



## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



## TO TELL OR NOT TO TELL

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha talks about the importance of having courts to adjudicate financial disputes. This leads us to the following true story.

Eli lived in a small community in the United States and was eagerly anticipating his bar mitzvah. One day, an envelope arrived in the mail. It was from an elderly couple in the community. Inside, there was a check for \$200 accompanied by a note: "May you build a bayis neeman be'yisrael, may you establish a loyal home in Israel, and receive only blessings in the future."

Eli was taken aback. He recognized that such a blessing is typically extended to newlyweds, not to someone celebrating a bar mitzvah. He thought



## DRAW UPON THE INSPIRATION

We have begun to move forward into the month of Elul leaving Tamuz and Av behind us. Those were the months in which our people lost their trust in HaShem with the making of their eigel hazahav and their rejection of their entry to our Land. Elul, on the other hand, hearkens us to move forward as we prepare for the great day of Yom Kippur when HaShem will grant us complete forgiveness and His ultimate embrace on Succos.

In His infinite Goodness HaShem endowed Elul with an abundance of love for His beloved people. He wants, or perhaps, He yearns for us to return to Him and encourages us to do so by showering us with the inspiration we need to accomplish this.

Before we continue it must be said how blessed we are to be able to find HaShem's Kindness in the most tragic of moments.

Our beautiful community of Baltimore has suffered the loss of two great people in one month with the passing of Rabbi Shalom Weingot z'l (pictured, right) and Reb Daniel Balsm z'l (pictured, left). In spite of our tragic loss, a loss that will be difficult to replace, HaShem in His Kindness towards these two giants, took them from us at the time of the year when they will gain the most in their pass-

perhaps they might have mixed him up with another couple.

Eli later learned that it was typical of this kind couple to give married couples \$200 and a bar mitzva boy, \$100.

Eli contemplated approaching the couple to highlight the potential oversight. However he hesitated, fearing that they might feel embarrassed upon realizing their mistake. What if they felt mortified about mistakenly giving a bar mitzvah boy a gift intended for a married couple?

Alternatively, perhaps they really meant to give him the 200 dollars. Perhaps the error lay only in the specific bracha they penned and not in the amount. Maybe they intended to give him this generous bar mitzvah gift because they were impressed with him somehow. Furthermore, it was likely that if he would go to them, they would tell him he could keep it anyway. What are the odds that they will ask for the money back?

Eli grappled with the moral dilemma, wondering whether it was his responsibility to inform them of the potential oversight. What do you think? Did he have a right to keep it, if it was mailed and addressed to him? Or should he risk embarrassing them by telling them?

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## MITZVA MEME



ing.

HaShem framed the celebration of Reb Shalom's shloshim and Reb Daniel's passing as our community prepares to enter the month of Elul. Can anyone who knew these great people continue their daily lives without pausing and reflecting how their own lives match up with theirs? They were paradigms of what it means to be a Yid. Reb Shalom and Reb Daniel were two individuals whose lives were solely dedicated to serving HaShem and serving His people. When one contemplates how they lived their lives one recognizes how many levels of dedication there are. While all of us are dedicated to serving HaShem and we do so with our learning

and our davening, observing Shabbos and with everything we do, nevertheless as we learn how Reb Shalom and Reb Daniel did those same things we recognize how much more meaningful and how much richer those same activities can be. We will also realize how much more comprehensive our dedication can be in terms of our learning and our thoughtfulness to the welfare of others. We will also discover insights to what it means to accept HaShem's judgment and to joyfully move forward with it.

We, the members of the Baltimore community who have lived in close proximity to these individuals, can still learn from them and from their ways. In this month of Elul, with HaShem's encouragement and inspiration, we can lift ourselves higher and bring blessing to Reb Shalom and Reb Daniel as well.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**





## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### THE BENEFITS OF YAWNING

Have you yawned recently? Yawning (scientifically known as oscitation) is an involuntary behavior that occurs in humans, but why exactly do we yawn? The truth is that humans are not the only creatures that yawn. Yawning has been observed in animals such as dogs, pigs, monkeys, crocodiles, snakes, and even certain fish! Imagine a fish yawning!

One of the earliest and most commonly held beliefs is that yawning allows for increased intake of oxygen and facilitates the expulsion of carbon dioxide. According to this theory, when we take a deep inhalation during a yawn, it enables more oxygen to enter the bloodstream and helps eliminate carbon dioxide. However, recent research has challenged this theory, pointing out that there is no direct correlation between yawning and the body's need for oxygen.

A more recent and increasingly supported theory suggests that yawning actually helps to cool the brain and counter overheating! Dr. Andrew Gallup and his colleagues proposed that during a yawn, the flow of cooler blood from the lungs to the brain can help dissipate heat. Additionally, the act of yawning stretches the facial muscles and jaw, potentially facilitating heat dissipation through the surfaces of the head. Studies have found that yawning frequency increases with higher temperatures, physical overheating, anxiety, and other conditions that elevate brain temperature. More yawning occurs in summer compared to winter months. In one experiment, holding cold packs on people's heads decreased contagious yawning, while warm packs increased it. This supports the brain cooling hypothesis. A study suggested that species with larger brain sizes and more complex brain structures tend to have longer-lasting yawns.

Another theory is that, along with cooling, yawning may stimulate states of arousal and alertness. The very powerful stretching of facial and neck muscles during a yawn has been shown to increase heart rate and skin conductance, similar to the effects of caffeine and coffee! Yawning often occurs when bored by a repetitive or passive task and is less frequent when engaged in interactive activities. This has led some researchers to propose yawning functions to stimulate wakefulness and attention when becoming drowsy. The motion of yawning also activates key nerves and neural pathways that coordinate arousal. It may also direct blood flow to the face and brain to promote alertness. In this way, routine yawning could work as a form of internal alarm

clock for the mind and body, defending against lapses in wakeful consciousness.

Yawning often occurs during transitions between different states of alertness, such as waking up, going to sleep, or moving from attentiveness to distraction. This has led some scientists to believe that yawning might play a role in the brain's transition between different neurological states, serving as a reset button of sorts. First-time paratroopers have been observed to yawn more frequently right before jumping, suggesting a link between yawning and changing physiological states.

Another theory posits that frequent yawning helps maintain the proper function of the ears. The action of yawning opens the eustachian tubes that connect the throat to the middle ears. This equalizes pressure between the inner ear and outer air, reducing discomfort from pressure changes. Yawning often happens during altitude changes on planes or elevators. The motion is well-suited to alleviating ear blockages and reestablishing equilibrium.

In humans and other highly social species, yawning also serves as a nonverbal communication device. Yawning in a group may promote coordinated arousal or alert others to threats. It could also broadcast boredom and influence group behavior. Yawning may be a signal to others that we need to rest. By responding with the same behavior, contagious yawning may represent a form of connecting and sharing emotional states.

We know that yawning can be contagious. What is fascinating is that yawning is contagious even between humans and dogs. Dogs yawn more after seeing their owners yawn.

The bottom line; scientists still do not know precisely why we yawn, but we can observe that yawning does some amazing things.

Let's close with two interesting fun facts. The largest yawn ever recorded was by a man in China who yawned for a full minute and 47 seconds. There is a condition called yawn syncope, which is when yawning causes a person to faint.

Thank you Hashem for your wondrous creation!

## "HOW FORTUNATE I AM TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN TIME TO PREPARE"

In 2019 when Reb Daniel and Michal Balsam received the devastating news that Reb Daniel was diagnosed with ALS they recognized the need to plan for the subsequent years. When Reb Daniel discussed his condition with his family members it was in the context of how grateful he was for the Kindness of HaShem. "Everyone dies, nobody lives forever. Some people pass away suddenly and some over prolonged time. How fortunate I am to have been given time to prepare my final years to achieve those goals which I always wanted to do. I am able to retire early and begin doing those things which are important to me. "

In fact, the amount of learning and classes he gave was truly remarkable. Perhaps the biggest lesson he taught was to fully accept HaShem's judgment with the greatest joy. With no element of exaggeration, he was always joyful until his final moment.

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In the summer of 2017 Rav Herschel Shachter (pictured) delivered a shiur on the mitzvah of t'cheiles in Baltimore. Reb Daniel who attended the shiur became interested in the inyan and decided that one day he would like to perform that mitzvah. As time moved forward and Reb Daniel got sick and his condition worsened he realized that he did not have much time left in this world. He buckled down with great diligence to study the sugya in great depths and in his final year he finally fulfilled that lifelong dream. How great every mitzvah was to him!



### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about lashon hara, this question was asked to Rav Elyashiv. Rav Elyashiv answered that the teacher should comfort the young woman in other ways, like strengthening her trust in Hashem, and that everything is for the best. She should not speak badly about the man, as he and the young woman are not dating anymore.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in honor of the yartzeit of my only son **Igor, Israel ben Nachum, Berenshtein** who tragically passed away on August 10, 1994, at age of 23.  
and in memory of my parents, **Zalman and Chaya( Klavdia) Vaynerman**  
and in memory my beloved husband **Naum, Nachum ben Israel, Berenshtein**.

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