



B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

Shabbat Shorts

Last time on "Shabbat Shorts": Fruits which are *sometimes* squeezed for their juice, fall into the rabbinic category of *sechita*. Thus for example, it would be rabbinically forbidden to squeeze oranges for their juice on Shabbat. So to return to the question with which we began: What about lemons, which would certainly seem to fall into the category of "sometimes squeezed for their juice"?

You may recall the Shulchan Aruch simply rules that it is categorically permissible to squeeze lemons on Shabbat. In the Shulchan Aruch's mind what's the distinction between squeezing oranges and squeezing lemons? The Mishna Brurah offers two possible distinctions:

- (1) No one actually drinks lemon juice (straight). Thus, lemon juice is not halachicly categorized as a "drink", and therefore squeezing a lemon can't fall into the category of *sechita*, which is defined as removing the "drink" from within the fruit.
- (2) Lemon juice is not typically squeezed and stored (i.e. no one ever produces containers or bottles of lemon juice), it is rather squeezed directly into a beverage (such as tea or water) for immediate consumption, and in this sense it doesn't pass muster as a "juice" or "drink".

Based on the p'sak of the Shulchan Aruch as justified above, the Mishna Brurah continues and says that "the world (I just love how we use that phrase:)) is lenient by custom, and does this".

If we were to stop here, making lemonade on Shabbat would be uncontestedly permissible. But you yourself may have been raising your eyebrows as you read distinction (2) above. After all, lemon juice *is* now a consumer product, with numerous companies bottling and selling it, and many of our refrigerator doors storing it. While distinction (1) does remain in place, the Mishna Brurah wonders out loud whether the already-in-his-day changing habits around lemon juice render the Shulchan Aruch's position outdated. Again in the Mishna Brurah's words,

"Nowadays when it is well known that there are some places where pitchers are filled [with lemon juice] by the hundreds to be added to punch (פאג"ש) in some places, it requires great thought as to whether it is permissible to squeeze lemons [even directly] into other liquids, for perhaps they are [now] similar to pomegranates and berries (i.e. rabbinically forbidden on the grounds that many people squeeze them for their juice)."

Mishna Brurah concludes by advising that the lemon instead be squeezed directly onto sugar (see previous Shabbat Short), with the sugar/lemon combo then being added to water.

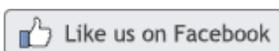
Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, always a stalwart defender of the Shulchan Aruch, maintained that the Halacha was - and still is - that squeezing lemons is simply permissible, period. However he too thought that it in this case it is worthwhile to be stringent following the Mishna Brurah's reasoning.

Which is why Crystal Light was invented??

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