

# THE BETH JACOB SHABBOS LEARNING PROJECT

## Keeping It Better Together

### Muktzeh Quiz 3: *Inherent Muktzeh*

#### ANSWERS!

- 1) Joe Northerner moved to Atlanta a few years ago. He loves the community and everything Atlanta – except the lack of winter. The power outages, the school closings for predictions of rain that kinda look like snow if you look at it with one half-closed eye, the people in scarves and hats when it dips below 75° – all this is too much for him. He is often heard scoffing, “C’mon people – you call this cold?!” To prove himself, he makes a point of always wearing short sleeves, davening at the outdoor minyan no matter what, and eating ice cream on his front lawn every Shabbos afternoon, even in the “freezing cold.” Last Shabbos, Joe opened his freezer on Shabbos afternoon for his weekly minhag – only to find that the huge meat order has blocked the ice cream drawer! What can Joe do now?
- a) I don’t know. Maybe he should jump in the freezer himself and stop kvetching.
  - b) Move the meat! This is serious business here. How else will the people know that they are wimps?
  - c) Sorry, Joe. Raw meat is *muktzeh* and there is nothing that can be done.
  - d) Maybe he should eat the frozen meat instead – that will really show his toughness!

Answer: B

We generally treat raw meat as *muktzeh*, but in cases of need we may rely upon the lenient position that raw meat is not *muktzeh* because it can be fed to local pets.

- 2) Tough Joe Northerner likes a game of catch with his son on Shabbos afternoon. But softballs are simply not tough enough. No, our dear Joe likes to use a large rock to toss around. Is this permissible?
- a) Nope. Rocks are the most *muktzeh* things out there, Joe!
  - b) Yes, but he must designate the rock for use by making a physical change. Try adding baseball stitching before Shabbos, Joe!
  - c) Yes, but if it falls, he can’t pick it up.
  - d) Yes, but only if he catches it in an unusual way – like with his teeth.

Answer: B

One may designate a *muktzeh* item for use on Shabbos. The optimal way to do that is by making a physical change in the object. (Note that in many cases mental designation is enough, but that is beyond the scope of this quiz.)

- 3) My favorite activity on a Friday night is going to a Shalom Zachar and seeing how high I can pile up the nut shells before they fall over. Last time, I managed a nine-inch pile – even though the Shalom Zachar was outside in the high winds and freezing cold. My friend Joe came over in short-sleeves while waving a Chinese-fan (that guy is really tough) to challenge me to a shell-piling duel. I accepted the challenge

and was about to move my nine-inch pile aside so I could start again when I overheard a Shabbos Learning Project scholar mention something about shells being *muktzeh*. What do I do now?

- a) Maybe invite Joe to an ice-bucket challenge, instead. He'll love it!
- b) It's OK – you still have some mandatory Shalom Zachar chickpeas on the same plate. Feel free to move the shells.
- c) You can move the shells for a permissible purpose. Use each one to scoop up some dip!
- d) I can't think of a fourth answer.

Answer: B

True, the shells are *muktzeh*. Since the plate has non-*muktzeh* items on it, you may move the plate.

- 4) I just bought a brand new suit in honor of Chanukah to match my cherished dreidel tie. This one is fire-colored and has Menorah-shaped buttons. As I button it for the first time – pop! A Menorah button pops off and slides across the Shul floor. In another minute I won't be able to find it anymore! What can I do?
- a) Sorry! A button is *muktzeh* and can't be moved. Maybe a Chanukah miracle will occur and you'll discover another Menorah button.
  - b) Ummm. A fire-colored suit with Menorah buttons? You may want to ask your wife next time.
  - c) It's not *muktzeh*. Pick it up, quick!
  - d) Pick it up and use it as a bookmark in order to salvage it.

Answer: A or C

There is a dispute amongst contemporary Poskim if buttons that detach from a shirt are, in fact, *muktzeh*. R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach was lenient. R Moshe Feinstein was stringent.

- 5) Disaster! I forgot to plug in my crockpot. Fortunately, we had a winning cholent last year that we decided to freeze for posterity. Can I take it out of the freezer? Desperate times call for desperate measures!
- a) I...guess...so.
  - b) Nope. Frozen food is *muktzeh*.
  - c) Yes. How can you go through a Shabbos without cholent??
  - d) Only if you designated the cholent as non-*muktzeh* when you put it in the freezer.

Answer: C

Since the frozen cholent is cooked, it is not *muktzeh*.