

## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



### THE BAR MITZVA

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion discusses how HaShem gave the Torah to the Jewish people in the desert. Our Sages teach that only one who makes himself like a desert, meaning that he is humble like the desert, can acquire Torah.

This week is also the week before the holiday of Shavuot which leads us to the following true story.

Yoni lived in a small Jewish community. He had his bar mitzvah and as is customary he read the Torah before the community in the shul. He read the



### FROM WHERE DOES IT SHINE?

There are two types of offerings that were brought in the Mishkan. The first was kodshei kodshim, extreme kedusha, and the second was kodshei kalim, lesser kedusha. Among the distinctions between these two types of offerings was the area to which the meat was permitted to be taken. The former was not allowed to be taken outside the curtains surrounding the outer Altar. If it did leave this area, it was rendered posul and was forbidden to be eaten. The latter was permitted to be taken anywhere within the camp, as long as it was within the boundaries where our people were encamped. If the latter left the entire camp it became posul and was not allowed to be eaten.

The reason for these limitations is because the meat of these offerings had a sanctity which required that it remain in a place of sanctity. The former having a higher level required an area with a higher level of sanctity. The latter whose level of sanctity was lower had a lower threshold. Even the latter required a place of sanctity. That was the area in which our people encamped.

Sanctity is a state of being. Not only does it apply to objects, animals and people, but it also applies to areas and locations. One area can have kedusha and the other can be devoid of kedusha. Not only the area of the Mishkan has kedusha but even where the Jewish people lived had kedusha, albeit less than the Mishkan.

From where does this kedusha emanate? This kedusha emanates from the Mishkan which housed the Aron HaKodesh which contained the Two Tablets and the Torah. The Mishkan was the resting place for HaShem's Presence. Just as light emanates from the Sun and illuminates anything within its direct range, so too, the kedusha emanated from His Presence and sanctified any place within its direct range. This included the camp where our people lived.

Torah portion perfectly, without any mistakes. However, because he was a shy boy he read it with a low voice.

Some people who sat in the back of the synagogue were unable to hear the Torah reading.

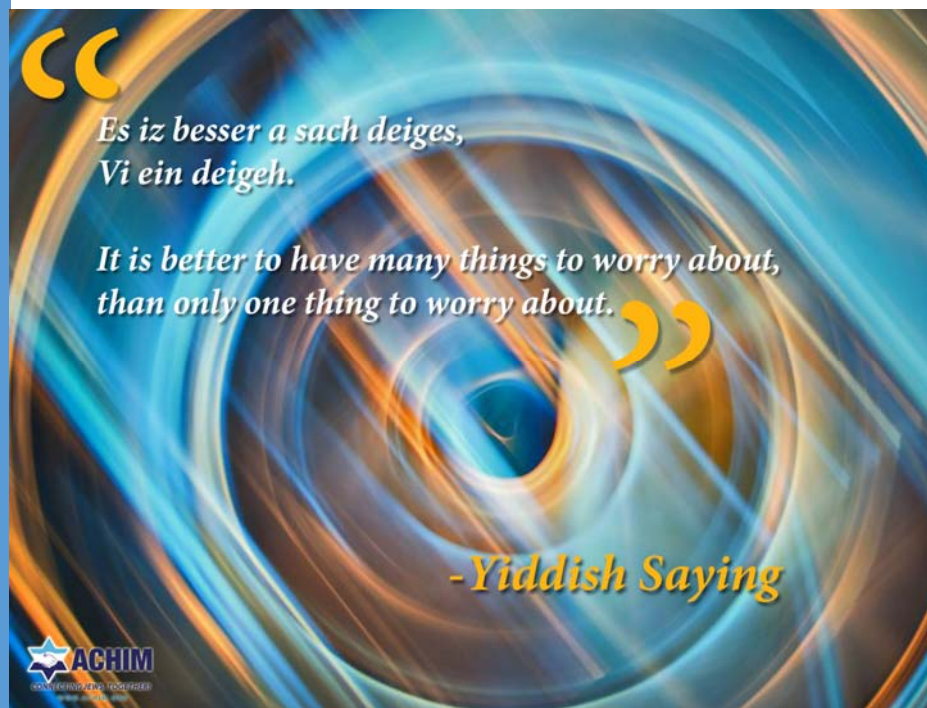
Later that day ten people who sat in the back had the idea that they would read the Torah portion once again because they were not able to hear it properly in the morning.

When they gathered to make the second reading, Shlomo, a person in the crowd wondered if this was okay.

It was likely that the bar mitzvah boy would hear that they reread the Torah because they were unable to hear him and that would likely embarrass him.

Shlomo wondered if it would be okay to read the Torah portion once again if it may embarrass the bar mitzvah boy.

What do you think?



In this week's Parsha, Bamidbar, the Torah tells us that when our people traveled from place to place in the desert they folded up the Mishkan and traveled in formation. The Talmud teaches us that once the Mishkan was completely folded up and uprooted from its place the kodshei kodshim, the former type of offerings became posul because the Mishkan and the Altar were no longer in their place and hence that level of sanctity was no longer there. However, the kodshei kalim, the latter type of offerings did not become posul because they were still in the camp of the Jewish people, albeit moving and not stationary.

Behold! The kedusha which was found in the camp of the people remained intact even when the kedusha of the Mishkan had dissipated. Even when the former became posul, the latter was not rendered posul because the sanctity of the Jewish people remained intact.

If the kedusha of the Jewish encampment emanated from the Mishkan, then once the Mishkan was no longer there from where did the kedusha of the camp come?

The answer is that the kedusha did not emanate from the Mishkan per se, rather it emanated from the Presence of HaShem which rested on the Mishkan. However, once the Mishkan was folded up HaShem's Presence resided in Jewish homes itself. It was the Jewish home itself that now housed the Source of that kedusha.

How fortunate we are! Every Jewish home whose day to day activities conform to the ideals of the Torah and whose relationships are based on Torah values and priorities, is home to HaShem and His Presence. The kedusha of our homes emanates from the Presence that resides within the home itself. Whether we are fortunate to be living in close proximity to the Mishkan or whether we have lost our Mishkan, the sanctity of the Jewish home is eternal.

Have a very safe and wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**





## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### PIGS IN A WIG

In the last two weeks we discussed animals with unusually long fur or feathers. Lets learn about another one. (It is sefira after all.)

The term "Guinea pig" is actually a misleading name. Guinea pigs are not native to Guinea, (a country on the west coast of Africa) and they are not related to pigs at all.

It is thought that they are called 'pigs' because they have large heads and stout bodies, and eat all day, similar to pigs. Many also believe the "pig" portion of the name comes from their squeaking noise that reminded people of baby piglets.

Some have said that the "guinea" portion of the name might have originated when sailors brought the animals from South America and sold them for a guinea, a term for an old English coin.

Here is another possible reason. Guinea pigs likely were brought to Europe by Spanish explorers in the 1500s. Around this time, the word guinea was sometimes used to describe things that were far across the sea, so that might be one reason why guinea was used in the name.

Or perhaps ports in either Guiana in South America or Guinea in Africa might have inspired the guinea portion of the name. Guinea pigs likely traveled to Europe on ships stopping at such ports.

In reality though, guinea pigs are part of the rodent family, along with chinchillas and porcupines, as well as mice and rats. They are originally from the Andes, in South America. Statues depicting guinea pigs have been unearthed in archaeological digs in Peru and Ecuador. Guinea pigs were originally raised as a food source, and in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador people still eat roasted guinea pig known as 'cuy'. Guinea pigs were also used for religious ceremonies in indigenous Andean groups.

In the Western world in the late 19th century, scientists realized that Guinea pigs had certain biological similarities to humans that would make them useful in many research fields. Guinea pig studies led to the discovery of the hormone adrenaline and helped develop replacement heart valves, blood transfusions, antibiotics and asthma medicines, as well as vaccines for diphtheria and TB.

Today guinea pigs are primarily easy, fun pets. They can live on grass and hay, as well as vegetable and fruit scraps like banana peels.

An adult weighs 1.5-2.5 pounds and are 8-11 inches long. They live 6-8 years.

They do not sweat like humans can and get heat stroke if they are left out in the sun or become too hot. They love to sit in the shade whenever possible.

Guinea pigs don't need to sleep for long periods. They are active for about 20 hours per day and take short naps throughout the day and night. They are highly active during the day and less so at night.

Guinea pigs are very affectionate and social animals. They are so social that in Switzerland it is illegal to own just one because it will be lonely. This was decided as part of legislation to grant social rights to animals. Although this takes animal rights to a frightening extreme, it is true that a guinea pig that lives alone will become lonely, stressed and depressed. Guinea pigs are very intelligent and can even be taught tricks. They're naturally very timid and spend a lot of time hiding. They make lots of different noises when they want to express themselves. This includes squealing, chirping, rumbling, purring and chirping. They will regularly make noises when anticipating food. When they are happy, guinea pigs jump straight up and down in the air which is referred to as 'popcorning'.

The guinea pigs that we are going to look at today are called by some, "pigs in a wig". Let's look at Long Haired Guinea pigs. There are a few types of long haired guinea pigs. Peruvian guinea pigs have smooth, straight hair that naturally parts in the middle, right down their backs. To make them even more interesting, their hair is often made up of a few different colors. This gives the appearance of a wig dyed three different colors, with only a little bit of body underneath, causing people to ask, "Which side is which?" Their hair can grow up to twenty four inches long! That's more than twice their entire body length. Peruvian guinea pigs were originally bred for shows in the fifteenth century, and they are still used for this today. They are not really practical pets because they need a lot of grooming, and daily brushing.

Many Peruvian owners keep the hair rolled up between shows to prevent matting, as a matted coat causes discomfort and irritation. Many guinea pig owners trim their hair to make it easier for them to see, and to be kept clean. Long hair is kept mainly for shows. Otherwise they are given frequent haircuts.

Silkies are another long haired variety. They also have smooth, silky hair, but it only grows in one direction, and does not fall over their faces.

The texel is a new type of long haired guinea pigs. They were bred and only officially recognized in the 1990s. Their hair looks like it was permed, and sometimes frizzy. They have ringlets or curls that make up their long soft coat.

**"YOU WILL KNOW HOW MUCH IS NEEDED, SO YOU MUST FILL IN THE AMOUNT"**

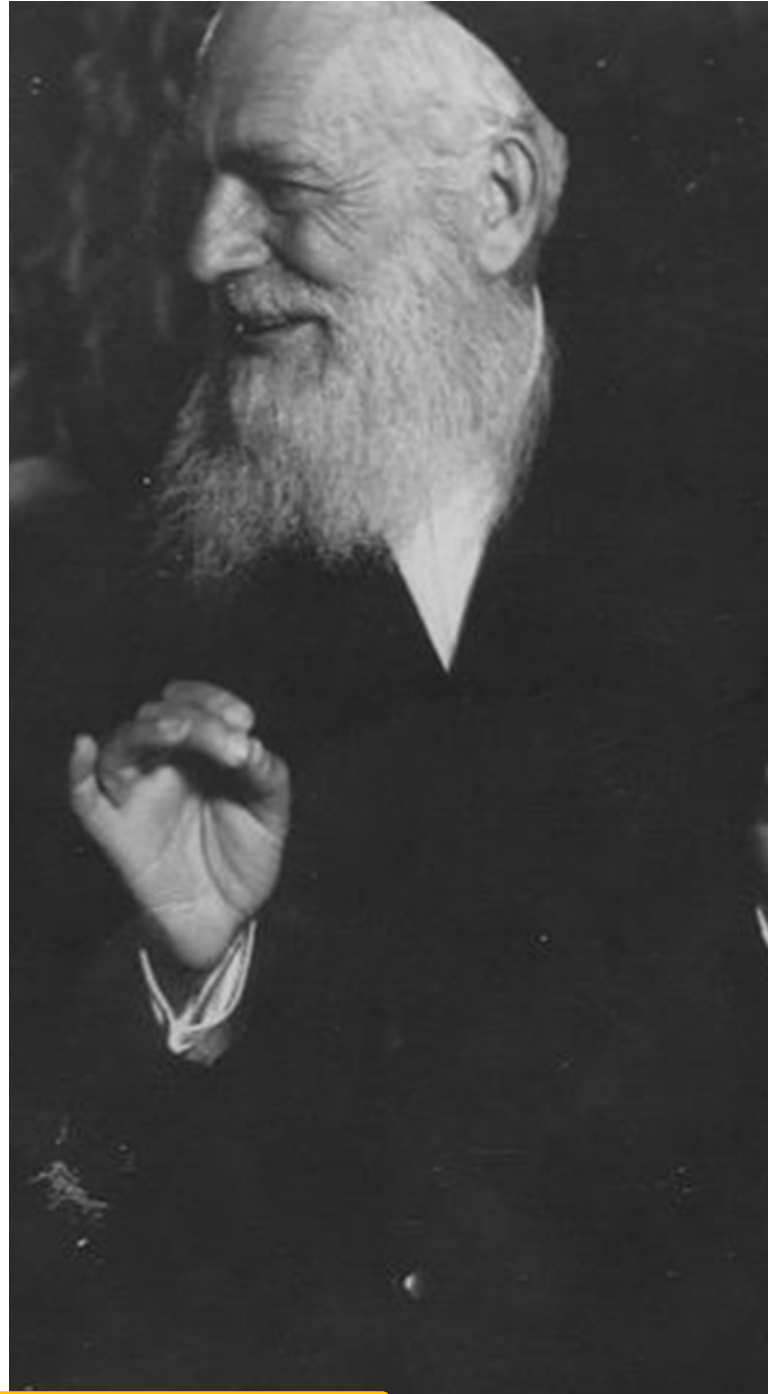
During World War One it became obvious that a sweeping solution would have to be found for the large number of refugees that was multiplying hourly. As the Ponevizher Rav was gathering funds and provisions to accommodate the influx, it was brought to his attention that with the proper amount of money some Jews in Poland could be saved. Without a second's hesitation The Ponevizher signed a check to the person who had supplied him with this information, leaving the amount blank.

"There must be some mistake," the man said. The line is empty." But the Ponevizher Rav had not erred. "You will know how much is needed, so you must fill in the amount; I can only tell you how much I currently have in my account."

Years later, this man with the check became an official in "Aliyat Hanoar," an Israeli government office in charge of the absorption of young immigrants, which helped subsidize the Batei Avos for orphans that the Ponevizher Rav had established in Bnei Brak. It was highly unusual for Aliyat Hanoar to provide money to a religious institution and this very fellow was instructed by his superiors to snoop around the Batei Avos and see if there was a pretext to disqualify the institution from funding.

But he refused to cooperate with the plan. He said, "There is unequivocally no need to inspect. I know from experience that the Ponevizher Rav is above reproach".

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#### THE ANSWERS

Regarding last week's question of whether you pay the retail price or the price for a replacement, Rav Zilberstein says that it seems that he is obligated to pay the cost needed to replace the item, and not the final retail price.

We already have several families who have committed to provide curbside pickup for their neighbors, making TableTalk available in this time of distancing.

If you are interested in doing so as well, kindly contact me and the TableTalk's will be brought to you.

I can be reached at 443.286.9338 or [paysach@achim.org](mailto:paysach@achim.org)

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