

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



MESSED UP MOUSSE

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Parsha, we learn about our forefather Avraham. Avraham had an Eshel, an inn or an orchard where he would serve his guests delicious foods, who would then express their gratitude to Hashem. This leads us to the following true story.

Arye made a siyum on a large mesechta and was very excited about it. He decided to make a fancy dinner to celebrate and invited 25 of his close friends to a Simcha hall. He contacted a caterer and told him he wanted a lavish and fancy party. The caterer, Shmuel, was happy to take the job. Shmuel suggested a delicious and exciting menu to Arye. Arye agreed to Shmuel's ideas and was excited about them. Arye paid for the caterer in full on the day of the event.

The day of the siyum arrived, and all of Arye's friends arrived at the Simcha hall. The meal was delicious, and people kept complimenting Arye and Shmuel about the delicious food. There was course after course, and people kept praising the amazing food.

Finally, the meal was over, and dessert was served. The waiters brought out a delicious chocolate mousse with whipped cream



WE ARE HERE TO GUARD HIS HONOR

The main character of our Parsha is our father, Avraham. He, together with Yitzchok and Yaakov, fathered our people. It is worth noting that in spite of Avraham's incredulous legacy, he was not the greatest contributor to the Jewish people. It is true that he gave birth to Yitzchok, who, in turn, gave birth to Yaakov. However, consider Avraham's brother, Haran, who had three children; Sarah, Milka, and Lot. While Avraham fathered Yitzchok, Haran also played a critical role in Yitzchok as Sarah was his daughter, so Yitzchok was his grandson. Yitzchok's wife, Rivka, from whom he fathered Yaakov, was a great-granddaughter of Haran. This is because Rivka was born to Besueil, the son of Milka, the daughter of Haran. Yaakov then married Rochel and Leah, from whom he fathered the twelve tribes. Rochel and Leah were once again great great granddaughters of Haran as they were born to Lavan, a brother of Rivka and great-grandson of Haran.

So Haran fathered Sarah, Yitzchok, Rivka, Yaakov, Rochel, and Leah. Avraham only fathered Yitzchok and Yaakov; the women came from outside of him. And let us not forget the significance of Lot's role in our people's history. Lot fathered the nation of Amon and Moav. From Moav came Ruth, who is considered the Mother of the Davidic Dynasty, and ultimately Moshiach! From our very beginning to our final destiny, Haran's descendants play the vital roles in Jewish history.

on top. The mousse was delicious.

The siyum was done, and things were moving to a close. But about a half hour, after the mousse was served, one of the guests vomited right at the table. A few minutes later, another person vomited. Then another. Soon nearly everyone who ate the chocolate mousse had to run to the bathroom or sink to empty their stomach.

It was extremely embarrassing to everyone who was there, especially to Arye. It was clear to everyone that something caused everyone to get food poisoning.

Shmuel immediately investigated, and sure enough, there was salmonella in the mousse. That bacteria caused the food poisoning. Thankfully no one got seriously sick. But it put a dark cloud over Arye's joyous Simcha. A few days after the event, Shmuel approached Arye and told him how bad he felt over the debacle and offered to refund the price of all of the mousse. Arye was unhappy with that offer. "A refund on just the mousse?" Arye argued. "nearly everyone threw up the entire meal. How can you charge me for the rest of the meal if the entire affair was ruined?"

Shmuel, who had paid a great deal of money for the raw food, was unable to give a complete refund. Shmuel countered that the rest of the food was greatly enjoyed by everyone. He was unable to refund that.

Arye then countered that not only should Shmuel refund the entire catering fee, but Shmuel should pay damages to Arye for causing him so much humiliation and shame.

They agreed to bring this question to a Rav.

What do you think? Is Arye entitled to a complete refund of the entire meal? Or just the price of the mousse? On the one hand, people did enjoy the first courses. But on the other hand, because they threw up all their meals, it ruined the whole meal. In addition, would Shmuel be obligated to pay extra damages to Arye for causing him so much shame?

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MITZVA MEME



Who was Haran, and how did he merit such greatness?

There is a positive mitzvah to bring about Kiddush HaShem, a sanctification of HaShem's Name. This mitzvah is so great that one must give their life to prevent a desecration of His Name. An example of this would be if a Nazi would instruct a Jew to kill a fellow Jew or else he will be killed. If he refuses to kill his fellow Jew and is killed, he has sanctified the Name of HaShem. Regarding such a person the Rambam writes, "and these are the murdered ones of the empire for whose state of (spiritual) elevation is unparalleled. There is no higher state of elevation than theirs."

To appreciate who Haran was and what he accomplished, we must remember the story of how Terach,

the father of Avraham and Haran, reported Avraham to Nimrod for his rejection of paganism. Upon learning of Avraham's rejection, Nimrod gave Avraham the choice to either bow to the idol or be thrown into the furnace. When Avraham refused the former, he was thrown into the furnace. Miraculously, he was saved and came out unscathed. Our Sages teach us that he was saved in the merit of Yaakov, who was yet to come from him. Haran, who was with Avraham and recognized the miracle, told Nimrod that he, too, rejected paganism. Nimrod gave him the same choice as Avraham, and he too, refused to bow to the idol. Haran was also thrown into the furnace, but no miracle was performed for him, and he perished.

Haran was the first person in the history of Mankind to forfeit his life to sanctify the Name of HaShem. It is from Haran that every member of our founding fathers and mothers can descend. We are the people who live and die to bring honor to His Name. It is no wonder that the Jewish people sprouted entirely from Haran.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S THE PROBOSCIS MONKEY

Imagine a society where long noses are considered desired and an attractive feature. Imagine if the longer the nose, the better your marriage prospects. Sounds impossible?

Well, that is the case with the following fascinating species of monkeys. Please meet the Proboscis Monkey or long-nosed monkey.

The proboscis monkey has an unusually large nose, a reddish-brown skin color, and a long tail. It lives only on the southeast Asian island of Borneo in mangrove forests on the coasts. As an interesting aside, Borneo is a large island near Indonesia. Is it divided into three parts by Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei. Borneo is actually an island larger than Texas, and it is the third largest island in the world. This monkey is one of the largest monkey species native to Asia. Males are close to three feet tall and have a maximum weight of about 65 lbs.

These primates have some of the longest noses around. The large nose or proboscis of the male can be 4 inches in length and hangs lower than the mouth. That means this monkey's nose is almost as long as a popsicle stick.

Why do they have such long noses? It may seem hard to believe, but male proboscis monkeys use their fleshy, pendulous noses to attract mates. Females prefer longer noses because they allow the monkey to make louder vocalizations. The longer the nose, the louder the call. Out-size noses create an echo chamber that amplifies the monkey's call, impressing females with their dominance as well as intimidating rival males.

Females have smaller noses (pictured, top right), and young monkeys have upturned noses.

Proboscis monkeys have bulging stomachs that give the monkeys what resembles a pot belly.

They are perhaps the most aquatic of the primates and are fairly good swimmers, capable of swimming up to 65 ft underwater. They can also swim across rivers. As a tool to help swim, many of the monkeys' toes and fingers are webbed. Hashem gave them webbed feet and hands to help them to swim away from crocodiles which are some

of their main predators.

Proboscis monkeys generally live in organized harem groups consisting of a dominant male and two to seven females and their offspring. One-male groups consist of 9–19 individuals,

All-male groups also exist. Upon reaching adulthood, males leave their natal groups and join all-male groups. When females give birth, the mothers then eat the placenta and lick their infants clean. Scientists conjecture that the reason for eating the placenta is that it has nutrients that aid the mother's recovery from pregnancy and birth. It also gives the monkey pain-killing compounds. The mother will allow other members of her group to hold her infant. They are known to make various vocalizations. When communicating the status of the group, males will emit honks. They have a special honk emitted towards infants, which is also used for reassurance. Males will also produce alarm calls to signal danger.

The proboscis monkey eats fruit and leaves primarily. While their diet consists of fruit, they will only eat unripe fruit. Ripe fruit can be lethal for them because ripe fruit has sugar in it that can be difficult for the monkey to digest and break down. When too much is consumed, it can lead to fatal bloating.

Occasionally, they chew their cud to allow more efficient digestion and food intake. That is why these large-nosed monkeys are known as the cows of the primate world! Just like cattle, proboscis monkeys have a complex stomach with many chambers – although they aren't technically ruminants. Each one of these stomachs is filled with healthy bacteria to help them digest their food.

Who are the predators of these fascinating monkeys? Predators of the proboscis monkey include crocodiles, leopards, sun bears, reticulated pythons, and even eagles, large owls, and monitor lizards. Although they spend most of their time in the treetops, they will not sleep there. This is to avoid their predators. Instead, they sleep on the thick branches growing over water. This provides them a quick escape if they were to come face to face with one of their many predators.

FEEDING THE HORSES

Rabbi Dovid of Lelov was renowned for being concerned about the needs of animals as well as people.

One Rosh Hashanah, when Rabbi Dovid of Lelov was at the court of the Chozeh (Seer) of Lublin, Rabbi Dovid was noted to be absent from shul. The Chozeh did not want the shofar sounded until Rabbi Dovid was present and sent people out around town to look for him.

They finally found Rabbi Dovid with a sack of oats, feeding the horses whose owners had all gone to shul for the Rosh Hashanah services, and neglected their responsibilities to feed their animals that day.

One time Rabbi Dovid saw a driver whip his horse very viciously. Rav Dovid said to him, "If you only knew how to communicate with your horse, you would have no need to hit him. Is it fair and just then to whip the horse because of your ignorance?"

Rabbi Dovid carried this one step further. Just "think," Rabbi Dovid said, "that one day this horse will take you before the Heavenly Tribunal for having whipped him. Will you not be embarrassed to go to trial against a horse?"

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THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's questions about the broken tiles, Rav Zilbershtein answered that the tenant does not have to pay for the entire floor. Instead, he would only have to buy a tile that is the closest approximation in shape and color to the original broken tiles.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated to the memory of Reb Pinchos Marder

פנחס בן יצחק ז"ל

By Reuven and Rachel Yablonovsky

