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Parshas Tzav  Rabbi Yitzchok Simcha

Powerful Prayers

The Gemorah in Megilla says that before Esther entered the chamber of Achashveirosh she recited the possuk "*Kaili kaili lama azavtani rachok mishuasi divrei sha'agasi*" - "*My G-d, my G-d, why have you forsaken me, why so far from saving me, from the words of my roar*". The Ksav Sofer suggests a deeper understanding of this possuk and why she said it here, based on a midrash in Devarim. The midrash says, "Moshe said to Hashem, 'when you see your children in pain, and there is no one to plead for mercy on their behalf, answer them immediately'. Hashem answered, 'any time they call on me I will answer as it says, *Mi K'hashem Elokainu B'chol Korainu Ailov*.'" Moshe requested of Hashem that Hashem answer Bnei Yisroel even when there is no one to ask on their behalf. Why did Hashem then seemingly disregard this request and answer, "I will answer when they call me"?

The K'sav Sofer suggests the following explanation. Chazal say that one who davens for his friend while he himself needs the same thing is answered first. The reason for this is that we are all commanded to love every Jew as we love ourselves. One of the greatest expressions of such a love is setting aside your personal problems and instead daven for the rest of Klal Yisroel. Therefore, such a tefilla is answered first.

With this we can understand the conversation between Moshe and Hashem. Moshe asked that even when there is no one to ask for them, meaning that instead of each person davening for everyone else, they are pleading only for themselves, answer Bnei Yisroel anyway. To this Hashem answers, whenever

they call on me, even if it is not the *madreiga* (level) of one davening for another, I will nevertheless answer them.

Perhaps this can help us understand Esther's tefilla. "*Kaili kaili lama azavtan*", Hashem you should not forsake me and my tefillos because "*Rachok Mishuasi divrei sha'agasi*", My prayers have nothing to do with my own personal danger, rather it is for the rest of Klal Yisroel.

The power of prayer is well documented. How much more powerful is it when infused with love for the rest of Klal Yisroel! The Ribono Shel Olam should help us attain this level of Ahasavas Yisroel, thereby catapulting our tefillos straight to the Kisai Hakavod.

Rabbi Simcha learns full-time at the kollel.



Opening Bottle Caps on Shabbos

Rabbi Shlomo Francis

Opening bottle caps on Shabbos is a common halachic sheila that many of us are faced with every week. It is important for one to realize that a seemingly minor change in the method of manufacturing of a particular cap may change its status from one that may be opened on Shabbos to one that is prohibited mideoraisa. Additionally, there are many instances that are subject to debate among contemporary poskim. The purpose of the article is not to pasken, but rather to clarify the issues involved so one may present a sheila to his own rav.

There are three primary concerns that pertain to opening of food packaging on Shabbos: 1) The most problematic issue that all poskim agree on is that creating a kli (vessel) is forbidden medeoraisa. This is either under the category of boneh- building or of makeh b'patish-completing the creation of a utensil. Accordingly there is no leniency to do so even when necessary for food preparation. 2) Destroying an existing kli with the intention of rebuilding it is the melacha of soser (demolishing). However destroying a kli without the intention of rebuilding is considered destructive and it is not forbidden m'deoraisa. The Gemara clearly states that when necessary for food preparation, the issur derebanan forbidding the destruction of a kli is waived. The rishonim differ on the application of the above Gemora. According to Tosfos and the Rosh, this would only apply to an inferior kli. According to the Rashba and the Ran, even a complete kli may be destroyed but only when necessary for Shabbos. The poskim disagree on whether one may rely on the lenient opinion in this matter (see Mishna Berura and Igros Moshe O.C. 1:128). 3) Tearing in a constructive manner is the melacha of mechatech. Tearing a bag in a destructive manner is ossur miderabonon, and therefore, when necessary for food preparation, there may be instances where the issur derabanon could be waived.

Even when the opening of the package may be permitted, care must be taken to avoid ripping or breaking any letters (or words) in the process as this would be the melacha of Erasing.

Practical Applications

It is important to note that the halachos of opening various containers are very complex, and there are dissenting opinions regarding these issues. In addition, these shailos often involve issurei deoraisah. R' Moshe stresses the vital importance of opening **all** food containers before Shabbos. The following leniencies should therefore only be used if one forgot to open a container before Shabbos.

Soda bottles and wine bottles:

Opening bottles with metal caps such as those found on some wine

or soda bottles is the most problematic scenario. Such caps are made by first having a smooth metal cap placed on the bottle. Then a machine carves out the tracks around the side while the cap is already sealed on the bottle. Consequently, the cap was not functional prior to its removal from the bottle. Therefore, according to many poskim, upon removing such a cap, one is creating a kli. As stated above, creating a kli, according to all rishonim, is an issur deoraisa. Obviously, in this case, there is no room for leniency- even if the contents in the bottle are necessary for food preparation. Some poskim permit one to open such a cap by piercing a hole in the cap before its removal. The hole should be large enough to render the cap completely useless. In this way, he will not be creating a kli when removing the cap.

Opening plastic bottle caps is considerably more lenient according to many poskim. While plastic caps are completely formed prior to their placement on the bottle, nevertheless, the only method by which it can be used as a functional cap is by breaking off the ring. According to some poskim, one is thereby creating a new utensil and is therefore violating the issur deoraisah of makeh b'patish (completing the form of a utensil).

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach Zt"l permitted opening plastic caps since it is apparent that the ring (whose function is merely to prevent tampering) is a totally independent item and is only attached slightly to the cap. Therefore, one may view the cap as fully functional even prior to the removal of the ring, and by breaking the ring one is not creating a new kli. One may speculate that perhaps in a situation where the ring is manufactured with a strong connection to the cap that R' Shlomo Zalman would agree that it may be forbidden.

As mentioned earlier, according to many poskim, one may avoid this problem by poking a hole in the cap prior to its removal, thereby destroying its potential to become a kli.

In an effort to avoid the various issues relating to opening bottles on Shabbos, Kedem often places a tamper resistant shrink wrap over their caps to replace the rings. As mentioned earlier, there is a machlokes whether one may break a kli for the purpose of obtaining food for use on Shabbos. R' Moshe writes that when it comes to tearing, even those who forbid breaking would be lenient and permit tearing in a destructive manner, provided that it is necessary for a genuine Shabbos need (see Igros Moshe O.C. 1:122). Therefore, if one forgot to open the shrink wrap before Shabbos, he may do so on Shabbos. If one is attending a simcha, he should make an effort to be certain that no open bottles are available before ripping such a seal.

One is permitted to open a beer bottle since one is not making the cap into a functional utensil by doing so. Similarly, one may remove the cork from a wine bottle since both the bottle and the cork are considered functional prior to the removal of the cork.

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