



## **MAMLECHET HACHAI: SUPPORTING ANIMALS**

**IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, ISRAEL WAS THE ONLY NATION TO RECOGNIZE THAT ANIMALS EXPERIENCE THE “PAIN OF LIVING BEINGS.”**

- Only in Israel did the law recognize that animals experience pain in the same way that we do, the principle of *tzaar baalei chayyim* (lit., the “pain of living beings”)
- It was Israel that taught the world that animals have a “living soul” and that we should care for them.

**CAN ANYONE TEACH US WHAT THE WORD *TZADIK* MEANS?**

- How many people do you think the Bible refers to as a *tzadik*? (In the whole Bible only two men are referred to as a *tzadik*—Noah and Joseph.)
- Why do you think that they alone were worthy enough to be called a righteous man?
- One thing they have in common is that only they provided food for both humans and animals in times of famine and emergency.

**MANY OF OUR GREATEST JEWISH HEROES IN THE BIBLE WERE PRAISED BECAUSE OF THEIR CARE FOR ANIMALS.**

- The passage from the Bible, “He that is wise wins souls” (Proverbs 11:30), was applied to Noah because he took great care of the animals.
- The Midrash (Genesis Rabbah, Noah 31:14), which is one of our ancient books of wisdom, tells us that Noah was unable to sleep—day or night—because he was always thinking about the care of the animals.
- He did much more than the basics in taking care of the animals in the ark.

**LET’S TALK ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO DO MORE THAN THE BASICS IN CARING FOR OUR ANIMALS**

- What are the basics to take care of in *feeding* your animals? (Enough food at the right times.)
- What could you do that would go *beyond the basics* in feeding your animals?
  1. Check to see if your animal has any special food needs.
  2. Make sure the food you feed your animals has all the proper ingredients.
  3. Check to find out what the proper weight is for your animal and give it more or less food as needed.

4. If you were to do only the *basics* of grooming your animals, what would you do? (Give it a bath once in a while.)
5. What could you do that would go *beyond the basics* of grooming your animal?
  - Bathe it regularly.
  - Brush its coat regularly.
  - Check its toe nails and make sure that they're clipped regularly.
6. If you were to only take care of the *basics* of your animal's health needs, what would you do? (Take it to the vet when sick.)
7. What could you do if you were to go *beyond the basics* of caring for your animal's health?
  - Find out from the vet what shots or regular medications it needs.
  - Keep a record of when it needs and gets shots.
  - Make sure it gets to the vet when necessary for shots.
  - Check it regularly for fleas and ticks.
  - Make sure it has a flea collar (if appropriate).



## Gather the People

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