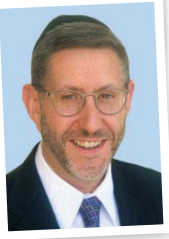


## FROM THE EDITOR

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Imagine finding kosher chickens on sale for R10 per kilo! And I'm not talking about inventing a time machine so that we can travel back in time and save on groceries (although, Stephen King did do that in a recent novel with a character who owned a diner, enabling him to keep the prices of his burgers curiously inexpensive).

It's the stuff of Jewish fantasy, right?

For the uninitiated, the kosher market can be difficult to understand. For example, it used to be the case – and probably still is at some stores in South Africa – that if products for Pesach were not clearly marked Kosher for Pesach and All Year Round...then once Pesach was over, stores would try and sell off the products as quickly as possible, thinking that their period of usefulness and acceptability was finished. (Complicating matters even more was that the stores thought that such products should be held back from going on the shelves until just before the holiday!)

A few years back, our family was living in an out-of-town community doing kiruv, which meant that our Shabbos table was regularly overflowing with guests. The nearby PnP, which was located at a mall that was in walking distance from where we lived, was small, claustrophobic, and crowded, with parking difficult to find no matter what time of day. So, we found another PnP just a ten minute drive away that was big, bright, and roomy, with plenty of parking and almost everything that we needed. While my wife was shopping there one day shortly after we had moved in – not long after Pesach – she noticed a large open chest-style freezer and she couldn't help but notice that it was filled to the brim with kosher chickens.

The sign said that they were on sale for R10 per kilo, with none of the chickens marked with a price of more than around R20 for an entire chicken. After she picked herself up off the floor and came to her senses, she quickly called her sister in Joburg to ask what chickens cost there, in case there had been some sort of sudden national price drop that she hadn't been made aware of; a reality check if you will. Informed that chickens were selling for the usual price in Joburg – around R60 per kilo – she called me, still not believing her eyes at what she had discovered, like finding buried treasure, and shared the news of her bounty. But the good news didn't end there, as bottles of kosher wine that should have cost R200 or more were on sale for R20, as well as tables full of other assorted kosher items for which people would have happily paid full-price.

It's one of my favourite stories to tell because it helps to illustrate a fundamental concept.

Hashem decrees how much money we will earn each year.<sup>1</sup> A large amount. A small amount. But it's not the amount that really matters. After all, what good is having a lot of money if prices are extremely high, if a loaf of bread will cost you as much as a house? And I'm not exaggerating; the gemara<sup>2</sup> tells about a drought in Nehardea (a city in Bavel) that was so bad that people were forced to sell their homes in order to buy wheat! (May we never know from such things!)

Likewise, how bad is having only a little bit of money if prices are very low, if that same loaf of bread costs next to nothing? It's all relative. The amount that we receive is fixed – but how far it goes isn't. It would be pointless asking Hashem to increase the fixed amount that we have been allotted. Instead, what our Sages advise is that we daven that we should use with bracha whatever amount of money that we've been allotted. We may only have R120 in our pocket, but that can buy one chicken, or six – it all depends on the price at which we find it for sale!

We are living in extremely challenging times, where fortunes, businesses, and livelihoods have disappeared almost overnight; where only the rare few have not felt the devastating economic impact. May Hashem bless each of us with a good, clean parnasah, sufficient to support the needs of our family as well as to assist with the needs of our community, and may we earn that parnasah and spend that parnasah with bracha.

The *JL* team was saddened to hear of the passing of Suzette Kruger, mother of our Art Director, Rizelle Hartmeier. May she rest in peace and may Hashem comfort Rizelle and her family for their loss.

**ROBERT SUSSMAN, EDITOR**

<sup>1</sup>Beitzah 16a  
<sup>2</sup>Kesuvos 97a

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**ON THE  
COVER:**  
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SCHOOL UNIFORM:  
A MASK TO HELP  
STOP THE SPREAD  
OF COVID-19.

