

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE CHRISTIAN BOOKS

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

The following true story occurred last week. Gavriel was in charge of distribution for a major Jewish publisher. One day he got an order from Eretz Yisrael for 50 of Rav Avigdor Miller's sefarim. The sefarim store needed them right away, so the owner asked for them to be shipped by air transport, which was much more expensive. Gavriel fulfilled the order and had several boxes loaded from his warehouse, and they were sent by plane. The air transport costs were about 150 dollars.

A few days later, Gavriel got a message from the sefarim store owner with a picture of the contents of one of the boxes: "I ordered Rav Avigdor Miller's sefarim, why did you send me a box of books proving the ideas of Christianity?"

Gavriel was shocked by the message and asked the owner to send him a picture of the outside of the box. Sure enough, the box with the Christian books had the label of the Jewish publisher on it. Gavriel told the sefarim store owner that he would look into how this happened and get back to him.

After a bit of research, Gavriel figured it out. These books by Rav Avigdor Miller were printed in a print shop based in eastern Europe seven years

STONES

We find ourselves in the Three Weeks of mourning during which we mourn the loss of the Bais Hamikdosh and the loss of our closeness to HaShem. Hashgacha should have it that I find myself currently in Eretz Yisrael during this time and as I went to the Kosel this morning I was struck by the words of the Malbim in his commentary on Tehillim chapter 102.

In the Psalmist's yearning for HaShem's return to His Home, he writes in verse 15 "(It is time to return to Yerushalayim) because Your servants have appeased her stones and cherished her dust."

Why do the stones of Yerushalayim need to be appeased and if so how were they appeased?

The Malbim reminds us how our Sages teach us that after our people sinned against HaShem they were actually deserving total decimation. However, He poured His wrath over the stones of His Temple and spared His people. In other words, the stones of Yerushalayim took the beating that should have been reserved for us. Those stones need to be appeased; they were not deserving of destruction, we should have been the target of that destruction. It is therefore we who are the ones who must appease those holy stones.

The Psalmist, therefore, pleads to HaShem to return, because 'Your servants already appeased her stones'. How have we appeased the stones of

earlier. The print shop was no longer in business. It turns out that the print house also made books for a Christian publishing company. When the books by Rav Avigdor Miller were ordered to be printed, one of the boxes was accidentally filled with the Christian books instead of Rav Avigdor Miller's books.

The print house accidentally switched the Jewish publisher's order, but they were no longer in business to claim anything from them. The books were sitting in the warehouse of the Jewish publisher for the past seven years.

Gavriel called up the seforim store owner and explained the situation. "Of course, we will replace the books. We will send them right away, and you should get them in about a week."

The sefarim owner said, "but I need them immediately. Can you please send them by plane like last time? Also, what should I do with these Christian books?".

Gavriel thought about both questions.

Did he have an obligation to pay the extra 150 dollars for expedited shipping on the replacement order? On one hand, the owner paid for fast shipping for the seforim, and he got the wrong books. So maybe Gavriel should pay once again for the fast air shipping. But on the other hand, it was a mistake made by the printing house, not them. How was he supposed to know that the wrong books were put in the box? The box had the appropriate label on it, with Rav Avigdor Miller's sefer written on it. The print shop sealed the box shut, and there was no reason for them to open it before they sent it.

Regarding the Christian books, what should he tell him? Should he sell them to a non-Jewish book store in Israel? Or was it wrong for a Jew to put books promoting the ideas of Christianity in circulation in Israel? Should the books be donated somewhere? Perhaps they should be thrown out?

What do you think?

Does Gavriel have to pay for shipping a new box of books by air? And can the seller in Eretz Yisrael sell the Christian books to a non-Jewish book store?



“*Serving yourself
is a form of idolatry.*”

The Kotzker Rebbe

Yerushalayim? Because 'they cherished her dust'. Our Sages would kiss the dust of our homeland when they had the opportunity to tread upon her earth. For thousands of years, we yearned to return to our homeland. So much of the venomous hatred that was targeted at us was the expression of the world's loathing us for having aspirations of leaving their lands to go to our own Land. We took a beating in all the lands to which we were sent in our exile because we would never let go of those hopes.

I am currently reading a book that is a compilation of hundreds of documents, including letters, governmental proclamations and other significant documents dating back to the late 1700's reflecting the attitude of the non-Jews towards us. These documents are filled with the loathing of the non-Jewish world of our people because of our yearn-

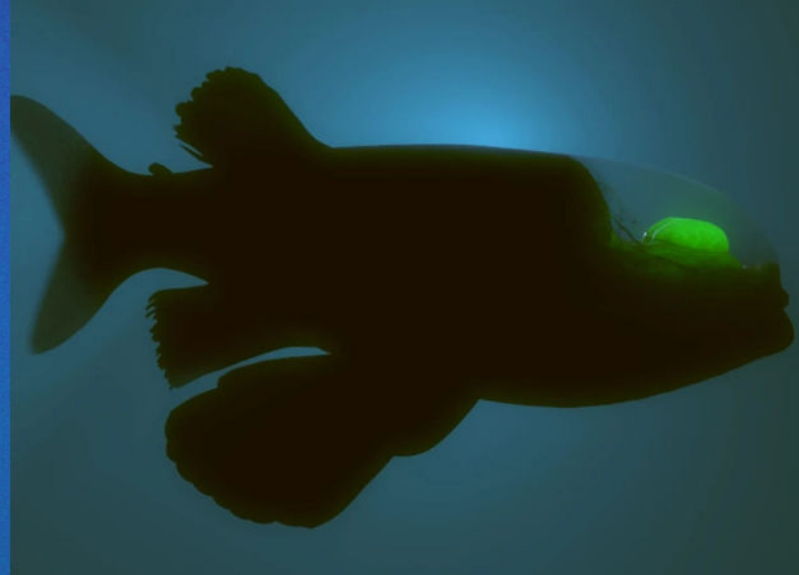
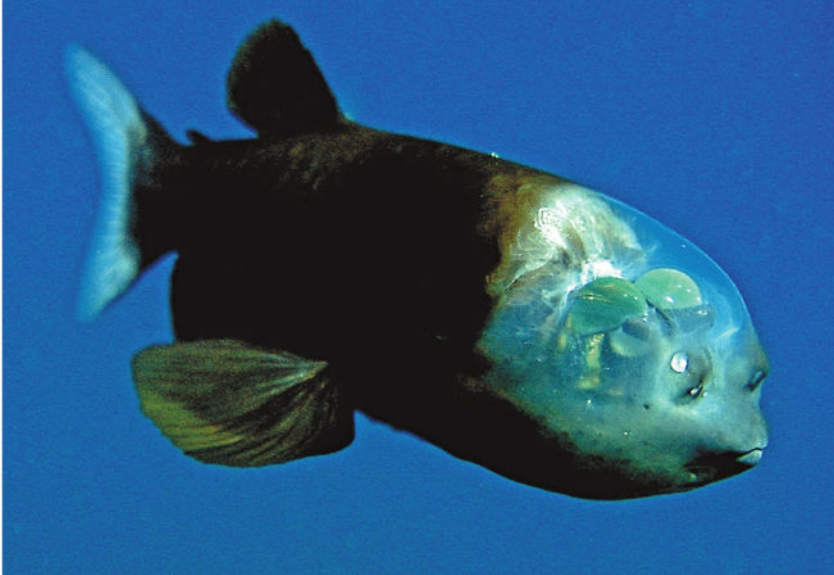
ing to return to our ultimate homeland.

The Psalmist, therefore, depicts the inextricable relationship between Yerushalayim and her children. She took the beating for the sake of her children. She did not want them punished as fiercely as they should have been. And they in turn remembered her in their exiles and did not forget their love and longing for her. It cost them dearly but they never gave her up. They held on tightly for the day they would return. Yerushalayim is appeased. She took a beating for them and they took a beating for her. She recognizes how her love for her children is reciprocal. Her children love her as much as she loves them.

The two of them are bound together and they both await the day that HaShem will return to them and fill their home with joy.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

MACROPINNA, THE BARELEYE FISH

Continuing with our exploration of strange and unusual animals, we would like to present the Macropinna, also called the barreleye fish or the spookfish.

Could you imagine what we would look like if our skin was transparent like glass? Could you imagine being able to see through the skin to see the internal organs inside?

That is what is really unique about the Macropinna. The skin of its head is totally transparent so that you can see the organs inside. You can see the entire inner part of the head. You can see their eyes, brain, and all the nerve endings that make up their head.

Let's look at this fish a bit closer.

The Barreleye was discovered in 1939 by marine biologist W. M. Chapman. It is found in the deep temperate waters of the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic oceans, primarily off California's coast and the North Pacific ocean. Although it was discovered in 1939, the transparent head was not observed until 2004 because the head was destroyed when brought up from the depths. In 2004 it was first photographed underwater, and we could see its unique head. The cockpit of the fish and its head give the fish the appearance of a submarine. However, only the cockpit is translucent. The rest of the fish is brown and pretty ordinary looking. Most of its body is covered with large scales.

The Barreleye is a deep-sea fish, and it lives around 2,000 to 3,000 feet below the water's surface, where the sun's light cannot reach. They can grow to be as long as 6 inches. Due to a lack of data and research, their absolute numbers are unknown. At first glance, it seems its eyes are at the front of its head in the form of two black holes. However, these are its olfactory organs where it smells. They are its nostrils.

The eyes are actually the greenish balls inside the fluid-filled shield on its head. The eyes usually just look directly upwards. It was initially believed that the green eyes of this fish were

fixed in place and, therefore, only provided a tunnel vision view of what was seen above its head. However, in 2008, scientists discovered that its eyes could rotate both up and forward in its transparent shield.

Most of the time, the fish hovers motionless in the water, with its body in a horizontal position and its eyes looking upward. Its fins give it stability to hover in place. Barreleye fins are large and flat, allowing them to remain motionless underwater. These fins use exact movements to steer them around as the Barreleye looks upwards.

Why are the Barreleye's eyes capped with bright green lenses? Where they live, it is so dark that these fish are solely focused on recognizing brightness and differentiating light that is coming from above or from potential prey. Scientists say that the green pigment in their eyes may help filter out green waves from surface light and help them see bioluminescence in jellies and other creatures of the deep. They use their ultra-sensitive tubular eyes to search for the faint silhouettes of prey overhead. Although they have very sensitive eyes, they are color blind and cannot see the differences in color. This is because their eyes do not possess cone cells that are used to perceive color.

We learned that the Barreleye fish's eyes are behind a transparent helmet on its head. It's a bit similar to the helmet of an astronaut. Why does it have this? We will see that its design is genius.

The Barreleye fish has a tiny mouth. So how does this fish eat? It steals! Siphonophores are 100-foot jellyfish-like sea critters that have hanging nets that catch fish. Barreleyes maneuver carefully among the siphonophore's tentacles, picking off the captured organisms. The fish's eyes rotate to help the fish keep its eyes on the prize. That is why it needs a transparent head shield. Its transparent head shield protects the fish's eyes from the siphonophore's stinging cells.

"TA'ISI, I HAVE MADE A MISTAKE."

In 1949 Reb Shlomo Zalman began delivering lectures at the Kol Torah Yeshiva. This is the story of how he was accepted to the position.

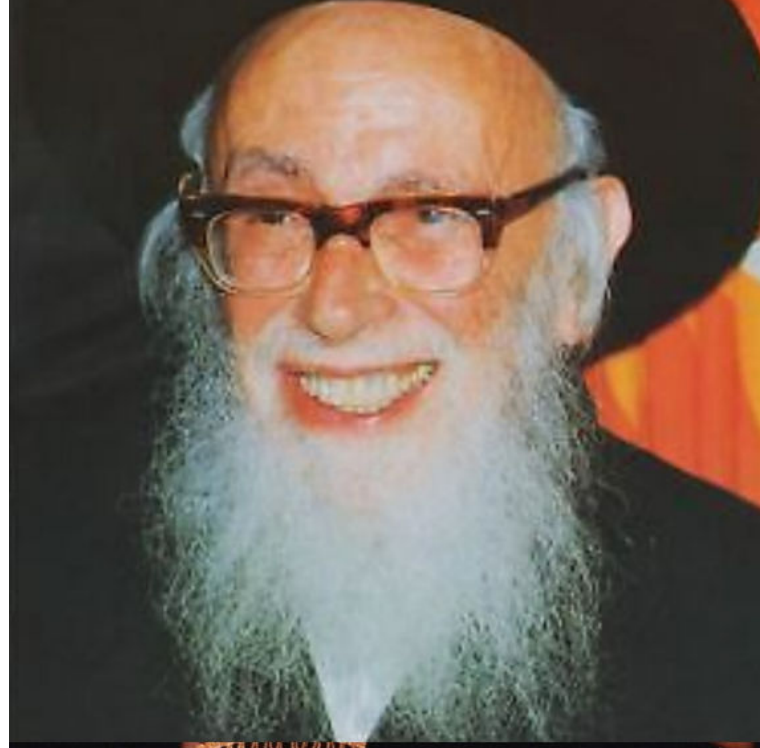
His very first shiur, the shiur that was his examination for the position, was attended by all of the yeshiva's rabbanim to award the youthful genius the respect and honor that he deserved. Not long after the start of the shiur, R' Yonah Mertzbach, one of the founders of Kol Torah, interrupted with a question. After a few seconds of silence, R' Shlomo Zalman declared without hesitation, "Ta'isi — I have made a mistake." He then began a new topic which was the focus of the remainder of the shiur.

When R' Shlomo Zalman returned home his Rebbetzin asked how he had fared R' Shlomo Zalman replied, "Not so well. The shiur had hardly begun when I admitted to a mistake. Actually, I had three different answers to offer. But I felt that the question was closer to the emes (truth) than any of my answers."

Shortly afterward, to R' Shlomo Zalman's surprise, he was informed that he had been accepted for the position.

Years later, R' Mertzbach told R' Yehudah Addas, Rosh Yeshiva of Kol Yaakov the following secret. "Do you know why R' Shlomo Zalman was appointed to his position? When I asked him that question and he answered, 'I'm mistaken' it was clear to me that with such a level of emes, he should be our Rosh Yeshiva!"

(From Jerusalem His Word, By Rabbi Hanoch Teller)



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the ladder that flew off the van, Rav Zilberstein wrote that we would normally assume the driver would be responsible for the damage. However, if he was in an extreme rush because of the impending birth, he is not expected to have to check that the ladder is secure. Therefore both the driver and the owner would not be required to pay for the damage in a Beis Din.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in honor of
**Rabbi and Mrs. Paysach Diskind and
Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Glazer**

