



A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Eitan was an observant investigative reporter who lived in Eretz Yisrael. At the time, there were growing public doubts about police responses to security situations. Eitan decided to conduct an investigative report on police tactics in response to cheifetz chashud, suspicious objects.

He wanted to examine their response times, their procedures, and how they ultimately neutralized such threats. To do this, Eitan took a briefcase, strapped wires and batteries to the outside of it, and placed it in the middle of a busy highway. He then stayed nearby to observe and record the police response.

After a short time, someone reported the cheifetz chashud. The police arrived, blocked off the entire road, and eventually



RECONSIDER; YOU MIGHT BE MISTAKEN

When Yosef reveals himself to his brothers, it shatters their entire perspective on all the events that occurred up until that point. The brothers had seen Yosef as the one who was hijacking the destiny of the Jewish people. They knew that all twelve brothers were equal members of the Children of Israel. However, when they saw their father giving Yosef preferential treatment, they misinterpreted it as Yaakov mistakenly passing on the entire destiny of the Jewish people to Yosef, to the exclusion of the other brothers. Their interpretation was wrong. However, according to their interpretation, they were right to suspect that Yaakov was making a gross error, and that Yosef was taking advantage of Yaakov's mistake. They therefore felt justified in wanting to eliminate Yosef in order to protect their destiny.

However, we know that their perspective was flawed. Yaakov had no intention of dismissing the brothers from being part of the Jewish destiny. They would most definitely be the founding fathers of the twelve tribes. Yaakov, however, chose Yosef to lead the family in exile. Yaakov knew that there was to be a mighty exile that would precede their entering the Land. The people would need Yosef's wisdom to guide them through that exile. This was the reason for Yosef's preferential treatment. He needed to be the leader among them.

When Yosef revealed himself to the brothers, it shattered their entire perception. They suddenly realized how wrong they were in misreading Yaakov's intention, and certainly in misreading Yosef's actions. They suddenly realized that they had been dealing with Yosef wrongly all along, while Yosef had been

succeeded in clearing the suspicious object. Traffic was stopped for a significant period, causing major inconvenience and frustration.

Eitan later published an article detailing the police response. The report caused a large public outcry and ultimately had a significant impact, leading to improvements in police response times for these types of security situations.

Sometime afterward, Eitan learned that because of the road closure he caused, a person sitting in traffic missed a non-refundable flight and lost a substantial amount of money.

Eitan then wondered: Did he have an obligation to find this person and compensate him for the loss?

On the one hand, his actions produced a major public benefit by improving security procedures. On the other hand, he acted on his own initiative, he was not appointed by any authority, and his actions directly caused a fellow Jew a significant financial loss.

Did Eitan have an obligation to pay for that loss? What do you think?

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the good Yosef had done for them, and his dedication to their welfare, with intense evil. They sold their most loving brother because of a misunderstanding.

Behold, this great revelation of Yosef to the brothers came about when the brothers were willing to acknowledge their misjudgment of Yosef's intentions.

So many quarrels are created by misinterpreting the intentions of others. There are many reasons why our vision can be tinted, but whatever they may be, we must be careful to give the benefit of the doubt to every person.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind

MITZVA MEME

“*I Think!*”

*- Rav Ezra Neuberger
in response to a nurse
who once asked what
he does in his spare
time*



caring for their destiny.

Many commentators draw a parallel between this story and what will occur at the end of days, when HaShem will reveal Himself to us and to the entire world. When that happens, we will reread history with an entirely different perspective. Our perception will be acutely aware of HaShem's involvement in every detail of history. We will actually be able to see how all of our tragic history was not a wrathful punishment, but a merciful arrangement designed by HaShem to protect us.

Let us listen to the messenger that Yosef sent to bring the brothers back after Binyomin “stole” the goblet. He reprimands the brothers: “How do you repay my master's graciousness with evil by taking his goblet?” Of course, the messenger was referring to the goblet. However, this is a subtle nudge to the brothers for what they did. They repaid



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE SECRET WORLD OF CRANBERRIES

Together, let's explore one of North America's most surprising native treasures: the cranberry. The cranberry's story begins with its name, and that name hides a feathery secret. When European settlers were wandering through North America's bogs they noticed something curious about the plant's flowers. In late spring, before any berries appear, cranberry vines produce pale pink blossoms with petals that bend sharply backward. To Dutch and German colonists in the 1600s, the shape of these flowers looked remarkably like the long neck, small head, and pointed beak of a Sandhill Crane. They called the plant a "crane berry." Over time, as language tends to do, the name was shortened. "Craneberry" became "cranberry," and a bird quietly nested itself into the fruit's identity forever.

Before European settlers named the cranberry, Native American nations already knew it well. For thousands of years, cranberries grew wild across northeastern North America, thriving in sandy, acidic wetlands where few other plants dared to grow. The Lenni-Lenape people called the fruit *ibimi*, meaning "bitter berry," a name that perfectly captures its sharp flavor. To them, cranberries were far more than food. They were medicine, dye, and a survival tool all in one. Mashed cranberries were used as poultices to draw poison from wounds or treat infections. Their deep red juice became a natural dye for clothing, blankets, and rugs. And when mixed with dried meat and fat, cranberries helped create pemmican, one of the world's original energy bars. Lightweight, nutrient-dense, and long-lasting, pemmican fueled hunters, travelers, and entire communities through long winters.

Cranberries themselves are designed for survival. They grow on low, creeping vines that hug the ground, spreading across bogs like living nets. These vines are perennials, meaning they don't need to be replanted each year. Some cranberry vines in Massachusetts are more than 150 years old and still produce fruit, quietly outliving generations of farmers who care for them.

Despite a common myth, cranberries do not grow underwater. They grow on dry land in bogs and marshes, rooted in sandy soil with an unusually high level of acidity. This acidic environment, with a pH between 4.0 and 5.0, would be too harsh for most crops. For cranberries, it's just right. The soil protects them from many pests and diseases, giving them a natural advantage.

As summer progresses, cranberry berries begin their transformation. They start out white or pale green, slowly blushing pink and then deep red as they soak up sunlight. Inside each berry are four tiny air pockets. These air-filled chambers are one of the cranberry's greatest tricks, and they play a key role in both nature and farming.

Those air pockets allow cranberries to float, and they also make the berries bounce. Long ago, farmers used this strange talent as a quality test. A fresh, ripe cranberry is firm and springy. Drop it on a hard surface, and it will bounce like a small rubber ball. Soft or spoiled berries just thud. This led some people to call cranberries "bounceberries," a nickname that feels perfectly suited to such an odd little fruit.

Pollination season turns cranberry bogs into buzzing cities. An acre of cranberry vines can produce up to 20 million flowers, and each one needs help to become a berry. Honeybees and native bumblebees do most of the work, moving from blossom to blossom and ensuring the next generation of fruit. Without these insects, cranberry harvests would fail, reminding us how deeply connected our food systems are to the natural world.

When winter arrives, cranberry vines don't die. Instead, they rest. Farmers flood the bogs so that a layer of water freezes over the vines, forming a protective blanket of ice. Beneath that frozen surface, the plants survive sub-freezing temperatures, waiting patiently for spring. It's a remarkable example of how farmers have learned to work with natural cycles.

Cranberries also played an important role in early American history. Sailors and whalers carried barrels of cranberries on long voyages because the fruit is rich in vitamin C. Eating cranberries helped prevent scurvy, a disease that once devastated crews on extended trips at sea. In this way, cranberries quietly supported exploration and trade, helping people survive journeys across oceans.

Today, cranberries are still measured in barrels, each weighing 100 pounds. The United States produces around 8 to 9 million barrels each year, with Wisconsin leading the way. More than 60 percent of America's cranberries come from that state.

Harvest time is when cranberry bogs look most magical. Most cranberries are "wet-harvested." Farmers flood the bogs, then use a machine called a water reel—often nicknamed an egg beater—to gently knock the berries off the vines. Thanks to their air pockets, the berries float to the surface, forming bright red carpets on the water. Long booms corral the floating fruit before it's pumped into trucks.

Only about ten percent of cranberries are dry-harvested. These are the berries you see fresh in grocery stores, and they're available for just a short time each year, usually from October through December.

Beyond their beauty and history, cranberries are nutritional powerhouses. They are naturally low in sugar, which explains their intense tartness. That same sharp flavor signals the presence of powerful plant compounds. Cranberries contain unique antioxidants called A-type proanthocyanidins. These compounds prevent certain bacteria, including *E. coli*, from sticking to the walls of the urinary tract. Instead of clinging and causing infections, the bacteria are flushed away. The benefits don't stop there. Similar compounds may keep *Helicobacter pylori* bacteria from attaching to the stomach lining, potentially reducing the risk of ulcers. Cranberries also appear to help prevent bacteria from sticking to teeth, which may lower plaque buildup and support gum health. Some studies suggest cranberry juice can help increase "good" HDL cholesterol and reduce inflammation in blood vessels, offering support for heart health.

When we step back and look at the cranberry's story, it becomes clear that this small fruit is anything but ordinary.

Thank you Hashem for your wondrous world!

THANKING IS DAVENING

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein related the following beautiful story. A man named Asher was going through serious financial difficulties. A friend advised him, "Why don't you go speak to the Gerrer Rebbe, the Beis Yisrael?"

Asher felt he had nothing to lose, so he went to the Gerrer Rebbe.

The Rebbe asked, "Asher, do you daven?"

Asher replied, "Rebbe, what do you think I do? That is what I do all day. I daven to Hashem: 'Please Hashem, help me get out of financial debt!'"

The Gerrer Rebbe asked again, "But do you daven?"

"Rebbe, I just told you, I don't stop davening. All throughout the day, all I do is daven to Hashem."

"Asher, do you daven?"

Asher finally asked, "Rebbe, am I missing something?"

The Rebbe explained, "Davening is not just asking Hashem for what you need. Davening is thanking Hashem for what you have. Do you thank Hashem for all the blessings He has given you? Tefillah should be 60% thanking and 40% asking."

Conversation over.

Asher was confused. He davens, and he asks Hashem, but does he thank Hashem? Is davening really about thanking Hashem? What did he even have to be thankful for? He recounted the conversation to a friend, who said, "The Rebbe makes a very good point. You have clothing. You are alive. Your heart is beating. Your lungs are working. You can see, hear, talk, and think. Your memory functions. For your body to work, trillions of processes have to go right, and they do. Do you ever stop and thank Hashem for these things?"

Asher realized he had far more to thank Hashem for than he had initially thought. He made a list and recognized that what the Ribbano Shel Olam was giving him infinitely outweighed what he was missing.

The Rebbe had taught Asher a secret: Thanking is Davening.



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the raffle, Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein (VH"N Vol. 4 Page 145) answered that the person does not win the raffle because the organization will not demand that he pay for the raffle after he said he is not interested. Therefore they should draw the winning ticket again.

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Yitzchak Yisrael ben Rafael Noach Yosef

and

Yisrael ben Yom Tov Lipman,

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