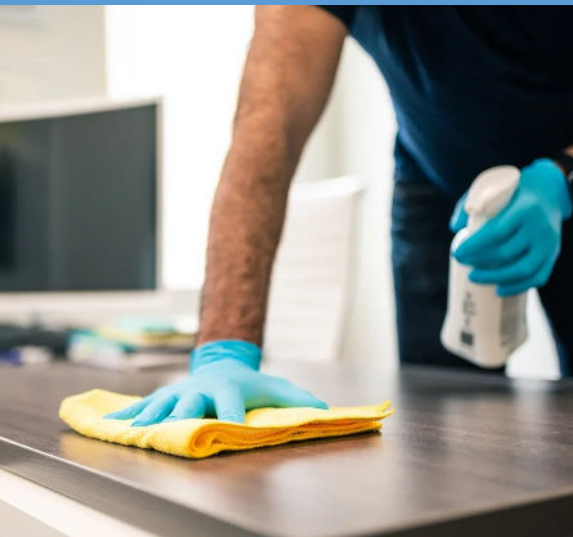


## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



### CONTINUES TO LINGER

By Rabbi Paysach Diskind

The following story occurred in Israel during the Corona pandemic. Yossi and his wife lived in a community where the virus was spreading rapidly. Many of their neighbors fell victim to the virus. Naturally, they were greatly concerned and remained in their apartment without ever leaving it except on rare occasions. Their children, all married, refrained from visiting them as well.

After some time, they began suffering from cabin fever and decided that they needed to leave the city and rent a flat in the country. Yossi's friend, Moish, had a flat in Tzfas which he rented out for vacationers. Yossi called Moish to ask if his apartment was available. His friend responded that it had been rented out for two weeks and the renters just left yesterday, so if he wanted it he



### JUST LOVE IT!

It is a basic tenet of our faith that HaShem is directly involved in the lives of the Jewish people. Not only of the people as a whole but even on an individual basis. Not only regarding the welfare of the nation but even regarding the welfare of every individual member of His people. This is what is referred to as hashgacha protis. With the other members of humanity, HaShem is also involved but He delegates their welfare to be cared for by spiritual entities. That said, it must be understood although this special attention applies to every individual member, nevertheless, the relationship is only through the nation as a whole. No single member of our people has this special relationship outside of the context of the nation as a whole.

To best illustrate this let us create a parallel, although not a perfect parallel as we will soon see. This fellow has a gorgeous Corvette and he takes much pride in it. Naturally, he cares very much about the welfare of his car. There are 30,000 parts in this car and he cares about the welfare of each part. He will personally oversee that every component of the car is well taken care of because so much of his pride is riding on it. In a similar vein, HaShem has His people in whom He invested His pride. "Yisroel, it is in you that I pride Myself" (Yishayahu 49:3). It is for this Pride that HaShem is directly involved. There is nothing in the Universe that is more special to Him than us. We also know that there is no extra Jew. Every member of our people has their unique role in the makeup of our people. It is therefore no wonder that HaShem's special attention is focused on every member.

The reason I qualified our parallel as not being perfect is because the owner of the Corvette does not really care for every part. It would be fine for him if there was a missing piece as long as the car would operate. After all, his pride is only in the car

could have it. They agreed on a price and it was a deal. In anticipation of Yossi and his wife, Moish did a thorough job of cleaning up the apartment.

The next day Yossi and his wife headed up to Tzfas looking forward to a badly needed two week respite. A few days after they arrived both Yossi and his wife came down with symptoms of Corona. They had themselves tested and, in fact, they had contracted the virus. With much regret, Yossi and his wife headed right back to their own home.

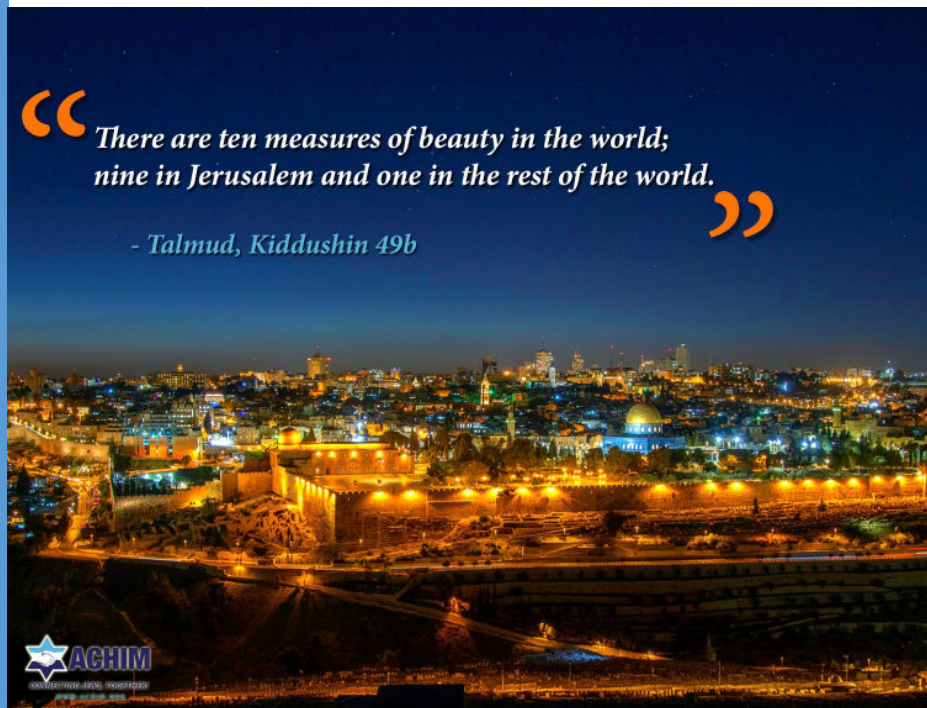
It was discovered that the previous renters had contracted the virus and were living there for two weeks with the virus. Unfortunately, Moish did not know that the earlier tenants were infected and did not disinfect the apartment.

Yossi called Moish and told him that he had no intention of paying for the apartment. The only reason they were going on vacation was to escape the virus infected city. They would never have rented an infected apartment! The doctors were all saying that the germs can linger for a while if it is not disinfected.

Moish, on the other hand, argued that he did clean the apartment and was never asked to disinfect it. If Yossi wished to have a disinfected apartment he should have requested it or taken care of it himself.

Is Yossi responsible to pay for the rental?

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as a whole, not in any piece per se. Whereas HaShem actually cares for every individual member. If there is a member of His people that is not well, it pains Him just as if the entire people were in pain. The Talmud quotes HaShem as saying in a time when a single Jew is suffering "My head is in pain, My arm is in pain."

Because of this unique relationship, it is incumbent upon us to serve HaShem with complete dedication. This was the service we did in the Mishkan and the Beis Hamikdosh. Who was chosen to do the service? The Kohanim and the Leviim were chosen to represent the people in this service. What qualification did they have that earned the status as being the 'servers'? The single quality needed was a complete negation of Self and complete dedication to the people. Only a person with this quality could truly represent the nation properly and only the service of such a person could be reckoned as being the service of the people. The moment the 'server' is driven by self ad-

vancement and self actualization, his service is no longer the people's, it is his own.

In this week's Parsha, the Leviim are separated from the rest of the people and appointed to serve in the Mishkan. The verse (8:19) in which this separation is instructed, the name "Bnei Yisroel" is repeated five times. The Midrash explains that HaShem repeats their name five times to demonstrate how dear His people are to Him.

Why is this verse chosen to demonstrate our closeness to Him? One may have thought that the Leviim were chosen because they are better than the rest of the people. Perhaps they have greater qualities and HaShem cares for their service more than the rest of the people. Therefore, specifically in this verse HaShem says how dear all of the Bnei Yisroel are to Him. So, why were the Leviim chosen over the rest, because they negate themselves entirely. As great as the rest of the nation may be, there is still some 'Self' that drives them. Levi, on the other hand, was entirely selfless. Only their service could properly represent the service of the people as a whole.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**



## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### EXPLOSIVE UNDERWATER FROZEN BUBBLES

Last week we learned about the amazing phenomenon of an underwater waterfall. Let's learn about another amazing and stunning phenomenon, underwater frozen bubbles.

Canada's Abraham Lake is stunning in every season, but it truly dazzles in the winter when its turquoise water freezes to reveal thousands of white bubbles beneath the surface.

The Abraham Lake bubbles, an intriguing winter phenomenon, result from methane gas trapped in the freezing ice. These gas bubbles are formed when plants and tree limbs at the bottom of the lake decay.

As the lake continues to freeze, these trapped bubbles create an icy spectacle of patterns and shapes, reminiscent of a giant lava lamp, with the surroundings adorned by deep cracks, inverted ice walls, and milky ribbons of snow.

Most lakes produce methane but what sets Abraham Lake apart for observing these frozen methane bubbles is the crystal clear ice and the high concentration of bubbles. The strong wind gusts here polish the ice into a smooth, glass-like surface, revealing the bubbles as they clear the snow.

How exactly is methane gas created? Let's learn a bit more about methane. Methane is a type of gas that's made up of one carbon atom and four hydrogen atoms, forming a shape like a tiny pyramid. Its scientific symbol is CH<sub>4</sub>. This gas doesn't have any color or smell. It's less dense than the air we breathe, and it doesn't dissolve in water very well.

Methane is usually found in a gas form, but it can exist as a solid under certain conditions, forming a plastic-like crystal. There are several types of these crystals, nine are known as of now.

When plants, animals, or other organic matter die, they start to break down, or decompose. This process is mainly carried out by microbes, tiny living organisms that are found just about everywhere on Earth. Some of these microbes are called methanogens, and they play a key role in producing methane.

Methanogens are a type of bacteria that live in oxygen-free environments, like the deep layers of a landfill, wetlands, or the stomach of a cow. They break down organic material for energy in a process called anaerobic digestion (anaerobic means "without oxygen"). During this process, methanogens consume the carbon-based compounds in the decomposing matter, and as part of their metabolism, they produce methane as a byproduct.

The carbon in the methane molecule (CH<sub>4</sub>) comes from the carbon-based compounds in the decomposing organic matter. The hydrogen atoms in methane come from water molecules that are also present in the environment where methanogens live.

So back to our frozen methane bubbles. Methane bubbles are formed in bodies of water when dead organic matter (leaves and animals) sinks to the bottom, to be consumed by bacteria that excrete methane. When this methane contacts frozen water, it turns into white floating blobs.

While the scene on Lake Abraham is stunningly beautiful, it can also be dangerous. The bubbles are extremely flammable, and if a methane bubble is broken near an open flame, it will turn into a fireball. Lighting a cigarette on the ice could be quite an explosive event.

## MIXING CEMENT & LAYING BRICKS

R' Dovid Katz recalled that one day in Kfar Saba, some students saw R' Aharon Leib Steinman mixing cement and laying bricks, assisting construction workers who were extending the yeshivah building. Assuming that R' Aharon Leib was trying to save the yeshivah money, R' Katz offered to take his place and help the workers. R' Aharon Leib smiled and told him that it was his mitzvah of building in Eretz Yisrael, as the Ramban writes, "that there is a mitzvah to build Eretz Yisrael in contemporary times."



A parent of a young son asked R' Aharon Leib, "Wouldn't it be more appropriate for a rebbi, rather than a morah, to teach boys in the younger grades? With a rebbi, the little boys could start learning as soon as they begin attending yeshivah." R' Aharon Leib replied, "In the youngest grades, women can teach as much content as men, and do it with more warmth. Having the children nurtured by the warmth of a morah is very important at that time."

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### THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the Kimpeturin Home, Rav Zilberstein answered that the receptionist would not have to pay for the woman's stay because she did not cause her a loss, only a menias revech, a prevention of a gain. Nonetheless, it would be midas chassidus, a matter of piety, to pay her for the loss.

In celebration of the beautiful simcha of our parents  
**Fred and Elaine Lepow 60th Anniversary**, as well as the  
**80th Birthday of our dear Emah**

May you both continue to celebrate with g'zunt many more years together as our inspiration as to what a true Bayis Ne'man Be'Yisroel is exemplified to be.

With Love, Malka and Alex Barron

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