

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



A DRINK OR AN IV?

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion talks about the service done on the holiday of Yom Kippur. This brings us to the following interesting dilemma.

Chaim was very ill and was hospitalized over Yom Kippur. Initially, he wanted to try fasting. But once Yom Kippur began he started feeling weak and needed to break his fast to preserve his health. His doctors advised that he needed more fluids in his body. Chaim asked if



A SACRIFICE

I dedicate this Parsha thought to my dear uncle, Rabbi Benjamin Kamenetzky, who passed away at the end of last week. The following thought gives us an insight to the value that Uncle Benyomin placed on life.

In this week's Parsha, Acharei mos - Kedoshim, we find the famous dictum that the laws of Torah are suspended before loss of life. The verse states "*you shall live by them* (through the words of Torah and through her laws)". Our Sages explain that the implication of this verse is that the Torah and her laws are to bring us life not death. Therefore in a circumstance when life is endangered and can be remedied only by transgressing the Torah we must opt to save the life and forego the Torah's law. There are however, four exceptions where the Torah's laws trump life itself. In these cases we uphold the the Torah and sacrifice life. These four exceptions are murder, adultery, idol worship and shmad. Shmad, is where the circumstance is such that by transgression of the Torah a disgrace to HaShem and to His Torah will be perpetrated.

What is the distinction between these four areas of Torah and the rest of the entirety of Torah? If the Torah values life over her laws should it not apply to all of her laws?

The value of anything is always equal to or greater than what you are willing to pay for it. For example, if you are willing to pay \$1,000 for a worthless trinket because it reminds you of your dearest friend then that trinket's value is at least \$1,000 to you. If I am willing to sacrifice my life for my child then my child's value is at least my life. In which case I can say that it is worth living just for my child because that is at least the value of my life.

This holds true with anything I am willing to pay with my life. People throughout history have been willing to pay their life for their country, for their beliefs, fame and notoriety. All these people gave value to their life thereby making their life worth living. Their lives were meaningful and valuable.

If, however, there is nothing a person is willing to sacrifice his life for, then there is nothing

he could have an IV inserted instead of actually drinking. The doctors said an IV would be sufficient.

Chaim had the following question. In normal situations we may not drink on Yom Kippur and in life threatening situations we must drink. If, however, the situation can be resolved without drinking that would be preferred.

Chaim wondered which would be preferred in this case: To break his fast by taking a drink, or to have the Jewish attendant insert an IV needle into his arm. Inserting an IV is normally not permitted since causing a wound on Yom Tov constitutes a melacho.

So in Chaim's case which method would be preferred – to drink the liquid which would be breaking his fast, or for another Jew to cause a wound on yom tov.

What do you think?

See Chashukei Chemed Yoma 579



ing worth living for! Life suddenly has no value. This is **not** to say that such a person wants to die, to the contrary, they want to live but from their perspective life has no value. It is just something to enjoy as long as you have it. If life will suddenly become difficult and painful there is no point in living. Such an attitude reduces life to a meaningless experience. How sad this can be.

HaKadosh baruch Hu created this world for Man to have a relationship with Him. There is certainly much meaningfulness in life from His perspective. It would therefore follow that we ought to give up our life for that relationship; that is the value of life. The question becomes why does the Torah instruct us to transgress her laws to spare life, should we not give our life to uphold the Torah. The Torah is the vehicle by which we express our relationship to HaKadosh baruch Hu.

The answer is given by our Sages. The Torah is teaching us that we should pass over one instance of HaShem's commandments in order to be able to continue living which will allow us to keep the other commandments that we will encounter. HaShem decided that it is

worth the tradeoff of a single mitzvah for the benefit of keeping the rest of Torah for the duration of life that will follow.

So now we need to ask why do we not apply this reasoning to those four sins?

The answer is that these sins represent the very essence of who we are. These mitzvos define us as the people of HaKadosh baruch Hu. When a person transgresses Shabbos one time he has not relinquished his membership of HaShem's people. When a person will eat pork in one instance he has not given up his membership. In both cases their relationship with HaKadosh baruch Hu has not been compromised. However, if a Jew commits murder, adultery, idol worship or shmad even for just one instance, he has compromised his relationship with HaKadosh baruch Hu.

It is therefore no wonder why great Jews who had the unfortunate opportunity to sacrifice their life for any of these mitzvos did so with such joy. They relished the opportunity to demonstrate that the value of their life was having a relationship with HaShem. They paid the highest price for that relationship.

How fortunate we are to live a life so rich with meaning, where our every breath can be filled with purpose and our every decision can reflect a relationship with HaShem!

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

Flowers supply bees with nectar. With their long slender tongues the bees can reach the nectar, which other insects cannot. The tiny bee just bristles with body hairs. As it takes the nectar, those hairs pick up the pollen from the flower's stamens. Thereby the bees transfer pollen from one flower to another, thus preserving the life of the plant.

Some bee flowers have stamens with special levers, triggers, or piston devices for dusting pollen on some particular spot on the bee. Going from one flower to the next, the bee deposits that pollen at the next flower. On each bee flight, the tiny insect somehow knows never to gather nectar and pollen from two different species. It always confines itself to just one species. In this way, the pollen is always carried only to another flower of the same species.

Some flowers are pollinated by beetles. Several flowers hold the beetles in a trap while the stigmas receive the pollen and the stamens sprinkle a fresh supply on the bodies of the prisoners. Then they open an exit by which the beetle escapes.

The flowers which sunbirds pollinate, stand erect and provide a landing platform. The petals of the flower are shaped into a tube which exactly fits the length and curvature of the bird's bill.

Certain flowers in the tropics are pollinated by bats which eat fruit. The flowers give off a special fruit-like odor, but only at night. This attracts the bats to come to them.

Some flowers are pollinated by flies. Since flies like smelly carrion, these flowers attract them with similar odors.

CROSS POLLINATION

When the beetle, *Catonia*, lights on a magnolia flower, its weight springs a trigger like trap that releases a sudden shower of petals that sprinkle pollen on the beetle's back. Alighting at the next flower, its back rubs against the stigma and the pollen goes onto it. Neither the insect nor the plant devised these things.

When the bee arrives at the Iris, it follows a distinct marked line--a center line--on the iris flower that directs it down to the nectar well in the center. In the process, the bee moves under the drooping stigma which rolls pollen off its back. This stigma is curved downward like a bent finger. Farther on in, its back picks up a fresh supply of pollen from the anther under which it is forced to stand in order to suck up the nectar. Meanwhile, the stigma "finger" has straightened up--so that as the bee backs out, its fresh pollen supply will not be scraped off and thus self-pollinate the flower.

Certain flowers, such as the honeysuckle and petunia, have only a faint odor during the day. In the evening, when certain insects which should pollinate them are out, they produce a powerful scent.

Each flower has a different story to tell about how it attracts insects, provides a "door step" for them, presents guide-line colors leading into the flower, and works out its various arrangements of anther and stigma.

Observing HaShem orchestrating the bees and the flowers with such synchronicity, we can learn to trust that He will orchestrate our lives as well.

THE HOLY EREV YOM KIPPUR ACTIVITY

Students were curious how Rav Yisrael Salanter spent the hours before Yom Kippur. They decided that they would spy on him. They watched him get a hammer and walk to shul. He then went upstairs to the privacy of the ezras nashim, the women section. They could not imagine what the rav would be doing with a hammer on Erev Yom Kippur. Was he perhaps going to give himself malkos, flagellate himself with a hammer? They watched as he spent three hours feeling each of the wooden benches and banging in all the nails. After they could not contain their curiosity they asked the Rav what he was doing. Rav Yisrael answered that on Yom Kippur there will be many more women than usual. They may come with their finest clothes, and those clothes might get ruined because of a protruding nail head. One small protruding nail may spoil their whole Yom Kippur davening as a result. Rav Yisrael felt this was the best way to prepare for Yom Kippur. Based on Touched By a Story Volume One Page 242, By Rabbi Yechiel Spero, Published by Artscroll Mesorah



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