

Vaad

News & Views



בס"ד

table of contents

Message from the Director	1
Purely Canadian Premium Vodka	2
And the Bush was not Consumed	3
Kosher @ Cavendish? Oh YEH!	7
Newly Certified	8

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Message from the Director

Dear Friend,

As Chanuka approaches, and we reflect on the meaning of this great Chag, we appreciate the miracles that our nation has received. This reminds us not only to remember those miracles that took place on Chanuka, but to look at our daily lives and the blessings which we and our families benefit from every day from the One Above. There are many unfortunate amongst us, who face challenges in their daily lives. That we are able to continue our lives with the blessings which we have, is a great feat that should certainly be recognized and appreciated. It is therefore incumbent upon those of us who have merited these blessings, to be thankful for them.

Chanuka reminds us that nothing should be taken for granted and that we should always appreciate what we have, be it something small or something big. We are faced with challenges, tests and sometimes, unfortunate tragedies. When our lives go well, we must show our appreciation to Hashem for the daily miracles. When things don't seem to go so well and we are faced with challenges, we must remember that, as difficult as it is, we do not have a panoramic view and there is a Master plan which is ultimately best for us. The

light of Chanuka ignites in us a spark of appreciation. Every Jew in their heart has a special 'pach shemen' fluid which ignites with just a small flame of Torah. Different experiences, ignite different thoughts and actions.

Especially now, when those around us try to impose laws meant to extinguish the flame of Torah and its symbols within us, we must rise up without compromise and ensure that we adhere to the edicts of Torah and all of Its laws. If we ourselves,

water down that which has been handed down to us, we will lack the strength to face the obstacles placed before us by those who threaten our core values. The Torah and all of Its laws and Halachot are very precious and our responsibility is to uphold them and be 'Mechanech' - educate - future generations, ensuring that they continue in this holy path. Chanuka is the time when we need to reignite, revitalize and enhance the Torah and Mitzvot. There is no better time than now to show our commitment to what we stand for.

Happy Chanuka.

Rabbi Saul Emanuel
Executive Director

PURELY CANADIAN PREMIUM VODKA

by: Lori Cohen

Silver Lake Vodka, a small, family-run business out of Simcoe, Ontario, makes one of the smoothest premium vodkas on the market.

"That's not my opinion," said Didi Nwagbo, sales manager for the brand. "That's what the LCBO says. The LCBO has one of the highest testing standards in the world. Companies send their products from all over the world to be rated by the LCBO, so if you've made it there, you've made it everywhere!"

Now this premium-brand vodka will be available to kosher consumers. "There was a lot of interest from members of the Jewish community—restaurateurs and bar service owners—who wanted our product to be kosher," said Nwagbo. "Silver Lake will be the first premium kosher vodka in the marketplace." Because it's made from corn, Silver Lake Vodka is also gluten-free.

The quality of a vodka is judged by its smoothness: the smoother, the better. Silver Lake is rated one of the best-tasting vodkas on the market. In fact, this small, boutique distillery will be expanding to meet demand. Right now Silver Lake produces 10-20,000 bottles of vodka per week; they are hoping to bring production up to 100,000 per week.



Silver Lake was brought to the [®]Canada's Kosher Certifier by a local restaurant owner. The company has been dealing with Rabbi Jaffe, and in Nwagbo's words, "It's been a very smooth process, and has only taken a couple of months." Their agent in Quebec is IsraVin, who will be responsible for getting Silver Lake Vodka into SAQ stores, as well as to kosher restaurants and bar services. The vodka will retail for approximately \$36-\$37.00/bottle through the SAQ. According to Nwagbo, this is not expensive for premium vodka, which usually retail for closer to \$50.00.

Quebec will not be the last stop on the distribution road. The company is also looking to sell in Israel, as well as New York State. "We've even had inquiries from the Jewish community in Mexico," said Nwagbo. "As a specialty premium vodka, with kosher certification, all markets are open to us."

If you are interested in more information regarding Silver Lake Vodka, please contact Gad Elbaz at IsraVin: (514) 991-9463.



והסנה איננו אכל

And the Bush was not Consumed

Sh'mos 3:2

שמות ג' ב'

by Rabbi Zushe Yosef Blech

The central Mitzvah of the holiday of Chanukah is the lighting of the Chanukah M'norah. As discussed in the Talmud (Shabbos 21b), when the Chashmonaim defeated the Greeks they found but one small cruse of pure oil fit for lighting the M'norah in the Bais ha'Mikdash. Even though there was only enough oil in the flask to burn for one day, it miraculously lasted the full eight days it took to procure additional pure oil. To commemorate this miracle, Chaza"l instituted the Mitzvah of lighting the Chanukah M'norah for eight consecutive nights. The Bais Yosef (O.C. 670:1), however, poses the most famous question in the annals of Chanukah literature – if enough oil was found to last one day, then the miracle actually only lasted seven days, and only seven nights need be commemorated. Of the answers put forward by the Bais Yosef (Rabbinic literature is replete with literally dozens more), he posits that the cruse remained full after being emptied, so the miracle was noticed even on the first day. This answer, however, has been the subject of much debate, in that the oil used on the second day onward may not have been considered “olive” oil, but rather “miracle” oil, and thus would not satisfy the Torah’s requirement that the oil be “pure olive oil.” What is clear from this approach, however, is that a “fire” may, indeed, be the product of something other than conventional combustion, a concept that has a number of interesting Halachic ramifications.

“Fire” is generally defined as the rapid oxidation of a material, typically a carbon-based molecule such as wood, coal or petroleum. Fire, or combustion, involves the oxidation of these fuels, generally releasing heat, light, carbon dioxide and water. This basic reaction does not always result in a conventional “fire”, however. The digestion of food involves much the same process, so much so that the R’shash rules that eating Chometz within thirty days of Pesach fulfills the requirement of burning Chometz! Even composting

vegetable products is a form of “burning,” a fact recognized in the Mishnah (Shabbos 4:1) where the covering of pots with decomposing vegetable matter (e.g. olive pressings - gefes!) is prohibited on Shabbos due the laws of Hatmanah b'Davar ha'Mosif Hevel (covering foods with materials that add heat). Clearly, however, one cannot compost olives to light a Chanukah M'norah. What qualifies as “fire” in Halachah depends on the situation.

Light

Historically, light was produced by fire. The Torah prohibits thirty-nine different creative labors on Shabbos, and lists but one specifically – fire (Sh'mos 35:3). Clearly, one is prohibited from any form of burning on Shabbos to create light, as well to cook or for any other purpose. One of the most interesting modern questions involves the status of an incandescent bulb on Shabbos. The overwhelming consensus of Halachic authorities over the past hundred years is that the glowing filament in a conventional incandescent bulb is true fire, and prohibited on Shabbos. Indeed, Rav Chaim Ozer made a point of making the blessing over fire in Havdalah on an electric bulb just to reinforce the point. Although the tungsten filament in a bulb may not “burn” (oxidize) in the conventional sense, the Rambam’s position that causing a metal to glow is considered a sub-category of Hav'arah – burning – (Hilchos Shabbos 12:1) is considered dispositive. [The Halachic status of “modern” bulbs such as fluorescent and LED is beyond the scope of this article.]

Which brings us to perhaps the second most talked about issue involving electric lights – using them to fulfill the Mitzvah of Chanukah lights. In contradistinction to Shabbos candles (more on this below), the Talmud (Shabbos 21a) tells us that all wicks and oils may be used for Chanukah lights.

Most authorities note, however, that the Mitzvah must involve wicks and oil (or at least candles) similar to the M'norah in the Bais ha'Mikdash, something absent in electric bulbs. Indeed, even gas flames would not suffice either, for even though they definitely present as fire, they lack the wick/oil system required by Chaza"l. Based on this analysis, virtually all contemporary authorities rule that one cannot use an electric M'norah to fulfill the Mitzvah of Chanukah lights (see Sefer Beis Yitzchak Y.D. 120, Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank in Har Tzvi II:114 and Mikraei Kodesh 20, and Yabia Omer 3:33). Another possible problem with electric lights is that Chanukah lights must contain sufficient fuel to burn for thirty minutes at the time they are lit, and it is arguable whether this requirement is met with electricity that is constantly being generated (Shu"t P'kudas Eliezer). Nonetheless, some authorities suggest that if one only has access to an electric M'norah, he should light it without a B'racha (Piskei T'shuva). In such cases, a battery operated M'norah may be preferred in that, at the time it is lit, it arguably contains the "fuel" to burn the requisite thirty minutes.

Regarding the requirement to light Shabbos candles, however, the absence of a wick/oil system should not preclude the use of electric lights. The purposes of Shabbos candles are Oneg Shabbos and Shalom Bayis, both of which are eminently satisfied with electric lights. Indeed, the Sh'miras Shabbos k'Hilchasah (43:4, 32) and T'shuvos v'Hanhagos 2:157 both rule that one may even make a B'rachah on them. On the other hand, Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank

quotes the Rogatchover to the effect that even though incandescent lights are, indeed, fire – and one can use them for Havdalah – turning them on does not constitute a "lighting" for the purposes of kindling Shabbos candles. [The Sh'miras Shabbos k'Hilchasah (2:43, footnote 22) also quotes an interesting observation of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l. He notes that lights powered by a generator actually use alternating current, meaning that they are constantly being turned on and off. He therefore suggests that battery powered lights are preferred inasmuch as they already contain an uninterrupted supply of the electricity needed to power the lights.]

Heat

Heat can be derived from various sources, but all heat may not Halachically be the same. Chaza"l noted Halachic differences between heat derived from conventional combustion (fire) and that derived from natural sources such as the sun and hot springs. Foods and equipment heated by friction also have specific Halachic ramifications, as do modern microwave and induction technologies.

Cooking on Shabbos

The sun has been around since the fourth day of Creation; fire, on the other hand, had to wait until Motzoei Shabbos to be created. Nonetheless, the Talmud (Shabbos 39a) rules that one may cook food by sunlight, a position codified in the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 318:3). Although we do not commonly cook foods in the sun, this Halacha has had a very practical application in Eretz Yisroel, which may extend to more countries as we become more energy conscious. Many homes in Israel use a solar heating

system to provide hot water, and a number of T'shuvos have been written as to the permissibility of using such hot water on Shabbos. Some authorities do, indeed, permit their use, a luxury generally not permitted in conventional hot water systems.

The Halachic distinction accorded solar cooking is quite interesting. Rashi and Ran explain that cooking in the sun is not "derech bishul" – the normal way of cooking – and therefore exempt from a Shabbos prohibition. The Avnei Nezer in O.C. 159:22 and Iglei Tal Melech Ofeh 44 explains such "abnormal" cooking as performing a prohibited action kl'achar yad – in an abnormal fashion – and thus subject to this general exemption in Hilchos Shabbos. The Mabi"t in Kiryas Sefer al ha'Rambam (Hilchos Shabbos (9:2-3) explains this concept slightly differently, arguing that the theory to permit such cooking is that it is not similar to the cooking used in the building of the Mishkan. The dispensation of solar cooking, however, applies only to food cooked directly in the sun. Cooking with Toldos Chamah – items heated by the sun – is Rabbinically prohibited since it is similar to Toldos ha'Esh – items heated by a fire – which is, indeed, equivalent to fire itself (Shabbos 39a).

It would seem from these explanations that solar heating actually effects "cooking" in the same manner as conventional fire; its permissibility on Shabbos stems from considerations unique to Shabbos and not a deficiency in the cooking process. This approach, however, does not seem to be universally accepted. The Talmud (M'nachos 21a) quotes

the Halacha that Dam sh'Bishlo (cooked blood) is not subject to the prohibition of eating blood. The G'morah, however, limits this dispensation to blood cooked by fire; blood cooked in sun is not considered "cooked." The Talmud explains this distinction by stating the blood cooked in fire congeals to the point where it is permanently changed and cannot subsequently liquefy, whereas blood cooked in the sun can return to a liquid state. The Kovetz Shiurim (P'sachim 24b) understands this to mean that there is a basic distinction between solar and combustion cooking – the two processes yield different physical results. Indeed, he therefore questions the above-cited Rashi who states that solar heat is not "normal" Bishul (as regards Hilchos Shabbos) – he should have said that it is not Bishul at all! [This also seems to be the understanding of the Nodah b'Y'huda II:43 regarding cooking in Chamei T'veryah – see below.] The Chazon Ish (23:8), however, takes issue with this approach, and argues that there is no physical difference between solar and combustion heating. [Solar cooking on Shabbos is permitted for the reason peculiar to Shabbos noted above.] He explains the distinction between blood cooked by solar heat and that cooked by fire as one of temperature – solar heat generally does not reach Yad Soledes and merely dries the blood (which can subsequently be liquified) whereas fire effects a true cooking. Should solar heat reach Yad Soledes and actually "cook" the blood, its Halachic status would be the same as that cooked by fire. [The G"riz (Stencil) weighs both approaches and leaves the matter unresolved.]

The question of the physical versus Halachic status of solar cooking on Shabbos has another practical ramification. Halachah states that Ayn Bishul Achar Bishul – once a food is (fully) cooked, subsequent heating cannot be considered "cooking" as regards Hilchos Shabbos. [Heating cooked foods on Shabbos presents other Halachic concerns, however.] One may then question the status of a food that was cooked in the sun and then "re-cooked" on a fire. If we consider the solar cooking to be a physical cooking (albeit permitted on Shabbos), perhaps a subsequent exposure to fire would be considered Ayn Bishul Achar Bishul and not subject to the prohibition of cooking on Shabbos. [See Minchas Chinuch Mitzvah 7:5 and P'rim M'gadim M.Z. 6 for a detailed discussion of this question.]

The G'morah (Shabbos 40b) also extends the

concept of solar heat by comparing Chamei T'veryah (the hot springs in Tiberias) to Toldos Chamah. Rav Yosi considers Chamei T'veryah to be Toldos ha'Or – something heated by fire – because he believes that they are heated by passing over the fires of G'henom. The Halachah, however, follows the Chachamim who consider such



natural heat analogous to that produced by the sun. Indeed, the Rambam (Pirish ha"Mishnayos N'gaim 9:1) seems to understand such heat to be chemically derived, a product of the reaction of water with sulfur. Indeed, geothermal springs are usually saturated with sulfur, and the Mishpatei Uziel (III O.C. 64) considers all such springs to have the same Halachic status as Chamei T'veryah.

Which brings us to perhaps the most novel application of these concepts. Two major problems that confront the frum traveler are the availability of Kosher food and the means to cook it under Kosher conditions, and one enterprising company developed a product that addresses both concerns. It consists of a shelf-stable container of Kosher food and an accompanying heating mechanism. Many chemical reactions are exothermic – they produce heat without a conventional flame – and this product is designed to produce heat by combining salt water with a proprietary metal compound, resulting in steam. While no one actually recommends using this product on Shabbos, the theoretical question has been posed: what are Halachic ramifications of using it on Shabbos? One of the major concerns is the cooking of the water to create steam. Some have argued, however, that it could be permitted since this chemical heating may be considered analogous to Bishul b'Chamah, just as the heat of Chamei T'veryah is produced by sulfur. The issue with which one must still contend is that cooking with Chamai T'veryah is still prohibited M'drabonon because it is considered Toldos Chamah. Some have argued, however, that the only reason that Toldos Chamah is prohibited is because the source of its heat is not obvious. In situations where there is no possibility of confusion

with normal fire – such as hot roof - some Rishonim do, indeed, permit cooking with Toldos Chamah on Shabbos (Maharshal 61). It may also be argued that even according to those authorities who disagree (Magen Avrohom 318:10 and others), in our case the water is being boiled directly by the chemicals, and may be considered Bishul b'Chamah itself.

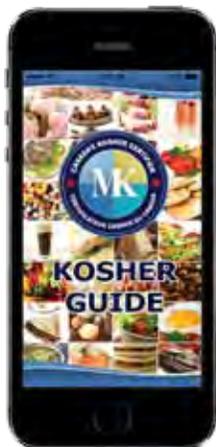
While this product may not be common culinary equipment, modern technology has succeeded in insinuating “solar cooking” into virtually everyone’s kitchen. The ubiquitous microwave can cook, yet contains no heating element and involves no “fire” in a conventional sense. The ramifications of its novel ability, however, raise issues that have no obvious precedent in Halacha, two of which have very practical applications. The first involves using it to cook on Shabbos, since it can be argued that microwaves are similar to permissible sun’s rays. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Igros Moshe O.C. III:52), however, rules that cooking in a microwave oven is considered “normal” cooking, as opposed to solar cooking which the G’morah refers to as Ayn Derech Bishul (not a normal way to cook). He argues somewhat presciently that such ovens are the wave of the future, and thus would be subject to the prohibition of cooking on Shabbos.

Bishul Akum

Another practical Halachic concern would involve the prohibition of Bishul Akum. In general, the cooking of important foods that are inedible and raw must involve some Jewish participation and, as noted in the above T’shuvah of Rav Moshe Feinstein, microwave ovens do, indeed, cook. On the other hand, some authorities argue that the absence of a flame obviates Bishul Akum concerns, based on the Yerushalmi (N’darim 7:1) and the language of the Ramo (Y.D. 113:13) and other Rishonim. Technology, however, is insidiously creative,

and induction cooking adds two new wrinkles to Bishul Akum concerns. Induction cooking relies on an electric coil to create an electric field in a ferromagnetic pot, causing the pot to act as a heating element. It may be argued that even if we accept microwave ovens to be free of Bishul Akum concerns, that is because no external heat is created - only the food itself becomes hot. Induction, while also relying on magnetic waves, heats the pot that then heats the food, which may be analogous to a conventional heating element. A second concern is a practical one. Bishul Akum can be obviated (at least for Ashk’nazim) by having a Jew turn the fire on, after which the non-Jew can place the pot of food on the existing fire. This arrangement works equally well for fire or conventional electric elements since, in both cases, the heat was created by the Jew. In an induction range, however, turning the circuit on creates no heat whatsoever - it merely creates a magnetic field. Heat is only created when the pot is placed over this field, and if the non-Jew places the pot on the “burner”, he is the one who is turning the “fire” on. Indeed, the circuitry is designed so that merely lifting the pot off the burner causes an interruption of the magnetic field, and only returns when the pot is replaced. Such ranges should therefore not be used unless a Jew actually places the pot on the burner every time.

Fire serves as an integral part of our Kiyum ha’Mitzvos. Every week, we welcome the Shabbos by lighting Ner Shabbos and we herald its conclusion with the flames of the Havdalah candle. Once a year we merit the lighting of the Ner Chanukah and, as we gaze at their flames it is interesting to note that it is not necessary that a fire burn – chemically or Halachically – for a cauldron to bubble!



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you'll be **happy** you did



KOSHER @ Cavendish?



Have you seen some pink cars running around Montreal? These cars are moving ads for a new self-serve frozen yogurt store, Yeh! Yogurt, which currently has 19 stores across North America, with more opening every day. The store at Cavendish Mall is under the certification of MK-Canada's Kosher Certifier, and will serve as the "flagship store" for kosher franchises.

"It's a natural merger of two great brands, MK and Yeh!", says Marvin Gurman, who owns the Yeh! brand, along with his brother Jon. "Our goal is to get MK hashgacha in all nine locations currently in Montreal, and we hope it will lead to kosher franchises in other cities as well."

In addition to frozen yogurt, Yeh! Yogurt also serves dessert crepes, and are working on lunch crepes for the kosher crowd as well.

The stores rotate through several flavours, some of which are pareve. You will always find pareve chocolate, as well as at least one of mango, grapefruit, or lime sorbets. The standard dairy flavours are plain, chocolate, and Greek honey, with five additional rotating flavours that included cheesecake, peanut butter, strawberry, blueberry, and pina colada. Eventually no-sugar-added flavours will be added as well.

Of course, self-serve yogurt is nothing without toppings. In addition to several kinds of fresh fruit, there are other healthy options such as flax, granola, and Kashi. Patrons looking for something sweeter can choose sprinkles, cookie dough, Hershey's chocolate, and Reese's Pieces. On top of the toppings, Yeh! provides Ghirardelli syrup in three flavours, as well as hot toppings such as hot fudge. The yogurts and toppings are all cholov stam (not chalav yisrael).

With the advent of certification through the MK, Yeh! hopes to add catering to their services. "This would involve pre-packaged portions," says Gurman. "We might even add pink kippot!"

The store at Cavendish has seating for almost 20, and an outdoor patio for summer. The décor, featuring mostly pink, is bright and cheerful, and the store staff is friendly and welcoming. According to Mitchell Simon, who is in charge of store development for the company, the MK certification should be in place before Chanukah; what better way to celebrate with the kids than some frozen yogurt and crepes?

Be sure to check Yeh! Yogurt in Cavendish Mall for the MK-Canada's Kosher Certifier certificate behind the counter.



NEWLY



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Yeh! Yogurt - Cavendish
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