

Youthful

Wonders of Creation

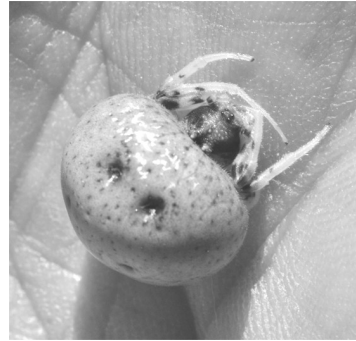
-- special thanks to Alex Isaacson for the content

Bolas Spiders are known as “fishing spiders.” Instead of spinning the web, they hunt by using a sticky 'capture blob' of silk on the end of a line, known as a 'bolas'.

How large are these “fisherman?” They grow up to a length of just half an inch! Actually, being small is a great benefit to them. How so? Their small size and the bleak

appearance make them look like dirt. This enables them to rest unnoticed. This is a form of a defensive trick that Hashem gave to them. Perhaps, a fascinating lesson is learned from this spider – being small and unnoticeable is a great natural shield.

What is a ‘delicacy’ of these tiny but mighty creatures? Big moths! There is a challenge though in capturing moths, because only their scales will stick to the spider’s ‘fisherman net’, which in turn allows a moth to escape. To solve this, Hashem made the spider’s net very long. When a moth slides down this net, it leaves a trail of scales until its body sticks to the net. Certain spiders that also specialize in moth capture use threads that are beaded with sticky ‘balls’. And some of these spiders use chemical attractants to lure the moths closer to them!



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◆ Please, don't read me during tefilla, kadish, etc. ◆

Menucha

A Shabbos table companion for the whole family

Volume V, Issue No. 16

בשלה

5776

Challenges

TOPIC

Halacha Challenge

Spider Webs on the Ceiling



On *erev* Shabbos, the Schneider family was busy getting things ready for their special guest – Shabbos Kodesh. Mrs. Schneider was cutting up vegetables for a salad, Mr. Schneider was polishing shoes, and the kids were sweeping away dirt and spider webs from the dining room floor. "All done!" cheerfully said the older brother Zevi. His sister, Devori looked around the room to make sure that it was, in fact, clean. Then, she pointed to the ceiling and said: "Look! In that corner, there is a spider web. We can easily reach it with a broom and remove it." Then, their youngest brother, Chaim said: "Actually, we have a spider web in every corner on the ceiling!" The kids looked around, and saw that Chaim was right. "But why do we need to remove those spider webs before Shabbos?" wondered Zevi. "They don't make our room look dirty!"

Question: Should the spider webs be removed from the ceiling?



Dedications

- by *anonymous sponsor*, in honor of *his friend*

Menucha thanks all of the co-sponsors of this week's issue.

Special thanks to *kehillas* **Beis Tefillah Yonah Avraham** for all of their help.



◆ requires geniza ◆

Menucha's Answer: Yes.

Explanation: It may be true that spider webs that are not in the eye's view don't make the room look dirty. However, removing spider webs on *erev Shabbos* from a Jewish home has additional reasons for it.

The Midrash *Shochar Tov* on Mishlei (§30) says that a spider represents the nation of Edom who destroyed the Beis Hamikdash. Shlomo HaMelech hinted to this in Mishlei (30:28): וְהִיא בְּהִיכָלֵי מְלֶכֶךְ, שְׂמִמִּית בְּיָדֶיהָ תִּתְפֹּשׂ, — *A spider captures with its hands, and it is in the king's palace.* The Midrash explains, that the "king's palace" in the verse is referring to 'the palace of the King of the world' - the Beis Hamikdash, and 'a spider' is Edom who went inside that palace to destroy it.

The book *Shabbos Secrets* writes the following on this topic (p. 49-50):

Why is Friday the day designated for dusting the house and removing all spider webs? Some spiders have seven legs, corresponding to the seven nations living in the land of Canaan who wanted to overthrow Hashem's rule. Furthermore, spiders contributed to the fire that destroyed the Beis Hamikdash. Since on Shabbos Hashem dwells among us, we remove all the spiders which want to crush the holiness of Shabbos...(Reishis Chochma)

Removing spider webs on *erev Shabbos* from the ceilings is discussed also in *halachic* works. In the section of Laws of Shabbos, the *Aruch Hashulchan* writes the following about the topic (OC 262:1):

In honor of Shabbos, a person should remove spider webs from the walls and the ceilings.

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**Summary from the last two weeks:** The Rambam explains [Laws of Shabbos 30:1], the *mitzva* of *Kavod Shabbos* (honoring Shabbos) was taught to us by the *navi* Yeshayahu [58:13] - וְקָרְאתָ "...לְשַׁבֵּת...לְקַדוֹשׁ ה' מְכֻבָּד..." - "And if you establish Shabbos...the holy [day] of Hashem [to be] 'honored'..." Besides being clean and looking nice, part of honoring Shabbos is making the home look presentable. The source of this *halacha* is the *Braisa* of Rabbi Yosi bar Yehuda [Shabbos 119b] : "Two Malachei HaShares escort a person from shul to his home on *erev* (i.e. *leil*) Shabbos...and when the man comes to his house and finds a lit candle, and a set table and a [nicely] covered bed, a good Malach says: 'May the will be that it will be like this next Shabbos!...' The *Mishna Berura* teaches that as part of the *mitzva* of *Kavod Shabbos*, one needs to sweep away dust and dirt in his home on *erev Shabbos*. Also the *Mishna Berura* writes: "[In order to] clean the house in honor of Shabbos, it is good to remove **spider webs** from the house during the day (i.e., on *erev Shabbos*)." [ibid. 262:3]

**Riddle**



*I am not a kangaroo,  
 And you won't find me in a zoo.*

*I am a living creature. That is true.  
 And in Beshalach my family will appear for you.*

*You think I am a horse?  
 Compared to me, it has a greater force.*

*A "Farm Animal" is not me at all.  
 So who am I after all?!*

**Answer to the last riddle**

**RIDDLE**

*In this week's parsha we are given the precious mitzva of eating matza...At his Pesach seder, Mr. Roger said HaMotzi & Al Achilas Matza and began eating the matza. "Interesting," he thought "I am not hungry, yet I had to say HaMotzi. Well that's because I love matza!" Then, Mr. Roger realized that tomorrow afternoon, before Mincha, he will need to eat a certain food on which he will need to say the bracha of Shehakol, yet he never enjoys the taste of that particular food at all. Besides that, he will, certainly, not be hungry, since he will have already eaten a Yom Tov seuda by that time. And did Mr. Roger tell you that he runs a marathon once a year and eats a pound of fresh veggies daily? Well, if he didn't, just know that Mr. Roger is a very healthy man. If so, why will Mr. Roger be eating that 'certain food' before Mincha tomorrow? And moreover, why will he need to say a bracha before eating it?!*

**ANSWER**

Mr. Roger is a *chazan* and he will be *davening* for the *amud* at Mincha. In order to have clear voice, he always eats a raw egg before leading the *tefilla*.

Interestingly, this case is discussed in *halacha*. The *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* [50:8] writes regarding a person who ate a raw egg to make his voice clear: "...although he does not enjoy its taste, he benefits from its nourishment, since [an egg] provides nourishment. And he makes a bracha on it."