



Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

This Issue Contains:

1. Water on Tap
2. Mix and Match
3. Answer to Yiddle Riddle



Sharona Shapiro <mshapiro@pluto.mscc.huji.ac.il> wrote:

Dear Rabbi:

I have never used this forum before but I understand that you give answers to halachic questions. Here is mine: I have a Brita water filter pitcher. Can I refill it on Shabbat and allow the water to go through the filter? Thank you very much and tizku l'mitzvot.

Dear Sharona Shapiro,

As you know, there are 39 categories of creative activity forbidden on Shabbat. One of them is *borer* — selecting one type of food or object from a mixture. Pouring wine or water through a cloth in order to strain out sediments or dirt is an example of *borer*.

But let's say for example you have a full glass of wine, and you only want to drink half. So you pour half back into the bottle. All you've done is to separate 'wine' from 'wine.' This is not an example of *borer*, since there was no 'mixture' to begin with.

So too in the case of a water filter. Most people looking at a glass of clean tap water see nothing but pure water. Even though we all *know* it's full of impurities, we accept it and drink it as is. Since we don't view it as a 'mixture' of water and impurities, the impurities are therefore considered part of the liquid itself. It's therefore OK to run it through a water filter.

This is true for most people. However, if you personally would never drink the water without filtering it, then for you the impurities can't be considered part of the liquid; filtering them would be *borer*. Neither may someone else filter the water for you; but if someone filters water for himself, you may drink it.

Sources:

- Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 319:10
- Ibid. Bi'ur Halacha "Ho'el"

Layve Rabinowitz <yeshcol@global.co.za> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Can you wear a yarmulka made out of linen and wool?

David N. wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Is it permissible to wear a wool coat on top of a linen shirt, since they are not the same garment?

Dear Layve Rabinowitz and David N.,

The Torah forbids wearing *Shatnez* -- a garment made of sheep's wool and linen. A 'garment' is defined as something which provides warmth or protection from the sun. A yarmulka fits this definition. So if it contains wool and linen, you can't wear it.

According to the Torah the wool and linen must be **connected** to be considered *Shatnez*. However, the Sages prohibited wearing a woolen garment over a linen one, or vice versa, if you can't remove the inner garment without removing the outer one. In such a case, it is considered as if the fabrics are connected.

Which reminds me of the following exchange:

Mother: Where is your brother? He's going to be late for school!

Son: He's upstairs getting dressed.

Mother: What's taking him so long?

Son: He accidentally put his shirt on backwards, and now he's trying to turn it around without taking it off.

Sources:

- Deuteronomy 22:11, Leviticus 19:15
- Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah 300
- Mishna Kelayim 9:3

Yiddle Riddle

Last week we asked: "Which verse do we say every day in the prayers, that starts and ends with the same three words in the same order?"

Answer: The last verse in the third paragraph of the *Shema*. It starts and ends with the words 'Ani Hashem Elokaichem' — 'I am Hashem, your G-d.' However, we add the word '*Emet*' (True) at the end of the verse in order to say '*Hashem Elokaichem Emet*' — 'Hashem, your God, is True,' as in the verse in Jeremiah ch.10.

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