



A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



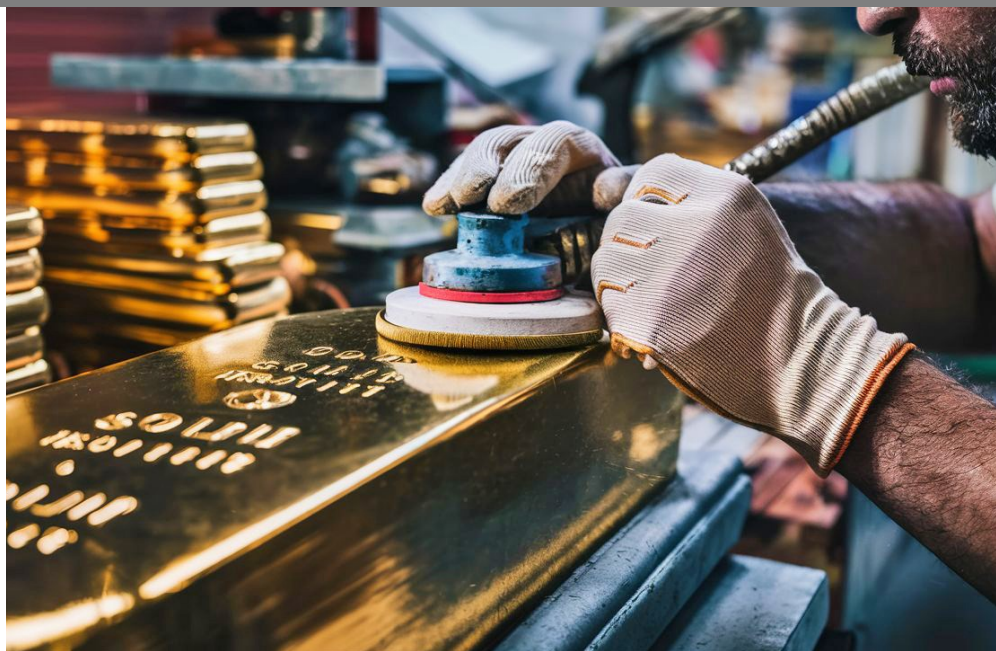
WOKEN BY THE AIR RAID

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

The following interesting question was presented to Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky.

Moshe and Dovid were friends who met daily at the nearby shul for Shacharis. Over time, Dovid began waking up late, consistently arriving 10 to 15 minutes after Shacharis had started.

One day, Moshe remarked, "It seems you've been arriving late daily. I guess you'll be late tomorrow too." Dovid countered, "No, I can wake up early. I'll be on time tomorrow." Skeptical, Moshe replied, "Given your track record, I doubt that." Dovid then proposed, "Let's make a bet. I'll wager 100 shekels that I'll arrive on time. If I do, you'll pay me 100 shekels; if not, I'll pay you." Moshe agreed, and they sealed the bet with a handshake.



RESTORING LOST LUSTER

In his opening commentary on our Parsha, Sforno explains why the integrity of the Mishkan was never compromised. It neither fell into enemy hands nor did it ever lose its luster. He explains the eternity of the Mishkan was due to four points. The first point was that it housed the Luchos HaEidus, the two tablets on which were written the Ten Commandments. The second point was that this Mishkan was ordered and instructed by Moshe. The persona of Moshe Rabbeinu was such that anything he achieved was eternal. The third point was that the maintenance of the Mishkan which was the charge of the Levi'im was overseen by Ithamar, the son of Aharon. The Mishkan's fourth point was that it was built by Betzalel who was guided by divine spirit. Every vessel that was created and every fabric that was woven was done with pure intent for the Mishkan itself. There was no self-interest. These four points gave the Mishkan her eternal nature. Nobody was ever able to penetrate her nor did she lose her luster.

From these opening verses it appears that every one of these four points contributed to the eternal nature of the Mishkan; if one of the four was missing the Mishkan would be vulnerable.

After traveling through three and half thousand years of history we, the Jewish people, also demonstrate signs of an eternal nature. However, we know all too well how we are vulnerable. Although we continue to survive the centuries of persecution and detrimental cultures, nevertheless, we have fallen into enemy hands and we do show signs of losing our luster. We end our Shmone Esrei

The following day, 10 minutes before 7:00 AM, an air raid siren sounded due to missiles launched by Israel's adversaries.

Dovid arrived at the synagogue, visibly tired and partially dressed, but punctual. He claimed, "I won our bet. I'm here on time." Moshe retorted, "The only reason you awoke on time was the air raid siren." Dovid acknowledged, "True, that's why I woke up, because of the air raid siren, and I ran to the bomb shelter but ultimately, I am here on time."

Moshe disagreed, "That doesn't count. You didn't wake up by yourself. Let's try another day." Dovid insisted, "I fulfilled the bet's conditions. Why should the reason for my punctuality matter?"

They decided to seek Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky's opinion:

Should Dovid receive the 100 shekels for winning the bet?

On one hand, he arrived on time; But on the other, his punctuality wasn't due to an early awakening but because he hurried to the bomb shelter following the air raid siren.

What do you think?

See Upiryo Matok Vayikra Page 294



with the prayer of restoring the luster we had in days of yore.

If we could somehow follow the recipe of the Mishkan and incorporate all four points perhaps we could also free ourselves from our enemies and regain our original luster.

In terms of containing the Luchos Haeidus, we certainly can achieve this by being fastidious in our guarding and observing the mitzvos that lie with those Tablets. By doing so, the mitzvos would come alive. Similarly, as we guard the Torah that was given to us by Moshe Rabbeinu we can achieve the second point. The fourth point may be achieved if we are careful to guard and observe the Torah with unwavering selflessness with the purity of intent exclusively for the Honor of HaShem.

The third point of the Mishkan was that it was maintained

by Ithamar. The ongoing maintenance of the Mishkan was overseen by the son of Aharon. The Levi'im who were charged with the maintenance of the Mishkan were overseen by Ithamar. To find the parallel to our nation, we ought to identify a Rov who will direct us in maintaining our guarding and observance of the Torah. It was not sufficient for the Levi'im to maintain the Mishkan on their own. They required Ithamar to oversee that maintenance. So often there are times when a Rov, who has sharper insight by virtue of his Torah knowledge and experience than the people he directs, needs to provide valuable direction. It is when the community follows the direction of their Rov that the Rov can lead.

This is certainly true in today's environment with the world gone mad. How badly needed is the direction and guidance from our Rabbonim.

May the offerings of His people be pleasing to Him once again as in days of yore.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

ZEA MAYS EVERTA, POPCORN

Last week, my daughter asked me where popcorn comes from and what is the science behind how it is made. I had no idea, so I decided to find out. Let's dive into the fantastic world of popcorn, a snack with a story that spans thousands of years.

So what makes popcorn pop? It's like a tiny, natural pressure cooker inside each kernel. Each corn kernel has a little bit of water stored inside it. This water is super important for making popcorn. Popcorn's peak popping occurs at around 14-15% moisture content. The outside of the kernel is a tough shell. It's strong and doesn't let water or air in or out. This shell is what makes certain types of corn able to pop and not just any corn. When you heat the kernels, the water inside starts to get really hot and turns into steam. Because the shell is so tough, the steam can't escape, and the pressure inside the kernel builds up. Pop! When the pressure from the steam gets too high, the kernel can't hold it anymore, and it explodes. This explosion is the kernel turning inside out and puffing up. That's the "pop" in popcorn! Popcorn kernels can pop at around 930 kPa (135 psi) of pressure and 356°F. The heat also cooks the starch inside the kernel, turning it into a soft, fluffy texture. That's the white part of the popcorn that we eat. It's basically the kernel's insides that have puffed up and cooled down into a tasty snack.

You might think, "Can any corn become popcorn if I just dry it out?" The answer is nope! There are six major types of corn, which include dent corn, flint corn, pod corn, flour corn, and sweet corn. Popcorn is a specific variety of flint corn called *Zea mays everta*. It's the only type of corn that pops, and it's been specially bred for its popping ability. Other corn types, like sweet corn or field corn, don't have the right conditions for that spectacular pop. Sweet corn that we usually eat has more moisture when fresh and is not as hard, so they can't build up pressure inside like popcorn kernels do. (Sweet corn has a higher sugar content than other corn and is picked while immature before the sugar has a chance to turn into starch.)

Can popcorn pop on the cob? Absolutely! It's a fun way to watch the magic happen. When the whole cob is heated, and those kernels have the right amount of moisture, they'll pop right on the cob, creating a fluffy spectacle. It's a delightful way to see science in action and makes for a tasty treat or a fascinating experiment. There might be some kernels that don't pop at all, which is pretty normal even when popping them off the cob.

You know how when you make popcorn at home, and there's that amazing smell that makes you want to eat some right away? Well, there's a really cool science reason behind why popcorn smells so

good. It's all thanks to certain special ingredients that popcorn releases into the air when it's cooked. One of these special ingredients is a compound called 6-acetyl-2,3,4,5-tetrahydropyridine (A-THP). When popcorn kernels heat up and pop, they release this compound into the air, and that's a big part of what gives popcorn its irresistible smell. A-THP smells good because of its molecular structure. It's able to bind with specific olfactory receptors in our nose, triggering a signal to our brain that we interpret as a pleasant smell. The specific structure of A-THP fits well with these receptors, much like a key fits into a lock, allowing it to effectively communicate this pleasing aroma to our brain.

Popcorn isn't a modern invention. Ancient people in what is now Mexico enjoyed it. Archaeologists found popcorn kernels in New Mexico that are over 5,600 years old! This means that according to archaeologists, people during the time of Noah and Avraham snacked on popcorn! It was a part of Native American Culture. Native Americans used popcorn not just for eating but also for decorating clothing and other items. They even made a kind of popcorn soup!

Europeans first encountered popcorn when they arrived in the Americas. Native Americans introduced them to this snack, and it quickly became popular.

The term "popped corn" first appeared in John Russell Bartlett's 1848 Dictionary of Americanisms. Popcorn became even more popular in the 1890s when Charles Cretors invented the first commercial popcorn machine in Chicago. It was a hit at fairs, parks, and eventually movie theaters. Popcorn was consumed as a breakfast cereal with milk and sweeteners in the 1800s.

Popcorn became popular in movie theaters during the Great Depression because popcorn was one of the few luxuries people could afford. Theaters started selling it to make extra money. It's been a movie staple ever since.

During World War II, popcorn became even more popular when sugar was rationed for candy production. Americans therefore ate three times more popcorn than usual because it was a readily available snack. Today, most popcorn for commercial use is grown in Nebraska and Indiana.

In modern times, popcorn has found a new role as an eco-friendly packaging material. Its biodegradable and renewable qualities offer an innovative alternative to traditional packing materials, showcasing popcorn's versatility beyond being a snack.

Final fun facts: Unpopped kernels left after popping are called "old maids" in the popcorn industry. The world's largest popcorn ball weighed over 9,370 pounds!

THE “KITCHEN” THAT RIPENS DELICIOUS FRUITS

A person once asked Rav Avigdor Miller why Hashem made it hot and humid. Rav Miller answered with the following analogy.

A man comes home and he has to go through the kitchen in order to go to the restroom. He tells his wife, “What? In this hot weather, you're cooking? It's too hot in here.” So she says, “Yes, dear, I'll turn off the stove,” and she turns off the stove. He comes out and he says, “Is supper ready?” And she says, “Sorry, not today.”

So, too, in September all the ripe red apples are out on the stands. How does an apple become red, juicy, and sweet? It's only because Baruch Hu turns on the heat. The summer is the “kitchen” that ripens delicious fruits that we are going to eat all winter.

So the next time it is hot and humid, rather than complain, we should think of the good times that are waiting for us.

From Rav Avigdor Miller, His Life and Revolution, By Yaakov Y. Hamburger, Published by Judaica Press,



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the Airbnb, Rav Mordechai Shuchatowitz of the Baltimore Beis Din answered as follows: The house that the Winklers rented and used that weekend was not defective. The power outage was not related to this particular house, and was not something that they should have been notified about beforehand. It was their mazal that the outage occurred when they were there, and the rental payment was made properly.

This week's TableTalk is dedicated to the memory of
Harav Tzvi Willner

הרב צבי בן הרב דוד זצ"ל

And for the zechus of good long healthy years filled with much nachas to his wife
Mrs. Brenda Willner שתחיה



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