



THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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Is one permitted to crush hard boiled eggs into small pieces?

The Shabbos *melacha* of grinding – טחינה only applies to items grown in the ground or items that are earth originating such as mud. Hence it is prohibited to grind pepper, salt, caked mud, garlic and other similar items. Eggs, on the other hand do not originate from the earth and therefore there is no *issur* to grind eggs.

What about grating cheese?

Similarly, cheese does not originate from the earth and therefore may be grated on Shabbos.

Is one permitted to use a grater for that purpose?

Even though one may grate certain items on Shabbos it is forbidden to use a grater! ¹ The reason for this is because using a grater is considered a weekday activity. It is not for us to define what is considered a weekday activity and what is not, it is *Chazal* who categorized certain activities as weekday activities.

Here are several examples of what *Chazal* call עובדא דחול – a weekday activity: It is forbidden to **measure** quantities, size or space on Shabbos. ²

¹ *Simon* 321:10 and *M"B* 36.

² *M"B* *simon* 306:34.

One is forbidden to hand an article to someone saying that it is to be used as collateral. ³

What about cutting up a salad into very small pieces?

Cutting into fine pieces is an offshoot of 'grinding' and is forbidden on Shabbos. It therefore follows that it is prohibited to cut vegetables such as cucumbers and tomatoes into fine pieces on Shabbos. However, the *Rashba* says ⁴ that one may cut finely, immediately prior to eating, because it is considered דרך אכילה as *Chazal* did not require one to eat food in large pieces. Not all agree to the *Rashba* and indeed the *Bais Yosef* says that even when one intends eating right away one should not cut the vegetables finely. The *Mishna Berura* ⁵ sides with the *Bais Yosef* and agrees that one should not cut the vegetables finely but says that one should not rebuke people that do cut them finely. ⁶

However, it is **extremely important** to be aware that everyone agrees that if one cuts

³ *Rama* in *simon* 307:11.

⁴ *Rama* *simon* 321:12.

⁵ *M"B* *simon* 321:44

⁶ This does not necessarily mean that one should not teach the members of one's household the correct method of finely cutting vegetables on Shabbos. On the contrary, each person is responsible for the correct conduct of one's family. It is with regards to others who would normally be offended etc that one need not teach them such a *halacha*.

the vegetables finely an hour or two before the meal, or for example one cuts the onions finely and then goes to shul, one is probably liable to bring a *korban chatas*, on account of both *Borer* – separating and **grating** the onion.⁷

Is one permitted to cut meat into fine pieces thereby enabling elderly people to eat it?

Firstly we should realize that since meat does not grow in the earth it is not subject to the constraints of grinding and therefore one may grind meat on Shabbos.⁸ One is forbidden though, to use a grater or meat grinder for this purpose but one may finely cut up the meat with a knife. The same applies to cheese and to any other similarly related item.

Accordingly it is permitted to finely cut meat for small children or for elderly people even though without cutting the meat they would be unable to eat it.⁹

Am I permitted to chew meat and feed a baby the chewed piece?

Using teeth to grind food for someone else is also considered grinding. Although it is not a *d'oraisso* because it is a deviation from the normal manner nevertheless it is forbidden. However, since as mentioned meat is not subject to the prohibitions of grinding, one may chew a piece of chicken or meat and feed one's baby the chewed product. It follows that to chew a vegetable or fruit to feed a baby is forbidden¹⁰ unless done so prior to eating (and even then we learned there is room to be stringent).

⁷ M" B simon 321:44.

⁸ Simon 321:9.

⁹ M" B simon 321:32.

¹⁰ M" B simon 321:36.

Vort on the Parsha

We find that Hashem said to Moshe Rabeinu on more than one occasion that he would die in the same manner that Aharon his brother had died. Chazal tell us that Moshe Rabeinu wished for a death similar to Aharon's, which obviously requires explaining.

Rashi says that Moshe told Aharon to lie on the bed, straighten his arms and legs and then he passed away. The Ibn Ezra explains that usually one can keep the Torah during one's lifetime but passing to the next world is not in one's control and hence void from mitzvos.

Aharon's passing to the next world was in a way that he was heeding to the word of Hashem, i.e. lie on the bed, straightening his arms etc.

Moshe Rabeinu longed for a death which in itself is also a mitzvah so that he could serve Hashem even in the last moments.

Unfortunately we are witness to many *k'doshim* (holy Jews) who have been killed just because they are Jewish, *Hashem yikom damam*. In their death they are also serving Hashem.

Food For Thought

Is one permitted to chop onions with an onion chopper on Shabbos?

Do the regular grinding restrictions apply to biscuits and cakes?

Are there any problems removing dried food from a shirt or jacket on Shabbos?

What about scraping mud from one's shoes on Shabbos? Does grinding apply somewhere?

Answers coming next week.

In memory of Avraham Moshe ben Chaim Halpern Shilitta- Rosh Chodesh Tammuz.

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If you would like to send a question to Rav Ostroff, you can write to him at shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com.

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.