

Gates of Tears Never Close

Special thanks to Revach L'Neshama for the story

A Rav in England had a friend who was a lawyer, and who knew very little about Yiddishkeit. Once, this lawyer approached the Rav with a very serious dilemma. He was currently defending a non-Jew who had become involved in criminal activities. This man was extremely cunning and deceitful, and the judge who saw right through his lies, decided to prosecute his lawyer as well. It is common practice in England that the judges can implicate the lawyers, to ensure that they do not become tainted by their clients' wrongdoings. This lawyer was in great danger of not only of losing his right to practice his profession, but of also of receiving a heavy punishment and fine. The Rav said to him, "Listen, my friend, the best advice I can give you is to do what all of Klal Yisroel does. Simply *daven* to the Ribbono shel Olom, and He'll save you from this *tzara*." The lawyer replied, "I should ask Hashem? It's not possible, and I'll tell you why. Once I already asked for help from Him, and I promised that I wouldn't ask for anything else."

The lawyer explained that a few years prior, he traveled to Australia for work, and stayed there for six months. While in Australia, his only daughter, who was then seven years old, suddenly became critically ill. The distraught father decided immediately to find a shul. Despite his ignorance of Yiddishkeit, he remembered that when he became Bar Mitzvah, his father took him to shul. He searched for a shul, and eventually found one, which was unlocked. It was the middle of the day, and the shul was empty. He burst out crying and continued crying without a stop for two hours. Amidst his tears he said, "Hashem, I need to ask You something, and I promise You that I'll never ask for anything else. I ask of You that my beloved daughter remain alive." Eventually, the lawyer felt a sense of relief, and returned to the hospital. He was greeted at the hospital with miraculous news - his daughter had opened her eyes. She began improving little by little, and eventually fully recovered. In fact, her new medical exams showed full recovery, and even the doctors admitted that it was a complete miracle.

The lawyer concluded, "I promised Hashem never to ask for anything else. How can I break my promise?" The Rav said, "Your promise is not valid! Hashem is not a person. You can continue to request whatever you need from Him." The lawyer followed his advice, and was declared innocent. ♦

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Halacha Challenge



A Bassinet Sunshade

by Shlomo Epshteyn

The Goldstein family moved into a new apartment. The room where the baby was sleeping did not have curtains and the sun would often shine directly on the baby. Mrs. Goldstein would solve this problem by using a cloth as a sunshade, placing it on the walls of the bassinet. On a Friday afternoon, however, she started wondering what she would do on Shabbos, since she was aware that it's not permitted to create even a temporary sunshade roof on Shabbos.

Question: What can be a solution in this situation?

Answer: If on *erev* Shabbos, Mrs. Goldstein places some of the sunshade (at least a *tefach** (about 10cm) wide) across the bassinet, then she could add the rest of the sunshade on Shabbos**.

* If the cloth is rolled up, the rolled up part is not counted as part of that *tefach*.

** The *tefach* of sunshade that was placed on *erev* Shabbos, should not be removed on Shabbos.



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Halacha Challenge (cont.)

Explanation: As we've learned in previous articles, creating a permanent shelter on Shabbos (i.e., with the intention to leave it there for several days)^{1*}, such as a sunshade or a rain cover, falls under the מלאכה of בונה. Creating a temporary shelter (אוהל עראי) is not a Torah prohibition, but is however prohibited under a Rabbinic *g'zeira*.¹ As long as the depth of the hollow space under the roof is at least a size of a *tefach* (8-10cm), the structure is considered to be a 'shelter' with respect to the מלאכה of בונה.² Hence, in our scenario, even though the height of the bassinet is very small, since it is more than a *tefach* deep, putting a temporary cover upon it as a shade is prohibited under the Rabbinic *g'zeira* of creating an אוהל עראי.

Since creating a temporary shelter is often necessary on Shabbos, Chaza"l made a few exceptions to the *g'zeira* of creating an אוהל עראי. In the previous articles we've learned about some of these exceptions*. In this week's article we'll take a look at another exception.

The Mishna in Shabbos (ch.17, mishna 7) states that a window shutter (e.g., a stand-alone board that was designated for this purpose before Shabbos) may be used to shut a window on Shabbos. The Gemora explains that the Mishna is teaching us a general principal: it is permitted on Shabbos to build a temporary addition (תוספת עראי) to an existing structure.³ Chazal also teach us that in a case where a person wants to build a temporary addition to a roof on Shabbos, at least a *tefach* size of a roof needs to already exist before that additional part is applied.^{4**} Hence, in our case, as long as the shade was partially made (i.e., at least a size of a *tefach*) over the bassinet on *erev* Shabbos, it's permitted to complete it on Shabbos.⁵ ♦

* As a brief review, the exceptions to the prohibition of creating an אוהל עראי that were discussed in the previous articles are: (1) using a cover that's attached to another structure and is made to be opened and closed as a regular usage of that structure (i.e. a hood of a stroller); (2) holding a cover by hands; (3) building a shelter in reverse order. ** Based on the ruling of Rav cited in Gemora Eiruvim, the Rishonim learn that the part of the cover that's rolled up is not counted as part of the *tefach*.⁵

1*. אורחות שבת פרק ט, אות א. 1. שו"ע סי' שטו סעי' א. 2. שו"כ פרק כד סעי' א. 3. שבת קכה. 4. עירובין קב. 5. שו"כ שם סעי' ט.

Wonders of Creation

The Snow Leopard

by Alex Isaacson



The Snow Leopard is a large cat native to the mountain ranges of Central and South Asia. They have long, thick fur, and their base color varies from smoky gray to yellowish tan. Its vocalizations include hisses, chuffing, mews, growls, and wailing.

Hashem made these leopards with several adaptations for living in a cold, mountainous environment. First of all, their bodies are stocky, their fur is thick, and their ears are small and

rounded, all of which help to minimize heat loss. Their paws are wide, which distributes their weight better for walking on snow. The snow leopard has a short muzzle and domed forehead, containing unusually large nasal cavities that help the animal breathe the thin, cold air of their mountainous environment.

Most fascinating are these leopards' tails. They are long and flexible, helping them to maintain their balance, which is very important in the rocky terrain they inhabit. Their tails are also very thick due to storage of fat and are very thickly covered with fur which allows them to be used like a blanket to protect their faces when asleep. ♦

Riddles



Riddle

Answer to the last issue's riddle

Where in *davening* do you find four different, consecutive words that all have the same root?

(Riddle: Which four blessings are said exactly once every year (outside of Eretz Yisroel)?)

ANSWER:

1. Upon Seeing the first blossoms in the spring
2. *Bedikat chametz*
3. "*Nachem*" during the Mincha *Amida* of Tisha B'Av
4. Lighting candles on *erev* Yom Kippur

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



“עם לבן גרתי ותרתי ג מצוות שמרתי”

Zeidy, why did Yaakov Avinu think that it was important to tell Eisav that he kept all of the mitzvos when he lived with Lavan?



Good question, kids. The answer is that Yitzchok Avinu revealed that Eisav could overpower his brother Yaakov only if Yaakov would not fulfill the mitzvos of the Torah.

Therefore, in this week's parsha, Yaakov tells his brother: “Eisav, you stand no chance to overpower me, because I have fulfilled all of the mitzvos of the Torah”.

[*peirush* Sifsei Chachamim]