

## Halacha Challenge

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person from doing the *melacha* of *kotzer*, the sages prohibited several activities which may lead a person to detach a living plant or part of a plant from its source of growth.

One of these prohibitions is stated in *masechet Succah*<sup>3</sup>. There, as a tangent on the laws of *arbah minim*, the Gemora cites Raba's ruling: One may smell hadasim while they are still attached to the ground, but one may not smell an esrog while it is attached to the tree. The Gemora explains that since an esrog is meant to be eaten, if one smells it, he may be tempted to pluck it off the tree to eat it. Hadasim, on the other hand, are there only for aroma and thus, a person will not have a big temptation to rip them off. The Shulchan Aruch rules according to this statement of Raba<sup>4</sup>.

The Rambam<sup>5</sup> explains that hadasim have no other function but to provide a good smell, and since a person can smell them while they are still attached to the ground, Chaza"l were not concerned that a person may be tempted to detach them. On the other hand, before eating a fruit, one normally plucks it off a tree. As such, Chaza"l made a *g'zeira* not to smell a fruit which is attached to its tree. [As an interesting side note, there is a disagreement amongst the poskim whether taking a bite from a fruit while it is attached to the tree is forbidden by Torah or is forbidden only *m'derabanan* (since one is doing *kotzer* in an abnormal way)<sup>6</sup>]. ♦

1. פרק ז משנה ב 2. רמבם פרק ח מהל' שבת הלכה ג ע"פ גמ' שבת קז: 3. סוכה לז: 4. שו"ע א"ח סימן של 5. רמבם פרק כא מהל' שבת הלכה ו 6. עיין מג"א א"ח סימן של"ו ס"ק י"א, עה"ש שם ס"ק כו סעיף י

## Wonders of Creation

### Dolphins

by Chaya Sara Bukhover



Here are a few interesting facts to remember about dolphins: Dolphins are mammals. They give birth to baby dolphins (i.e. not eggs). They are born with hair (whiskers just above their rostrum), but it falls out immediately after birth. Male dolphins are called bulls, female dolphins are called cows, and a baby dolphin is called a calf.

Every dolphin has its own "signature" whistle to identify itself. Dolphins breathe air like us. They can hold their breath for amazing amounts of time - seven minutes is no problem! Just like other mammals, they produce milk for their babies, and their offspring will suckle for up to four years.



An amazing gift that Hashem gave to dolphins is that they can sleep by resting one half of their brain at a time. This way, they always keep one eye open when they are sleeping. This, of course, is helpful to "keep an eye open" for predators. ♦

A baby dolphin is being fed milk by the "dolphin nurse"

## Riddles & Parsha Qs

### Riddle



The following took place a few thousand years ago:

Zevy sat down to eat lunch. He looked at his fingers and then at his plate and said, "I better not eat this fatty chicken skin. Otherwise, I might become a *metzora!*"

How could this be?

(Hint: Just review *peirush* Rashi on last week's parsha, and you'll find the answer.)

Answer to last issue's Riddle: (Riddle: "Moishy! What you are doing is *asur in halacha!*" screamed out Levi. "Oh, but I really need to do this," said Moishy. "Well, if you'll put on *Tefillin*, then you'll be allowed to do it," said Levi.)

Moishy was passing by the door of a shul when the *tzibur* was praying (in a city where there was only one *minyán*).

## Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, how do we know that speaking *loshon hora* is a really bad thing?



Look, kids—this is the second week that we learning a parsha that talks about *tzara'as*, which people would get for speaking *loshon hora*. Rashi teaches us (in parshas *Chayai Sara*) that when the Torah speaks about something at length, it shows us how important it is in Hashem's eyes.

Special thanks to revach.net for the stories

### Truth Matters

The Chazon Ish used to *daven* Mincha in the early afternoon at his home. Although there was a core group of regulars who *davened* at the *minyán* every day, it was often difficult to complete a *minyán* at that hour.

One day, to the great dismay of all the people waiting it, took a particularly long time to gather a *minyán*. When the tenth man finally arrived, it had gotten so late that one of the regulars told the Chazon Ish that he had previously made an appointment with someone in his house at precisely this time. The Chazon Ish replied, "For a man who cleaves to the attribute of truth, there is no question as to what to do." The man left to his house to make the appointment. ♦

### A Gangster Remembers

In the beginning of the 20th century, a Jewish boy in Chicago had a difficult childhood, and ended up growing up on the streets. Eventually, he became a gangster, and in time became the leader of his gang. One morning, he and his gang were about to carry out a daring robbery which he himself had planned. Suddenly, this Jewish gangster changed his mind not only about committing the robbery itself, but about his entire life of crime. That morning, he abruptly walked away, leaving his gang and his life of crime permanently behind him. What had changed his mind?

The former Jewish gangster revealed the answer later on in an article that he wrote. That morning, an early childhood memory suddenly entered his mind: Once he stole an apple from a pushcart. When his father found out about it, he put him on his lap and tearfully said, "The Torah says, *Lo signov*, - do not steal." He tearfully repeated the same words again and again.

The gangster had remembered this scene in vivid detail that morning, picturing in his mind the anguish on his father's face. This picture was enough to jolt him out of his life of crime, and lead him to a more honest and productive life. ♦

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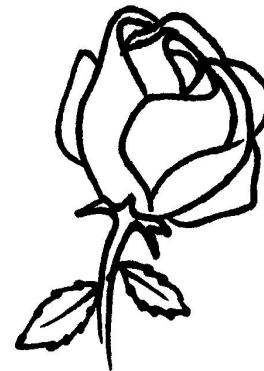
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## Halacha Challenge



### Spring Aroma - part 2

compiled by Shlomo Epshteyn  
reviewed by Rav Chaim Malinowitz

*As Sari was watching her little sister playing in the park on Shabbos afternoon, she wanted to smell the roses that were growing in the small garden. She wasn't sure, though, if she was allowed to, since she learned recently that we shouldn't smell fruits that are still growing on a tree.*

#### Question

Can Sari smell the roses that are growing in the park?

#### Answer

Yes. And if the roses was planted for the fragrance, Sari should make a bracha of "*borei atzei vesamim*".

[Can Sari touch the rose while smelling it? Can she shake it to bring out a greater aroma from it? These are interesting questions, but we'll have to answer and explain them in the subsequent articles.]

#### Explanation

To review from last week's article, the Mishna in *masechet Shabbos*<sup>1</sup> lists *kotzer* (reaping) as one of the *avos melachos*. The definition of *kotzer* is detaching a living thing from its source of nourishment<sup>2</sup>. To prevent a ↷

**This week's issue is dedicated**

in memory of Leah bas Chaim