



A MITZVA DILEMMA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



DOG IN PUBLIC PROPERTY

By Rabbi Yitzi Weiner

Avi lived in Eretz Yisrael and loved the Yom Tov of Sukkos. He built his sukkah on the sidewalk in front of his house. He did not own the property, but no one objected. On Sukkos he wanted to make a siyum, and his wife cooked many fleishig dishes, including sausages and steaks. He invited a large group of friends to join.

When everyone gathered, they realized that a nearby maariv was about to begin. They left the food in the sukkah for a few minutes so they could daven, and the sukkah was empty.

When they returned, they were shocked. A dog with a collar was inside, eating



DON'T JUDGE A PERSON BY HIS CLOTHING

When Yaakov approached his father, Yitzchok, under the guise of being Eivsov, Yitzchok smelled the scent of his clothing and remarked "Behold, the scent of my son is that of the scent of the field which HaShem blessed". After this remark he immediately pronounced his blessing upon Yaakov. Why was this smell so significant?

The Hebrew word for clothing 'begodim' can also be vowelized as 'bogdim' which means those who rebel. Our Sages teach us that when Yaakov approached his father, Yitzchok caught a scent of Yaakov's future descendants who would reject HaShem and His Torah.

Throughout our long enduring history there are many stories of Jews who in their earlier stages of life rejected HaShem but when enemies rose up against them to push them further in their rejection they fought back with the greatest dedication to HaShem and to His Torah. There is a story of a Jewish inmate in a German concentration camp who had already stopped wearing tefillin long before the Nazis came to power. And yet, in spite of his initial rejection of tefillin, he began wearing tefillin in the camp and even endangered his life to don the tefillin in the presence of the commandant.

Our Sages explain that this is the intent of the scent that Yitzchok smelled in Yaakov's clothing. The 'begodim' of Yaakov carried a holy scent, that of the field of HaShem. Even those descendants of Yaakov who will reject HaShem

the meat. Avi recognized the dog. Most of the food had been eaten or at least tasted, and it was no longer usable for the siyum. Eventually, Avi's wife managed to prepare something quickly, and they also ordered takeout. The siyum turned out fine in the end.

Afterward, Avi approached the dog's owner, a neighbor named Yaakov, and said, "Your dog went into my sukkah and caused all this damage. I lost all the meat, and I had to order new food. I think you have to pay for all of this damage."

Yaakov responded, "I understand, but your sukkah is in the middle of the sidewalk. My dog is allowed to walk on the sidewalk. He found an empty sukkah, and I'm not obligated to pay. You did not have the right to build the sukkah in that spot."

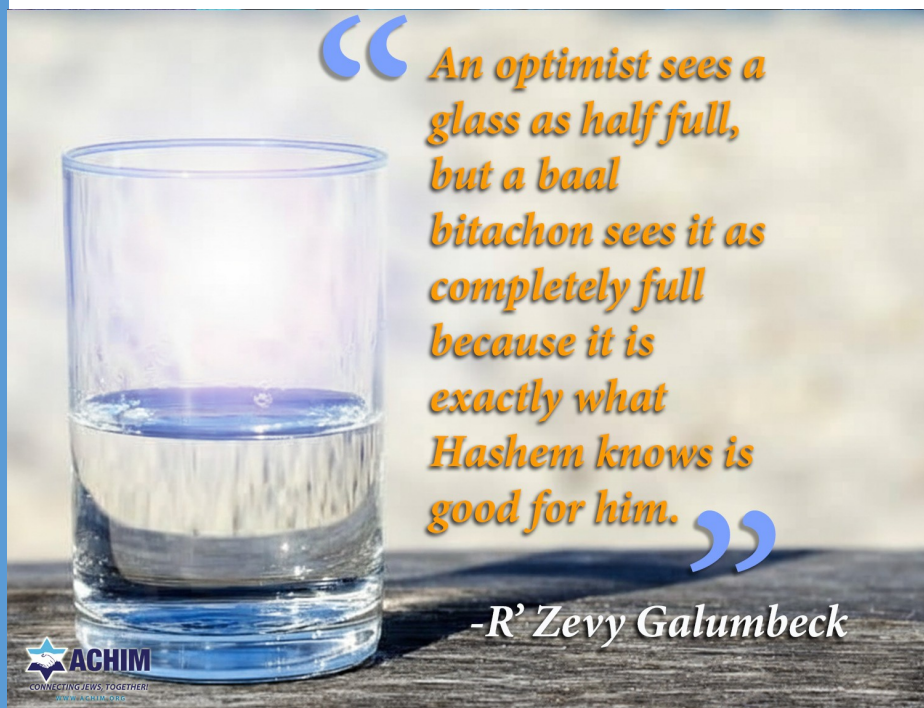
They agreed to bring the question to a din Torah.

Is the owner of the dog responsible because the dog entered someone's sukkah? Or do we say that since the sukkah was built on public property, is it not considered Avi's protected space, making the dog's presence permissible?

What do you think?

See Veharev Na Volume Four Hebrew Edition Page 479

MITZVA MEME



still have the scent of the field blessed by HaShem. In the deepest recesses of the Jewish neshama lies a holiness of the field which HaShem blessed.

The clothing of a person is considered part of him as he is permitted to wear his clothing on Shabbos and it is not considered that he is carrying. At the same time we recognize that it is not the person himself. Our Sages view clothing as an expression of the one who wears it but not necessarily a definition of who he is. When Yitzchok smelled the scent of Yaakov's clothing as being the scent of HaShem's field, he recognized that the rejection of Yaakov's descendants is only their clothing, it is only their expression. It is not who they essentially are. Every Jew is essentially a spark of HaShem and carries the greatest kedusha. Unfortunately, it sometimes gets covered with a garment that does not reflect that holiness. In spite of its unholy cover-

ing, the Jewish neshama always carries the scent of the field that was blessed by HaShem.

Rabbi Shlomo Porter, a most beloved person, a father and mentor to hundreds upon hundreds and perhaps thousands upon thousands of people, passed away this week. Among the many gifts Reb Shlomo blessed his community was his remarkable ability to smell the scent of holiness in people who seemed to be dressed in the most unholy clothing. So often people are judged by their clothing or even by their behavior and are identified in a negative light. Reb Shlomo saw the greatness and nobility of every Jew.

In one situation a person was verbally abusing Reb Shlomo in a very harsh way. Reb Shlomo listened to him trying to appreciate the pain this person was in. He understood this person's abuse came from the pain of a holy Jew and not from an evil person.

May the memory of Reb Shlomo continue to be an inspiration to our community.

Have a wonderful Shabbos.

Paysach Diskind



SHABBOS: CELEBRATING HASHEM'S CREATION THE GRAPEFRUIT

Why is a grapefruit called a grape fruit? Is it related to grapes? Let's explore this fascinating fruit together.

When you peel open a grapefruit and taste that zingy mix of sweet and sour, you're biting into one of nature's happiest "accidents". This fruit wasn't planned, planted, or perfected by humans at all. It showed up on its own, born from a quiet act of Providence somewhere in the warm breezes of the Caribbean.

Long before scientists began tinkering with fruit genetics, two different kinds of citrus were growing side by side on the island of Barbados. One was the pomelo (Pictured, right), a big, gentle giant of the citrus family from Southeast Asia. The other was the sweet orange, already a hybrid itself from a mix of pomelo and mandarin. Sometime in the 1600s, a bee or a gust of wind carried a bit of pollen from one to the other. That tiny dusting of life created a new fruit that no one had seen before, one with the large size of a pomelo and the sunny color and sweetness of an orange, yet with its own mysterious tang.

When islanders first found the new fruit, they didn't have a name for it. It grew in tight grape-like bunches on its branches, (Pictured, left) so people started calling it "grapefruit." But before that, it had an even more exciting name: the forbidden fruit of Barbados. Reverend Griffith Hughes, a British naturalist, wrote about it in 1750. He described the strange new citrus as if it were something rare and magical, hanging among the palm fronds like treasure. Nobody then could have guessed that this accidental hybrid would someday travel the world, feed millions, inspire strange diets, and even glow under blacklight.

The grapefruit's parents couldn't have been more different. The pomelo, *Citrus maxima*, is mild and fragrant. Its rind is thick, and its flesh can be almost as big as a human head. The sweet orange, *Citrus x sinensis*, is smaller, juicier, and far sweeter. When Hashem crossed the two, it produced something unexpected: a citrus with the pomelo's size, the orange's color, and a new taste that made people raise an eyebrow.

That flavor, tart, a little bitter, and sharply refreshing, comes from a compound called naringin. You can find naringin mostly in the white pith under the peel. It's what gives grapefruit its famous bite. Some people love it; others find it too sharp. That difference comes down to genetics. Certain people have extra-sensitive taste receptors for bitterness, so one person might call grapefruit refreshing while another puckers up after one bite. There's a simple trick for the sensitive crowd. A sprinkle of salt on the fruit actually blocks the tongue's bitter receptors, making the grapefruit taste sweeter. It's a little kitchen chemistry that people have used for generations.

For decades after its discovery, the grapefruit grew quietly in the Caribbean. Sailors passing through Barbados spread its seeds to other islands and then to Florida. In 1823, a French settler named Count Odet Philippe planted the first grapefruit trees in the Tampa Bay area. Florida's warm, sunny climate turned out to be perfect for them.

Still, the fruit wasn't an instant hit. People were used to the

sweetness of oranges, and grapefruits seemed strange and sour in comparison. But slowly, curiosity took hold. Victorians in England began serving them as an exotic luxury breakfast item, often with sugar sprinkled on top. In the United States, their popularity exploded after 1900, when large-scale citrus farms began producing them by the millions.

By the early 1900s, Florida had become the grapefruit capital of the world. Newspapers even joked that the state bird should be the "ruby red." Texas soon joined in, growing its own sweeter varieties in the Rio Grande Valley. A farmer there discovered a single branch on one of his trees with bright red fruit instead of the usual pale yellow. That one lucky branch gave rise to the Ruby Red grapefruit, the first naturally sweeter type. It became so successful that in 1929 it earned the first U.S. patent ever granted for a citrus fruit.

If you've ever noticed that pink and red grapefruits taste sweeter than white ones, there's a colorful reason. The blush in the flesh comes from lycopene, the same natural pigment that colors watermelon and tomatoes. Lycopene isn't just pretty; it adds a subtle fruitiness that softens the sour tang.

White grapefruits, like the original Barbados kind, are sharper and more bitter because they have less lycopene and more naringin. Ruby reds sit at the other end of the scale, mellow, juicy, and just the right balance of sweet and tart.

For all its citrus cousins, the grapefruit is one of the strangest. Botanically speaking, it's a berry, just a very big one, packed with nearly a cup of juice per fruit. The peel holds aromatic oils that perfumers use to create crisp, clean scents. In the wild, the same oils help the fruit repel hungry insects. A healthy grapefruit tree can live and bear fruit for up to fifty years, sometimes producing more than a thousand pounds of fruit in a single season.

The grapefruit's story has a few odd chapters. One of the funniest took place in 1915, when a baseball manager named Wilbert Robinson agreed to catch a baseball dropped from an airplane as a publicity stunt. The pilot, either mischievous or confused, tossed out a grapefruit instead. It burst all over Robinson's uniform, and he thought he'd been hit and was bleeding. When he tasted the "blood" and realized it was juice, he laughed, and the grapefruit gained a bit of fame in baseball lore.

In a more serious twist, scientists later discovered that grapefruit can interfere with certain medications. It blocks an enzyme in the intestines that breaks down drugs, allowing too much of them to enter the bloodstream. Doctors now warn patients about this interaction, which shows that even a humble fruit can have powerful chemistry hidden inside it.

Another surprise lies in the rind. When exposed to ultraviolet light, compounds in the peel glow faintly under blacklight. Teachers sometimes use it as a fun science demonstration, showing kids how living chemistry hides in everyday fruit.

Thank you Hashem for Your wondrous world!

HE CALMLY OPENED THE DRIVER'S DOOR, PUT HIS FOOT ON THE GROUND, AND PUSHED THE CAR FORWARD UNTIL THE ENGINE CAUGHT

Rabbi Shlomo Porter was the heartbeat of the Baltimore Jewish community, a man defined by his warmth, his depth, and a quality best described as geshmak. As the Founder of Etz Chaim, he was not merely an outreach professional but a father, friend, teacher, and mentor to thousands. It was said that to know him was to know twenty people wrapped in one; he was a "unity of many things," much like the songs he loved to sing.

Rabbi Porter's worldview was forged by the extraordinary resilience of his parents. His parents were partisans who fought against the Nazis, and his mother was the sole survivor of her family. Despite the horrors she witnessed, her enduring message to her son was, "Zei freilach Yidden" (Be happy Yidden). She also instilled in him an uncompromising reverence for Shabbos, telling him that when they came to America, it would have been better to be killed by the Nazis than to be mechalel Shabbos (desecrate the Sabbath). This intensity of connection to Shabbos became Rabbi Porter's hallmark and fittingly, his neshamah (soul) left this world on Shabbos.

While he was famous for outreach (kiruv), his impact was rooted in deep scholarship. The Brisker Rav once noted that if a teacher of the aleph-beis is also an expert in the entirety of the Talmud, his teaching of the aleph-beis is on a completely different plane. This was Rabbi Porter. Because he was an expert scholar, his teaching of even the basics contained profound depth.

While he led the organization Etz Chaim, the true "Tree of Life" was the Porter home and his Shabbos table. Many organizations spun off from Etz Chaim, **including Achim, and this TableTalk**, but in reality, they all spun from the "Porter heart."

He possessed a magnetic authenticity. Speaking with him for just a few minutes felt like standing under a "waterfall of spirit." Yet he operated with a profound menuchas hanefesh (calmness of soul).

Rabbi Shlomo Porter was once driving with his son-in-law. They were in a blue car that had a habit of stalling. One day the car stalled again, and Rabbi Porter, without missing a beat, calmly opened the driver's door, put his foot on the ground, and pushed the car forward until the engine caught. That was how Rav Porter handled many "stalls" in life, with menuchas hanefesh and steady calm. He showed how much a person can accomplish with the strength that comes from menuchas hanefesh.

The world feels colder now without his warmth. However, his legacy is vast, predicted to be clearly visible even five generations from now. He left behind a community transformed by his laughter, his learning, and his unshakeable belief that being a Jew is, above all, geshmak.



THE ANSWER

Regarding last week's question about the minyan outside, Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein (Veharev Na Volume Four Hebrew Edition page 499) answered that if non-religious people are still coming to join from off the street, it is best to keep the minyan outside for as long as possible, even after COVID no longer required it. That takes priority over moving the minyan back inside the shul.

L'Zecher Nishmas **HaRav Meir Shruga ben R' Eliyahu** v'zugoso **Fraida Miriam bas HaRav Elozer Beinisch Zywica**
R' Eliyahu Yosef Ben HaRav Meir Shruga v'zugoso **Esther Miriam bas R' Tzvi Moshe Zywica**
Moras Laya Bracha bas HaRav Elozer Beinisch Friedlander
Moras Aviva bas HaRav Shmuel Yaakov Weisbord

May their Neshamos have an Aliya and may they be "Gutta Beters" for us & Gantz K'llal Yisroel.

Yossie & Chaya Krieger



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