

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



ENOUGH WEDDING PLATES

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha opens with the story of how Avraham, Sara, and Yishmael, served their guests a delicious meal with great alacrity and enthusiasm. This leads us to the following true story.

Chaim was in his early thirties and he just got engaged to be married. He had a difficult life as both of his parents were no longer living. One parent passed away when he was a child and another passed away when he was in his twenties. This meant that Chaim had the responsibility to make preparations for his wedding by himself.

He met with Binyamin, the manager of a Simcha hall that offered both the hall as well as catering services.

Chaim told Binyamin that he wanted to order 200 plates for the wedding dinner. He was planning to have a relatively small wedding. Binyamin told him that would not be a problem at all.

Chaim mailed out all the invitations. However, Chaim was very gregarious and friendly. When meeting a friend before the wedding he would tell them to come, and they could always make room for one more person. He made this generous invitation to quite a few friends. In his mind, Chaim rationalized that even though he only ordered 200 plates, in a worst-case scenario people could always share a bit of the meal.



WHAT? IMPOSSIBLE!

This week's Parsha opens with three angels coming to visit Avraham. Each angel has its unique mission. One came to heal Avraham from his Bris Milah, the second came to inform Avraham and Sara of the upcoming birth of Yitzchok and the third came along to continue on the way to destroy Sodom.

Why is it necessary to have an angel to inform of Yitzchok's birth? There were many miracles that occurred to our people which were not announced prior to their fulfillment. Yaakov's birth was not announced prior to Rivka's pregnancy nor were any of the shevatim. Yocheved gave birth to Moshe at the age of 130 years and no announcement was made.

It is noteworthy that Yitzchok's name reflects the incredulousness of his birth. The name Yitzchok means 'to laugh'. It reflects the laugh of Sara when she heard the angel's message that she would bear a child. This laughing was not an expression of joy but an expression of disbelief. The sheer idea of her being able to carry a child was impossible, let alone at her advanced age. It was her disbelief that caused her to laugh.

We know that events and circumstances that surround the development of our forefathers occur with the understanding that they will be reflected in unfolding of our destiny. Avraham developed his trait of kindness - his descendants are a nation of giving and caring. Yaakov was meticulously honest in his business dealings - his descendants are likewise meticulous in their integrity, and so on.

The day of the wedding arrived and the wedding hall was electric. Friends streamed in and there was a palpable joy in the wedding hall. When it came time for dinner, people sat down and every seat was taken. There were still quite a few people who did not have seats.

Binyamin, the manager, watched this carefully. He knew that he had prepared 200 plates. He made a quick count. There were at least 150 more people waiting to be seated. There were far more people than Chaim accounted for, and more than he had prepared for. They were all standing around waiting to be seated. Binyamin felt that if he didn't take care of them, it would look very bad for his catering business and it would look like he had not prepared properly. Luckily Binyamin had food in the refrigerator that was prepared for another simcha the next day. Binyamin quickly had his waiters bring out more tables, seats, plates, and food. Soon enough all 350 people were seated and had a fantastic time at the simcha. The wedding was joyous and very uplifting. Everyone had a great time.

The next day, Binyamin called Chaim up. "Chaim, Mazel Tov on your marriage, I'd like to settle the account. You of course recall that you only ordered 200 plates for the wedding. I counted, however, and there were at least 350 people who needed to be seated and fed. It was clear that more people came than we expected. I know that money is tight, so I will give you a present. I will donate 50 plates for free. However, I will have to charge you for 300 plates and not 200."

Chaim made a quick calculation of the costs and realized the wedding was going to cost a lot more than he expected. Chaim replied, "I really appreciate your gracious offer, but why did you serve 350 plates? I never asked for that. I expected all the extra guests to either not eat that much or share the food with the others."

Binyamin politely laughed. "I'm sorry Chaim, that's not how that works. People can't and don't share food at a wedding. If I didn't feed the extra guests it would have looked terrible for my business. It would have caused me a great loss. If you accidentally invited more than 200 people, then I have to feed them and charge you for it."

They both agreed to bring this question to a Rav. What do you think? Does Chaim have to pay for 300 plates even though he only ordered 200?

On the one hand, Chaim did invite more than 200 guests, so maybe he should pay for the extras. But on the other hand, Binyamin unilaterally brought out the food without first getting a commitment from Chaim. Can he charge for that? What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Bereishis page 420



With the birth of Yitzchok, the seed of the Jewish people was planted. There was no basis for anyone to believe that Yitzchok would be born other than a prophecy from HaShem. A prophecy that was announced by HaShem's messenger, the angel. This circumstance of the incredulousness of a child being born to Sara was only anticipated because of this announcement.

The absolute impossibility of Yitzchok's birth along with the absolute trust that he would be born, fortified his descendants with a trust in the Word of HaShem. At no point in time during our long exile could anyone expect that our people would endure. For 2,000 years we had no land, we were not accepted as equal citizens of the lands that hosted us. We were dispersed with no central court. There was little to no communication between the many Jewish communities spread throughout the world. Could the Jews of

Yemen reunite with the Jews of Europe a thousand years later? It was truly absurd to believe that one day we would all return to Israel and rebuild the Bais Hamikdosh. It was absurd to believe that Yerushalayim would one day have millions of her children filling her streets and marketplaces. It was absurd to believe the sounds of weddings would fill her alleyways. It was absurd to believe there would be a king in Israel to whom the entire world would turn for guidance.

With the birth of Yitzchok we learned that when our destiny is announced we can trust in it. We can anticipate its fulfillment. We are able to travel through the most tragic periods of history with the knowledge that HaShem has not abandoned us. We know that our destiny has been spelled out in the books of our Prophets and we can anticipate all the greatness that they foretold.

Yitzchok's birth had to be announced to engrain within Yitzchok's children the trust that HaShem's Word will occur no matter how impossible.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

INCREDIBLE NOSES

A few weeks ago, we learned about aromatherapy. Two weeks ago, we learned about the power of smell. Last week we learned about a monkey with a huge nose. Let's complete this mini-series by learning some amazing facts about our noses that will help us look at our own noses in a whole new way.

In addition to helping us smell, our nose provides many other important functions.

First, the nose filters out foreign particles. Nasal hair, called cilia, filters out dust, allergens, and pollen, which helps prevent them from entering our lungs. The cilia are estimated to protect our bodies from about 20 billion particles of foreign matter each day! Why is this filtering important? This has the following important benefits. It helps reduce exposure to foreign substances and microbes. It lowers our risk of allergies and hay fever. It reduces our risk of coughing, and it aids our immune system. In turn, this decreases the chance of getting sick and developing conditions such as colds, allergic reactions, or flu.

Second, when we breathe from our nose, the nose releases an important element called nitric oxide. Nitric oxide is a vasodilator, which means it helps to widen blood vessels. This can help improve oxygen circulation in your body. This means that the nose helps to increase oxygen uptake and circulation and increases air flow to arteries, veins, and nerves. One benefit of that increased oxygen flow is that it improves memory function and our ability to think. Another benefit of widened blood vessels is that it helps to maintain lower blood pressure. Another benefit of this increased oxygen flow is that it gives us more energy and reduces stress. Nitrous oxide is also antibacterial, anti-fungal, anti-pathogenic, and antiviral, so the nose is the first line of immune defense.

Third, the nose also helps to warm, moisturize, and humidify inhaled air. This brings the air we inhale to body temperature, making it easier for our lungs to use. And this means that oxygen can get through your body quicker and more efficiently than if we breathe through our mouth.

Fourth, the nose can help you relax and be calm. Nose breathing triggers a part of the parasympathetic nervous system that promotes rest through a slower heart rate, as well as improved recovery and improved digestion. So even in a stressful state, a deep inhalation from the nose can help you relax. This is a reason why yoga and breathing exercises promote nose

breathing for relaxation. This relaxation also helps to keep high blood pressure at bay.

Fifth, because of all of the benefits cited above, scientists suggest that we will get better, more healing, and restorative sleep if we breathe through our noses while we sleep. Breathing through your nose can improve your sleep in multiple ways and helps you wake up more refreshed and with reduced brain fog. It can also provide an improved quality of breathing that may help people with sleep disorders. Some studies suggest that breathing through the nose during sleep can reduce the risk of serious conditions like heart disease.

Based on all of the above, some researchers suggest that folks with longer noses can access more of these benefits. Larger noses will filter out more microbes and prevent more illnesses. This will lead to more oxygen circulation and, therefore, greater thinking and memory capacity.

Sixth, our nose plays an important role in creating our voice. The nose is the place where the tone of our voice is shaped as air passes through and the passage expands or contracts. Our voice is produced in the larynx, but that sound is really just a buzzing sound. The richness of the sound is determined by how the sound is processed above the larynx, which occurs in our nose and throat.

Finally, in addition to smell and taste, the nose also aids our ability to hear by equalizing the air pressure in the inner ear.

Let's conclude with some fascinating nose facts. Your nose will continue to grow as you age. It reaches its main shape by the age of 19, but from then on, it will lengthen slowly and more noticeably droop downwards. The droop isn't due to growth but rather gravity.

Men's noses tend to be larger than women's. However, women tend to have a better sense of smell. Women have, on average, 43 percent more cells in their olfactory bulbs than men do, so they can smell more smells.

According to the Guinness Book of world records, The longest nose of a living person (male) is 3.46 inches and belongs to Mehmet Özyürek of Artvin, Turkey (**pictured, top right**). This was verified on 13 November 13, 2021.

Thank you, Hashem, for our noses!

THE POWER OF GOOD MORNING

Rabbi Avigdor Miller always looked for opportunities to bless people. He explained that in addition to being a method of developing Ahavas Yisrael, blessing others was of personal benefit since Hashem repays the one giving a bracha, (blessing) as Hashem told Avraham, "I will bless those who bless you".

To Rabbi Miller, saying good morning to someone was not just protocol or being polite, but an opportunity to say it consciously and bestow sincere blessing to someone. He once said that the word "hello" should be "thrown out of the dictionary" because it doesn't mean anything. Saying 'good morning', however, is giving a bracha. Rav Miller would say that when wishing "Good morning" one should include in his thoughts detailed blessings such as that the recipient should have a good breakfast, learn well, be healthy and merit every good thing.

Rav Avigdor Miller was once in the car on the way home from yeshivah. A talmid (student) noticed that Rav Miller was mumbling while they drove. When Rav Miller realized that the talmid next to him noticed, he explained his behavior to him. "I'm seeing blocks upon blocks of homes without TV antennas and I am giving them all brachos!"

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THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's questions about the mousse, Rav Zilberstien wrote that a meal with a dessert that will make everyone sick is worth nothing, (has no market value) so even though they enjoyed the first part of the meal, the customer would be exempt from paying the caterer. If there were guests who did not eat the dessert and did not get sick, those meals would have to be paid for. However, the caterer is not obligated to pay for any damages for embarrassment to the customer.

In honor of our grandson **Avi Reichman**
who enjoys discussing the halacha question of the week at the Shabbos table

Rabbi and Mrs. Fulda

