, he smiled and told them, "Don't worry, raboisai. Be'ezras Hashem I will manage to answer your questions from now on. All I wanted to do was to show both you and myself that if it ever happens that I really don't know the answer, I won't be embarrassed to admit it..." (From In Their Shadow Volume Three, By Rabbi Shlomo Lorincz)

ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS TO SHOW BOTH YOU AND MYSELF THAT IF IT EVER HAPPENS THAT I REALLY DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER, I WON'T BE EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT IT..."



Achim in a Nutshell:

"Veyached l'veineinu l'ahava es Shimecha."

"Please bring our hearts together so that we can love Your Name".

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