

## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



### THE REALTOR

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week's Torah portion the Torah says, "Cursed be the one who corrupts the justice of a stranger, orphan and widow". This leads us to the following true story.

Avi was a young man who was recently engaged. He and his fiancé had money saved up to purchase a small starter home. During the engagement they reached out to a realtor to help them find a house. The realtor was happy to help them. He showed them a house and the couple thought that it was perfect. They agreed to purchase the house and signed the deal with the seller. Things were going smoothly until tragically, in the middle of the engagement, Avi and his fiancé got into a car accident. His fiancé was badly injured and shortly thereafter she passed away. Avi was devastated. He was-



### MA'ASER

Excerpted from a talk by Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky

In this week's Parsha, Ki Savo, the Torah instructs us on viduy ma'asser. At the end of the three year tithing cycle we must make a proclamation that we tithed all the tithings in accordance with the prescribed laws. It is noteworthy that this proclamation is called viduy, which means a confession. The question is if we have done no wrong how can this be called a viduy? To what are we confessing?

Viduy is a critical component of Teshuva. Rambam writes "when one does teshuva they must be misvadeh, confess." It seems intuitive; if we expect HaShem to forgive us for our wrongdoing we must admit that we did something wrong. So long as we do not acknowledge our wrongdoing we cannot expect Him to forgive us. Viduy, however, is much deeper than the acknowledgement of the wrongdoing.

Our Sages teach us that Leah was the first person to express ho-doah, thanks, to HaShem when Yehudah was born. This needs clarification. Did Avraham and Sarah not express their gratitude to HaShem on the birth of Yitzchok? Did Leah not express gratitude on the birth of her first three sons?

To appreciate the answer let us consider the following two individuals; the son and the orphan. The child of Weiss family is well pampered and never in need of anything. Even many of his whims and wishes are realized by his gracious parents. Next to the child's bedroom the Weiss' have a guest. This guest is an orphaned child whose parents perished in a car accident leaving no relatives behind other than him. This orphan is now 12 years old and

n't going to be getting married and he wasn't going to buy the house with her. Everyone was very understanding and the purchase of the house never went through.

Two years later Avi met another woman, got engaged and got married. When they were ready to buy a house he reached out to the owners of the original home that he had been looking at. Sure enough, the house was still on the market. Because he wasn't using the realtor, the selling price was 6% cheaper and there were significant savings. Avi made a private deal with the seller of the house and was ready to move in with his new wife. Eventually the realtor heard about the sale. He approached Avi and said, "I don't understand. How could you make a private deal with the seller? You owe me 6% of the cost of the house."

"What do you mean?", Avi replied, "I didn't use you this time." "Of course you did", retorted the realtor. "You only knew about this house because I showed it to you two years ago."

Avi replied, "Yes, but two years ago the whole deal fell through because of the terrible accident. It was canceled".

"Still", argued the realtor, "I am entitled to my 6% fee for showing you the house".

What do you think? Does Avi owe the realtor the money?

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*We think our  
comfort zones  
keep us safe,*

*But really they  
keep us small.*



has been living with the Weiss family for a year. There is no difference in the way they treat their son and the way they treat this orphan. Without question, the sense of gratitude that the orphan feels towards the Weiss family is far greater than their son will ever have for his parents. Why? Because the son deserves it...., well perhaps he does not deserve it but in some way he feels that as a child of the family, all that love is coming to him. His appreciation is therefore somewhat limited. Whereas the orphan knows that he has nothing at all coming to him. The Weiss family has no responsibility to him whatsoever. Anything they give is totally undeserved.

With the birth of Yehudah, Leah felt like that orphan. She knew that she deserved only three sons from Yaakov. She had no claim whatsoever to a fourth son. Her expression of ho-doah upon the birth of Yehudah was unparalleled to any expression of gratitude by those who preceded her. All who preceded her deserved, on some level, the goodness that was showered upon them like the child of the Weiss family.

The root of viduy, to confess, lies in the word ho-doah, to express gratitude. The reason is that gratitude is the expression that wells up in a person upon receiving goodness that they do not deserve. Hence, every expression of gratitude is a confession that the goodness coming to them was not deserved.

Perhaps the reason that the tithing proclamation is called viduy is because there is a lingering sense of deservedness that the owner feels. Consider how much of his hard earned produce he gave away. After all the tithing, he is left with only 79% of his produce. There is certainly a sense of righteousness that he may feel. He might be justified in feeling what a tzaddik he is; giving away his hard earned work. Therefore, upon the completion of the three years of tithing he says viduy, that he is totally undeserving of anything, no different than the orphan. He proclaims that everything he did was in accordance with the prescribed laws because he recognizes that it is his responsibility to live by those laws. His produce was totally underserved, it was gifted by HaShem and it is therefore his responsibility to dispense it accordingly.

How exhilarating viduy can be! Every act of viduy draws us that much closer to HaShem in our awareness of how grateful we must be to Him. Every gift of good health and all the other gifts HaShem grants us becomes so much more appreciated in the context of our viduy.

Have a very safe and very wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**



## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### THE WOOD FROG - A FROG WITH INTERNAL ANTIFREEZE

The Wood Frog is a medium-sized frog that can grow to about 3 inches long. The female frogs are larger than the males. Wood frogs are reddish-brown, tan or dark brown and have a dark mask around their eyes, a white stripe on their upper lip and a white belly that may be tinged with yellow or green. Wood Frog tadpoles have long tails with a large fin and no front legs. Larvae are dark grey to dark brown with a pale stripe along their upper jaw and a pale belly. The larvae may reach 2.5 inches long before metamorphosis. The Wood Frog's call is a series of clucks. They live mostly in Canada and the northeastern United States.

Wood Frogs are especially abundant in Canada, particularly in relatively undeveloped areas. The loss of forest habitat is probably the main threat to this species. Pollution can also be detrimental to these frogs by causing direct mortality as well as developmental deformities. Large numbers of Wood Frogs are killed on roads every year during migrations to and from breeding sites, and high levels of road mortality can cause long-term decline of frog populations.

Their predators are a variety of snakes and birds. Wood frogs protect themselves in two main ways. The first is cryptic coloration or camouflage. Their colors and shape helps them blend in with their surroundings. They also have mucous

covered bodies, making them slippery, and hard to catch. Wood frogs eat small invertebrates. They are not picky and will eat almost anything that they can catch with their sticky tongues. They make a sound similar to a duck clucking or a finger rubbing on a balloon.

According to the usual "laws of nature" the wood frog's biggest threat should be the freezing Canadian winters. But instead of migrating every winter, Wood Frogs have a special mechanism to make it through the coldest winters. They pump their body tissues with large amounts of glucose that acts as a form of natural antifreeze to limit the size of crystals that can form. Here's how it works. First, water flows out of their internal organs, which eventually forms into a surrounding protective layer of ice. Meanwhile, their bodies accumulate urea and glucose, which act as an antifreeze, keeping the individual cells in vital organs from freezing. Scientists hope that by closely studying the Wood Frog, they can figure out how to safely freeze individual human tissues and organs.

## "I FORGOT TO TELL HIM THAT HE SHOULD REASSURE HER AND GIVE HER CHIZUK"

The Steipler Rov was always on the lookout for situations that might require some action on his part to make life more comfortable for others. One day he came to Lederman's Shul and found that new shelving had been put on the wall that separated the main section from the women's section. The top shelf, however, extended above the upper ledge of the wall. As soon as the Steipler saw this, he went as quickly as he could and started removing seforim from the top shelf.

Someone asked him what had happened and offered to help. Without stopping what he was doing, he answered that the seforim were blocking air from the women and had to be removed.

Although walking was very difficult for the Steipler Rov and he rarely left the house, one Friday night he hurried to the home of a student to ask directions for finding a particular acquaintance.

After receiving the information, he apologized for the disturbance on Shabbos and explained why he needed to find this man so urgently. "He came to see me today to ask me to daven for his wife who was not feeling well. I forgot to tell him that he should reassure her and give her chizuk. I must therefore immediately go to remind him that he should reassure his wife."

The Steipler, By Rabbi Moshe Sofer, Published by CIS page 196 197



### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the emergency room, Rav Zilberstein wrote as follows. If it was a Jewish hospital, the mother should not have tricked them, because there is a chazaka that the doctors would do their best job even if she wouldn't urge them with her story. Nonetheless we cannot fault the mother for doing what she did. However, concluded Rav Zilberstein, there are hospitals in the world, that will not give elderly patients above the age of eighty or seventy, the best care. In that case it would be a mitzvah to lie and say that the patient is really younger.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in honor of the marriage of  
**Yechiel and Zehava Reischer**  
May they merit to build a bayis n'aman b'Yisroel.  
By Shraga and Perri Goldenhersh

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