

# THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

## HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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### Muktze continued

*Are bones that are fit for dogs muktze? Does it make a difference if I personally do not own a dog?*

The *Shulchan Aruch* says<sup>1</sup> that bones suitable for dogs and peels suitable for cattle are not *muktze* and may be removed from one's table, providing one either owns such animals or these animals are common in one's vicinity. Consequently one need not personally own such an animal for the bones not to be *muktze*; as such bones are identified as animal food.<sup>2</sup>

However, hard bones unsuitable even for dogs are *muktze*.<sup>3</sup>

Incidentally, if the bones were not completely picked of their meat they are not *muktze*, regardless whether dogs are common in one's area or not.

*If shells and peels – which I understand are muktze – are on the table, what is the permitted way to remove them?*

Certain shells and peels are *muktze* even if animals are common in one's vicinity, for example egg peels and nutshells, as these are unsuitable for animals.

The *halacha* is that when one needs to use a permitted item or to move it from one place to another, and something *muktze* is placed on it, one is required to tip the *muktze* off and only then carry the plate.<sup>4</sup> See the footnote.<sup>5</sup> If one

cannot tip the *muktze*, either because it will damage the *muktze* (e.g. candlesticks on a table) or because one requires the space the plate is occupying, one may carry the plate with its *muktze* to a different location where it can be tipped off.

Accordingly, if peels are on a plate and one either wants to clean the plate or clear the table, since tipping the peels onto the table or floor is impractical, one may carry the plate to the garbage can and tip the contents into the garbage. It is forbidden to carry the garbage can to the table and tip the contents of the plate into it, because a garbage can is usually *muktze*.<sup>6</sup>

*Is one permitted to use a knife or napkin to push peels onto a plate?*

The *Taz* says that using a knife (or napkin) to push *muktze* is called *tiltul min hatsad* (indirect *tiltul*) and may be done for a permitted cause, i.e. to clear the table. The *Mishna Berura* reiterates his *p'sak*<sup>7</sup> and also permits it. The *Rav Shulchan Aruch*<sup>8</sup> and the *Chazon Ish* disagree with the *Taz* saying that such a *tiltul* is considered direct moving of the *muktze* because the knife is an extension of one's hand and is forbidden under all regular circumstances. This is not like carrying a plate with *muktze* on top, where the plate is **not** considered an extension of one's hand, and

<sup>5</sup> Provided that the plate, tray etc is not a *basis l'davar ha'assur*, i.e. that the *muktze* was not placed on the *heter* before Shabbos so as the *heter* will serve the *muktze*. There are many particulars to this *halacha*, which we will *beH* learn another time.

<sup>6</sup> If garbage was in the can before Shabbos, the can becomes a *basis l'davar ha'assur* and is *muktze*.

<sup>7</sup> *Simon* 308:115.

<sup>8</sup> *Simon* 308:60.

<sup>1</sup> *Simon* 308:27.

<sup>2</sup> *Simon* 308:29.

<sup>3</sup> *M'B* 308:114.

<sup>4</sup> *Simon* 308:27.

hence is *tiltul min hatsad*. One must refer to one's Rav as to which opinion to follow.

### *I heard that if peels and shells are amassed on the table one may remove them. Is this true?*

The *halacha* is that when something unpleasant or disgusting is in one's immediate surroundings, it may be removed.<sup>9</sup> Even though that particular item is *muktze*, *Chazal* permitted its removal because of human dignity; this *heter* is known as *גראף לרע'י*. The *Mishna Berura* says<sup>10</sup> that in the event that the peels are piled up on the table to the point that causes unpleasantness, one may remove them from the table.

### *Must one use a plate or may one remove them by hand?*

We find in the *gemora*<sup>11</sup> that Rav Ashi told his servant to lift a dead mouse by its tail and remove it from the house. This was to emphasize that anything sickening or unpleasant in one's surroundings may be handled directly and removed, despite it being *muktze*.

*Chazal* permitted the handling of *muktze* items in order to save one from unpleasantness. Rav Moshe Feinstein *ztz"l*<sup>12</sup> is quoted saying that even something that will cause unpleasantness, for example, if guests are arriving and a *muktze* item is lying in the living room. The *Mishna Berura* writes<sup>13</sup> that a pile of shells and peels may be removed from the table with one's hands, even though they are *muktze*, because one is disgusted by it. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *ztz"l* is quoted saying<sup>14</sup> that if guests are arriving and the housewife is **greatly** embarrassed lest the guests would see even a small amount of shells and peels, then they too may be removed. One must not take this leniency too lightly and include everything into "unpleasantness", because after all we are dealing with *muktze*.

<sup>9</sup> *Simon* 308:34.

<sup>10</sup> *Simon* 308:115.

<sup>11</sup> *Shabbos* 121b.

<sup>12</sup> In the back of the *sefer* written by Rav Pinchas Bodner called "Muktze".

<sup>13</sup> *Simon* 308:115.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

### *If I own an ostrich, may I handle broken glass?*

The *Shulchan Aruch* tells us<sup>15</sup> that items fit for animals are not *muktze*, provided that those animals are common. Items fit for animals that are not common, even though the wealthy raise those particular animals (Bengalese tigers?) the items remain *muktze*, unless you yourself raise such animals. Therefore, if you own a pet ostrich, since ostriches eat broken glass;<sup>16</sup> broken glass for you would not be *muktze*.

### **Vort on the Parsha**

The Torah calls the festival of Sukkos the festival of gathering and only in *Derarim* (16:13) is it called Sukkos. The *Meshech Chochma* (23:16) explains that when the "second" *luchos* were given to *B'nei Yisrael* and Moshe descended from the mountain, the clouds of glory returned to protect *B'nei Yisrael*, and then they were given the festival of *Sukkos*. Before then it was merely the festival of gathering.

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**Note:** The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive *p'sak*.