



A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



THE VIVID DREAM

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

This week's Parsha talks about Yaakov's dream where he saw a ladder going up to Heaven with angels going up and down, and Hashem standing above him. Hashem promises Yaakov that although he is facing mortal danger from Esav and Lavan, he will be safe and give birth to a great nation. This leads us to the following true story regarding a dream.

Avraham lived with his family in one of the towns of the Gaza Envelope (near the Gaza border). His Rebbe (Torah teacher), one of the Gedolai Hador and one of the Tzaddikim of the generation, always encouraged him to live in his neighborhood and not move. "Stay put and have a positive influence on your surroundings," he would say.

This year, on October 6th, on the night of Simchas Torah, Avraham's Rebbe, who had recently passed away, came to Avraham in a dream. In Avraham's dream, his Rebbe told him to get up and leave. "Take your

NO ATTACHMENT

When studying these Parshios it is valuable to bear in mind the principle that our Sages taught us; "The events of our Fathers, i.e. Avraham Yitzchok and Yaakov, are an indication of what will occur to their descendants." With this in mind we must understand that Yaakov's departing B'eer Sheva to go to Choron to live with his Uncle Lavan is the precursor of the exile in which we currently find ourselves. While this may offer some comfort since we know that Yaakov eventually comes home, nevertheless, it raises the concern of all the challenges that we must face.

One valuable insight this offers is the direction it gives us while we live in exile. In the exile that Yaakov lived through he created a path for us to walk on.

After working for Uncle Lavan 14 years in payment for his two wives and having built a family of 12 children Yaakov tells Lavan that it is time for him to move on. He must develop his own family and create his own livelihood. Lavan had already checked his sources of sorcery and discovered that all of his own financial success was due to the work that Yaakov did for him. In light of that, he offered Yaakov to continue working for him and that Yaakov should name the salary and he will grant it.

However, instead of asking for a handsome salary which Lavan would have gladly given, Yaakov asks for a special arrangement. Rather than taking a salary directly from Lavan, Yaakov asks that all the speckled sheep be his. Lavan will not owe Yaakov anything in exchange for his work. If there

wife and kids, and leave your town as it is a Sakanah (danger) to stay here.”

Avraham woke up and dismissed the dream, then went back to sleep. But his Rebbe appeared to him again, but this time strangling him by the neck, insisting he get up and go, as it was a major danger to stay there. Avraham woke up still physically feeling the tightness around his neck. Alarmed, he woke up his wife, shared what happened and expressed his fear.

Usually, Avraham did not pay much attention to dreams, but this time it felt different, and very urgent. Despite being a Shabbos observant Jew, Avraham got in his car with his wife and children, in the early morning and drove away from the border town based on the strong message from his dream.

Over the course of Shabbos, and after Shabbos, they heard what happened to everyone who lived on the border with Gaza and Avraham realized that he was saved because of the message from his Rebbe.

After all was said and done, Avraham came to Rav Zilberstein with the following question.

Did he do the right thing by breaking Shabbos because of the message of his dream? According to Halacha, can a person break Shabbos because of a message in a dream? Perhaps he can, if he thinks it is a matter of life and death.

Or, perhaps he did the wrong thing and he should not have broken Shabbos because of a dream.

What do you think?

From *וי העמודים וחשוקיהם* a Kuntrus published by the Kollel of Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein, told over by Rav Eli Sofer.



were no speckled sheep, Yaakov received nothing. If all the sheep are speckled they will all belong to Yaakov and Lavan will get nothing.

Why did Yaakov choose such a risky compensation?

The Maharal teaches that the moment of greatest attachment between HaShem and Moshe was when HaShem gave the Luchos to Moshe. The reason for this is because at the moment of giving, both parties were holding on to the Luchos simultaneously. Whenever there is a transaction between two parties the moment of transaction is a moment of attachment.

As much as Yaakov had to live with Lavan, he nevertheless, wanted to keep as far away as possible from Lavan. In next week's Parsha when Yaakov meets Eisov he tells

his brother that "I have sojourned at Lavan's". He does not say "I have lived at Lavan's". Yaakov is careful to identify his living at Lavan as simply sojourning. He specifically wanted to have no attachment to Lavan. Yaakov understood that such an attachment would be harmful for his own welfare as well as the welfare of his young family - it could not be tolerated.

The Sheim miShmuel therefore explains that to maintain his distance from Lavan, Yaakov opted not to receive anything from Lavan. As the Maharal points out that any transaction would have created an attachment.

May HaShem grant us the strength to maintain the necessary distance from the abundant foreign influences that surround us.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE GIANT MOOSE

This week's Parsha talks about Yaakov's livestock. Let's learn about the world's largest deer, the Moose.

Moose are huge. They are the largest land mammals in North America. Bull moose can stand up to 7 feet tall at the shoulder, nearly 10 feet long, and weigh up to 1,500 pounds, making them even larger than bison and polar bears.

Despite their huge size, moose are excellent swimmers. They can swim up to 6 miles per hour and dive up to 20 feet underwater to reach and eat aquatic vegetation. They can stay submerged for up to 60 seconds and also swim several miles without stopping. Their hollow hair helps them stay afloat and provides insulation in cold waters. Because their nostrils are so large, they function as valves, blocking out water and allowing them to stay submerged for longer periods. They dive to cool their bodies and search for aquatic vegetation. Moose do not even have to wait until they rise above the water's surface to chew or swallow either!

A little-known moose fact is that killer whales (orcas) will attack moose that get too close to some ocean coasts. Because moose rely on aquatic vegetation as well, they swim in ocean waters and dive for food sources. Consequently, bears and wolves aren't their only predators. Orcas often attack and feed on moose that are underwater!

Bull moose have the largest antlers of any mammal. These antlers, composed of bone, can spread up to 6 feet across and weigh about 40 pounds each. The males develop muscular necks to help support these huge antlers. The males shed their antlers annually. These antlers grow back in the spring, reach full size by September, and fall off between mid-November and March. Antlers are covered in a soft skin called velvet until mating season. In September, bulls experience a surge of testosterone that causes the velvet to shed, leaving bare bone. Moose often rub their antlers on trees to help the velvet come off. Antlers are used for dominance displays, attracting mates, and defending against rivals. Once antlers are shed, they decompose and serve as a protein source for ground animals like squirrels.

Moose are herbivores and primarily feed on leaves, bark, pine cones, twigs, and aquatic vegetation. They have a four-chambered stomach, similar to cows. This allows them to efficiently digest tough plant materials, such as twigs, bark, and leaves. In fact, the name "moose" comes from the Algonquin word that means "twig eaters." They can eat up to 50 pounds of food per day. This plays an important part in the ecosystem, helping control the growth of trees and shrubs, while moose droppings provide nutrients for other plants and animals.

Moose are solitary animals, except during mating season. Unlike many other deer species, moose do not form herds. They are more territorial and less social. In the fall, bull moose compete for mates by making loud vocalizations, thrashing trees, and sparring with their antlers.

Moose are surprisingly athletic. Despite their large size, they can run up to 35 miles per hour for short distances and jump up to 6 feet high. They are also adept at climbing hills and swimming.

Moose thrive in cold places and live in areas with snow cover. They prefer boreal and mixed deciduous forests. Found in northern regions of North America, Europe, and Asia, moose have a low tolerance for heat and often seek shelter in shaded areas or cool bodies of water during warmer months.

Female moose, called cows, usually give birth to one calf, although twins are not uncommon. Moose calves grow exceptionally quickly. They can outrun a human within just five days of birth. A baby moose, called a calf, grows at an incredible pace during its first year of life. Born in the spring, calves gain about one to two pounds a day, and later up to five pounds a day!

They can live up to 20 years, though many fall prey to predators like wolves or bears in their early years.

Moose are known for their loud calls, which can be heard during the mating season, also known as the rut. Bulls often grunt, while cows make a wailing sound to attract mates.

What are Moose's defense mechanisms? A moose can kick in any direction with its front hooves and uses its large antlers for defense. When frightened, they can put up quite a fight. Their antlers alone can cause significant damage. Moreover, their massive bodies and strong, fast legs also aid in defense. They mostly use their sharp hooves to fight off predators. Combined with their weight and agility, moose are capable of seriously wounding a bear or wolf with their sharp hooves. A great rack of antlers is an advantage to a male moose. Despite this power, they are rarely aggressive unless provoked. A moose's usual aggressive action is to "bluff," where they pretend to attack to stay safe without the need to fight.

Male moose have dewlaps, which are dangling flaps under their chins. Bulls rub these on cows to scent mark them during mating season. The size of the dewlap may also indicate a moose's dominance level.

Canada has the greatest number of moose. They are also found in Alaska, New England, Fennoscandia, the Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), and Russia.

The plural of moose is moose. The only correct plural form of moose is "moose." Sometimes, people mistakenly think its plural is "Moses" or "Meese," but this is not the case.

Thank you Hashem for your wonderous world!

THE SHPOLER ZEIDE, THE DREAM AND THE HORSE THIEF

During the 18th century, a man once cried to the Shpoler Zeide (R' Aryeh Leib Of Shpola) that he had been falsely accused of theft. The Zeide responded, "I too was once falsely accused of theft and was thrown into prison for two months. I did not bear any resentment against G-d; because I knew that He must have a purpose for my being there.

"What happened was that I lodged at an inn, and another guest and I left together. I noticed that he frequently looked over his shoulder, but I did not ask him why. After we had walked some distance, we saw a wagon approaching, whereupon my companion asked me to watch his bags for him, saying that he would return momentarily. When the wagon approached, two men alighted and one of them pointed at me and said, 'There is the thief.' They grabbed my companion's bag, and upon opening it, found several silver items he had stolen from the inn. I protested that I had not taken anything and that there was another person to whom this bag belonged, but they did not believe me. They tied me up and brought me to town; and I was thrown into jail.

"The other prisoners began tormenting me, pulling my beard and payos. They said that if I did not pay the initiation fee as a prisoner, they would beat me. When I told them that I had no money, they forced me to lie down and began beating me. When the first person hit me, he began to scream with pain, and his hand swelled to three times its size. The other prisoners therefore were afraid to touch me, and I was left in peace.

One of the prisoners was called 'the gypsy,' but I learned that he was really of Jewish origin. He had been kidnapped as a young boy by a band of gypsies. He remembered, however, that his parents were Jews and that his name was Yaakov. He had been imprisoned for stealing horses.

"I gradually impressed upon the man what it meant to be a Jew, and that he was obligated to observe the Torah and mitzvos. I taught him how to say the Shema and how to pray. Soon he began to avoid the treif (non-kosher) food he was given and ate only fresh vegetables as I did. He accepted upon himself that if he would be freed, he would become an honest person and return to Judaism.

"One night I dreamt that the prophet Elijah told me to have no fear and to leave the prison. I took Yaakov by the hand, and when we came to the cell door we found it ajar. All the guards were in a deep sleep, and we left the prison unnoticed. I went to a nearby town and became the shamas in a shul. Yaakov kept his promise and became an honest, sincere, and devout Jew.

It was then that I understood why the chain of events had led to my imprisonment. I had to bring the neshamah of Yaakov back to Judaism. I consider it a privilege to have been given this mission, and I am glad of it, even though it necessitated my being in jail for two months. Sometimes a person is sent to this earth for an entire lifetime, just to bring one neshamah back to its source."

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THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about shooting the holes in the hat and jacket, Rav Zilberstein (Upiryo Matok Vayikra Page 151) wrote as follows. The robber is not obligated in court to pay for the damage, because he was told to do so by the owner and that is called "Mazik Birshus". Mazik Birshus is considered as if the owner did the damage, not the shooter. However, because the robber caused the damage to be there by robbing the man, he would be responsible to pay midinei shomayim as a grama.

HAPPY 50th BIRTHDAY TO ONE OF TABLETALK'S BIGGEST FANS!

From his family



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