



## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



## GOODBYE MAX

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Parsha the Torah discusses how Yosef and Binyamin cried on each other's necks, to mourn the destruction of the future temples.

That leads us to the following true story.

Gavriel was the gabbai of a shul. One morning, a Jew named Steve came into the shul. Steve would normally only come to the shul on the High Holidays and Gavriel was surprised and delighted to see Steve.

Towards the end of davening when they came to kaddish, Steve said kaddish by himself with great emotion. When he said kaddish he was really crying, with tears coming from his eyes. It was clear that someone had recently passed away.

After davening ended Gavriel went over to Steve to welcome him. "Hi Steve, it is really



## WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT LIFT

In this week's Parsha the brothers discover that Yosef is the viceroy in Egypt. When they tell their father, Yaakov, of the news he refuses to believe them. Only after seeing the wagons Yosef sent "did Yaakov's spirit become alive." What did Yaakov see in those wagons? Our Sages teach us that those wagons were sent by Yosef to remind Yaakov that the last verses of Torah they studied together before he left the house 22 years earlier were the laws of eglarufa. Therefore, when Yaakov saw those wagons he realized that it must have been Yosef who sent them and that he still remembers the Torah he learnt.

What are the laws of eglarufa and what significance is there to the survival of Yosef?

The Torah instructs us on the mitzvah of eglarufa in the event that a dead body is found on the road between two cities. The city that is closer to the body must perform this mitzvah as follows. The elders of that city take a calf to a river and proclaim that they did not have a hand in the murder of this individual.

This proclamation implies that there might be some form of blame placed on these elders. Evidently, this individual encountered a murderer or a wild animal that overcame him. What could they have done? Our Sages teach us that they must proclaim that they did not see him and allow him to leave without proper escort. The Torah is teaching us that had this unfortunate person had a proper send-off he may not have died. How would a proper escort protect one from a murderer?

so great to see you back. It seems that you are saying kaddish now, did someone recently pass away in your family?"

Steve was grateful for Gavriel's warm welcome and looked at him and smiled. "Yes. We had the funeral for Max yesterday. "Sadly, Max, my dog of 15 years, left this world. I'm not married and I don't have children and Max was truly this man's best friend. We had the graveside funeral yesterday and I intend to say kaddish for Max at least for the shloshim, for the next 30 days."

Gavriel swallowed hard. He was delighted that Steve came to shul, but the halacha does not require someone to say kaddish for a pet, even a very beloved one. Should he tell Steve that we don't say kaddish for dogs? In addition, no one else in the shul was saying kaddish at that time. It was just Steve. If he doesn't say anything to Steve, should the congregation continue to say amen yehei shemai rabba on his kadish over the next 30 days?

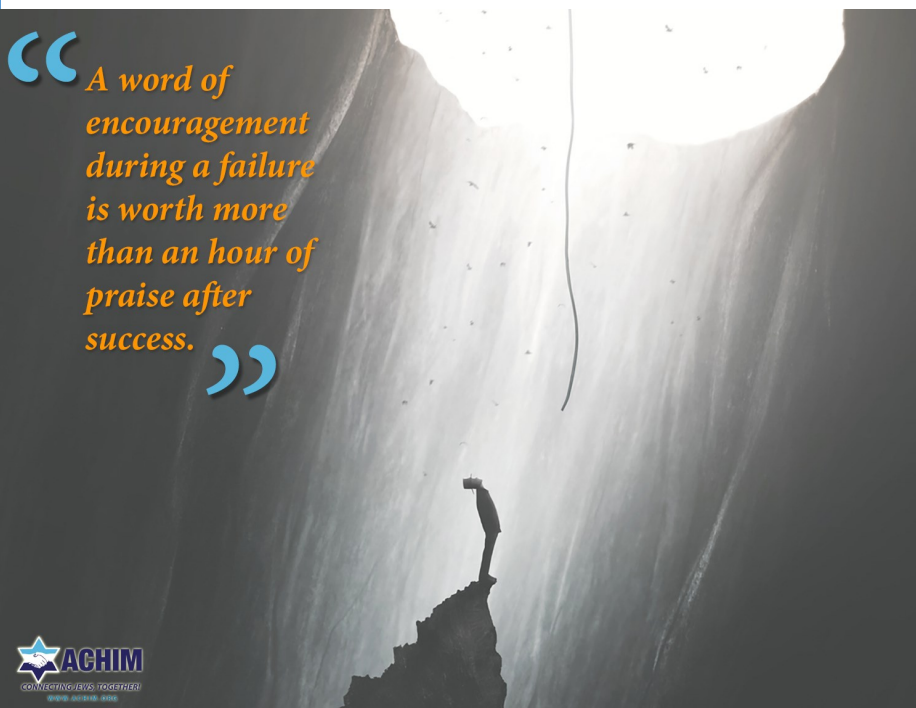
Regarding saying something to Steve, it may hurt his feelings and he may not come back to shul at all. At least this was bringing him to shul. But on the other hand, how could the shul allow it, if we don't say kaddish for dogs?

Regarding saying amen yehei shemai rabba, was there anything wrong with answering amen yehei shemai rabba when kaddish is not required to be said?

This question was asked to Rav Aron Yehuda Leib Shteinman.

What do you think Gavriel should do?

## MITZVA MEME



When a person takes to the road he is vulnerable. If, before leaving the community he would have received words of chizuk and support, his spirits would have been lifted and he would have been able to carry himself with greater confidence and would have been able to ward off his attacker. Had he received words of support he may not have even become the target of the perpetrator. So often a victim is chosen to be a target because the perpetrator senses his weakness in his lack of self worth. The greater our sense of self worth is, the more confident we are and the less weak we will appear to others.

When Yaakov now learns that Yosef is still alive and has been living in Egypt, the world capital of depravity, he could not believe that Yosef remained a tzaddik. He left home as a 17 year old good looking teenager and lived in Egypt for 22 years. He became the most popular personality for the past nine years. How could Yosef remain a tzaddik?!

When Yaakov saw the wagons he was reminded of the message that eglarufa teaches us. The encouragement you give a person is not lost. With every word of encouragement you strengthen their self worth and confidence.

We are taught that all the Torah which Yaakov learnt from Shem and Ever he gave over to Yosef. The lessons Yaakov taught Yosef from the Torah of Shem and Ever were the lessons the Jewish people would need to survive our long and unending exile. Those lessons were the greatest words of encouragement anyone could have. With those wagons that Yosef sent to his father, he reminded Yaakov that they learnt the laws of eglarufa together and that all those words of encouragement were not lost. It is no wonder that Yaakov's spirits came back alive.

How easy it is to lift a fellow Jew with some words of encouragement.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**





## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### THE NECK AND ADAM'S APPLE

This week's Parsha discusses the reunification between Yosef and his brothers. The Torah writes that Yosef cried on the neck of Binyamin. Rashi quotes our Sages that Yosef cried on Binyamin's neck because the Batei Mikdash that would be built in the territory of Binyamin, would one day be destroyed.

The question is asked, why did Yosef cry about the future destruction right now at this point? The Sfas Emes answers that Yosef felt that even though the brothers reconciled outwardly, there was still a small lingering resentment between the children of Yosef and the children of the other brothers. Yosef predicted that the lingering resentment would be manifest in sinas chinam, baseless hatred between the brothers and that it would one day lead to the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. That is why he cried on Binyamin's neck right now.

The Maharal of Prague points out that the neck of Benyamin was the perfect concrete symbol of the Beis Hamikdash, just as the neck is the portal between the mind and body, so too is the Beis Hamikdash the portal between the heavens and the earth.

Let's learn a bit more about the neck and the role it plays. The neck is the part of the body that connects the head with the torso and provides the mobility and movements of the head. The neck supports the weight of the head and protects the nerves that carry sensory and motor information from the brain down to the rest of the body. In addition, the neck is highly flexible and allows the head to turn and flex in all directions.

The neck also protects some extremely critical organs. It protects the upper parts of the respiratory and digestive tracts, endocrine glands, nerves, arteries and veins.

In anatomy, the neck is also called by its Latin name, cervix. Cervix can refer to the opening of the uterus as well as the neck. Therefore the adjective "cervical" may refer either to the neck as in cervical vertebrae or cervical lymph nodes, or to the uterus, as in Cervical cancer. This leads us to the next point.

When we look at a neck, we see one organ, but the neck structures are actually divided into four compartments, the cervical lymph nodes, the Vertebral compartment, Visceral compartment, and the Vascular compartment.

1 . The neck contains cervical lymph nodes which surround the blood vessels in the neck. Of the 800 lymph nodes in the human body, 300 are in the neck. Lymph nodes are small bean-shaped structures that are part of the body's immune system. Lymph nodes filter substances that travel through the lymphatic fluid, and they contain lymphocytes (white blood cells) that help the body fight infection and disease.

2 . The Vertebral compartment contains the cervical vertebrae (bones) and the cartilage discs between each bone. The alignment of the vertebrae defines the shape of the human neck. The top part of the spinal cord is also found within the neck.

3 . The Visceral compartment accommodates the trachea (windpipe), pharynx (the top of the esophagus which is the food pipe), and the thyroid glands.

4 . Finally, the Vascular compartment has the carotid artery and internal jugular vein.

The muscles of the neck attach to the skull, to the clavicle, which is the horizontal collar bone and the sternum, which is the vertical bone in the center of the chest.

The neck has a great deal of functionality but is also subject to a lot of stress. This is why disorders of the neck are a common source of pain.

People don't often think about the thickness of a neck, but it is actually pretty important. The thickness of a neck and neck circumference has been associated with cardiometabolic risk, and the risk of getting a heart attack or stroke. People are often concerned with extra fat in any part of their body but doctors say that upper-body fat distribution, including fat in the neck area, is a worse prognostic compared to lower-body fat distribution for diseases such as type 2 diabetes. In addition, neck circumference has been associated with the risk of being mechanically ventilated in COVID-19 patients, with a 26% increased risk for each centimeter increase in neck circumference.

The thyroid cartilage of the larynx forms a bulge in the middle of the neck. This is called the Adam's apple or laryngeal prominence. The Adam's apple is usually more prominent in men. It is typically larger and noticeable in adult males, because its size in males tends to increase considerably during puberty as a result of hormonal changes. The purpose of the Adam's apple is to protect the walls and the frontal part of the larynx, including the vocal cords (which are located directly behind it).

Another function of the Adam's apple is related to the deepening of the voice. During adolescence, the thyroid cartilage grows together with the larynx. Together, a larger soundboard is made and, as a result, the man gets a deeper voice.

There is a fascinating backstory to the term "Adam's Apple". The English phrase "Adam's apple" comes from the Latin term, "pomum Adami", translated as Adam's Apple. This Latin term is found in European medical texts from as early as 1600. In Thomas Bartholin's 1662 work *Anatomia*, he offers an explanation for the origin of the phrase: "a piece of forbidden fruit was supposedly embedded in the throat of Adam."

The problem with this explanation is that these details (the forbidden fruit being an apple, and it getting stuck in Adam's throat) are not found anywhere in the Bible. Therefore the Linguist Alexander Gode proposed in 1968 that the Latin phrase "pomum Adami" was actually a mistranslation of the Hebrew term "tafuach ha'adam". Tafauch ha'adam really meant the "Male Swelling" referring to the male's bump on his neck. However, this was mistakenly interpreted as "Tapuach Ha'adam", Adam's Apple. The confusion was due to the fact that in the Hebrew language the proper name "Adam" אדם literally means "man", and the word for "apple" is similar to the word "tafuach" which means "swollen".

## IS IT FAIR TO LAUGH JUST BECAUSE HE IS POOR?

Rav Elchonon Wasserman, never reproved his students. Rather he showed them what should have been done, pointing out when necessary where they had erred. Once at the Maariv service held in Rav Elchonon's house at the end of Shabbos, a poor and rather pitiable person was present. His outward appearance was ludicrous and his weird gesticulations almost forced people to laugh. Some of those present were indeed unable to control themselves and burst out laughing.

Reb Elchonon remained in his corner engrossed in prayer and seemingly unaware of what was taking place.

When Maariv ended and the person who was the focus of the laughter had left, Reb Elchonon turned to his students with a grave countenance.

"Now suppose," he said, "that the person who was here were wealthy. Would you have laughed at him? Please listen closely. Had that man been rich would you have dared to laugh at him, ludicrous though his gestures may have been? Thus only because someone is poor — 'inferior' — people allow themselves to mock him.

Is it fair to ridicule a person just because he is poor?"

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One day, the Chazon Ish and Reb Shlomo Kohen entered an apartment building in Bnei Brak. As they went up the staircase, the loud voices of a husband and wife in the midst of an argument could be heard from within one of the apartments.

The Chazon Ish then quickly turned and uncharacteristically rushed out the building as if running away from a fire.

He explained to Reb Shlomo, "Were they to know that I heard, they would surely be embarrassed"

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### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the husband who took home meat from the store he was working in, Rav Zilberstein wrote that his wife is allowed to use her husband's money to secretly pay for the meat.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated l'ilui nishmas

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on his yartzeit 7th Teves

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