

The Yeshiva Cat

Special thanks to revach.net for the story

One day in Yeshivas Kfar Chassidim, the *almanah* of the late Rosh Yeshivah, Rav Noach Shimanovich, went down to the storage room together with one of the *bochurim* to bring up some supplies for the kitchen. While they were in the storage room, they heard suspicious noises. When Rebbetzin Shimanovich asked the bochur what the source of the scurrying noises were, he told her that the *bochurim* had spotted mice on several occasions. Rebbetzin Shimanovich was aghast at this news, and asked the *bochurim* to find a solution to the problem. The *bochurim* located a cat that would hopefully take care of the burgeoning mice population in the yeshivah.

A few weeks later, the Gaon Rav Eliyahu Lopian was walking around the yeshivah building on his daily walk accompanied by a *bachur*. They were discussing words of Torah when they suddenly ran into the yeshivah cat. Rav Eliyahu was surprised – this was the first time he had seen a cat on the yeshivah grounds.

“Whose cat is this?” inquired Rav Lopian. The *bochur* explained that the cat had been brought to the yeshivah to curtail the mice problem.

Rav Lopian inquired further, “And who feeds it?”

The bochur answered, “She has plenty of food – she eats the mice! We don’t need to bring her food.”

Rav Lopian answered, “I don’t understand. If she does her job well, and scares off the mice, she won’t have anything left to eat! We surely have to provide her with food.”

Rav Lopian then entered his apartment and brought out a bowl of milk. He said to the *bochur*, “When you want one of Hashem’s creatures to serve you and work for you, you need to provide it with food. This is an explicit mitzvah in the Torah, “And I will put grass in your fields for your cattle –and you will eat...” ♦



Halacha Challenge



Flipping a Torn Page

by Shlomo Epshteyn
reviewed by Rav Chaim Malinowitz

All week long, Shimon looks forward to going to shul with his father on Friday night. This Shabbos, Shimon and his father came a little late and the only siddurim left for them were the old dusty siddurim on the top shelf. Shimon didn't mind. However, in the middle

of Shmonei Esrei, when he was about to turn the page, he noticed that the page was ripped. If he will lift it, he will be separating parts of letters from each other; and when he will lay the page down afterwards, he'll be re-connecting those parts of letters.

Question

Can Shimon turn that page or should he try to remember the words by heart?

Answer

Shimon can turn the page.

Explanation

At the initial glance, this *shaila* is identical to the *shaila* from a few weeks ago of whether or not it is permitted on Shabbos to use a book that has writing its edge. (And as we saw, the Mishna Berura¹ permits using such a book when another book is not available.) However, as we will see, the two *shailos* are different from each other.

First of all, in the case of the book that has writing on its edge, the book was made to be opened and closed. In fact, the P'risha² says that this is exactly



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Halacha Challenge

Why using such a book is permitted. The P'risha compares it to opening and closing the door of a house. Since the door was made to be opened and closed all the time, we are not doing the *melacha* of Boneh when we close the door, or the *melacha* of Soser when we open it. Similarly, since the book is made to be opened and closed, Mochek or Kosev are not being performed whenever the book is opened or shut. Though the Achronim bring other reasons to permit using such a book, the Mishna Berura¹ only cites the *s'vora* of the P'risha.

On the other hand, in the case of a torn page, when the book was produced, the parts of the torn page were obviously not made to be disconnected and re-connected. As such, we should be more stringent in this case. However, the Igros Moshe³ writes that the *s'vora* of the P'risha applies also in the case of a torn page. He writes that the *s'vora* of "it's made to be open and closed all the time" does not depend on the intention of the people who make it so, but rather on the way that the situation turned out to be. In the case of a torn page, the parts of the page happen to connect and disconnect from each other. Hence, it's comparable to a door that gets opened and closed all the time.

In addition to this, the Igros Moshe writes that it's logical to say that those *poskim* who prohibit using a book that has writing on its edge, would permit flipping a torn page. His reasoning is as follows. When a page is torn, some of the letters are broken into two parts. One part of a letter is on one piece of the torn page and the other part of a letter is on the second piece of the torn page. However, in almost all cases of the broken letters, one of the pieces is going to contain a part of that letter from which one can figure out which letter it is. As such, when a person puts the two pieces together, he is not accomplishing anything with respect to the *melacha* of Kosev. By the same token, separating the two pieces does not create an issue with the *melacha* of Mochek. Hence, in our case, Shimon can turn the ripped page so that he can continue his Shmonei Esrei⁴.

IY"H, in a subsequent article we'll discuss the *shaila* of putting together two pieces of a page in order to read the text, where the page was torn completely (i.e. the two pieces became disconnected from each other at all points). ♦

1. מ"ב סימן ש"מ ס"ק יז 2. פרישה סימן ש"מ ס"ק א 3. אג"מ יו"ד חלק ב סימן עה ד"ה ובדבר דף 4. ועיין בששכ"ה פרק כח אות ג

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, we heard that as a result of the spies speaking *loshon hora* about Eretz

Yisroel, their tongues stretched to their belly buttons. We understand why the tongue stretched - it's the organ that was used to speak *loshon hora*. But why did it stretch specifically to the belly button?



A belly button is just a scar on our abdomen that was left after the umbilical cord was cut off after birth. It is the only "wound" that never heals. Hashem does not heal this wound on purpose - to remind a person how

He took care of him while he was in the womb, by feeding him through the umbilical cord. Since the spies showed a lack of *bitachon*, their tongues stretched to their belly buttons - a place that reminds a person to have *bitachon*. [based on a *d'rasha* from Rav Avrohom Alter]

Wonders of Creation

Vampire Bats

Special thanks to the Israel App for the help with the content



There are nearly 5,000 species of mammals in the world, and almost a quarter of them are bats. Because of the popularity of vampire legends, some people mistakenly believe that all bats suck blood. In reality, only three species subsist entirely off of blood: the common vampire bat (*Desmodus rotundus*), the hairy-legged vampire bat (*Diphylla ecaudata*), and the white-winged vampire bat (*Diaemus youngi*). All three species are native to the New World, ranging from Mexico to Brazil, Chile, and Argentina.

Vampire bats are believed to be the only species of bats in the world to "adopt" another young bat if something happens to the bat's mother. Vampire bats hunt only when it is fully dark and they use infrared radiation to locate blood hotspots on their prey. Their victims are primarily horses and cows. The bat's saliva, left in the victim's resulting bite wound, has a key function in feeding from the wound. The saliva contains several compounds that prolong bleeding, such as anticoagulants that inhibit blood clotting, and compounds that prevent the constriction of blood vessels near the wound.

The unique properties of the vampire bats' saliva have found some positive use in medicine. Recently, a drug by the name desmoteplase was engineered, which uses the anticoagulant properties of the saliva of *Desmodus rotundus*. The drug's function is to increase blood flow in stroke patients. ♦

Riddles

Riddle



Zundle, the ger tzedek was sitting in his Bedouin tent, sipping on his coffee. His son knocked on a pole of the tent to get a permission to come in. Zundle let him in and saw that his son was exhausted and also looked sad. "Why do you look exhausted, my son? And why do you look sad?", asked the father. "I am exhausted, because I just spent many days traveling in the desert - I was returning home from my trip to the encampment of Bnei Yisroel. I am unhappy, because I am bringing a bad report: Bnei Yisroel are now destined to wonder in the desert for 40 years!" answered his son. The father shook his head and said, "Oh no, this will make my Shabbos more complicated." How so?

Answer to last issue's Riddle:

(Riddle: ...- "25" years of age in halacha, mi yode'a? - "25", ani yode'a! It's in this week's Parsha: a Levi starts learning how to do his service in the Mishkan at the age of 25. - "30" years of age in halacha, mi yode'a? - "30", ani yode'a! It's also in this week's Parsha: A Levi starts to serve in the Mishkan at the age of 30. - "35" years of age in halacha, mi yode'a?)

ANSWER: When a person turns "35", it is considered that he has reached the mid-point of his life! This reflects in certain halachos. For example, a day after 35, it is considered that a person has lived most of his life. As such, even though he does not have physical signs of maturity, he is no longer called a *katan* (e.g., he can be counted in a *minyan*). [see M.B. 55:27]