

## A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



### THE LIGHT RAIL

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

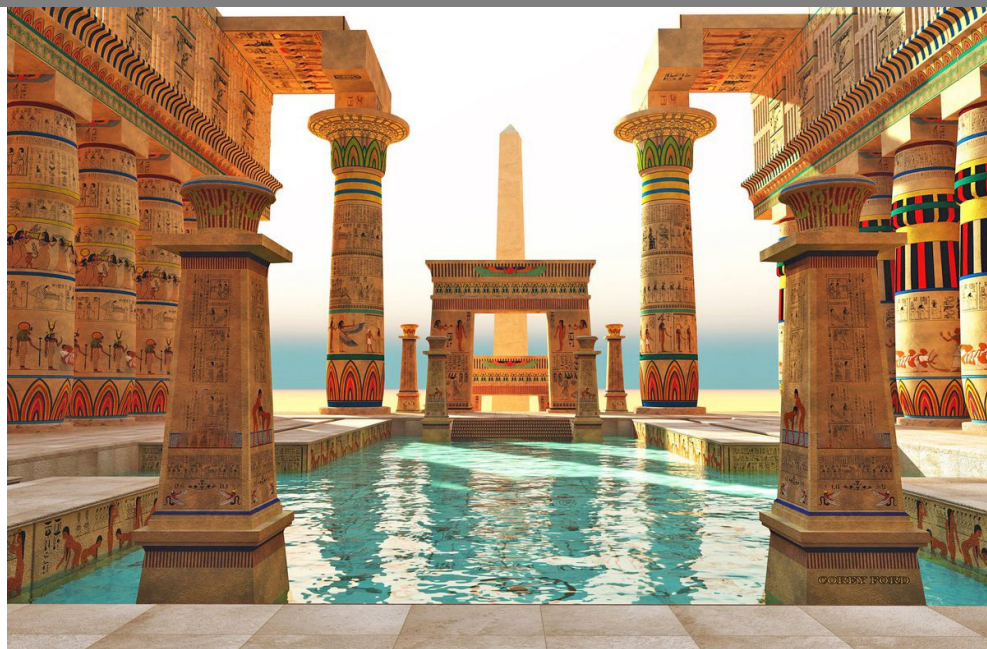
This week's Parsha talks about how the dust of the ground was transformed into lice for the plague of kinnim.

This leads us to the following true story. Israel's light rail system was an exciting and transformational project. Construction was underway in many parts of the country. The light rail was set to be built adjacent to the city of Ramat Gan.

The construction went on every day. Unfortunately, the construction brought up an enormous amount of soil and dirt. The residents of Ramat Gan who lived on Hakablan Street lived closest to the construction site. Whenever anyone on the street would open their windows, large amounts of dust would go into their apartments. It was the summer and keeping all the windows closed was not feasible. The residents were really suffering and frustrated.

Many people of the Ramat Gan community began to object to the construction project because the dust was so problematic.

In response to the uproar, the construction company made an announcement that a new, complimentary air conditioner unit would be allotted to each apartment on Hakablan Street in order to help them for the summer. The air conditioning



### IT IS NOT WHO YOU ARE, BUT WHOSE YOU ARE

How fortunate we are that when we were enslaved in Egypt HaShem redeemed us!

This is the theme of our annual Pesach Seder. Ought we not ask ourselves why do we owe such gratitude to HaShem for redeeming us from Egypt, was it not HaShem who put us into Egyptian slavery? Perhaps we would be more grateful if He had left us alone.

Among the qualities that we as Jews can be proud of is that we are owned by HaShem in a similar manner that a slave is owned by his master. On surface the concept of being chattel of someone else is not anything to be proud of. However, upon closer consideration we can appreciate the difference between being chattel of another human being and being chattel of the Creator of the universe, Director of history and Father of mother nature. Chattel of another human by definition implies that we are subhuman. Only something less than human can belong to another human. Chattel of the Creator, however, implies that we are sub-Creator. A human being which is but a creation of the Creator is much less significant than the sub-Creator.

The benefits of being HaShem's chattel is that we are eternal and indestructible. Nothing that is associated with HaShem is finite or destructible. The cost of being HaShem's chattel is that we are held responsible for our smallest infractions. Although we are human and as such HaShem does not expect that

units would cool down the apartments during the summer, and they would also filter out the dust. The company said it was the least they could do for the inconvenience and frustration of the residents.

In a short time, hundreds of brand new air conditioner units were distributed, one to each of the apartments on the street.

Leah lived in one of the Hakablan street apartments. She didn't own the apartment but rented it from Mrs. Green. Leah, like everyone else on her street, got one of the brand new air conditioning units from the construction company.

About a year after the light rail construction in Ram Gan was completed, Leah found a new apartment, which she planned to buy, in a new city. Mrs. Green, Leah's landlord, came to say goodbye to Leah on the day she moved out. Mrs. Green saw the air conditioner being loaded into the moving truck.

"Is that the air conditioner that was given by the construction company because of the light rail dust?" Mrs. Green asked Leah.

"Yes," Leah answered. "It works really well and I'm grateful that they gave these free air conditioners to all the residents on the street. It is really the least they could do for all the suffering we endured during the constriction. Before the air conditioners were given out we had so much dust in our lungs".

"I don't think you can take that," Mrs. Green said quietly. "The construction company gave one to each apartment. You can't take the unit with you when you leave", Mrs. Green said.

"What do you mean?" Leah replied. "It was given to the resident of the apartment, not to the apartment itself.

"I don't agree. It was given to the owners of the apartments and you were not the owner."

They both agreed to bring this question to a Rav.

What do you think? Can Leah keep the air conditioner?

On one hand, you can argue that it should go to the one who actually lived there and who actually suffered from the dust. In that case, it should go to Leah.

But on the other hand, perhaps they were given to the owners of the apartments, and in that case it should go to Mrs. Green.

What do you think?

See Upriyo Matok Shemos 112



every Jew be perfect, nevertheless, we are responsible to strive for perfection. We are therefore liable to be constantly working on perfecting ourselves.

The greatest benefit of being His chattel is that we live a most meaningful life. In our role of His chattel, HaShem counts on us to bring the world to its destiny. The destiny of creating a 'domicile' for HaShem in this material world is directly dependent upon HaShem's people.

How does a nation of mortal beings morph from a nation of mortals to a nation of sub-Creators?

That metamorphosis occurred only through the process of our slavery in Egypt and its subsequent redemption. The very process of becoming a nation happened in a state of slavery. We are not a nation that was captured. We were a

family that was enslaved and in that state of slavery we morphed into a nation. We were born in slavery. There was never a moment when we were autonomous. With HaShem's redemption from Egypt, we kept our state of slavery. Instead of being slaves to Pharaoh we became slaves to HaShem.

Behold! The very slavery of our people is what facilitated our becoming the chattel of HaShem.

When we celebrate our redemption on the night of the Seder. We are not merely celebrating our redemption. We are celebrating our going into slavery as well.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

**Paysach Diskind**





## SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION

### CHICKEN & CHICKEN SOUP

Last week we learned about the lemon and how it can help a person with a sore throat. This week, let's learn a bit about another home remedy for colds; Chicken Soup.

Let's learn a bit about the chicken first, and then we will dive into the soup.

Last week we learned that the lemon was artificially cultivated in China. Can you guess where chickens were first bred, and where chicken soup was first documented? Good guess. China.

The chicken, whose scientific name is *Gallus gallus domesticus*, is a domestic subspecies of the red junglefowl that is native to southeast Asia. It is a member of the pheasant family. You may recall that pheasant, slav, was fed to the Bnei Yisrael in the desert.

The chicken was domesticated in the area of southwestern China, northern Thailand and Myanmar. However, scientists say that the Chinese did not originally domesticate it for food. They rather first domesticated it for the purpose of cockfights and for special ceremonies. Chickens were not kept for food until the time of the Greeks, in the Hellenistic period (4th–2nd centuries BCE).

Are chickens docile vegetarians? The truth is, they are not. They eat both vegetables and animals. They are omnivores. Besides eating seeds, grass and grain, they will catch and eat insects, lizards, toads, and even field mice.

Did you know that chickens can fly and they can also run very fast? Chickens can't fly long distances, but they can fly enough to get up high in a tree or go over a fence for better foraging. They can run up to 9 mph in short bursts, but their real power is they can turn on a dime. This speed and agility helps keep them safe from predators.

Would you believe that chickens are very intelligent, have great memories and can recognize over 100 faces? People with backyard chickens can attest to the fact that their chickens know them and each member of their family. They can even recognize different animals too, such as your dogs and cats. Chickens also remember places and different members of their flock, even after months apart. Chickens are intelligent creatures that can demonstrate complex problem-solving skills and have super-sensory powers such as telescopic eyesight and almost 360-degree vision like owls. They comprehend cause and effect, pass on their knowledge to their children, demonstrate self-control and even worry.

Now let's get to our discussion about Chicken Soup. The earliest recorded evidence of chicken soup being used as a therapeutic dish dates back to Chinese antiquity. In the second century BCE, the Chinese medical text, Huangdi Neijing, declared that chicken soup is a "yang food" – a warming dish – to which different therapeutic herbs can be added to cure various diseases.

In the second century CE, the Greek physician Galen recommended chicken soup as a cure for migraine, leprosy, constipation and fever.

1204), recommended chicken soup for the weak and the sick.

Modern research has confirmed the beneficial effects of chicken soup. According to WebMD, in at least two research studies chicken soup appears to help fight colds.

Research shows it may have a mild anti-inflammatory effect that can help ease cold symptoms and ease symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections. Researchers specifically studied the movement of neutrophils – a type of white blood cell – when combined with soup. They found that the movement of neutrophils was reduced in the presence of soup, suggesting a possible anti-inflammatory mechanism that could alleviate cold symptoms.

Additionally, it helps clear nasal congestion as well as thin mucus so you can better cough it up. The aroma, spices and heat from chicken soup could help clear sinuses and improve symptoms of infection among people with respiratory problems. Hot chicken soup is more effective than hot water in stimulating the mucociliary transport system, which helps move things along in the upper and lower respiratory tract, allowing the body to rid itself of particles and infection. The mucociliary transport system is important for getting rid of every respiratory infection, including colds. Whatever can make airways clear up faster may decrease the risk of infection or clear an existing infection."

Sipping hot fluids helps to warm the bottom of your nasal pharynx, which can also help improve symptoms. Chicken soup can offer a nutrient-dense food option when someone is struggling with a poor appetite. It can also help increase hydration during a time when this could be a challenge.

Most chicken soups contain ingredients that provide lots of vitamins and minerals. For example, carrots provide your body with vitamin A, a nutrient that plays a role in the immune response. Chicken stock contains zinc which may help fight a cold when consumed in high amounts. Vegetables such as carrots, celery, and onion have vitamins C and K, and other antioxidants and minerals. Not only does this help build a healthy immune system to fight off viruses, but it also helps your body recover from illness more quickly. Chicken may help with the repair of body tissue and contains the amino acid cysteine.

Chicken is also high in tryptophan, which helps your body produce serotonin that can enhance your mood and give you the feeling of 'comfort' that helps make chicken soup a true comfort food.

Of course, the environment in which chicken soup is often eaten helps, too. Researchers have made the point that when you are feeling ill if someone is taking care of you, that tender loving care is not just a placebo effect. There are clearly beneficial effects of that. So if someone is sitting there and making you chicken soup, it may make you feel better and whether it has to do with the contents of the chicken soup may be irrelevant.

## I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO BE SELF-CONSCIOUS

When Rav Yosef Tendler first came to Ner Yisrael to teach, he applied for a twelfth grade position. Rav Tendler, who had never stood before a classroom to teach, was told By Rav Yaakov Weinberg to prepare three days of shiurim for the twelfth grade. When he arrived in Baltimore, however, Rabbi Weinberg asked him to present his sample shiur to the tenth grade instead.

Rav Tendler was taken aback by this, but didn't question Rabbi Weinberg. He delivered the shiur, yet no one from the administration had come to the classroom to observe him. He was perturbed because he had left his wife with two young children and traveled so far for a trial lesson that was seemingly ignored. He was also disturbed by having been given the tenth grade class to teach, although he was applying for the twelfth grade position.

Rav Tendler discussed the matter with Rabbi Gershon Weiss who was similarly puzzled. Rabbi Weiss spoke with Rabbi Weinberg, who reassured him that there was nothing to worry about.

The next day was a repeat of the first. Rav Tendler was scheduled to meet after that second shiur with Rabbi Weinberg. Before they spoke, Rabbi Weinberg took him to the tenth grade room, and showed him a vent in the wall.

Rabbi Weinberg then explained his mysterious behavior, "That vent goes straight to the administrative offices. I knew that you had never been in front of a class before, and didn't want you to be self-conscious. To alleviate that pressure, we chose the tenth grade room so that I could sit behind the wall and listen to every word."

Rav Tendler was hired and the rest is history.

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Reb Nachum Velvel Dessler inherited his father's (Rav Eliyahu Dessler) power of speech, especially his power of vivid description. He was once asked to speak at a simchah after a distinguished talmid chacham from Vilna. The preceding speaker had spoken very poorly. Reb Nachum Velvel absolutely refused to speak after the Rav, despite numerous entreaties. He later explained to his family that he feared that he would embarrass the previous speaker.

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**Pictured:** Rav Yaakov Weinberg as a young man



### THE ANSWER

**Regarding last week's question about the parking lot, Rav Zilberstein wrote that he should not allow people to park there on Shabbos. This is because it gives the impression that he doesn't care that Shabbos is being violated.**

This week's TableTalk is dedicated in memory Maytie Deitcher

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