

A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



105 BOUREKAS

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Rachel was the cook for a girls' seminary. There were about a hundred girls in the seminary, and Rachel was responsible for providing all the food.

Her responsibility included ordering the food. Naturally, she ordered the food in bulk orders thereby saving money.

Rachel had her own family, a family of five. When she would order a hundred of something, like a hundred cheeses, she would order five extra at the cheaper wholesale price and then immediately reimburse the seminary for her personal orders.

One day before one of the holidays, she placed an order for one hundred delicious cheese Bourekas from the



YOU CAN ALREADY TASTE IT!

From Maamarei Pachad Yitzchok Succos maamar 10

Every holiday on our calendar celebrates an event that affected Klal Yisroel. Succos is unique in that it celebrates an event that has not yet happened. Succos celebrates the anticipated arrival of our reaching our destination, the coming of Moshiach and the period when the sin of Adam will be corrected. It is no wonder that Succos is referred to as the Period of our Rejoicing. It reflects the anticipated moment when HaShem will reunite with us in the way we were united in times of Dovid and Shlomo. There is truly no way for us to properly fathom what it will be like as we have no parallel to it in our set of experiences.

Every day of Succos there was a water offering in the Beis Hamikdosh. The previous evening water was drawn and with great pomp and celebration it was brought up from the spring to the Beis Hamikdosh. Regarding this celebration our Sages tell us that anyone who did not experience the joy and celebration of the drawing of this water has never experienced joy. It was the ultimate joy that one could experience.

How do we understand this? There is certainly joy in performing any mitzvah; for if we appreciate what is accomplished when doing a mitzvah it brings incredible joy. However, why does the drawing of the water produce an unparalleled joy? Why is this different from any other mitzvah? Furthermore, there is not even a mitzvah in drawing the water. The mitzvah is done the next day when the water is poured onto the mizbeiach? This is called a hechsher mitzvah, an activity which prepares the mitzvah. How can the joy of hechsher mitzvah be greater than the joy of the mitzvah itself?!

When HaShem created the world not everything went as planned. "HaShem

bakery, and as she usually did, she ordered five extra for her family at the cheaper price.

The order was delivered, and Rachel wasn't around in the morning. The box of cheese Bourekas was dropped off at the door of the seminary. The girls at the seminary took them in, and they almost correctly assumed that all of them were for the seminary. They distributed and enjoyed them, including the extra five that Rachel had ordered for her family.

When Rachel heard that the entire delivery, including her personal order, was consumed, she chuckled. She was glad that the girls enjoyed them, but she had the following question: She had ordered five extra units intending to pay back the seminary. In this case, since she didn't end up using them, she wondered if she still needed to reimburse the seminary for those five extra Bourekas.

On one hand, the seminary did not need those extra five, and she ordered them just for her family and maybe she should pay for them, even though she didn't benefit. On the other hand, since the seminary girls enjoyed them, maybe the seminary should be responsible, and she wouldn't need to pay for the extra Bourekas.

What do you think? The answer may surprise you.



“ *A bitter face is a form of lashon hara (evil speech), and a smiling face is a form of charity.* ”

-Rabbi Nachman of Breslov



spoke 'let the earth put forth trees of fruit that produce fruit... and the earth put forth trees that produce fruit...' Behold! Although HaShem ordered trees of fruit the earth only put forth trees. Our Sages explain that the earth was ordered to put forth trees that taste like the fruit they produce. However, the trees did not carry that taste. Instead, the trees tasted like wood. (It is interesting to note that the Esrog tree does taste like its fruit; both its bark and its leaves.)

This flaw was not limited to trees and their fruits. It affected all areas of endeavor where process is required. Although bread is tasty and nutritious, the process is quite difficult. One must till the soil, plant the seeds, tend to it, harvest it, thresh it, grind it, mix it with water, knead it and finally bake it. Just as the tree processes the fruit but does not offer the pleasure of its fruit before the fruit is produced so it is with all processes. The pleasure of the result is not achieved until the end.

In the same vein, it is with the performance of mitzvos. There

is certainly a joy in preparing to do a mitzvah but it does not yield the same joy as the mitzvah itself.

It was the sin of Adam which caused the trees to disobey HaShem's order. Once that sin is corrected the world will spring back to its original plan. (How did Adam's sin affect the trees if he sinned days later than the creation of the trees? This is a great question which is not being discussed in this TableTalk.)

Once that sin is corrected, the delicious taste of the mitzvah will permeate the preparation of the mitzvah as well. Since Succos is the holiday when we touch and taste what still lies ahead with the coming of our great destiny, the joy of drawing the water was filled with the taste of the mitzvah that was to be performed the next day. That joy, the joy of tasting the mitzvah in its hechsher is unparalleled. That is the taste of a mitzvah in the post Messianic period.

May we merit to experience this joy in all of our mitzvos speedily in our days.

Have a wonderful Shabbos and a beautiful Yom Tov.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

THE FLEMISH GIANT RABBIT

The animal kingdom is filled with a myriad of fascinating creatures. We have all seen bunnies before. But have you ever seen a bunny that is bigger than an average-sized dog, or almost as big as a person? No, this is not fantasy fiction, but Hashem's amazing world. Please meet the Flemish Giant Rabbit, the world's largest breed of domestic rabbit. Also referred to as the "universal rabbit" or the "gentle giant," the Flemish Giant is a remarkable blend of history, size, and personality.

The breed is believed to have originated in the 16th century near the Belgian city of Ghent. Early records from around 1860 provide evidence of its existence. The Flemish Giant's size is its most distinguishing feature. Adult rabbits can weigh up to 22 lbs, with some exceptional individuals, like Darius, weighing as much as 48 lbs. Furthermore, the world record for the longest rabbit is held by a Flemish Giant at an impressive 4.25 feet long. In fact, the Flemish Giant rabbit can be mistaken for a dog due to its size. Their ears alone are 8 inches long. These bunnies' bodies are long, powerful, and boast glossy and dense fur. The typical lifespan of a Flemish Giant rabbit is between 8–10 years. Their average litter size is between 5–12 offspring.

They have long, upright ears that contribute to excellent hearing. They also possess good eyesight. Female Flemish Giants have a dewlap, a fold of skin under their chin. This dewlap is used by females to warm their young.

Historically, the Flemish Giant was primarily a utility breed, bred and sought after for its meat and fur. They were imported to America in the early 1890s with the intent of increasing the size of meat rabbits. However, by 1910, their gentle and patient nature made them popular pets in the U.S., leading to the formation of the National Federation of Flemish Giant Rabbit Breeders in 1915. This breed has significantly influenced rabbit breeding worldwide, with breeds like the Belgian Hare stemming from the Flemish Giant.

Today, these bunnies are cherished pets in both Europe and North America. The breed is nicknamed "Gentle Giant" because they are known for being docile and patient. Their docile nature, combined with their intelligence and affectionate demeanor, makes them ideal for families, even those with young children. However, their impressive size requires more spacious accommodations and a larger food intake than their smaller counterparts.

They are very social and enjoy spending time with their human owners. They are friendly and thrive on interaction. They are also eager to please and easy to train. In fact, Flemish giant rabbits can choose a "favorite" human to give special attention. They can also befriend other pets in the home. They don't fare well with isolation and can develop behavioral issues if left alone for too long.

They show interest in human interaction and are intelligent. They can be trained to use a litter box. As such, like a dog, they can roam freely indoors and don't need to be kept in a cage. Despite their size, they're known for their cleanliness.

Good cage sanitation is essential for these giants, given their vulnerability to upper respiratory infections and conditions like gastrointestinal stasis. Their long ears, susceptible to mites and bacteria, necessitate regular cleaning, while their weight puts them at risk of sore hocks, making solid-floor cages a better choice than wire mesh.

Flemish Giants come in a range of colors, with the American Rabbit Breed Association recognizing seven - black, blue, fawn, sandy, light gray, steel gray, and white. Despite their robust appearance, they're susceptible to ailments like cardiomyopathy, spondylosis, and respiratory infections. Hence, regular vet check-ups and a balanced diet, mainly consisting of Timothy Hay, fresh greens, and ample water, are crucial for their well-being.

I CANNOT ACCEPT THIS ESROG...

R' Betzalel Leiser and R' Chaim Heiman would bring Rav Elya Meir Sorotzkin an esrog every year as a gift, to use on Succos. One year they brought Rav Elya Meir a truly beautiful, very large, Teimaner (Yemenite) esrog.

When Rav Elya Meir, who was accustomed to using a Yemenite esrog, saw the esrog and noticed its perfect shape, his eyes lit up. It was clear that his heart was irresistibly drawn to that esrog. His love of mitzvos was evident as he relished the beautiful esrog. What happened next, however, showed so clearly how Rav Elya Meir's every action was governed by his exemplary middos and mussar.

"I cannot accept this esrog," the Rosh Yeshiva said, despite the clear longing in his heart.

"Why not?" R' Betzalel asked, puzzled. "Isn't it the most exquisite esrog?"

"Yes, it certainly is," the Rav Elya Meir answered wistfully. "However, a few days ago, someone else brought me a 'Teimaner esrog' as a gift, and I accepted it. That esrog is also a nice one, though not nearly as nice as this one. If I take this one and use it, that Yid might feel bad or slighted that I'm not using the esrog that he gifted to me." The Rosh Yeshiva paused, then said, "And I cannot be the cause of his chalishas hadaas (becoming dispirited)."

"What I saw from that episode," R' Betzalel shares, "was his tangible love of mitzvos. But even more than that, I saw the way he balanced competing, pivotal values of middos and mitzvos."

(From Rav Elya Meir Sorotzkin, by Avrohom Birnbaum, published by Artscroll Mesorah, and reprinted with their permission.)



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the young man who was interested in learning more about Judaism, Rav Zilberstein wrote that it would not be permitted to approach him in the middle of Shemonah Esrei, because it is not guaranteed that he will become Torah observant as a result.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in memory of our dear father, **Rabbi Abraham (Abe) Pelberg Avrohom ben Yisroel Moshe** on his 12th Yahrzeit. He dedicated his life to showing the beauty of the Torah to Jews from all walks of life throughout North and Central America. May the lively Torah discussions generated from this week's TableTalk be an aliyah for his neshama. **Moshe and Adeena Pelberg**



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