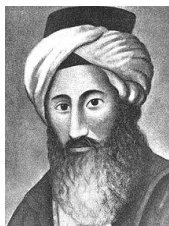


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Rav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai, the Chida (1724-1806).

Yahrzeit date: 11th of Adar (this year: Tuesday, Feb. 11)

The Chida was born in Yerushalayim. At the age of 18, he learned under Rav Chaim ben Atar (the Ohr Hachaim) who established a yeshiva in Yerushalayim. He later learned in the Beit El yeshiva of the *mekubalim* under Rav Shalom Sharabi (the Rashash).

The Rashash and two of his disciples, the Chida and Rabbi Haim de la Rosa, felt that the time was right to hasten the final redemption. They removed themselves from all earthy matters and chose to live an ascetic life which included fasting in order to sanctify and purify themselves. The following story takes when a thick blanket of snow covered the city of Yerushalayim. The three *tzaddikim* rolled about in the snow, praying with incredible devotion and fasting afterwards for three consecutive days. At the end of the fast, they went to an isolated place and began to meditate. However, they were suddenly petrified by the sound of a heavenly voice: “My sons, you don’t have the right to hasten the Geula. The hour has not yet come, and to prevent you from together attempting to do it again, one of you will be exiled abroad.”

Since the heavenly voice did not declare who among them would suffer this fate, they drew lots and designated the Chida. Without hesitation, the Chida accepted the verdict and put himself on route for a long exile, during which time he would meet the great men of his generation and travel to many countries, including Egypt, Italy, France, England, the Netherlands, Germany, Sicily, Crete, and Turkey.

On his travels the Chida collected funds for the communities who resided in Eretz Yisroel. He visited the famous libraries of Italy and France, where he examined the original manuscripts. He was interested and absorbed by all that he saw and heard in the many places that he traveled. The Chida had a very modest personality. This shines through in the detailed diary of his trips, *Ma’agal Tov*. He attributes all the honor he received on his travels to the fact that he represented the Holy Land, and not to his own righteousness.

The Chida’s works include a collection of responsa known as *Yoseif Ometz*, the *Shem HaGedolim* (a biographical work on 1300 authors and 1200 writings, dating back to the Gaonim), and many others. He passed away in Livorno, Italy. The gravesite of the Chida is at Har HaMenuchos, Yerushalayim. ♦



Halacha Challenge

Drinking Water from Melted Ice Cubes

by Shlomo Epshteyn



Ten year old Chani was enjoying the warm weather on a Shabbos afternoon. After a pleasant Shabbos walk with her family she was thirsty. She put some ice cubes into a cup of water and thought to herself, “right now, I’ll drink all the water, and then after the ice cubes melt, I’ll have new cold water to drink again!”

Question

Does Chani have a good plan?

Answer

The answer depends on Chani’s parents, or more specifically, the *minhagim* that they keep. If her parents keep Sephardi *minhagim*, then Chani has a good plan. If her parents keep Ashkenazi *minhagim*, then Chani should leave some water in a cup before the ice cubes melt (under these condition, the water from the melted ice cubes may be consumed).

Explanation

To understand this *halacha* we need to look deeper into a topic we mentioned briefly in the last article – “consuming melted snow and ice”. A Braisa (Shabbos 51b) teaches that one is not allowed to break snow or hail on Shabbos in order to make the water flow from that snow or hail. Rashi (ibid.) explains that this is a rabbinic prohibition of *molid*—creating a new substance. Since a person is “creating” the water by actively breaking down the snow or hail, this act is similar to a *melacha*. Rambam (Laws of Shabbos, 21:13) and other Rishonim (Rashba, Ramban) learn that this prohibition was made by the sages, because it is similar to extracting juice from fruits. Sefer HaTruma, on other hand, learns that the

Halacha Challenge

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reason for this prohibition is that the newly formed water will have a status of *nolad* (a newly-created substance). Thus, according to sefer HaTruma, converting a solid substance into a liquid is prohibited, even if it is done passively. Also, the newly created liquid has a status of *muktza*, and is thus prohibited.

Sefer HaTruma further learns from this Braisa that it is not permitted to put a *pashtida* - a piece of meat and fat wrapped in a baked dough - next to a fire, since the congealed fat inside the *pashtida* will be melted into a liquid form. Since most Rishonim disagree with sefer HaTruma's approach of learning the Braisa above, the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 318:16) rules that it is permitted to put a *pashtida* in a warm place in order to melt the congealed fat (since the *pashtida* was fully cooked, there is no issue associated with the *melacha* of *bishul*). Similarly, in regards to the snow and hail, the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 320:9) rules that as long as the ice or the snow were not actively melted by hand (e.g., by crushing it), one is allowed to use the melted water.

The Rama (O.C. 318:16), however, writes that the custom (of the Ashkenazim) is to follow the opinion of sefer HaTruma, and hence one should not put a *pashtida* in a warm place, unless there is a Shabbos need (e.g., one is lacking appropriate Shabbos food). Magen Avrohom (320:14) points out that the Rama would rule similarly in regards to passively melting ice and hail.

As such, in our scenario, if Chani follows Ashkenazi *minhagim*, she should leave some water in which the ice cubes can melt. As we learned in the last article, consuming melted snow or ice which melted inside another liquid is permitted by the same Braisa: "but one may put [snow or hail] into a cup [with wine]." The explanation that's found in Rishonim (see Mordechai on Shabbos, ch.4) is the following. There is no prohibition of creating a *nolad* if the actual conversion from solid to liquid is done passively and the resultant liquid is not identifiable inside the drink / food in which the solid has melted. ♦

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, we know that *nesi'im* brought precious stones as their donation for the Mishkan. Do we know which donation Moshe Rabbeinu brought for the Mishkan?



Excellent question, kids. Actually, Moshe Rabbeinu did not give any donations for the Mishkan. The reason is because he did something greater than contributing the materials. Moshe Rabbeinu prompted others to contribute. Our sages say: "*Gadol hame'ase yoser min ha'ose*" - The one who is the cause of the action is greater than the one who actually performs it!
[based on *peirush* Me'am Loez]

Wonders of Creation

The Crafty Chameleon

by Alex Isaacson

It sure doesn't move quickly, but the chameleon doesn't have to. Capable of changing into a variety of colors, including pink, blue, red, orange, turquoise, yellow, and green, this reptile is a true master of disguise. There are at least 160 species of chameleons found in Africa, Madagascar, Spain and Portugal. Chameleons can also be found in south Asia, and Sri Lanka. Like snakes, these creatures have no outer ears, middle ears, ear drums, or openings for ears, but they are not deaf. They can detect sound frequencies in the 200–600 Hz range.



When we think about this reptile, we immediately direct our minds to how it changes color, but it's the chameleon's senses that are most fascinating. Hashem gave this creature the most distinctive eyes of any reptile. The upper and lower eyelids are connected, with only a pinhole large enough for the pupil to see through. Chameleons can rotate and focus both eyes separately in order to observe two different objects simultaneously, thus allowing their eyes to move independently from each other, giving them a full 360-degree arc of vision around their body. When prey is located, both eyes can focus in the same direction, giving the chameleon a sharp 3-dimensional view along with depth perception.

The chameleon's tongue is made out of a special blend of muscle and bone that allows it to snatch prey in less than .07 seconds. It has an ability to shoot its tongue out of its mouth so fast due to an elastic recoil built into the tongue. ♦

Riddles & Parsha Qs

Parsha Q



According to some opinions, one of the priestly articles (from this week's parsha) had a text written on it in a reverse order. Which garment was it?

Answer to last issue's Riddle:

(Riddle: *Kings Love me. Craftsmen torture me. When they're killing me, they want me to live. Who am I?*)

The Chilozon snail. [The *techeles* dye which is derived from this snail is used in royal garments, as is evident from Megillas Esther. The snail needs to be squeezed (ouch!) to release the blue-colored "blood" while being careful to keep the snail alive as long as possible, because after it dies, the quality of dye goes down. (based on Gemora Shabbos 73a)]