



CHAYAT HASHAVUA: GRASSHOPPER

CAN ANYONE TEACH US THE HEBREW NAME FOR THE GRASSHOPPER?

- It's *khagav*, from the Hebrew root כחג.
- It probably means "that which hides," because grasshoppers and locusts can be so thick in the air and on the ground that they hide the sky and everything else.
- In some places, like Texas, they can be so thick that they completely cover the ground and everything on it, like a carpet.

WHAT ANIMAL IS LIKE THE GRASSHOPPER?

- Can anyone teach us what it is that makes grasshoppers different from locusts?
- Locusts migrate, travel great distances, in swarms.
- Grasshoppers are mostly solitary and stay, more or less, in one place.
- What's the main thing that locusts do when migrating that greatly affects people? (They consume all the vegetation in their path.)

WITH SO MANY GRASSHOPPERS AROUND, IS IT OKAY TO EAT THEM ACCORDING TO OUR TRADITION?

- Can anyone teach us whether insects or "creeping" things are kosher?
- But there's an exception to that rule that says they're not kosher. (Leviticus 11:21-22, Shabbat 90b)
- Can anyone teach us which insect we are permitted to eat? (Grasshopper/locust.)
- Can anyone teach us how to tell a kosher grasshopper from a non-kosher grasshopper? (Kosher grasshoppers have jointed legs above their feet.)
- There are some Yemenite Jews who, because of their kashrut tradition, still eat locusts and grasshoppers.
- They are considered a good source of protein, fat, and mineral salt.
- Why might the rabbis have decided that grasshoppers should be considered kosher? (Maybe because sometimes they were so thick it was impossible not to have eaten them inadvertently.)

IT'S TIME FOR THE GRASSHOPPER QUIZ!

- How long is the longest grasshopper when fully grown? (Five inches.)
- Where are grasshoppers' ear drums? (The eardrums of short-horned grasshoppers are on their abdomen just behind where the hind legs meet)

with the body. On the long-horned grasshoppers and crickets they're on the forelegs.)

- Can anyone teach us why the “Mormon cricket,” a close “cousin” to the grasshopper, was given its name? (They're found in the western United States, near the early Mormon settlement in Salt Lake City, Utah, and did much damage to crops there.)
- Since there were grasshoppers in Israel, do you think we should have a “Jewish grasshopper”?

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU MIGHT LEARN FROM THE GRASSHOPPER?

- All summer long the grasshopper sings and does the job God created it to do, until its belly bursts and it dies; and though its end approaches, it sings on.
- We should do no less: as long as we live, no matter how bad we feel—we may have lost someone or something we loved, or failed at something although we tried very hard—we should keep on singing and doing what God asks of us.
- The reason is that it helps us feel better when things are going badly if we remember that we can still sing and we can still do the things God asks of us.
- Incidentally, can anyone teach us how grasshoppers sing? (They rub their hind legs or forewings against other parts of their bodies. And they have eardrums to hear their own sounds.)
- What could we learn from grasshoppers about making music? (They do it by using just the gifts that God gave them, nothing else, and they seem to enjoy doing it all together—in the way they divide into bands, they show us how to be unified and all work together.)



Gather the People

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