

THE DIALOGUE

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It's Our World!

The Torah tells us, "When entering a conquered country, don't destroy its fruit trees." Miamonides extends this restriction to wanton destruction of any objects.

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Actually, what I mean to say is we here on your chilly shelves feel like we really have purpose. I'll explain a little more...

We spend our days, noodling about, quietly sitting inside the dark, bitty fridge walls where you or your little sister, Betsy, put us. (It's a known fact that nice children help their parents put away food!) "Psst..." I whispered to the salsa. "Take a look at those reading glasses someone left inside here next to the spaghetti!" Yes, life here is okay, but each time we see a crack of light, we all stiffen up, look our best and hope we'll be the next one chosen. How my heart leaps when it is me or one of my closest friends like Miss Ketchup or Dr. Relish. It is our sincere hope to be used and appreciated for what's inside our packages. The real reason that I am sharing this with you now is that I just saw something that revealed a sad thing in the outside world. It made my community and myself very blue, very blue indeed. Someone left the refrigerator door OPEN and Chicken Soup was dribbling outside of its Tupperware on a kitchen chair, right where Gabe was supposed to be enjoying her, fueling up his hungry body and clever, mind so he can do his homework, help

TORAHpedia

Lesson 2: בל תשחית

Bal Tashchit

DON'T WASTE

In the Torah, Hashem clearly lays out the expectation that we respect the value of everything in the world and take care not to waste. The Torah's words are framed in the context of a conquering army invading its enemy's turf. Even in that situation - a soldier is focused on war - we are warned to be careful. *"When entering a conquered country, don't destroy its fruit trees."* So clearly the Torah tells us not to destroy things. Hashem explicitly forbids destroying fruit trees; we can easily see the shame in the waste of a productive fruit tree. Certainly, the mitzvah doesn't only apply to fruit trees; it applies to any object. We humans have the powerful and important "job" of taking care of the world. One part of that job is protecting the eco-system. The eco-system is a word we use to describe the interaction of nature, plants, animals and humans within our world. We have to protect Hashem's earth-system.

Have you ever wondered what goes on inside the refrigerator when the door is closed?! Well, I feel quite privileged to share that information with you, because I am a bottle of mustard. We beauteous jars, packets and lasagna leftover dishes are people, too! Sort of.

his family, and prepare to do all the wonderful mitzvot that he does. We all rejoiced for Chicken Soup when she was picked for Gabe's dinner tonight. For we knew it meant that he'd be the one with the honor of helping him do the wondrous things we know he does. But why was Chicken Soup just laying there like that? Helpless and going to waste... I'll imagine that the sight tugs at your heart, too.

You see, our very wise G-d made our whole world just right, in a way that everything is important. There's just enough for all the creatures if we remember to use everything G-d gives us. We can share what we don't need or find some other way to use it. G-d

Maybe Gabe
heard the
commotion going
on behind the
fridge door...

has a dream that the world will be filled with people who know how special each and every thing, person and

creature is. He gave us the awesome job of taking care of this world and remember that it's his beautiful kingdom.

Maybe Gabe heard the commotion going on behind the fridge door, as he came inside and carefully poured his soup into a bowl and made a Hebrew blessing over his food. *Baruch Atoh-Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech HaOlam, shehakol ni-yeh beedva-roh. Blessed are you, God, King of the Universe, who creates all things!*

After he so happily ate dinner, he helped his grandma to find her glasses. She had been looking and looking for them.



Many things happened to help make the chicken soup into this food Gabe ate!

First, Hashem created a chicken...
A farmer fed the chicken...
The vegetables were planted...
Transportation...

Fill in more ideas:

Finally, Grandma came to visit and prepared dinner.

Imagine if all this effort, time, manpower, etc. went to waste just because someone didn't take the time to care.

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

For hundreds of years, unfortunately, we have not given the world the attention and care it deserves. Today, "Tikun Olam - Taking Care of our World" is certainly a "hot-botton topic". Yet, this mitzvah has been our duty for thousands of years. Hashem expects us to care for the world. We were told this from the creation of the very first humans, Adam and Chava (Eve)...