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אין בית המדרש בלא  
**חידוש** Chiddush



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## A Question on Faith

The Midrash tells the story of a loyal minister who presented the king with a gift, a beautiful sword of the finest quality. On receiving the sword, the king turned to his executioner and commanded him to execute the minister with the very sword which he presented to the king. This *Mashal* illustrates the conversation between Hashem and Moshe 40 years after the Exodus.

When Hashem tells Moshe that he is about to die, He says הן קרבו ימיך למות "behold your days are drawing close to die." Hashem announces Moshe's death with the word הן. The Midrash tells us that like the minister in the parable, Moshe protests; With this word הן that I praised you declaring; הן לה' אלוקיך השמים ושמי השמים, the Heavens and the Heavens above them belong to You Hashem, with this word you announce my death?

Hashem responded to Moshe "indeed you did praise Me with the word הן, but dear Moshe, don't you remember when else you used this word הן? When I sent you to tell the Jewish people that their redemption is at hand, you responded לי יאמינו, "behold they will not believe me". It is because of this הן that I use this word to declare your passing."

At the burning bush, Hashem told Moshe to go to Egypt and announce the impending Geulah to the people and that they would listen to his voice. But Moshe responded with doubt, casting aspersion on the Jewish people that they would not believe him.

Hashem warned Moshe that for his slander he deserved to be beaten with his staff. The signs which Moshe was shown at the burning bush all contained within them a reproach to Moshe himself. His staff turned into a serpent, alluding to the snake of Gan Eden which spoke slanderously. Subsequently his hand was plagued with Tzaraas, the punishment for Loshon Hora. And ultimately, because of this slander, Moshe was destined to die, הן קרבו ימיך למות.

We can't really blame Moshe for his lack of confidence in the faith of the Jewish people. Moshe knew very well who he was talking about. Bnei Yisroel were not the biggest bunch of Tzaddikim. They had fallen to the depths of the 49th Gate of Impurity, standing on the abyss of complete spiritual collapse.

Our sages teach that only one fifth of the Jewish people left Egypt. The remaining 4/5ths who did not believe in Geulah, passed away during the plague of darkness. According to another version only 1/500th of the Jewish population merited to leave Egypt.

Even those who did merit to be redeemed were far from perfect. At the time of Krias Yam Suf, when Bnei Yisroel crossed safely on dry land while the Mitzriim drowned in the raging waters, the angels protested. What is the difference between these people (Bnei Yisroel) and these people (the Egyptians)? These one's worship idols and these one's too worship idols. The Jewish people commit murder and sins on immorality just like the Egyptians. Yet why are Bnei Yisroel spared while the Mitzriim perish?

But this was only true on the superficial level. In their heart of hearts and in the essence of their souls, the Jewish people are *Maaminim Bnei Maaminim*, believers the sons of believers. They believe in Hashem and they believe in Geulah.

Hashem's lesson is a powerful directive on how we should look at every Jew, even those who seem so distant from Jewish observance and faith. Every Jew possesses a Neshama, a part of G-d Above. In their truest essential state they have an innate believe in Hashem and in Torah. This is the Jew that we should see when we look at others and not judge them on externalities.

When we believe in our fellow Jews them and see their inner faith, we can reveal it within them and through this we will merit to leave our Exile together in the ultimate redemption with Moshiach leading the way.

# Squeezing Lemons on Shabbos

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

One of the Shabbos Melachos is Dosh - threshing. Threshing is the process used to extract grain kernels from their husk. Mefarek is a Toldah (derivative or subcategory) of the Melocha of Dosh which forbids extracting any food or liquid from the source in which they were originally absorbed. Squeezing fruits to extract the liquid from inside of them is considered an act of Mefarek.

The Talmud<sup>1</sup> rules that on the Torah level, the prohibition of squeezing fruits only applies when squeezing grapes or olives. There is a dispute among the Rishonim why these fruits are singled out.

Rashi explains that it is because the majority of grapes and olives are used to extract their liquids, to make wine or oil. Based on this, grapes and olives are not exclusive. If at any time another fruit type is primarily used for making juice, this too would be Biblically forbidden.

The Ran on the other hand explains that only grapes and olives are forbidden because only their extracts are considered as one of the seven halachically defined liquids<sup>2</sup>. All other fruit juices are considered as merely a part of the fruit that has been separated or 'cut off'.

Juicing oranges would be a practical case of dispute. According to Rashi squeezing these oranges would involve a Biblical prohibition, whereas according to the Ran it would not.

All of this is on the Torah level. Miderabbonon, squeezing any fruit which is commonly used for juice is forbidden. This would include most fruits nowadays.

Squeezing juice over food<sup>3</sup> is permissible based on the Talmudic dictum that whatever comes into food is considered like food. In this 'halachic reality' the fruit juice is no longer considered juice, but rather like a piece of the fruit. This would even apply to squeezing grapes and olives. Squeezing into a liquid or an empty cup remains forbidden.

Based on the above, squeezing lemons onto fish or into salad would be completely permissible. But what about squeezing lemons into tea, or into water to make lemon juice or to make salad dressing? It would seem

that this is clearly forbidden, since lemons are a type of fruit which is commonly squeezed for its juice.

Nonetheless, the Shulchan Aruch rules that one may squeeze lemons for their juice on Shabbos.

The primary reason for this leniency<sup>4</sup>, is because lemon juice is not (generally) not consumed on its own as a drink, it is always mixed with other ingredients (such as water and sugar). This is as opposed to other fruits which are squeezed to drink straight.

The rationale is that since the lemon juice still needs to be mixed with other ingredients in order to drink, it is not considered to be a real liquid in its own right. Therefore lemons may be squeezed into liquids or even into an empty vessel.

The Magen Avraham and Alter Rebbe<sup>5</sup> rule like this reasoning of the Shulchan Aruch and permit squeezing lemons on Shabbos in any manner.

However, the later Acharonim argue with this lenient ruling of the Shulchan Aruch.

The original reason found in the Rishonim to permit squeezing lemons was because lemon juice was only used for food and not as a drink. This no longer applies since lemon juice is commonly used in drinks. The Beis Yosef's justification, that since lemon juice is not drunk alone it should be permitted, is questionable.

The Tzemach Tzedek challenges this justification based on the following; Wine in the times of the Talmud would have to be mixed with water to dilute its strength. Nonetheless, squeezing grapes is certainly forbidden even though the wine would only be drunk when mixed with water. Why should lemons be different?<sup>6</sup>

The Mishna Berura, Chayei Adam and Eglei Tal also rule that one may not squeeze lemons on Shabbos (except onto foods).

The accepted practise in most communities today, certainly so for Chabad Chassidim who follow the rulings of the Tzemach Tzedek<sup>7</sup>, is not to squeeze lemons on Shabbos (except onto foods).

So how do you make your lemon tea? The Mishna Berura<sup>8</sup> suggests that the lemon should

be squeezed onto sugar and the sugar then placed in the tea. This is considered as squeezing onto food which is always permissible.

The Tzemach Tzedek<sup>9</sup> raises this possibility and argues. Since the sugar will dissolve into the tea and this is the person's intention. If so the sugar cannot be considered as 'food'. It is considered as though you have squeezed into a liquid which remains forbidden.

Rather, one should either use pre-squeezed lemon juice or cut slices of lemon which may then be placed into tea or jugs of water.

Similarly when making dressings, the lemon should be squeezed directly over the salad and the other dressing ingredients mixed and added afterwards.

One final issue on the topic: When squeezing lemons over salad, removing any pips which might have fallen in would be a problem of Borrer (selecting). Similarly using a net or strainer to squeeze into (to catch the pips) would also be problematic since it is using a Keli to do an act of Borrer.

Conclusion: Lemons, like other fruits, should not be squeezed on Shabbos. The only exception would be to squeeze lemons directly onto solid foods e.g. fish and salad.

<sup>1</sup> Shabbos 145b

<sup>2</sup> Water, wine, blood, olive-oil, milk, dew and honey. For this reason unlike other fruit juices where the brocha is a generic *shehakol*, wine receives a special blessing. Olive oil, were it to be potable would remain *haeitz*. Similarly only wine and olive oil as fruit extracts could render something susceptible to Tumah.

<sup>3</sup> The Poskim bring to conditions to be able to squeeze onto food. Either it must be to enhance the flavour of the food or the liquid must be absorbed into the food that it is being squeezed onto.

<sup>4</sup> See Beis Yosef OC 320

<sup>5</sup> Misgeres Hashulchan records that the minhag in his locale is to permit squeezing lemons into water.

<sup>6</sup> There are those who do make a distinction. Wine when diluted is still called wine, suggesting that it does not become *battel*. Lemon when mixed to make other drinks is not longer called lemon juice.

<sup>7</sup> When the Tzemach Tzedek argues on a ruling of the Alter Rebbe, we follow the rulings of the Tzemach Tzedek since he is the later authority.

<sup>8</sup> Quoting the Radbaz. This ruling is also found in the Ben Ish Chai and Chida.

<sup>9</sup> A similar ruling is found in the Chazon Ish. Based on this, squeezing lemon onto sugar to eat would be permissible.