



EVEN FISH NEED LOVE

Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita

Spare a thought for the “Real Common Trumpeter Fish”, this denizen of the deep seas not only carries a ludicrous name, but research has now shown that humans think it is too ugly to save from extinction. A study has found that bland, visually unappealing fish are more likely to be threatened with annihilation than their more colourful, more flamboyant counterparts. Humans, it seems are more committed to saving cute cartoon fish than ensuring the survival of his drabber reef-mates.

Dr. Nicolas Bouquet of the University of Montpellier, said: “We found that less beautiful fish are those recognised as threatened. Our study highlights important mismatches between potential public support for conservation and the species most in need of support.”

The good doctor speaks of other research that highlights his theory: “The Murdoch University in Perth Australia found that aesthetically challenged animals are routinely ignored by researchers in favour of ‘cuter’ species.” I could go further but I am sure the reader gets the gist. The human preferences for certain shapes or colours is likely to be part of our cultural make up, and can lead to the “unattractive” being frowned upon and getting thrown aside.

As Yiden we may look askance at all this, after all what do we care about such unkosher critters and how attractive they may be. However, the wonder of the Eibishter’s creation speaks volumes to each one of us, and everything that we witness have powerful lessons.

Yes, we may glance away at news of how mankind’s perception of different creatures impacts on how they survive, after all, we are Torah Yiden that follow in Hashem’s ways. Or do we?

בס"ד



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לזכר ולעילוי נשמת
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לזכר ולעילוי נשמת
הרבנית הצדקנית
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How many decisions do we make about others based on looks, or empty perceptions? I'm not talking about the world of livestock, I speak of a much more precious strata of life, the Yiddisha neshomah. I know, it seems that this subject is constantly flowing from my pen. In America there is a folk saying, when someone speaks consistently about only one subject the quip is that they are a "one trick pony", that they have only one thing to talk about. I don't see myself as such, however, I do see the pain of kids who aren't accepted because they don't tick all the boxes and are being excluded from schools. I wonder how we all sleep at night. These Yiddisha neshomalach are not misshaped fish floundering in the deep seas, they are spiritual and beautiful, carrying a holy spark of kedushah that is the very essence of our connection with the Eibishter.

We cast aside children because they don't fit our dictates, where in our rich mesorah have we ever done so? Our whole golus is because we are reaping the fall out of the Sinas chinum that caused the destruction of the Bais Hamikdosh. Today we have so many kindah enrolled in mosdos hatorah, so much in the way of wealth and freedom, yet kids are wandering our streets without anywhere to go.

I have a plan, I know, it won't get anywhere but I'll put it out there anyway. All the heads of mosdos in each community should sit together and go through all of the names of the children that find it hard to be placed. Let this committee make it incumbent that every child has a place before the new school year starts, and if not, if just one kid is lost, let it be known that no school will open. I hear the gasps of air "it will never happen" you say. Well when I was a youngster they said yeshivah education was for old timers and a lost cause, see what Hashem can create? Thousands of holy children flock to hear the words of Torah daily, how dare we exclude those who just may not fit our blueprint? Some may not be aware of this, but there was a time when struggling new mosdos paid parents to send their children to their schools. Now it seems that even money won't get your child a place. I know many of the problems that inclusiveness carry with it, but Hashem created each one of our kids, they are a holy gift, where do we get the right to throw them under the bus?

Ok ok I know, it's Rubin on his usual rant, it will all pass, he will humour us with his warm stories next time and we can all go back to our daily grind.

I just ask of us all, "if this is how we treat the next generation, if subliminally we are showing that some neshomalach are expendable, what hope do we have for our community?"

There are lots of question marks in our communal agenda and all too few answers. Our young are not boring fish swimming beneath the surface, they are shining carriers of our greatest gift, the yiddisha neshomah, and we disparage them at our peril.

In ending, can I suggest a small gesture? If this really bothers you, next time you hear of a youngster being left with no place to go, say a small kapital Tehillim, for that sweet child, for his parents, and yes, for the spiritual wellbeing of Klall Yisroel.

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