

The Guard Dog

Special thanks to revach.net for the story

R' Shachna Koledetzki, zt'l, told over a story which he heard personally from the woman who witnessed it. This woman lived in New York, and her husband traveled out of town every week for business, returning only for Shabbos. Her husband bought a watchdog for the home in order that his wife, who remained home alone with the children most of the week, would feel secure. The dog always remained by the front door, which was partially made out of glass, and would bark ceaselessly whenever he spotted a stranger approaching the house. He would continue barking until the woman would come to the door to see who was knocking.

One day, Rav Elchonon Wasserman who had traveled to America to collect money for his yeshivah, came to visit this family. As R' Elchonon approached the house, the dog bristled, and was about to begin his usual frantic barking. However, when the dog caught a glimpse of R' Elchonon, he stared at him and remained silent. His usual barking seemed to have caught in his throat.

The woman was shocked to see the dog stand so placidly next to the door. She approached the door, saw R' Elchonon, and opened the door for him. The dog remained in place next to the door standing still as a stone, without moving a muscle. It remained in that paralyzed position for the entire hour that R' Elchonon was in the house. As soon as R' Elchonon left, the dog lay down, and resumed his normal behavior. ♦

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Halacha Challenge



Fire Cookies

by Shlomo Epshteyn
reviewed by Rav Chaim Malinowitz

In preparation for the big Lag BaOmer party, Mrs. Rosen bought "fire cookies". Each cookie was shaped like a fire with lots of little red sprinkles on top (though there was no image drawn on top of the cookie). Of course, the kids couldn't wait to eat them and they asked to try one cookie on Shabbos. "We'll divide the cookie by breaking it up into smaller pieces," pleaded the kids. "We can't!" objected the oldest brother Shimon. "I learned last week that we're not allowed to break a cookie that has a picture on top of it."

Question

Can the "fire cookie" be broken up into smaller pieces?

Answer

Yes.

Explanation

In last week's article, based on the Gemora Yerushalmi and a *shaila* that was sent to Maharam of Rotenburg, we saw that it is a problem (*m'derabbanan*) to break a cookie by hand that has a picture drawn on top of it (e.g., a Magen David star drawn with frosting on top of a cookie) due to the *melacha* of *Mochek* (erasing)¹.



This week's issue is dedicated

anonymously, in honor of the Aish Kodesh community

Halacha Challenge

Does it make a difference if the image was drawn on top of the cookie or if the image is part of the cookie itself (e.g., an image was engraved in the cookie dough before baking it)? One of the laws of making matza will help us answer this question. A Braisa in *masechet Pesachim*² teaches that the *mitzva* of *achilas matza* can be fulfilled with the “decorated *serikin*”. The *meforshim* explain that the “decorated *serikin*” were matzos onto which various images such as animals and fish have been etched before the dough was put in the oven. Since the *mitzva* of *achilas matza* is done on Yom Tov, and the matzos are eaten by the breaking of small pieces one at a time and eating them, the Braisa is permitting us to “erase” the images on top of the decorated *matzos* on Yom Tov.

Based on this Braisa, the *poskim* rule that even though one is not allowed to break (by hand) an image that was drawn on top of a pastry, one is however permitted to break an image that is part of the pastry itself³. The Chazon Ish⁴ explains that when an image is drawn (e.g., with a frosting) on top of a baked item, then that image has the status of an “image” (i.e., the image stands as a separate entity) by which the *melacha* of Mochek would apply (*m'derabbanan*). However, if the image was etched onto the dough before baking the pastry, then it doesn't have the status of an “image”, but rather it becomes “*t'munas haPas*” – the look of the baked item. The Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchosa⁵ further says that by the same token, if a baked item is shaped into the form of a certain image, it is permitted to break it by hand on Shabbos. Hence, in our scenario, the cookies that are shaped into an image of a fire can be broken up on Shabbos. ♦

1. רמ"א סי' ש"מ סעיף ג, מ"ב סי' שם ס"ק יז וס"ק כב. 2. פסחים לז. 3. מ"ב סי' שם ס"ק יז. 4. חזו"א סימן סא ס"ק א סוד"ה ואמנם. 5. ששכ"ה פרק יא אות ח (במהדורה חדשה)

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, why is there a *minhag* for the kids to play with bow and arrow on Lag BaOmer?



Great question, kids! A bow in *loshon haKodesh* is *keshet*, which also means a rainbow. A rainbow appears when in the Heavenly courts the world was given a bad judgment; but Hashem had mercy and kept the world going. During the life of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, a rainbow never appeared in the sky, because with R' Shimon's merits, the **entire** world was judged favorably.

On a deeper level, the bow and arrow represent the learning and teaching of the Torah. The more you pull the string of the bow towards your heart, the further the arrow flies. So too by the Torah, the closer you bring the Torah to your heart through *ameilus* in learning it, the better you can teach it to others.

Wonders of Creation

The Common Snapping Turtle

by Alex Isaacson

The common snapping turtles are aquatic ambush hunters that capture their prey with their powerful beak-like jaws. The highly mobile head and neck that they have is essential to their hunting. Hashem gave these turtles an ability to snap because unlike other turtles, they are too large to hide in their own shells when confronted.



Snapping is also their defense mechanism. However, these turtles rarely bite humans. They usually flee when threatened by a person. Interestingly, these turtles turn into fierce fighters only when out of the water. When

encountered in the water, however, they usually slip quietly away from any disturbance. ♦

Riddles & Parsha Qs

Riddle



After reviewing parshas Bechukosai, Simcha was inspired from the chapter on Arachin (the value of oneself or of another person or thing that a person vows to give as a contribution to the Beis Hamikdash) and made a vow.

The next day, Simcha went to the Beis HaMikdash to pay his pledge. After explaining to a Kohen his vow, the Kohen told him what he must give. Simcha took out his wallet, looked inside and said, “Oy, I wish I was a little bit shorter.” Why did Simcha say this?

Answer to last issue's Riddle:

(*Riddle*: I have fulfilled a Rabbinical commandment when I was not yet commanded to fulfill a Torah commandment. Therefore, I can no longer fulfill the Torah commandment when I am commanded to fulfill it. How is this possible?)

A minor who became an adult between Pesach and Pesach Sheini. In such a case, in the Beis Hamikdash, he is responsible for eating the Pesach offering on Pesach Sheini. But if he was included in the Pesach offering on Pesach itself (and thus fulfilled eating the Pesach offering only on a Rabbinical level), he is exempt from fulfilling it again on Pesach Sheini (even though it would now be a Torah commandment since he as an adult).

[Special thanks to Ohr Someyach's Yiddle Riddle Archives for the riddle.]