

Such Wonderful Air

Special thanks to Revach L'Neshama for the story

Rav Avigdor Miller was known for his emphasis on appreciating the wonder and beauty of nature and the vast wisdom of the world that Hashem created among a multitude of other qualities from which we can learn so much. This classic story epitomizes his constant focus on appreciation for Hashem.

Once, a grandchild visited Rav Miller at home and was puzzled to see his grandfather with his face in the sink. After a few minutes, Rav Miller stood up, and breathed deeply. "The air is so wonderful," he said.

His grandchild said, "Why was your face in the water for so long that you couldn't even breathe properly?" Rav Miller said, "On my way home, someone started talking to me and commented that lately, the air has been polluted. I didn't want my appreciation of Hashem's air to lessen, so I decided to deepen my appreciation of air. After depriving myself of air for just a short while, I now am even more thankful to Hashem for providing us with such wonderful air. ♦

A Lesson From Mishlei

רִדְף צְדָקָה וְחֶסֶד יִמְצָא חַיִּים צְדָקָה וְכַבֹּד. [משלי כא: כא]

A person "chases" giving charity and doing kind deeds, by fulfilling them without a delay.

[see the commentaries of Ibn Ezra]

Contact info: menucha613@gmail.com

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Halacha Challenge



וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי לְקַטוֹ לֶחֶם מִשְׁנֵה... [שמות טז:כב]

אמר רבי אבא, בשבת חייב אדם לבצוע על שתי ככרות דכתיב להם משנה. [גמ' שבת קיז:]

Challah Repair

by Shlomo Epshteyn

The kids of the Bluberg family started setting up for the Shalosh Seudos. "Imma - you made such tasty challahs this week," said Yossi, as he was taking the challahs out of the fridge. After a moment, everyone noticed a change of expression on his face. "What's wrong?" his mother asked. "Look, Imma. Somehow one of the challahs got broken in half." His sister Sari shook her head and said, "Oh no! Those were our last two whole ones!" Overseeing all of his, 4-year Boruch, started thinking for a solution. A moment later, he said, "I know! Let's repair the broken challah!" Yossi and Sari barely stopped themselves from laughing at little Boruch's idea.

Question: Is Boruch's idea something to be laughed at?

Answer: Not at all. If the challah's halves will be connected and appear as one challah,¹ then it will be considered as "shalem" (whole) for Lechem Mishne.² This can be achieved by inserting a stick-type object³ into one half of the challah, leaving the other end of the object sticking out; and then, pushing the second half of the challah onto it.⁴

[1] It should not be noticeable that the challah is composed of two halves (unless a person is looking up-close at it). [2] One should not use the repaired challah for Lechem Mishne if he has another whole challah (roll, matzah, etc.) that was never broken before. [3] A non-muktza object should not be used for this purpose. [4] The connection should be strong enough, that if a person would hold one half of the challah, the other half would not break off.



This week's issue is dedicated by the Aish Kodesh community, in honor of Rabbi Ari N. Enkin, on the occasion of his new book (Eilu V'eilu) release.

Explanation: Gemorah Shabbos [117b] cites the following halacha: "Rabbi Abba said: On Shabbos, a person is obligated to break bread over two loaves, because the verse in the Torah [Shemos 17:22] says lechem mishne (double portion of bread)" [The expression "breaking bread" refers to saying the bracha of hamotzi. Hence, R' Abba is teaching us that when a person is reciting the bracha of hamotzi, he should hold two challas in his hands.] The Aruch Hashulchan explains that the words "lechem mishne" in that verse are redundant, since the verse already said "two omer amounts [of manna] per person". As such, the phrase "lechem mishne" is there for a drasha – to teach us that on Shabbos, when a person makes a seuda, he needs to have two challas over which he will make the bracha of hamotzi. Borrowing from the words of that verse, "Lechem Mishne" became in Klal Yisroel the name of this obligation.

[By fulfilling the mitzva of Lechem Mishne, we remember the miracle of manna. As an interesting side note, the Midrash [Bereishis Rabba, parshas Vey'chi] teaches that Hashem provides parnasa to each person on a daily basis. Perhaps then, the mitzva of Lechem Mishne on Shabbos is not just to remind us of the miracle of manna in the desert, but rather, it is a one-day-a week opportunity for a person to be reminded of his own personal manna that's granted to him every single day.]

To fulfill the mitzva of Lechem Mishne properly, one needs challas that area whole. It appears from the commentary of the Vilna Gaon on the Shulchan Aruch [O.C. 274:1] that this is also derived from the words "lechem mishne" in the Torah. How so? As we know, by Pesach Seder we must have one broken matzah on the table, because the Torah refers to matzah as "lechem oni" - a bread of poverty. Our sages explain that a bread of poverty is bread that's not whole [Berachos 39b]. Consequently, the word "lechem" on its own, refers to bread that is whole. Hence, "lechem mishne" means two portions of whole bread.

Now, to understand why joining two halves of challah gives it a status of shalem (whole) for the mitzva of Lechem Mishna, we need to look at a certain halacha in the laws of Eiruv. When making an eiruv in the courtyard, each family needs to contribute its share of bread for the common eiruv. However, Chazal made a g'zeira in this halacha: one may only give a loaf of bread that's shalem. What's the need for such a g'zeira? If people would be allowed to give even a slice of bread, a quarrel may occur, where one person will say: "I contributed a whole loaf, while you contributed only a slice!" Hence, to preserve shalom in communities, the g'zeira was enacted, obligating everyone to contribute a loaf that is shalem. [Eiruv 81b]

Regarding this g'zeira, the Gemora Eiruv [ibid.] cites a ruling of Rav Chisda: "If a person "sewed up" the [broken] loaf with a stick, then he can use it for the eiruv." The Gemora, does indicate though, that this can only be true if, after joining the two halves, it will not be visible [at the place where halves come together (Rashi, ibid.)] that the loaf is composed of two parts.

The poskim rule that this din is also applicable to the challah of Lechem Mishne: Just like in the laws of Eiruv, "repairing" the broken loaf, helps it to re-gain the status of shalem, so too, "repairing" a broken challah, helps it to re-gain the status of shalem for the mitzva of Lechem Mishne [O.C. 168:2]. ♦

Koala

by Alex Isaacson



While similar in appearance to bears, the Koala is not in fact a bear. They are amazing creatures however. From diet to digestion, to human similarities, the Koala are quite a curiosity. A male can weigh up to 31lbs, and be a little over 2.5 feet tall. They have sharp claws to assist with climbing tree trunks, live up to 18 years, and also have two opposable thumbs to provide better gripping ability. Its closest living relative is the wombat. The Koala, however, has a thicker coat, much larger ears, and longer limbs.

It is a nocturnal marsupial and lives almost entirely on Eucalyptus leaves which are tough, toxic and low in nutrition. Because of its powerful jaws however, the Koala are able to chew up the Eucalyptus into a very fine paste before swallowing. The caecum (or pouch) similar to the human appendix, completes the process by changing the eucalyptus leaves into digestible nutrients.

The Koala has a very low metabolic rate for a mammal. Amazingly, it rests motionless for about 16 to 18 hours a day, sleeping most of that time, and eats during the 5 hours that it's awake. Interestingly, Koalas are one of the few mammals (other than primates) that have fingerprints. Another peculiar thing about it is that when under stress, Koala may issue a loud cry, which has been reported as similar to that of a human baby. ♦

Riddles

Riddle



Answer to the last issue's riddle

Why was Heshy, who was a not tall man, consoled after learning siman 168 of the Shulchan Aruch?

(*Riddle:* What non-food mitzva is similar to the mitzva of eating the Matza - in that you first make a bracha and then you bring something to the mouth?)

ANSWER: Shofar