

Special thanks to Chevrat Pinto for the details of the biography



Rav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler (1892-1953).

Yahrzeit date: 25th of Teves (this Shabbos, December 27-28)

Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler was born to Rabbi Reuven Dov, a *talmid muvhak* of Rabbi Simcha Zissel of Kelm. Rabbi Reuven Dov was a wealthy man who gave great amounts of money for *tzeddaka* and Torah. For a long period of time he was the main financial supporter of the famous Kelm yeshiva. However, the family did not let young Eliyahu become affected negatively from their wealth. For example, each day he was served a dish of oatmeal that was utterly tasteless, with the intention that he should learn to be content with little. Years later, R' Dessler was known to say, "There is no meal in the world that I don't find good!"

In view of R' Eliyahu's exceptional talents, his father sent him to study in the Kelm yeshiva. R' Eliyahu was the youngest in his class. He remained there for 18 years and earned a reputation for excellence among its thousands of students. While learning at Kelm, R' Dessler married a granddaughter of Rav Simcha Zissel. The couple moved to London in 1927. Years later, in 1941, R' Dessler founded the Gateshead yeshiva and kollel. Students recall that the R' Dessler, through his own behavior and sterling character traits, served as an example of how one should conduct himself.

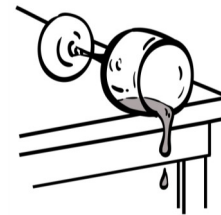
In 1948, he was asked by Rav Yosef Kahaneman to join the Ponevitch Yeshiva in Bnei Brak as a *mashgiach*. Rav Dessler accepted the offer, but only on a condition that he could continue his work in England. Therefore, he divided his time between the two countries. Rav Dessler's exemplary knowledge of Torah and his refined *midos* quickly spread his reputation in Eretz Yisroel. Tremendous numbers of visitors came to the yeshiva to hear him speak. His lectures were filled with profound concepts that marveled all his listeners, and everyone considered him to be one of the spiritual leaders of the generation. After Rav Dessler's *petira*, his students gathered his writings and teachings in a 5-volume work called *Michtav Me-Eliyahu* (English version: "Strive for Truth!"). ♦



Halacha Challenge

Wiping a Red Wine Spill

by Shlomo Epshteyn



A cup of red wine spilled on Shabbos, and everyone rushed to wipe up the mess. Reuven brought pre-cut paper towels, Shimon brought a white towel, and Levi brought a red towel.

Question

Whose towel should the family use to clean up the spill?

Answer

Reuven's pre-cut paper towels should be used to wipe the spill. If the paper towels are insufficient (to fully absorb the wine), then Shimon's white towel should be used next. If that towel will not be enough to wipe the spill (and no other cloth of non-red color is available), then even Levi's red towel may be used. In all cases, the spill should be wiped gently, so as not to squeeze out any absorbed liquid.*

Explanation

This is a continuation of our series of articles on the *melacha* of *tzoveya* (dyeing). To summarize from the previous articles, *tzoveya* is an *av melacha*, as it was required to dye the wool covers of the Mishkan. Some Rishonim¹ hold that after eating strawberries or similar fruits, one should be careful not to touch fabric with juice-stained fingers. The concern is that the fruit juice will stain the cloth, thereby constituting a *toladah* of

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tzoveya. Others², however, are lenient, because staining a cloth with fruit juice is *derech lichluch* (the cloth gets soiled more than it gets improved). Many of the later *poskim* rule stringently on this *halacha*³.

The Magen Avraham states that in a case where the color of the fruit juice is of the same color as the cloth, there is even more reason to be stringent, because the original color of the cloth gets improved⁴. The Mishna Berura⁵, however, does allow one to rely on the lenient opinions (i.e., on those who hold that this is *derech lichluch*) when a person has no other way to clean his hands (even in a case where the color of the fruit juice is of the same color as the cloth). Also, some contemporary authorities⁶ hold that this stringency does not apply to disposable items (e.g., a paper napkin). Hence, in the above scenario, paper towels would be the best choice, and a non-red cloth towel would be second best.

The spill should be wiped gently, so as not to squeeze out the wine from a towel. IY"H, in upcoming weeks we will delve into the topic of *sechita* (squeezing out liquids) to understand why in a case like this there is an issue of *sechita*. We'll also need to see if there is a distinction in *halacha* between removing a red wine spill versus removing a white wine spill. ♦

*Note: This article is a *halachic* discourse and may not necessarily be *halacha l'maysa* in real-life situations which are invariably more complex.

1. ב"י א"ח סימן שכ בשם ספר יראים 2. דרכי משה שם בשם האגור 3. שו"ע סימן שכ סעיף כ, מ"ב שם
- ס"ק כד, עה"ש סימן שכ אות ז 4. מג"א סימן שכ ס"ק כה 5. מ"ב סימן שכ ס"ק נ"ט
6. ששכ"ה פרק יד סעיף כא (במהדורה חדשה)

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



"Zeidy, why was it a snake and not another animal that wanted to kill Moshe Rabbeinu when he stopped at an inn on the way to Mitzraim?"



"You're asking a good, deep question, my children! The Me'Am Loez explains (based on Chazal) that Moshe Rabbeinu was on a way to fight Pharaoh, who is symbolized by a snake!"

Wonders of Creation

Cuttlefish

by Alex Isaacson



Cuttlefish are marine animals in the class of Cephalopoda, which also includes squid, octopuses and nautilus. They generally range in size from six to ten inches. Despite their name, cuttlefish are not fish but mollusks. They have large, W-shaped pupils, 8 arms, and 2 tentacles furnished with special "clamps" that they use to secure their prey.

Cuttlefish eat small mollusks, crabs, shrimp, fish, octopuses, worms, and even other cuttlefish. Their life expectancy is one to two years. Recent studies indicate that cuttlefish are among the most intelligent invertebrates and also have one of the largest brain-to-body size ratios of all invertebrates.

'Cuttle' is a reference to their unique internal shell called the 'Cuttlebone'. It is porous and is made of aragonite. This shell provides Cuttlefish with buoyancy, regulated by a change of gas-to-liquid ratio in the chambered cuttlebone. Various species of these fish have their own distinct shape, pattern and size of the cuttlebone.

The irony is that these creatures are color-blind, yet they are referred to as the "chameleons of the sea" due to their ability to change skin color. Hashem fashioned these mollusks with elastic sacs containing different pigments and He provided for these creatures an intelligent mechanism of color production: Muscles that wrap around these sacs contract and relax in a specific order in order to release the desired color. ♦

Solve a Riddle

Riddle

By yetzias Mitzraim, bnei Yisroel are promised to be brought to a land "flowing with milk and honey". Is there a hint to Shabbos in that description of Eretz Yisroel?



Answer to last issue's riddle:

(Riddle: There are two weekly parshios, adjacent to one another, which don't have the 4-letter name of Hashem in them. What are they?)

Miketz and Vayigash. (Nesivos Shalom explains that the 4-letter name of Hashem is not present there, because these *parshios* deal with the start of *galus* Mitzraim. In *galus*, the attribute of *chesed* (symbolized by the 4-letter name of Hashem) is more concealed.)