



## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



### THE COMMUNITY-WIDE OUTREACH EVENT

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Eli was the president of a shul in a small community in Israel. His shul planned to organize an all-day learning event to engage the entire community—both religious and non-religious members. Their goal was to involve as many Jews as possible. They had a great panel of well-known and charismatic speakers who would greatly inspire the community.

In the flier for the event, Eli decided to include a statement: There will be no fundraising appeals made at this event. He wrote this because he didn't want people to cynically assume that the event was a fundraising ploy. It was genuinely meant to be an opportunity to connect fellow Jews to their shared heritage.



## PUT IT IN WRITING

In last week's Parsha Moshe states "On this day HaShem commands you all these mitzvos and you shall do them with all your heart and all your soul." Ramban explains Moshe's intent was to tell his people that he has now completed the entire compendium of the mitzvos.

It is noteworthy that including the mitzvos enumerated in last week's Parsha there were still two mitzvos missing. The mitzvah of teshuva and the mitzvah of writing a Sefer Torah. These remaining mitzvos seem to somehow belong in a class of their own; as if all the mitzvos were enumerated and then there are two mitzvos that have their own distinction. In what way are they distinct? Allow me to diverge a moment.

Next week Klal Yisroel begins the Selichos service that will continue through Yom Kippur. In these prayers we plead to HaShem to forgive us, to protect us, to grant us a positive judgment on the High Holidays, and to return us to the Beis Hamikdash. Throughout the prayers we turn to the merit of carrying HaShem's Name. 'In the merit of HaShem's Name which we carry, please fulfill our requests.' 'Even if we are not worthy of salvation, at least save us on the merit that Your Name is downtrodden.' The notion that HaShem attached His Name to us is a very dominant theme throughout our tradition.

The first place HaShem associated His Name is with our Fathers, Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov. HaShem refers to Himself as the GD of Avraham and so on. The Talmud teaches that HaShem does not associate His Name with anyone as long as they are alive. The reason being because the person can always change his ways and reject HaShem. HaShem will not be fickle. Once His Name

The day of the event arrived, and there was a massive turnout—more than 1,000 people came. People were happy, smiling, and deeply engaged. Eli was thrilled by the large crowd and the positive atmosphere.

As he was walking up to the podium, a woman from his congregation approached him. She said, "Eli, I know you're aware that my husband recently passed away. I'm a mother, and now a widow. My daughter is getting married soon, and I don't know how I will pay for her wedding. Do you think you could make an appeal at some point during the event to help my daughter get married? I'm desperate, and with the huge, unprecedented crowd here, this would be a great opportunity to easily raise funds for the wedding."

Eli felt torn. On the one hand, he had publicly declared that he wouldn't make any fundraising appeals. But on the other hand, what he had meant was that there would be no appeals on behalf of the synagogue. This was different—this was an appeal for a community member in need, and the event seemed like the best opportunity to help her.

Eli wondered if it would be wrong to make the appeal, even though the flier had stated there would be no fundraising. Should he stick to his word, or was this an exceptional circumstance because it was not an appeal for the synagogue? In addition, when he wrote the flier, he hadn't known about this widow's situation. What do you think?

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is associated with this person He will not take it away. He therefore waits until the person completes his life of righteousness and then attaches His Name. This is the safety measure to ensure the integrity of His Name.

The question can therefore be asked how did HaShem attach His Name to Klal Yisroel when He knows that we will reject Him and His Torah, GD forbid.

The answer is that although we have turned away from the path HaShem expects from us, nevertheless, HaShem knows that we will do teshuva at some further point of time. At the end, His people will completely accept Him and will live up to all of His expectations. HaShem was willing to attach Himself to us because it will all work out perfectly.

It is therefore no wonder that teshuva has its own distinction since that is the guarantee that the Torah and her destiny will be realized.

Regarding the mitzvah of writing a Sefer Torah our Parsha reads; "And HaShem said to Moshe. You will die and this nation will stray after the pagan gods and they will forsake me and reject My covenant. I will be angry with them and will hide My Face from them and all evil will befall them. They will say 'Where was GD?' they will acknowledge that they forsook Me. And now, write this song (this is the reference to the mitzvah of writing the Sefer Torah) and teach it to them in order that this song will testify to them.. and when all these great tragedies will befall them, then this song will respond to them because I know that it will not be forgotten from them." HaShem commands us to write the Torah so that it will respond to our people at the other end of history and will direct us back to HaShem.

Behold! It is that Sefer Torah that ensures our return back to HaShem. Perhaps this is why these two mitzvos were introduced only after the entire compendium was presented.

May we see the day when our people become worthy once again to carry His Name proudly back to Yerushalayim.

Have a wonderful Shabbos and I wish you a k'siva v'chasima tova.

**Paysach Diskind**





## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### MORE AMAZING HORNS

Last week, we learned about cows with unusual horns. This week, let's learn about four more amazing creatures with unique horns!

**Saiga Antelope.** (Pictured left) The saiga antelope is one of the most unusual creatures you'll ever encounter! This antelope, native to the grasslands of Central Asia, looks like it's stepped straight out of a storybook. What makes the saiga stand out the most? Its incredible nose and its unique horns! Let's start with that nose. The saiga has a large, flexible snout that looks like something from another planet. But it's not just for show. This special nose helps filter out dust during the dry summer months, and in winter, it warms up the cold air the saiga breathes in. Pretty cool, right?

Now, let's talk about the horns. Only male saiga antelopes have them, and they're truly spectacular! The horns are translucent, meaning light can shine through them, and they have a slight, beautiful curve. Each horn is covered in tiny ridges that give them a special texture, and they can grow up to two feet long! But the saiga's horns aren't just for looks. Males use them to battle each other during mating season to win over females. It's a tough job, but these graceful horns help the saiga show off its strength.

**Four-horned Antelope (Tetracerus).** If you thought two horns were cool, wait until you meet the four-horned antelope, also known as the Tetracerus! This rare and fascinating antelope, found in the forests and grasslands of India and Nepal, has a unique feature that sets it apart—four horns instead of the usual two! The first pair, smaller and more delicate, sits near the front of its head, while the second pair, longer and stronger, grows farther back.

These horns are sharp and ridged, perfect for showing off during mating season or for defending themselves from predators. The back horns can grow up to 4 inches long, while the front ones usually stay under 2 inches. But what makes these horns extra special is how they're used! Male four-horned antelopes use them to battle for territory and impress females. When two males compete, they'll lock horns and push each other, testing their strength in a battle of horn power. Despite their small size—about the same as a large dog—the four-horned antelope is fast and agile, which helps them escape danger. They're shy animals, often hiding in thick brush, making them difficult to spot in the wild. And they're great jumpers, able to leap over obstacles as they dash through the forest.

**Jacob Sheep.** The Jacob sheep is a woolly wonder you won't forget! Unlike most sheep, these amazing animals can grow not just two, but four to six horns! The Jacob sheep's horns come in all shapes and sizes. Some grow upward, some curve outward, and others twist in spirals. The two main horns are thick and can grow up to 30 inches long, while the smaller ones grow on the sides of the head like little crowns.

These extra horns don't just look cool—they also help protect the sheep from predators in the wild! But where did these unusual sheep come from? Jacob sheep are one of the oldest breeds of domestic sheep, with roots going back thousands of years to ancient Syria. Today, they're mostly raised for their beautiful, spotted wool, which can be used to make soft blankets and cozy sweaters. Jacob sheep love to graze in big, open pastures, often with their friends. They're tough, independent animals that can thrive in both hot and cold climates, and their extra horns help them stand out in any flock. Male Jacob sheep, known as rams, use their horns for head-butting to show off their strength, especially during breeding season.

**Gerenuk.** (Pictured right). The gerenuk is no ordinary antelope! With its long neck and slender legs, this incredible creature has a unique superpower—it can stand on two feet, just like a human! Found in the dry, scrubby lands of East Africa, the gerenuk's name even means "giraffe-necked" in Somali, and it's easy to see why. Most antelopes graze on grass, but not the gerenuk! When it's hungry, it uses its powerful hind legs to stand upright, reaching for leaves high up in trees. Its long neck helps it stretch even higher, grabbing leaves that other animals can't reach. This gives the gerenuk a big advantage in places where food is scarce. It's like having its own built-in ladder! The gerenuk's balancing act is not only impressive but also fun to watch.

Now, let's talk about their horns. Only male gerenuks have them, but they're definitely worth mentioning. The horns are lyre-shaped, curving gracefully backward like a musical instrument. They can grow up to 17 inches long, and their ridged texture makes them stand out. These horns aren't just for show—the males use them to battle for mates and establish their territory. Despite their delicate look, the horns are strong and durable. Gerenuks don't drink water like most animals because they get all the moisture they need from the plants they eat. This helps them survive in some of the hottest, driest parts of Africa.

Thank you Hashem for your wondrous world!



## THERE WERE NOT ENOUGH CHAIRS IN THE YESHIVA FOR ALL THE WOMEN

Rabbi Meir Stern, Rosh Yeshiva of the Yeshiva Gedola of Passaic, told the following story about Rav Mordechai Schwab, who was the mashgiach in the Passaic Yeshiva.

Rav Stern recalled that one Yom Kippur night, as they were about to begin Kol Nidrei, they realized that Rav Mordechai was not present. Someone went to find him and discovered Rav Schwab quietly setting up chairs in the women's section. When asked what he was doing, Rav Schwab explained that he felt there were not enough chairs in the Yeshiva for all the women who would come to pray on Yom Kippur. Rav Mordechai believed that this act of chessed (kindness) took priority over Kol Nidrei. To him, no mitzvah, no matter how simple, was ever beneath him.



### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the victim of terror who received a 1,000,000 shekel check, Rav Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok, Devarim, p. 319) writes that he would have to give 20% of the capital he received. This is because he can support his family with this money and it's very likely that this benefit came as a result of the prayers and blessings of that tzaddik. Therefore, he should give the 20% he promised to the tzaddik's yeshiva.



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