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**Rav Mordechai Gifter** (1915-2001). *Yahrzeit* date: 23<sup>rd</sup> of Teves (this year: Thursday, December 26)

Rav Gifter was born in Portsmouth, Virginia and spent part of his childhood in Baltimore. In his early teens R' Gifter studied at Yeshiva of Rav Yitzchak Elchonon in New York City under Rav Moshe HaLevi Soloveitchik. Rav Gifter learned together with Rav Avigdor Miller.

In the winter of 1932, Rav Gifter went to study at Telz yeshiva in Lithuania and spent eight years there before returning back to America. In 1944, Rav Gifter became a mashgiach of Telz yeshiva in Cleveland.

In 1976, Rav Gifter moved to Eretz Yisroel, founding the Telz yeshiva in Kiryat Telz-Stone. Three years later, the Rosh Yeshiva of Telz in Cleveland, Rav Baruch Sorotzkin, was *niftar*, and Rav Gifter returned to Cleveland to succeed him. Rav Gifter served as the Rosh Yeshiva of Telz in Cleveland until the end of this life.

Rav Gifter's love and dedication for Torah was noticeable even when he was a young boy. Once, there was a very large snowstorm in Baltimore and the city almost came to a halt. Young Mordechai Gifter, however, approached his father and said, "I must go to Talmud Torah (the Sunday school where he was taught Torah)." His father replied, "No one will be there. The school will be closed. It is almost impossible to get around today." The child kept on begging his father that they try to go. The father finally gave in and they walked all the way to the Talmud Torah by walking inside the tracks left by the trucks. Though the Talmud Torah was in fact closed, that trip paved a long road for R' Gifter.

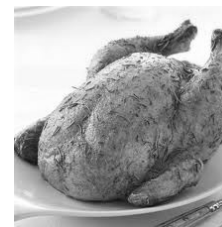
Rav Gifter was famous for his *shmuezin* on *sholom bayis*. Once, a talmid shared with Rav Gifter his explanation for why folding up his *talis* on *Motzoei* Shabbos is a *segulah* for *sholom bayis*: "By folding up a *talis* right after Shabbos a husband is showing that the *talis* that his wife gave him is important in his eyes and he is folding it carefully." Rav Gifter's response was close to the following words: "Why wait till *Motzoei* Shabbos? Pick up a vacuum cleaner on *Erev* Shabbos! That will certainly be a *segulah* for *sholom bayis*!" ♦



## Halacha Challenge

### Chicken Grease on Fingers

by Shlomo Epshteyn



*Avromy ate chicken at the Friday night seuda. Now his hands are greasy. He remembered that last week his father, after eating a pomegranate, cleaned his hands with water as opposed to with a cloth napkin. Avromy is now wondering if he must do the same.*

#### Questions

What is the difference between cleaning hands from pomegranate juice and cleaning them from chicken grease? Can Avromy use a cloth napkin to clean his hands now?

#### Answers

To review from last week, the potential issue when a person wipes fruit juice from his hands is the melacha of *Tzoveya* (dyeing). *Tzoveya* is an *av melacha*, as it was required to dye the wool covers of the Mishkan. The Beis Yosef<sup>1</sup> cites Sefer Yereim which says that after eating strawberries or similar fruits, one should be careful not to touch his clothing or a tablecloth with juice-stained fingers. The concern is that one will apply the fruit juice to the cloth, thereby performing a *toladah* of *tzoveya*.

The Darchei Moshe<sup>2</sup>, however, cites the opinion of the Agur who holds that this action is not considered *tzoveya* (even *m'derabbanan*) because it is *derech lichluch* (the cloth gets soiled more than it gets improved). Most of the later poskim rule stringently on this halacha<sup>3</sup>. The Mishna Berura<sup>4</sup>,

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## Halacha Challenge

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however, does allow one to rely on the lenient opinions when a person has no other way to clean his hands.

There is also a controversy among contemporary authorities whether the *melacha* of *tzoveya* applies to disposable items (e.g., a paper napkin). Rav Neuwirth ז"ל in *Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchosa* rules leniently on the matter<sup>5</sup>. However, the *sefer* *Chut Shoni*<sup>6</sup> (a collection of *shiurim* from HaRav Nissim Karelitz *shlit"a*) states that since a disposable item does not deteriorate on its own, *melacha* of *tzoveya* does in fact apply to it.

The *sefer* *Chut Shoni*,<sup>7</sup> however, says that according to all opinions, the concern of performing *tzoveya* in these scenarios is applicable only when one's hands are soiled with liquids that have an ability to dye fabric (e.g., fruit juice<sup>8</sup>, cocoa<sup>9</sup>). Cleaning hands from other unwanted matter (e.g., food grease) is permissible even with a cloth napkin (even though the napkin gets somewhat "colored"). Consequently, in our scenario, Avromy may use a cloth napkin to clean his hands from the chicken grease. ♦

\*Note: Since this is just a discourse in *halacha* and not *p'sak* halacha, one should ask his Rav on how to conduct himself if such a case should arise.

1. ב"י א"ח סימן שכ 2. שם 3. שו"ע סימן שכ סעיף כ, מ"ב שם ס"ק כד, עה"ש סימן שכ אות ז  
4. מ"ב סימן שכ ס"ק נ"ט 5. ששכ"ה פרק יד סעיף כא (במהדורה חדשה) 6. חוט שני פרק י"ט  
אות ב 7. שם 8. שם 9. ששכ"ה שם

## Wonders of Creation

### Gangurru

by Alex Isaacson



Everybody knows that the Gangurru, or Kangaroo to most people, are endemic to the country of Australia. They have large, powerful hind legs, large feet adapted for leaping, a long muscular tail for balance, and a small head. Like most marsupials, female kangaroos have a pouch called a marsupium in which infant kangaroo's complete postnatal development takes place. As for defense, Kangaroos are adept swimmers, and often flee into waterways if threatened by a predator. If pursued into the water, a Kangaroo may use its forepaws to hold the predator underwater so as to drown it.

What most people don't know, however, is that Hashem created them as the only large animals to use hopping as a means of locomotion. The comfortable hopping speed for the average kangaroo is about 13–16 mph. Though, speeds of up to 44 mph can be attained. There is also a link between the hopping action and the breathing cycle: as the feet leave the ground, air is expelled from the lungs; bringing the feet forward for landing automatically refills the lungs. This fast and energy-efficient method of travel has been granted to them by the Creator because of their need to regularly cover large distances in search of food and water. ♦

## Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, why was Moshe Rabbeinu concerned that the Yidden might not believe him about the soon-coming Yetzias Mitzraim?



Nice question, Kids. You see, we thought that we will need to stay in Mitzraim for 400 years, just as Hashem told to Avraham Avinu in the Bris Bein HaBesorim. But Hashem, in his love for us, shortened *galus* Mitzraim and we only stayed there for 210 years! Moshe Rabbeinu thought that perhaps the Yidden will not believe him that the *g'zeira* was cut short by 190 years.

[based on Shem MiShmuel]

## Solve a Riddle

### Riddle

There are two weekly *parshios*, adjacent to one another, which don't have the 4-letter name of Hashem in them. What are they?



Answer to last issue's riddle:

(Riddle: On Chanuka we have heard plenty about the Greeks. But how do the Greeks, or more specifically a part of their culture, play a role in Halachos of Purim?)

If one heard the Megilla reading on Purim in a foreign language (i.e. not *Loshon HaKodesh*) which he doesn't understand, he has not fulfilled the mitzva of hearing the Megilla. The only exception to this rule is the Greek language (i.e. the authentic ancient Greek)—one who heard the Megilla in Greek has fulfilled the mitzva—even though he did not understand one word! [see Rambam - Hilchos Megilla 2:3]