

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE SAME NAME

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Torah portion, Tazria Metzora, opens with the Mitzva to give a baby a Bris on the eighth day. (Vayikra 12,3)

This leads us to the following true story that was brought before Dayan Aharon Dovid Dunner.

There was once a bris that was done in the United Kingdom. At the bris the Rabbi officiating at the Krias Sheim, the naming ceremony, asked the father what the name would be. The father told the Rabbi that they should call the child George. The Rabbi said, "well, we need a Jewish name for the Krias Sheim."

So the father nonchalantly said, "In that case, okay, you can give him the name of my grandfather, Avraham Yaakov". The Rabbi gave him the name, Avraham Yaakov. However the family never had any intention of



END THE QUARANTINE BY COMING REAL CLOSE TOGETHER

In this week's double Parsha, Tazria Metzora, we are taught that when a person contracts tzoras and is declared 'tomei' he is sent out of the city and must cry out "tomei, tomei". The Talmud teaches us that the metzora must declare his state of "tomei" for people to know about his condition so that they will daven for him.

Zera Shimshon takes note of this strange reason. We do not find this suggestion elsewhere? Why is the condition of tzoras unique that we solicit the prayers of strangers? Before suggesting an answer, Zera Shimshon asks another question as follows.

We know that tzoras comes to a person as a method of rectifying the person's evil speech. There is one opinion in the Talmud that teaches that one who speaks lashon hara has no way to rectify his condition since Dovid Hamelech says in Psalm 12 "HaShem will root out all lips that speak evil speech". Once Dovid made such a decree and as the Talmud points out that this decree is active, how can his tzoras correct his evil tongue?

Zera Shimshon explains that the prayers of the community have the power of breaking a heavenly decree. Therefore, the function of his tzoras is to inspire those who learn of his condition to pray for him and with the power of

calling him by his Hebrew name. They saw it just as a formality. They immediately called the baby George.

A few years later, they had another baby boy.

At the Bris, the father said they wanted to call him Peter.

Again, the officiating Rabbi said, "Well, you need a Hebrew name".

The Father said, "Okay, if you insist, give him the name of my grandfather Avraham Yaakov".

But basically the children were always called Peter and George,

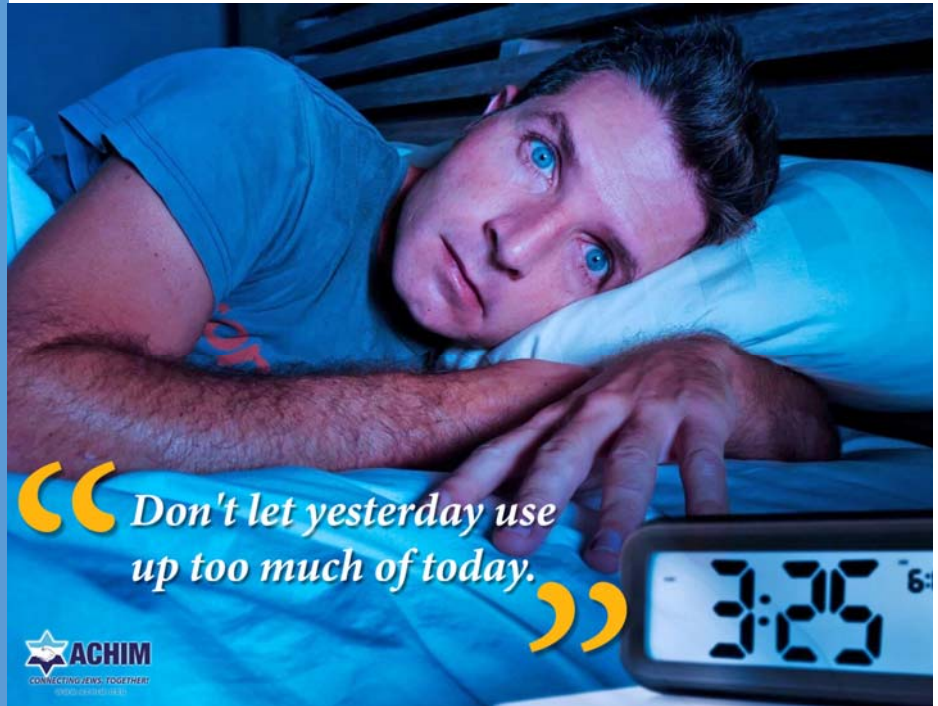
As they grew up, the children went to Yeshiva and the administration realized that both boys had the exact same Hebrew name, Avraham Yaakov.

They wondered if there was any problem with having two brothers with the exact same name, Avraham Yaakov Ben Aron.

This question was brought before Dayan Aharon Dovid Dunner.

What should they do? Should they give a new name, should they add a new name to one of the children to distinguish them? Maybe they should leave as it is? What do you think?

See Chashukei Chemed Megilla Page 141.



the collective prayers of the community his tzoraas will recede and his evil tongue will be corrected.

Our entire Jewish community is currently in a state of isolation similar to that of the metzora. We all want to return to our normal routine of life but HaShem has prevented us. The Zera Shimshon instructs us that the way to get out of this condition is through the prayers of the community. But, alas, we are unable to hold minyanim in our shuls or even outside. Has HaShem locked us out and thrown away the key?

As we count the Omer every day in preparation for our approach to Mount Sinai at which our entire nation was unified like one person with one heart, perhaps we can tap

into that energy already today. If we can just feel the pain that so many of our fellows Jews are experiencing; the death of close ones, the loss of income and just being locked up indefinitely then perhaps sharing in that pain can bring us so much closer together. Perhaps HaShem will see our prayers that we daven for one another as a tefilah b'tzibur, as a communal prayer and with that He will bring an end to this extreme punishment.

Let us leave with the words of Yeshayahu in this week's Haftorah. "Be glad with Yerushalayim and rejoice in her, all you who love her; exult in her triumph, all who mourned for her".

Have a safe and wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE ELECTRIC EEL

In Mitzrayim, the Egyptians worshiped the Nile River as a God. The Nile river has a fascinating fish called the Nile Eel Fish.

Electric eels have a remarkable weapon, a powerful Taser or stun gun that can shoot out electricity without even touching its prey. Electric eels generate large electric currents by way of a highly specialized nervous system. They have abdominal organs that produce electricity. These organs make up four fifths of the eel's body, and give the electric eel the ability to generate two types of electric organ discharges: low voltage and high voltage.

How does it create electricity? These organs are made of electrocytes, lined up so a current of ions can flow through them. When the eel finds its prey, the brain sends a signal through the nervous system to the electrocytes. This opens the ion channels, allowing sodium to flow through, reversing the polarity momentarily. By causing a sudden difference in electric potential, it generates an electric current in a manner similar to a battery.

In the electric eel, some 5,000 to 6,000 stacked electroplaques can make a shock of up to 860 volts. This level of current is enough to produce a brief and painful numbing shock similar to a taser discharge. Due to the high voltage this can be felt for some distance from the fish. In fact this is a common risk for aquarium caretakers and biologists attempting to handle or examine electric eels.

The eels use electricity in multiple ways. Low voltages are used to sense the surrounding environment. High voltages are used to detect prey and to stun them. Pairs of high voltage pulses separated by 2 milliseconds are used to detect and locate prey by causing them to twitch involuntarily; the electric eel senses this movement. A string of high voltage pulses at up to 400 per second are then used to attack and stun or paralyze the target, at which point the electric eel applies a suction-feeding bite.

The typical electrical output is sufficient to stun virtually any animal. The electric eel can also concentrate the shock by curling up and mak-

ing contact at two points along its body. When eels are agitated, they can produce intermittent electric shocks for over an hour without tiring.

Electric eels feed on invertebrates like shrimp and crabs. Adult eels may also consume fish and small mammals, such as rats. One question that scientists are still trying to understand is why eels can shock other animals without shocking themselves.

Researchers are attempting to create artificial versions of the eel's electricity-generating cells. They hope to use these as a power source for medical implants and other microscopic devices.

The Nile eel fish (*Gymnarchus niloticus*) lives in the Nile River in Egypt. This fish stores electricity in its stubby tail, and discharges it into the water in controlled bursts.

It is true that there are some marine creatures which use electricity as a means of defense, but the Nile eel fish uses its electricity for a surprisingly different purpose: it sends out quick bursts of electricity as a radar instead! When the echoes come back, it can tell what is ahead, just as a bat does!

This fish sends out these impulses and as they bounce back from solid objects, the electromagnetic energy is used as a form of underwater radar. It somehow interprets the reflected signals accurately in its brain, just as bats do with airborne waves, in time to alter its course and avoid running into things. One might ask, why does it need this ability when other fish manage not to "run into things"? The Nile eel fish uses its radar signals at night when it is darting backwards. For some reason, it likes to do that frequently, and since it has no eyes in its tail it uses radar in their place.

Thank you HaShem for showing us your wisdom!

"I WAS CONCERNED THAT ONE MAY FEEL BADLY THAT HE DID NOT HAVE ME AS A SANDAK

Rav Shach was once approached by a young kollel man whose wife had given birth to twin boys. He asked Rav Shach to be sandak for one of the boys. Rav Shach responded that he would agree to be sandak for both of them, not just one.

The yungerman then explained to Rav Shach that his father-in-law was traveling in from Australia, and he would like to honor him with being the sandak for the other boy.

Rav Shach then explained that in that case it would be hard for him to accept being sandak at all. It would have to be either both, or none at all.

So the young man honored Rav Shach with being sandak for both babies, and accorded his father-in-law another honor. Some time later, the father asked Rav Shach for an explanation as to why he insisted on being sandak for both.

"When the two boys are older" said Rav Shach, "I was concerned that one may feel badly that he did not have me as a sandak while his twin brother did. I therefore wanted to be sandak for both, or neither."

Reb Shayale of Kerestir had great respect for the children of the Sanzer Rav, the Divrei Chaim. Once, Reb Shalom Leizerl of Ratzfert, a son of the Divrei Chaim, was spending Shabbos in Miskolcz. Reb Shayele arrived on Erev Shabbos to serve as sandak at a bris milah.

Although Reb Shayele would generally preside over the Seudas Bris when serving as sandak, this time, however, he hurried from the Beis Midrash following the actual bris milah. He later visited with Reb Shalom Leizerl at his lodging and then headed directly to the train station to return back to Kerestir.

He was later asked to explain why he didn't stay for the Seuda as he normally did.

Rav Shayale answered, "With another Rebbe in town, I did not remain a moment longer than necessary so as not to potentially draw Chassidim away from the illustrious visitor".

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THE ANSWERS

Regarding the question of the office snacks that were in Israel and not yet sold, Rav Zilbersten said that regarding this matter, we follow where the owner is located and not where the chometz is located. Therefore if the owner is in the US and there is still time to sell chometz, it can be sold.

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