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**Rav Shabtai HaCohen Katz** (the Shach) *zt"l*, (1622-1663).

*Yahrzeit* date: 1<sup>st</sup> of Adar (this year: Shabbos, Feb. 1)

As the author of *Sifsei Kohen*, Rav Shabtai HaCohen is recognized as one of the most fundamental and authoritative commentaries on the *Shulchan Aruch*. R' Shabtai was born in Vilna. At the age of twelve, he was already fully versed in the Talmud. The Shach's father sent him to the Yeshiva of the great Gaon Rabbi Yehoshua, the author of the *Pnei Yehoshua*. The Shach was 24 when he completed and published his commentary on *Yorah De'ah*. He named his sefer "*Siftei Kohen*", which means "Lips of the Kohen". This expression is found in the Prophet Malachi (2:7) "for the lips of the Kohen shall preserve knowledge, and they should seek the wisdom of the Torah from his mouth." In the introduction of his book, he wrote: "Honestly, for years I have invested a great amount of work ... without leaving place for sleep. ...I examined each case from every side, not once or twice, but rather a hundred and one times." Eighteen of the greatest Rabbanim of the generation gave their approbations for the printing of his commentary. Among his other works are *Sefer Ha'Aruch* on the Tur, *Poel Tzedek* on the 613 mitzvos, *Takfu Cohen* and *Gevuros Anashim*.

One story goes that at around the age of five, his class was reviewing the parsha of the week, *Chayei Sarah*. The boys came to the story of Abraham's servant Eliezer, who was telling Rivka's parents, "I came today to the spring" (Genesis 24:42). They repeated to their Rav what Rashi said on this passage: "Today I left and today I arrived, which teaches us that the route was shortened in a miraculous way." One child got up and asked, "How could Eliezer recount such a story to Rivka's parents? They wouldn't believe it!" The instructor didn't know what to say. Then, the little Shabsai stood up and answered, "Some verses further on, Torah tells us that Eliezer told them: 'Sarah, my master's wife, bore to my master a son after she had grown old, and he gave him all that he possesses', and Rashi says that Eliezer showed Rivka's parents a document proving that Avraham had allotted him this wealth. By means of this document, which was written and dated on the same day that Eliezer left, he proved that he had actually arrived in a miraculous way." ♦



## Halacha Challenge

### Apple-Snow Slurpee

by Shlomo Epshteyn



*Fresh snow fell on Shabbos day. Avromy wants to take the clean snow from his porch, put it in an empty cup, and add apple juice to make an "Apple-Snow Slurpee".*

#### Question

Can Avromy make this "Apple-Snow Slurpee"?

#### Answer

Yes. It's best, though, to put juice first and then add snow to it.

#### Explanation

There are quite a few potential issues involved here. The first issue is the *melacha* of *Tzoveya* (dyeing). *Tzoveya* is an *av melacha*, as it was required to dye the wool threads for the tapestries (e.g., *paroches*) of the Mishkan. [As a side note, we learn in this week's parsha that wool threads of three different colors were needed for the Mishkan: *techeles* (of sky blue color; produced from the Chilozon snail), *tola'as-shoni* (of shiny red color; produced from the Crimson worm), and *argomon* (unfortunately, we don't have a clear *mesorah* about the appearance and the source of the dye that was used to make *argomon* threads).]

Since this *melacha* was performed with non-food items (i.e. wool), some Rishonim<sup>1</sup> hold that *Tzoveya* does not apply to food items (*ein tz'via b'ochlim*). Even though some Rishonim argue on this *din*, the *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>1</sup> rules according to the lenient opinion. As such, in our case of making Apple-Snow Slurpee, it is permitted to add the yellow apple juice to the white snow. Having said that, since some Rishonim are stringent in the *din* of *tz'via b'ochlim*, some *poskim*<sup>2</sup> write that when possible it is best to add non-colored food to the colored food, and not the other way around. Hence, in our scenario, it is best to first put



## Halacha Challenge

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the juice in a cup and then add the snow to it. It is also important to know that some *poskim*<sup>3</sup> hold that although it is permitted to mix foods/drinks where one food item will be colored by another food item, it is proper not to do so if a person's intention is to change the color of the food item. (In our scenario, this is not relevant. The intention when making an Apple-Snow drink is merely to add tasteful flavor to the snow).

Another issue in our case is consuming melted snow. The Braisa<sup>4</sup> teaches: "One is not permitted to break snow or hail in order to make the water flow from there". Sefer HaTruma explains that in the case of the Braisa, a solid is being converted into a liquid. This liquid will have a status of *molad* (a newly-created substance). This *molad* is *muktza*, and is prohibited for consumption. Nevertheless, our case is different, because the snow will be mixed with the apple juice and it will melt on its own. The permission to consume melted snow or ice which was melted on its own inside another liquid is learned from the end of the same Braisa: "but one may put [snow or hail] into a cup [with wine]." The explanation that's found in Rishonim<sup>5</sup> is the following: There is no prohibition of creating a *molad* if the actual conversion from solid to liquid is done passively (e.g. a person is not crushing the ice by hand) and the resulted liquid is not identifiable inside the drink / food where the solid is melted.

The prohibition to move a *Muktza* item is another possible concern in our case. Mishna Berura<sup>6</sup> teaches that rain which fell on Shabbos, and all the more so if it fell before Shabbos, does not have a status of *Muktza* and can be used for washing. Many *poskim*<sup>7</sup> rule that just like rain, the snow also does not have a status of *Muktza*\*. The reason why rain and snow are not considered to be in the category of *molad* (newly created object-which is typically *muktza*) is complex and needs to be elaborated on in a separate article. ♦

\*Some *poskim* are stringent in this *din*: The author of the book *Tiltulei Shabbos* writes that he heard from Rav Moshe Feinstein that snow is in fact *Muktza* (cited by R. Eider in his book *The 39 Melachos*).

\*1. בעל יראים שהביא ב"י בסוף סימן שכ 1. שו"ע סי' שכ סעיף יט 2. שעה"צ בסימן שיח ס"ק סה, ששכ"ה פרק יא סי' לט 3. נשמת אדם שהובא במ"ב בסימן שכ ס"ק נו 4. שבת נא: 5. מרדכי פרק במה טומנין 6. מ"ב בסימן שלה ס"ק ל 7. ששכ"ה פרק טז סימן מה ועיין שם בהערה ק"ח

## Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, we learned that the dye for *tola'as shoni* threads of the Mishkan was made from the Crimson worm. So, who is this Crimson worm, anyway?



I love your curiosity, kids. Well, the Crimson worm is small louse-like bug that lives on the Oak tress of the mountains in Eretz Yisroel. In the early spring, when they become pea-shaped, red dye can be squeezed from them. Look for them next

time you go on trips in our precious land!

[based on Tosefta Menachos 9:16 and encyclopedia sources]

## Wonders of Creation

### Intelligent Giant

by Alex Isaacson

The elephant is the largest living land animal on earth, with a lifespan of 50-70 years. The gestation period for an elephant is 22 months, the longest of any land creature! And when the calf, or baby elephant, is born it weighs an astounding 230lbs.



An elephant's intelligence and memory is thought to be comparable to that of the dolphin. They are known to experience and display grief, altruism, compassion and self-awareness, as well as make music, play, and use tools. With a brain weight of almost 11 pounds, their senses are quite developed.

An elephant can find a watering hole in the middle of a drought season that has been passed down by memory from generation to generation. In a Mirror Self-Recognition Test, an elephant was able to recognize the fact that the image in the mirror was its own self. An elephant's hearing receptors reside not only in its ears, but also in its trunk. They are sensitive to vibrations, most significantly in their feet which have special receptors for low frequency sound. Also, their tusks continuously grow throughout a lifetime and can measure up to 10 feet. Like humans, who are typically right or left handed, elephants are usually right or left tusked. ♦

## Riddles & Parsha Qs

### Riddle



Kings love me. Craftsmen torture me. When they're killing me, they want me to live. Who am I?

[Hint: Rashi introduces me for the first time in this week's parsha.]

### Answer to last issue's Riddle:

(Riddle: At first, you don't have it. Then, you get it as a gift. When you loose it, you get another as a replacement-for free! If you loose it again, then you need to pay for a replacement. What is it?)

A tooth.