

## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



## “PAIN-LESS NEEDLES”

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

In this week’s Torah portion we find a reference to the prohibition not to hurt another person.

Moshe saw Dasan and Aviram arguing and one lifted his hand to hit the other. Moshe called out “Wicked one, why do you hit your fellow” (Shemos 2,13)

There is a prohibition against causing unwarranted physical pain to another person. (See Sefer Hasmitzvos Hakatzar Prohibition 43)

This brings us to the following



## THE HISTORICAL ANOMALY

This week’s Parsha, Shemos, begins the second Book of the Five Books, the Book of Shemos. This Book is dedicated to the creation of our people. As we learn this Book we will follow our people’s development from their very genesis through their exodus. As the Book continues we follow our people’s growth until they finally achieve their mission of housing the Presence of HaShem within their camp.

Given that context let us examine the genesis of our people because there must have been some extraordinary beginning. The story of our people’s history presents a riddle. There is no culture/civilization who has survived and preserved their heritage like our people. While the young democracies and other societies frolic in the playground of history like young children, the Jewish people are an old seasoned traveler of history for three and a half thousand years. All the old travelers of history can be found only in the museums, the cemeteries of history and in history books, the tombstones history. The Jewish people can be found today in Academies studying their ancient books and practicing their tradition in their synagogues. How did we survive the storms of change when nobody else has?

To resolve this riddle let us examine the very first verse of our Parsha. “*These are the names of the children of Israel that came to Egypt, each one came and his family came with Yaakov. Reuven, Shimon, Levi ....*” Why does the Torah break the narrative mid verse? We already know from last week’s Parsha that they came down with their families. If the verse begins *These are the names...* why interrupt with the detail that each one and their family

true dilemma.

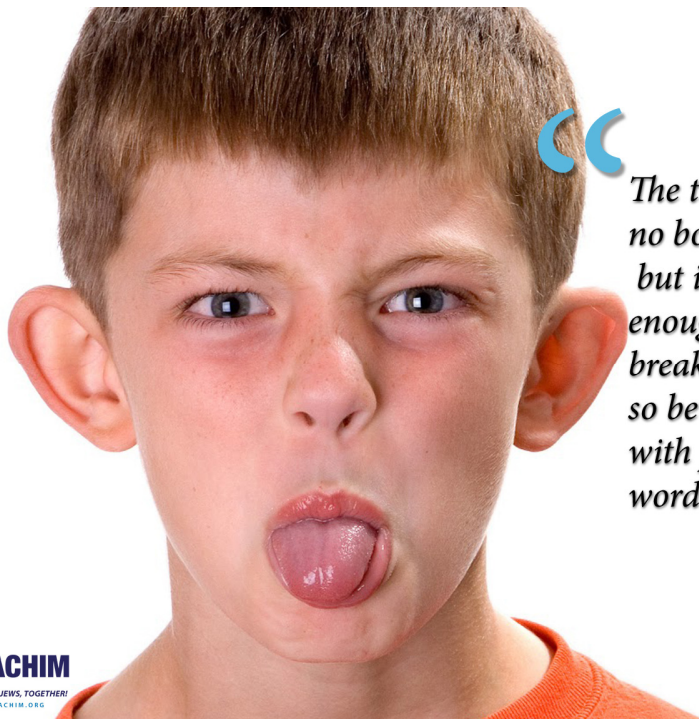
Ilana was a doctor who owned a health clinic in Israel. Among many of the services provided in the clinic were vaccinations and inoculations. The clinic was reimbursed, \$10 for each vaccination by the government department of health services. The standard needles cost the clinic \$1 each. This made the profit margin for each inoculation \$9. However there are specialized, "superfine" needles that cost less pain. These cause \$2 dollars a piece and would shrink the clinic's margins.

Ilana wondered if Torah law would require her to purchase the special needles that cost the least possible pain. The difference in pain is very subtle, and over time the expense would be significant. Is she obligated to endure that extra expense to avoid this subtle difference in pain?

On one hand it is only a small difference in pain that requires a substantial cost. But on the other hand perhaps any unnecessary pain would be forbidden by this mitzva.

What do you think?

See Chashukei Chemed Bava Basra Page 384



“The tongue has no bones but is strong enough to break a heart, so be careful with your words.”

came with Yaakov?

I believe the answer to this question will reveal the secret of our people's strength and endurance.

There are two critical components which if secure, our destiny is guaranteed. If they are not secure our destiny will fail. The first component is that we need to be connected to the source of Existence itself. The second component is that we must have a healthy family structure by which to maintain that connection to the source. In other words, to ensure your appliance is working you need a power source and you need a wire to connect to that power source.

Our father Yaakov is that source. Our Sages teach us that the Throne upon which Hashem sits (this is a metaphor for the basis upon which HaShem interacts with our universe)

has the face of Yaakov etched into it. Yaakov is the individual who connects us to the very Source of existence.

The Jewish family which is constructed with a mother and a father who care about each other and together are dedicated to their children creates a powerful bond that connects one generation to the next. This bond can travel the distance of millennia; there is no limit.

Perhaps this is why the Torah interrupts the first verse of the Book as follows. *“These are the names of the sons of Yisroel who came to Egypt, each one with his family; their families were strong, came with Yaakov, the source of existence.*

Our destiny is secure, as long as we hold tight to our family and to our ancestral heritage.

How fortunate we are! There is no distance of time and no distance of space that separates us from Yaakov.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

### Paysach Diskind

*The NSA has been in the news lately. Please join us for a new series with a former codebreaker from the NSA, who will talk about the interface between science and Torah as well as his experience as a religious Jew working in the NSA. Starting Sunday Jan 29 at Ner Tamid. More details at [Achim.org](http://Achim.org)*



## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

Sometimes it can be difficult to find your way home. An impressive method of navigation, used by pigeons, is called magnetoreception. Homing pigeons can detect the earth's magnetic field and use it as a map to find their way home even if they are put in a cage and transported to a strange location.

In flight, there are three dimensions to account for: left and right, up and down, and forward and backward. Like other birds, pigeons are known for their excellent eyesight. Most of their navigation can be handled by landmarks and other visual cues. However, when they are put in a cage and transported to a strange location, how do they manage to find their way home?

Though scientists have yet to determine precisely how pigeons respond to the earth's magnetic field, they have found many clues. The most promising hint is in their spectacular beaks. Along the skin lining of their upper beak are iron-containing particles called mag-

## 3-D PIGEON MAGNETS

netite. The magnetite is attached to nerve endings arranged in a complex, three-dimensional pattern.

This three-dimensional spread is the key to creating a three-dimensional map of the world. The earth's magnetic field moves in three dimensions, and the pigeon can detect it in all three directions. The details still are uncertain, but it is assumed that the sensory cells associated with the magnetite (called magnetoreceptors) sense slight changes in the angle of the magnetic field, enabling the pigeon to find its way home.

**THIS THREE-DIMENSIONAL SPREAD IS THE KEY TO CREATING A THREE-DIMENSIONAL MAP OF THE WORLD. THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD MOVES IN THREE DIMENSIONS, AND THE PIGEON CAN DETECT IT IN ALL THREE DIRECTIONS.**

# WATCHING A FIGHT

The gaon R. Mordechai Schwab related the following story: "In Kamenetz, before the yeshivah had its own beis midrash, we would daven in the town's beis midrash and on Shabbos we would daven in Rav Baruch Ber Liebowitz's house. Rebbe had a married son who died young. The widow and her small son and daughter lived in Rebbe's house, too. One Shabbos, we all heard the loud noise of two gentiles yelling and fighting with each other on the street just in front of the house. Immediately, Rebbe ran to search for his grandson so that the child would not see the awful sight. After Rebbe found him he explained to us that when he was a youngster, too, there was a similar incident outside of his house. He recalled how his father rushed frantically to try to shield his eyes from seeing it. Rebbe told us that his father, in fact, had arrived too late, for he already had seen the two gentiles exchanging blows. Rav Boruch Ber added, 'Quite possibly, had I not witnessed that sight, I would have had much more success in my Torah learning in those days. That barbarous scene made such a strong impression on me, that I still see it today and cannot erase it from my mind.'" (From Reb Baruch Ber by Rabbi Chaim Shlomo Rosenthal)

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Achim in a Nutshell:

*"Veyached l'vaveinu l'ahava es Shemecha."*

"Please bring our hearts together so that we can love Your Name".

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