

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE



THE TRAPPED PET MOUSE

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion discusses how Bilam beat his donkey unnecessarily. The angel asked Bilam, "Why did you beat your donkey? (Bamidbar 22,32)". The Sefer Chasidim (Os 666) writes that this verse is one of the sources for the prohibition of tza'ar ba'alei chayim, causing unnecessary pain to animals.

Our Sages teach that one of the



CLARITY; A LESSON FROM NOSSIE MUNK Z'L

In this week's Parsha, Balak, Balak the king of Moav hires Bilam to curse the Jewish people. Bilam has a record of cursing people; even whole nations, successfully. His power was bestowed upon him by HaKadosh baruch Hu and he used this power for evil. It is remarkable to note how far HaKadosh baruch Hu extends Man the freedom of choice. He even lets Man use the gifts of spirituality for evil.

Bilam was eager to curse our people but HaKadosh baruch Hu was committed to us and prevented him. Not only was Bilam unsuccessful in placing a curse upon our people but HaKadosh baruch Hu took away Bilam's free will and forced him to say blessings instead of curses. The Prophet Micha references this incident to demonstrate the love that HaKadosh baruch Hu has for us. Although He gave Bilam free will to do as he wished and to curse anybody he desired, nevertheless, when Bilam was going to use it against HaShem's people, He blocked it.

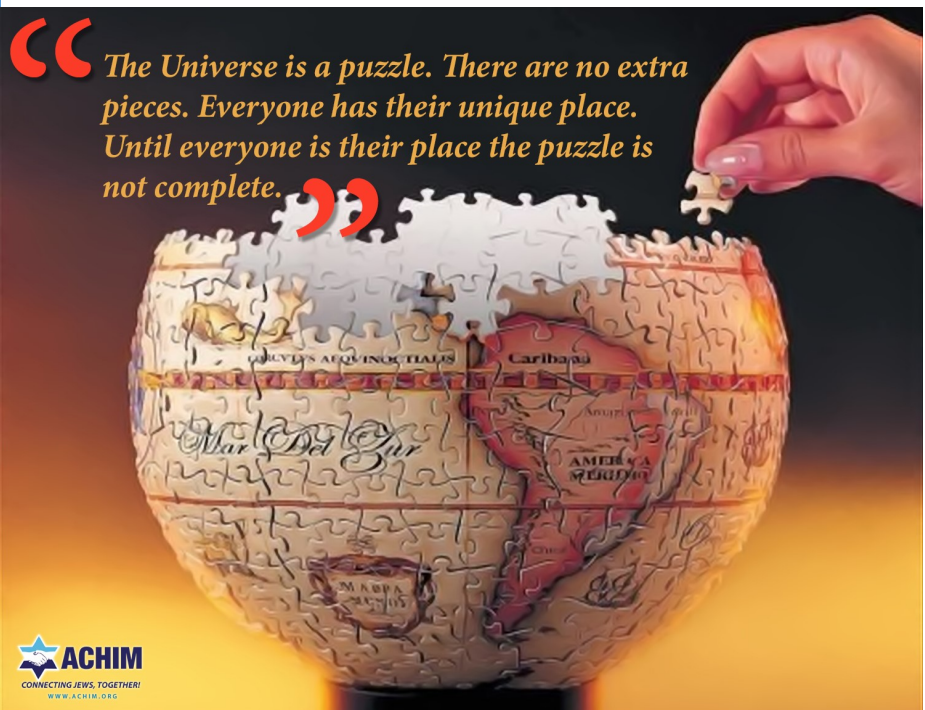
In this context I would like to share with you, who my dear brother-in-law was. His name was Nossie Munk and lived in Monsey with his beautiful family. Last week, just after his 50th birthday his special neshoma returned to its Creator, after suffering several years from a blood disorder. Nossie was not a regular fellow; although he was not a rabbi, he did have a penetrating insight to all that happened in his life. He, like HaKadosh baruch Hu, was able to turn what seemed like a curse into blessings.

Nossie had clarity that HaKadosh baruch Hu created the world and all that

applications of tza'ar b'aalei chaim is that if you have a pet; it is forbidden to eat in the morning until after you have fed your pet.

This brings us to the following true story.

One day the Green family noticed the telltale signs that there was a mouse in their house. They quickly purchased mouse traps and made sure that the traps would not cause any pain to the mice and that they would be able to release the mice once they were caught. Every morning, the kids would run to see if they had caught anything. Sure enough, on Shabbos morning, they discovered a little mouse sitting inside the trap. It is forbidden to release the mouse on Shabbos, so they decided that as soon as Shabbos ended they would let it go. As the family was about to make Kiddush Shabbos morning, their young daughter interrupted. "Wait, don't make Kiddush yet, the mouse was not fed!"



can do."

Nossie placed an extremely high value on Torah and for those who studied it. There were many situations where, in a discreet manner, he helped Torah scholars without their being aware of it.

Nossie loved the people who HaShem loved. Every Jew was special to Nossie. If there was a fellow Jew in need of assistance, whatever it may be, he did his very best to help him. There was once a situation where Nossie discovered a young man who was suffering from scoliosis that had no home to go to. In addition, he suffered from an eating disorder and other problems. Nossie and his wife took him into their own home, gave him his own bedroom, provided him food and took him for professional help. He lived with them for nine months till Nossie was able to get him into a center that could help him.

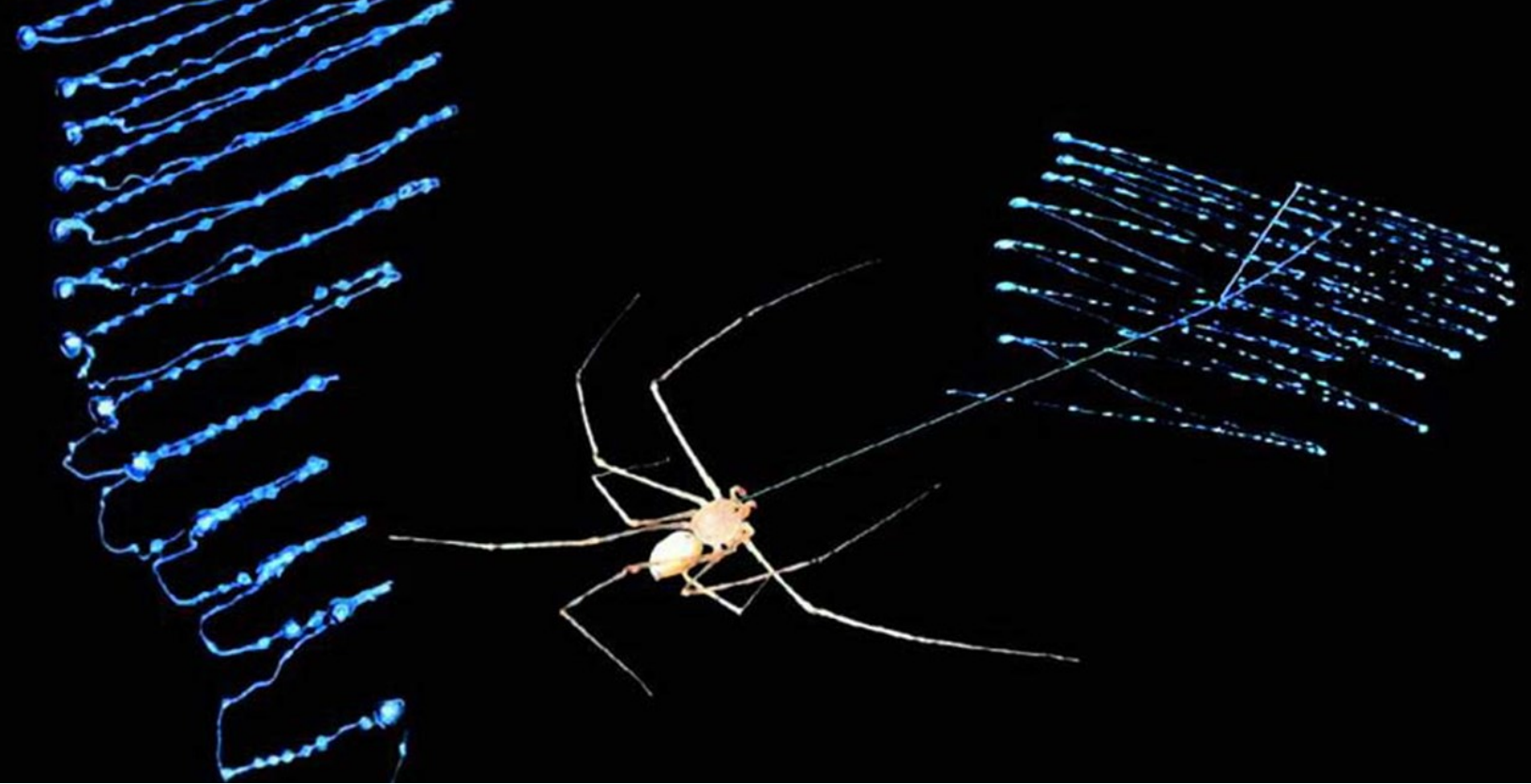
Nossie will be missed by his family, by his friends and by all who knew him. He will be missed by all those who might have had the opportunity to learn from his ways. May his memory be a blessing which will inspire us to follow his path.

I have included a copy of an update that Nossie sent his family and friends from the hospital back in December 2016. He

is in it. He had clarity that HaKadosh baruch Hu manages and micromanages His world down to the very finest detail. He had clarity that HaKadosh baruch Hu loves every person and looks out for their very best. He had clarity that no matter what happens in a person's life it is under HaKadosh baruch Hu's watchful and caring Eye.

Throughout his sickness, even in times of pain and weakness, Nossie continuously expressed his gratitude to HaKadosh baruch Hu for all the goodness that He bestowed upon him.

He told me during his sickness "When I get better I am going to be the best Jew I can be. I do not believe HaShem expects me to learn 10 hours a day, I simply am not able to do that. But I can dedicate myself to chesed and will be an inspiration to others to give of themselves to help others. That is what I



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

Spiders go higher in the sky than any other living creature on our planet. This is part of their way of taking long-distance journeys to new lands.

The mother spider carries her babies in a brown bag. Inside the bag are about 200 baby spiders, each one the size of a dot. There is lots of food inside the bag. After they are one day old, they will come out from the bag and immediately all will leave in different directions. If they did not do this, they might begin eating up each other. (One exception to this is a certain spider which carries her newborn babies on her back for a time before they leave home. They are all crowded together, not in a bag, and do not disturb one another.)

Now, how does the tiny baby spider go about leaving home? That is simple enough, he crawls up to a high point. It may be a grass stem or the side of a tree trunk, or a leaf on a plant. Then he upends and off he goes!

Even though he is only a day old, his little silk factory is in full operational order. Instead of a tail, the spider has a spinneret. Lifting this up in the air, he begins

FLYING SPIDERS

spinning his fine thread which catches in the wind. The wind carries away the thread as the baby keeps reeling it out. Soon enough thread is in the air (about 9 feet [27 dm] of it), and the baby is lifted off its feet and goes sailing! This thread is actually a liquid which immediately hardens when the air touches it. For its size, the thread is as strong as steel; in fact it is stronger, for it can stretch without breaking.

When did he learn all this; he was only born that day! But he knows still more. The tiny spider quickly commandeers his craft and begins steering it! As soon as he becomes airborne, he climbs up on the silk line and walks on that fluttering thing as it is flying high! How he can do this and not fall off is a mystery (how he can even hang on is a wonder). But he quickly becomes master of the airship. Arriving about half-out along the line, he pulls on it, tugs it here and there, and reels it underneath him. In this way, the line now becomes a rudder which he uses to steer up or down! Where did a one-day old, with a brain one-thousandth as large as a pin-head, get such excellent flying instruction?

Soon he lands on something, but generally he will

THE HOLY HORSES

One Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Dovid of Lelov was at the court of the Seer of Lublin. It was time to blow the shofar, but Rabbi Dovid was missing and the Seer did not want the shofar sounded until Rabbi Dovid was present. Eventually someone found him in a barn, with a sack of oats. He was feeding the horses, whose owners had gone to shul for the services and neglected their responsibilities to care for their animals.

In another situation, Rabbi Dovid of Lelov carried this one step further. He once saw a driver whip his horse. He said to him, "If you only knew how to communicate with your horse, you would have no need to hit him. Is it fair and just to whip the horse because of your ignorance? He went on to tell the man that one day the horse would take him before the Heavenly Tribunal, for having caused him needless pain. "Will



ACHIM IN A NUTSHELL

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

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

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