

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



CHEESE DANISHES

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Parsha the Torah says "You shall do what is Just and Good. (Devarim 6,18)" Our Sages explain that we have a mitzvah to compromise with another and go liflim meshuras hadim, beyond the letter of the law.

This leads us to the following interesting story.

Chava would bring her young children to a pre-nursery playgroup across the street from her. Morah Mimi was a wonderful Morah and the kids loved her. One year, shortly before Shavuot Morah Mimi opened her door. At the door was Chava holding a large tray. "Morah Mimi, we are so grateful to you for all of your wonderful work, I bought you a tray of cheese danishes for Shavuot. I hope you enjoy them." Morah Mimi was very grateful and profusely thanked Chava.

Morah Mimi put the cheese danishes in the refrigerator. The truth was that in her family they didn't really enjoy cheese products. The cheese danishes sat in the fridge for two weeks but they were not touched. After being in the fridge for a



EVERYTHING HANGS ON THE NAME

In this week's Parsha, Moshe reviews the Ten Commandments for his people. The third Commandment states "Do not carry the Name of HaShem in vain, because HaShem will not cleanse a person who mentions His Name in vain." The Talmud teaches us that all of creation trembled when this mitzvah was commanded. Why is creation more concerned about this mitzvah than the others? Additionally, we are taught that our exile will continue so long as we do not keep this mitzvah. What makes it so unique?

To say the Name in vain includes even reciting a bracha that was unnecessary. For example, making a bracha on a coffee after one already recited the same bracha on his tuna fish.

The Name of HaShem is distinctly different from names of other things. The Midrash teaches us that before the world was created only G.D and His Name existed. Behold! His Name is a reality that existed before there was the world as we know it. It is not a word by which to refer to Him. Both common and proper nouns are words by which we refer to things or people. It is not the person or thing itself, it is only a means of reference to that individual. By contrast, the Name of HaShem, is an oral articulation of HaShem Himself.

To further clarify, even though there was no greater Sage than Rambam in his day, nevertheless, it is not disrespectful to bring his name into the bathroom. For that matter one may utter the name of Rambam in the bathroom. HaShem's Name, on the other hand, is forbidden to be mentioned in vain or in a bathroom. It is a terrible desecration of sanctity. The reason is because His Name is actual, not simply a reference.

This is also the reason for the prohibition of erasing the Name. It is tantamount to erasing an expression of HaShem. This is also the reason why reciting a bracha in its appropriate context brings blessing to the world. By reciting His Name we increase His exposure to our

while they got spoiled and Morah Mimi threw them out in the garbage.

About three weeks later Morah Mimi realized that Chava was unusually late with her monthly payment. She was usually very prompt and on time, but this month it seemed unusually late. "She probably just forgot about it", Morah Mimi thought, and sent Chava a short message reminding her about the monthly payment for the playgroup.

Chava came over a few minutes later. "I was surprised about your message," Chava said. "I personally handed you the payment three weeks ago. Don't you remember, when I gave you the cheese danishes I left an envelope right under the danishes with the cash for our payment?"

Morah Mimi felt terrible. Because she didn't eat the danishes she never saw the envelope with the cash of her payment. When she threw out the danishes she also threw out cash. Morah Mimi now felt very conflicted. Did she have a right to ask for the payment again?

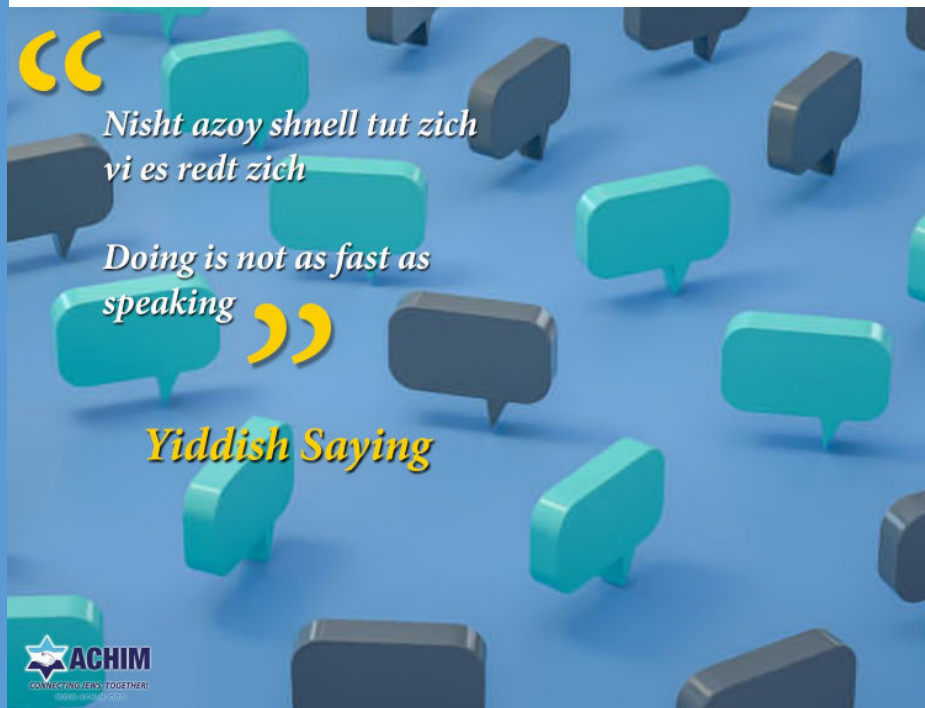
On one hand, she did receive it from Chava and she actively destroyed the money that was given to her.

But on the other hand, Chava never explicitly told her that her payment was there. Perhaps that was not considered paying and she would have to pay again?

Morah Mimi wondered if she had a right to ask for the money again?

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Bereishis 427



world. The reason why Torah study brings blessing to the world is because the words of Torah are all expressions of His Name. By uttering HaShem's Name in appropriate places we bring HaShem into the world.

Every creature in the world; from Man to animal, from planets and stars to angels and celestial beings, draws their existence from HaShem and from His Name. Hence, when the Name is uttered in sanctity all of creation is blessed. If it is uttered in vain or out of context all of creation is shaken.

When expressing this mitzvah the Torah does not state 'Do not utter the Name in vain' rather 'Do not carry the Name in vain'. The Klei Yakar comments as we have explained, to utter the Name is to lift it. It is no wonder that all of creation trembled when this mitzvah was commanded. They realized that their dependence upon HaShem's Name is now in the hands of mortal Man.

Throughout our prayers we find that our strongest argument for HaShem's help and redemption is that He does so for the sake of His

Name. The understanding is that we, his beloved people, are the carriers of His Name. It is therefore appropriate that he saves us for the sake of His Name that we carry.

Perhaps, before HaShem will redeem us for the sake of His Name, we must demonstrate that we ourselves care to bring honor to His Name.

This Mitzvah is extremely difficult to fulfill properly because it involves saying His Name with focus and attention. I know how difficult it is to always bear in mind the meaning of His Name as we recite it hundreds of times a day. It is so part of our routine, how can we possibly fulfill this mitzvah properly?

As with everything HaShem expects from us, we need only start with just a few tefillos and slowly build it up. Once we begin, HaShem will grant us the strength to expand our abilities. May these seven weeks of consolation bring us to the final arrival of our complete nechama.

Have a very wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE OLIVE TREE

This week's Parsha talks about how Hashem gave us Eretz Yisrael, a land filled with Olive trees (Devarim 6,11). Let's look a bit deeper at the olive tree.

The olive's official botanical name is *Olea Europaea*, meaning "European olive". It is found traditionally in the Mediterranean Basin, in the lands surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. Today it is cultivated in all the countries of the Mediterranean, as well as in Australia, New Zealand, North and South America, and South Africa. It is related to species such as lilacs, jasmine, and Forsythia.

The olive is one of the core ingredients in Mediterranean cuisine. The olive fruit can be green, purple, dark brown, black, and even pink in color. Olives contain about 20% oil. The largest type of olive is called "donkey olive" and the smallest type is "bullet".

The word olive comes from the Greek word *elaia*. In fact, the word for oil also comes from the word *Olea*. Originally oil referred to olive oil but became used for other oils as well.

The olive tree, like a pine tree, is an evergreen tree and works throughout the year. It is usually squat and ranges between 26–49 ft in height. The trunk is typically gnarled and twisted. The older the olive tree, the broader and more gnarled the trunk becomes.

Olive trees are often planted in pairs with a single primary tree and a secondary tree selected for its ability to fertilize the primary one.

Olives grow very slowly, and over many years, the trunk can attain a considerable diameter. Some reach as much as 30 feet in girth. Olive trees are very hardy: drought-resistant, disease-resistant and fire-resistant and can live to a great age. They tolerate drought well, due to their sturdy and extensive root systems. Its root system is robust and capable of regenerating the tree even if the above-ground structure is destroyed. Olive trees can live for several centuries and can remain productive for as long if they are pruned correctly and regularly. The crop from old trees is sometimes enormous, but they seldom bear well two years in succession, and in many cases, a large harvest occurs every sixth or seventh season.

The olive tree starts to bloom after 4 years. But the first olive harvest can be expected after 15 years.

Archaeologists say that based on written tablets, olive pits, and wood fragments found in ancient tombs, the origin of the original olives came from the Levant between 5000 and 6000 years ago. The Levant is the area of Eretz Yisrael and Aram Naharaim. This is of course consistent with the fact that olives are one of the *shivah haminim*, one of the seven species of fruit of Eretz Yisrael.

Even today, throughout Israel dozens of ancient olive trees

are found with estimated ages of 1,600–3,000 years. Ancient trees include two giant olive trees in Arraba and five trees in Deir Hanna, both in the Galil region, which have been determined to be around 3,000 years old. All seven of these trees continue to produce olives. One of the oldest olive trees in the world (pictured above) is on the island of Crete, Greece and is still producing fruit after 4,000 years.

Rav Shimshon Pincus pointed out that like the Jewish people, olive oil was very important to the ancient Greeks and later to the Romans. This is because they also appreciated the symbolism behind olive oil which represented intellectual enlightenment,

Olive oil was used to anoint kings as well as athletes in ancient Greece. Olive oil was burned as an "eternal flame" of the original Olympic games. Victors in these games were crowned with olive leaves. The first eye shadow was created in Ancient Greece by mixing ground charcoal with olive oil. In Ancient Rome women applied olive oil to their skin and hair as protection from the sun and to maintain a pleasant fragrance.

Even today Italy is one of the largest exporters of olive oil in the world. Spain is the first. Today, some Italian olive trees are believed to date back to Ancient Rome (8th century BC to 5th century AD),

Today olives are grown in the Americas, but they are of course not native to the Americas. They were brought to America by Spanish colonists. Its cultivation prospered in present-day Peru, Chile, and Argentina and later in California.

Interestingly, you cannot consume olives directly from the tree. Raw olives have a bitter element called glucoside oleuropein. Harvested olives need to be processed with a brine of lye and then pickled before becoming edible. The curing process may take from a few days, with lye, to a few months with brine or salt packing.

Spanish olives go through natural fermentation in brine. This explains the red pimento pepper stuffed into Spanish olives. Originally, the pimento was hand-cut into tiny pieces, then hand-stuffed into each olive to balance out the olive's otherwise strong, salty flavor. The word pimento comes from the Latin word, pigmentum, or coloring. The peppers added color to the olives.

California olives are called "artificially ripened olives". This is a California invention where green and unripe olives are placed in an alkaline solution and soaked. Upon their removal, they are washed in water injected with compressed air and an iron compound (ferrous gluconate) that turns their skins a shiny patent-leather black. Once fully oxidized or "blackened", they are brined and acid corrected and are then ready for eating. Delicious!

YOU ARE A GUEST, NOT A CUSTOMER

The Lev Simcha, the Gerer Rebbe, would often make sure to perform acts of chesed anonymously.

A young man from Bnei Brak was told by his doctor to spend some time in a location with dry air, such as Arad. As he could not afford to take his entire family with him, he traveled there alone. To his surprise, the one glatt kosher restaurant in Arad refused to accept payment for his meals. "You are a guest, not a customer", the owner explained. Some time later the young man happened to meet the restaurant owner in Bnei Brak, and he thanked him once again for his hospitality. This time the owner offered more details. The Lev Simcha had told him that should young men with little means of support go to spend time in Arad for health reasons, the owner should let them eat free of charge. The bills were then sent to the Lev Simcha, who paid them.

Once, upon returning from a trip, the Lev Simcha discovered that he did not have the key to his house. One of the attendants told him he had a spare key at home, and he went to fetch it. While he was waiting, the Lev Simcha searched his pockets again, and deep in one of the corners, he felt the key. The attendants sighed with relief and moved toward the door, but the Lev Simcha did not move. "We must wait for him," he said as he put the key back in his pocket, and then he began pacing calmly back and forth. When the attendant returned with the key, the Lev Simcha took it from him with a glowing smile, and he walked together with him to open the door, never letting the attendant know that his efforts had been unnecessary.

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THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the two painters, Rav Zilberstein wrote that the customer does not have to tell the painter that the first estimate was not accurate because it is normal for a seller or contractor to state a higher price with the assumption that they will accept a lower price. See Upiryo Matok Bamidbar Page 128



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