

Halacha Challenge

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removes mushrooms that grow on the edge of a bucket, since they receive their nourishment from the water that's located there. The Lechem Mishna in his *peirush* on the Rambam³ explains that doing *kotzer* using a instrument is an *av melacha*, but performing *kotzer* using hands without an instrument is a *toldah* of *kotzer*.)

To prevent a person from doing the *melacha* of *kotzer*, the sages prohibited several activities which may lead a person to detach a living plant or part of a plant from its source of growth. One of these prohibitions is stated in *masechet Succah*⁴. There, as a tangent on the laws of *arbah minim*, the Gemora cites a ruling of Raba that one may not smell an *esrog* while it is attached to the tree. The Gemora there explains that since an *esrog* is meant to be eaten, if one smells it, he may be tempted to pluck it off the tree to eat it.

The Shulchan Aruch⁵ rules according to this statement of Raba. As such, in our scenario, Shmuli cannot smell the strawberries of his yard. In the subsequent articles we'll need to understand the *halacha* of smelling a fruit which fell off a tree on Shabbos and also the *halacha* of smelling flowers. ♦

1. פרק ז משנה ב 2. רמבם פרק ח מהל' שבת הלכה ג ע"פ גמ' שבת קז: 3. שבת קח.
 *3. רמבם פרק כא מהל' שבת הלכה ו ולחם משנה פרק ח מהל' שבת ס"ק ג 4. סוכה לז:
 5. שו"ע א"ח סימן שלו סעיף י

Wonders of Creation

The Gazelle

by Alex Isaacson and Shlomo Epshteyn



A Gazelle is any of the antelope species in the genus *Gazella*. Gazelles are mostly found in the deserts, grasslands, and savannas of Africa. They tend to live in herds and spend most of their time grazing.

The Gazelle possesses and exhibits a distinctive behavior of stotting when they are threatened by predators. Stotting is when an animal suddenly springs into the air, lifting all four feet off the ground simultaneously.

Why did Hashem make Gazelles have such a response to the predators? Some scientist explain that by making this unique jump, a Gazelle is signaling to a predator: "I am very fit. There is no point for you to chase after me, because I will win anyway."

Another explanation is that a Gazelle is telling a predator, "I am aware that I am now your target". Therefore, the predator does not have the advantage of a surprise attack. It was statistically proven that cheetahs abandon more hunts when their gazelle prey stots. ♦

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, we learned in this week's parsha that a baby boy gets a Bris Mila on the 8th day. Why that day?



Good question, kids. One of the reasons is explained by the Orach Chaim HaKadosh. As you might remember from learning parshas Bereishis, Rashi teaches us that Shabbos gave strength to the world.

In the same way, Shabbos gives strength to a person. Hashem wanted a new-born boy to receive that "Shabbos strength" before his Bris Mila. By the time the 8th day comes, a new-born boy passed at some point a full day of Shabbos.

Riddles & Parsha Qs

Riddle



Answer to last issue's Riddle:

"Moshie! What you are doing is *asur* in *halacha*!" screamed out Levi.

"Oh, but I really need to do this," said Moshie.

"Well, If you'll put on Tefillin, then you'll be allowed to do it," said Levi.

(Riddle: I top the heads. I myself have 3 heads on my right side and 4 on my left side. Into some people I instill love, into others I instill fear. Who am I?)

The head Tefillin. It has a 3-headed *Shin* on its right side, and a 4-headed *Shin* its left side. It brings us closer to Hashem, and it causes the non-Jews to have fear when they see us wearing it.

Is a Miracle a Miracle?

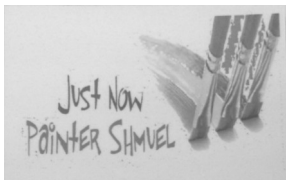
R' Yosef Yoizel Horowitz, The Alter of Navardok, was once sitting in a cabin in the woods learning Torah. His only source of light was a candle which was almost at its end. R' Yosef Yoizel was worried that he would be forced to stop learning, but he strengthened himself with thoughts of *bitachon*. He had strong faith that Hashem could provide a solution for him even in his isolated location. He walked to the front of the cabin, opened the door, and was startled to see someone approaching him from the woods. The stranger handed him a candle and disappeared into the woods.

R' Yosef Yoizel, who never discovered the identity of the stranger, saved the candle stub for twenty five years. He viewed it as proof of the miracle, and as a reminder of what could happen if one places his full faith in Hashem.

Eventually, a fire which engulfed Navardok destroyed the candle. R' Yosef Yoizel viewed this as a sign that there was no need for tangible proof of the reality of living with faith in Hashem. He felt that his initial excitement over the miracle of the candle was a lack of faith. A person with true *bitachon* should not be fazed by such seemingly unexplainable incidents. Instead, one should be constantly cognizant that nature itself is miraculous, and miracles can be natural. (From Madregas Ha'Adam)

Another story illustrating this concept is told about R' Moshe Shmuel Shapira, z"l, the Rosh Yeshiva of Ber Yaakov. One of his students was writing a biography of a famous Gadol. However, he was having difficulty verifying the authenticity of his sources. During this period, he traveled abroad, and was astounded to discover that the man sitting next to him on the plane was a direct descendant of the Gadol! Obviously, he took advantage of the plane trip to verify his sources, and glean even more information about the Gadol from his descendant. When he returned to Israel, he went to see R' Moshe Shmuel, and told him about this astounding incident. He was so excited as he told the story that he stumbled over his words. R' Moshe Shmuel looked at him calmly, failing to understand the source of his great excitement. He gently said, "What new thing are you telling me - that there is a Creator who runs the world?" ♦

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Halacha Challenge

Spring Aroma - part 1

by Shlomo Epshteyn



The Spring is here. Nissan is around the corner. Many trees and other vegetation are starting to blossom and fill the streets with aroma.

This time of the year is the peak season for strawberries in Shmuli's backyard garden. As Shmuli was enjoying his Shabbos afternoon in the garden, he thought, "let me come close to the strawberries and smell them. This will be a true oneg Shabbos for me!"

Question

Can Shmuli smell the strawberries that are growing in his garden?

Answer

Shmuel will need to find something else to smell for his *oneg* Shabbos, because there is a rabbinic prohibition of smelling (on Shabbos) an edible fruit while it is attached to the ground.

Explanation

The Mishna in *masechet* Shabbos¹ lists *kotzer* (reaping) as one of the *avos melachos*. The definition of *kotzer* is detaching a living thing from its source of nourishment². (As you might remember from a prior article, this *melacha* applies even to things that are not connected to the ground. For example, the Gemora³ says that a person transgresses Shabbos if he



This week's issue is dedicated

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