

The Chasam Sofer's Final Minutes

Special thanks to revach.net for the story

"Praised is the man who comes here (to Shamayim) and his Torah is in his hand." (Pesachim 50a)

In the final days of his life, the Chasam Sofer reviewed the entire Torah that he learned, in order to come to *shamayim* with his Torah intact. In the last few hours of his life he realized that three *chidushim* of his were no longer clear in his mind. He quickly called for his close *talmid*, Rav Menachem Katz, who lived not too far from Pressburg, where the Chasam Sofer was located. Rav Menachem reviewed with him these *chidushim* and then the Chasam Sofer's face lit up from content that he would return his *neshama* to *shamayim* with all the Torah still with him.

As soon as they finished reviewing, the Chasam Sofer screamed to Rav Menachem Katz, who was a Cohen, "Run out! I am dying." As soon as Rav Katz ran out, he heard the Chasam Sofer say Shema Yisroel as his holy *neshama* departed to the heavens.

Rav Katz later said about his Rebbe that he had such a good heart, that he held back the departure of his *neshama* until he was sure that Rav Katz was safely outside without violating the Mitzvos of the Cohen. ♦

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תשע"ה - Issue #3

פרשת נח

Halacha Challenge

"And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." - Bereishis 7:12

Opening the Hood of a Stroller

by Shlomo Epshteyn

reviewed by Rav Chaim Malinowitz



A bar-mitzva Kiddush put the Goldberg kids in a good mood, and therefore, when it started to drizzle on the way home, no one was upset. No one, except for one person – baby Miriam, who was being pushed in a stroller by her sister Chani. "Why don't you just open the stroller's hood?" asked her little sister Sari. "Are you kidding me?" said Chani, "you want me to create an 'ohel' on Shabbos?! It would be the same as opening up an umbrella now!"

Question: Is Chani's logic correct?

Answer: Not exactly. Attaching the hood to the stroller on Shabbos is not allowed, but if the hood was fastened to the stroller prior to Shabbos, then it's permitted to open it on Shabbos, even for the purpose of protecting a child from rain.

Explanation: "Where did 'building' (i.e. the *melacha* of Boneh) take place in the [construction] of the Mishkan," asks Gemora Yerushalmi¹. The Gemora answers: "[it would take place when] they would put the Kerashim on the Adanim" – i.e., when they would insert the wood planks into the sockets to form the three walls of the Mishkan. The Gemora then points out that from this we see that a mere assembly of a structure from pre-made parts is also Boneh.²



This week's issue is dedicated
anonymously

Halacha Challenge (cont.)

There are many things which are called a “structure” in respect to the *melacha* of *Boneh*. In this series of articles we will focus on a structure which is referred to by Chazal as “*ohel*” (lit. a shelter). Chazal teach us that creating an *ohel kavua* (i.e., made in such a way that it can stand for a lengthy period of time)³ is prohibited *m'deoraisa*⁴. Rabbinically, it is also prohibited to create an *ohel arai* (a temporary *ohel*)⁵.

The term *ohel* can actually refer to several types of structures. One of the structures that is called an *ohel* is a wall-less, overhead shelter⁶. For example, putting a sheet on top of something to create shade in a picnic area on Shabbos would be classified as creating a temporary *ohel*, and would thus be prohibited.

One exception to this, however, is an *ohel* that is attached to a structure and is made to be opened and closed as a normal usage of that structure. For example, the Darkei Moshe rules that on Shabbos or Yom Tov it is permitted to open and close the roof of a Sukka (a hard roof which protects the Sukka from rain), if the roof is attached by hinges to the Sukka. Since the roof is fastened to the Sukka, and closing (or opening) this roof is part of Sukka's usage, opening and closing this roof is no different than opening and closing a door of a house (i.e., although we are “improving” the house by closing its door, this is not called *Boneh*)⁷.

Consequently, the sefer Shemrias Shabbos Kehilchosa writes that it is permitted to unfold and fold the hood of a stroller on Shabbos if this hood was attached to the stroller before Shabbos⁸. [Opening a hand umbrella cannot be compared to unfolding a hood of a stroller, since an umbrella is not attached to another structure (more on umbrellas in the future articles, IY”H).] ♦

1. ירושלמי פרק כלל גדול ה"ב 2. ע"פ פירוש פני משה שם ד"ה הדא אמרה אפ' מן הצד 3. ערוה"ש סימן שטו אות ב 4. שבת קלח. 5. שבת קכה: 6. עיין רש"י שבת קכח: ד"ה שאין עושין אהל עראי, שו"ע סימן שטו סעיף א 7. דרכי משה סימן תרכו, רמ"א סימן תרכו סעיף ג 8. ששכ"ה פרק כד אות יג

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, the Torah teaches us that “Noach found חן (favor) in the eyes of Hashem”, and that's really what saved Noach from the flood. Since חן has such a big merit, teach us please the way to earn it.



You made a good observation, kids! It's true that even though Noach had other great merits — the biggest one being that his descendants were going to be the Bnei Yisroel who will receive the Torah, nevertheless, what saved him was Hashem's חן for Noach.

Shlomo HaMelech teaches us is his sefer Mishlei that two things earn חן for a person: being humble, as the verse (3:34) says “וְלַעֲנוּיִים יָתֵן חֵן”; and learning Torah, as the verse (5:19) says “אֵילַת אֲהָבִים וְיִצְעָלָהּ חֵן”.

[based on Sichos Musar by Rav Chaim Leib Shmuelevitz]

Wonders of Creation

Axolotls



The Axolotl is a Mexican aquatic salamander, native to Lake Xochimilco in the Valley of Mexico. This animal cannot be found anywhere else in the wild. According to scientists, there are only about 1200 left. This “happy face” animal never grows out of the tadpole state — they reach maturity without undergoing metamorphosis, as most other salamanders do. This is caused by the lack of a certain hormone, whose function is to induce the thyroid. As a bonus, some of them glow in the dark. They are sold as pets in the United States and other countries. ♦

Riddles

Riddle

As we know, between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur an extra word - ולעילא - is added to the Half Kaddish, but we combine the words מן מכל to form כל in order to remain with a total of 28 words in the Half Kaddish.

The reason for the significance of the number 28 is revealed in the beginning of *sefer Bereishis*.

Where?

Answer to last issue's riddle

(*Riddle:* At the time of the Beis Hamikdash, there was a town near the Euphrates in which the first day of Pesach was always observed for one day. The first day of Succos, however, was sometimes observed for one day and sometimes for two. Why?) [Special thanks to Yiddle Riddle Archives (Ohr Somayach Institutions) for this riddle.]

ANSWER: This town was 11 days traveling distance from Yerushalayim. When Rosh Chodesh was proclaimed in Yerushalayim, messengers went out to inform the people. Even though these messengers did not travel on Shabbos, they would always reach this town in time for Pesach, because at most, only two Sabbosim interrupted their journey, giving them 13 days to get there (11 of travel plus 2 of rest). This is enough time to arrive before Pesach, which is on the 15th of Nissan.

Before Succos, however, there are two additional holidays: Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. These are additional days on which the messengers did not travel. Therefore, sometimes the messengers would arrive in time for Succos and sometimes they would not. It depends: If both Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur occur on weekdays, they “use up” two additional travel days. If so, the messengers need 15 days to get there (11 travel plus 2 Sabbaths plus 2 holidays = 15). This is not enough time to arrive before Succos, which is on the 15th of Tishrei. Not knowing the correct date, they therefore needed to observe two days due to doubt. If either Rosh Hashana or Yom Kippur occur on Shabbat, however, they gain a day and arrive on time.