



# Ohr Somayach Light Lines

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## Light Insight

### *Porkie*

**I**t's a well-known fact that Jews don't eat pork. Why not?

You might hear people say that since refrigerator companies hadn't gotten off the ground in the land of Canaan some three thousand years ago, the Torah forbade eating pork for health reasons. The corollary of that statement is that since we now have wonderful refrigerators, we can now all eat pork.

Alternatively, you might hear some people express their revulsion at our little porcine friends thus: "The pig is a disgusting animal. It grovels around in the dirt.

Its diet is from the most disgusting things that lay on the ground. Even if pig was kosher, I'd never eat it."

The Torah's view is neither of the above. Our Sages says quite clearly that "A person shouldn't say: 'I don't want to eat pig meat or wear *shatnez* (a forbidden mixture of wool and linen).' Rather he should say: 'I do want to do these things, but what can I do — my Father in Heaven ordered me not to do them.'"

It is for this reason that the meal we eat on Shabbat afternoon is called *shalosh seudot*, which translates as "three meals." More accurately, it should be called *seuda shlishit* — "the third meal." So why is this meal called "three meals?" (The answer is not

because you're supposed to eat enough for three meals.)

When a person sits down to eat the first meal of Shabbat on Friday night, he has an appetite built up from the day. Similarly, the second meal of Shabbat on Saturday morning comes at a time when most of us are ready to sit down and enjoy a meal. However, when just a couple of hours after this meal, we are obliged to sit down and eat yet another meal, it becomes clear retroactively that the other two meals were not for the sake of our own stomachs but to honor Shabbat with our eating and drinking. Eating on Shabbat and abstaining from eating pig are both for the same reason — to fulfill the Will of the Creator of the Universe.

## LOVE of the LAND

*Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and the Land of Israel*

### *Yam Hamelach (Dead Sea)*

**T**he lowest spot on the earth's surface, about 394 meters below sea level, Yam Hamelach is commonly known as the Dead Sea because no fish can live in it, and its mineral substances destroy almost all organic life.

A fascinating explanation of how this unusual sea came into being is offered by the great Biblical commen-

tator Rabbi Meir Leibush Malbim. When Abraham parted company with his nephew Lot, the latter is reported to have lifted his eyes and looked at "the entire Jordan plain, which was entirely irrigated before G-d destroyed Sodom and Amorrhah." The Jordan River once created a fertile delta at this plain, compared at the conclusion of this passage to the famous Nile Delta and the "Garden of G-d" in Eden. It was the richness of this well-watered land that attracted Lot to settle in its principal city, the wicked Sodom.

When G-d destroyed Sodom and its

sister cities, this plain turned into a giant crater which became filled with the water of the Jordan running into it. The salt and other minerals contained in the depths of the earth combined with the Jordan waters to form the Dead Sea.

Since the early 1930s, close to 50 million tons of magnesium chloride, sodium chloride, calcium chloride, potassium chloride and magnesium bromide has been reaped from the Dead sea, and today major commercial enterprises farm it for minerals and to make a popular line of health products. It is also considered an attraction for tourists and for those seeking a therapeutic dip in its mineral-rich waters.

## Response Line

### NASDAQ Kosher Snack

Rafi Goldmeier wrote:

*Is a Jew allowed to buy shares in a company like McDonalds? They serve milk cooked with meat, and it is prohibited for Jews to derive any benefit from milk and meat cooked together.*

Dear Rafi,

Many major corporations have investments in restaurants, hotels and food businesses that use mixtures of meat and milk. And as you said, the Torah forbids deriving benefit from meat cooked with milk.

However, many authorities of Jewish law maintain that since you have no rights of ownership in the actual products but rather only dividends from the company's investments, it is permitted to own such stocks.

Rabbi S. Z. Braun addresses a similar question about owning stocks during Passover in a company that makes *chametz*. He writes that "since the stockholder

has no right to do anything at the plant on his own accord, and certainly he has no right to destroy the *chametz*, he is not in violation of owning *chametz*." The same would apply to your question, and therefore you can own McDonalds stock.

Disclaimer: Under no circumstances does the above information represent a recommendation to buy or sell stocks.

And speaking of stocks:

An American financier was vacationing at the pier of a small coastal village when a small boat with a native fisherman pulled up alongside the dock. Inside were several large fish. The American asked the fisherman how long it took to catch them. "Only a little while," he replied. The American then asked why didn't he stay out longer and catch more fish? The fisherman replied, "I have enough to support my family for today."

"What do you do the rest of the day?" asked the American.

"I sleep late, play with my children, take a siesta and stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play guitar."

The American said helpfully, "I

am have an MBA from Harvard, maybe I could help you. If you spend more time fishing, with the proceeds you could buy a bigger boat on which you could catch even more fish. Then, you could buy several boats and eventually have a fleet. Instead of selling your catch to a middleman you could sell directly to the processor, eventually opening your own cannery. You would control the product, processing and distribution. You could leave this small coastal fishing village and move to the big city to run your expanding enterprise."

"How long will all this take?" asked the fisherman.

"About 15 years."

"Then what?"

"Then," smiled the American, "you would announce an IPO and sell stock in your company to the public! You'd make millions!"

"Then what?" asked the fisherman.

"Then," said the American, "you retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you could sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take a siesta and stroll to the village in the evenings to sip wine and play your guitar."

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