



Parshas Re'eh 5762

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*May I handle a pocketknife which some of the items are non-usable on Shabbos?*

A pocketknife is comprised of a blade, which is often used for cutting food etc, nail clippers and other utensils. Seemingly this would fall into the category of a *basis l'davar ha'assur v'hamutar*, i.e. the handle of the pocketknife holds items permitted to use on Shabbos and items forbidden to use. Therefore, if the permitted items are more valuable and more important than the forbidden items, the pocket knife would not be *muktze*. If the forbidden items are more valuable, the pocketknife would be *muktze*. However, since the *muktze* items are at most *melachto l'issur* – utensils used for forbidden purposes on Shabbos, and not *chisaron kis* – valuable to the point that they would not be used for anything other than their intended purpose, even if the forbidden items are more valuable, the pocketknife may be handled *l'tsorech gufo um'komo* – may be handled in order to use it or to move it out of the way.

Accordingly, a pocketknife whose nail clippers or screwdriver unit are more valuable than the knife, may be handled in order to use the blade but may not be handled in order to protect the pocketknife from the rain.<sup>1</sup>

*Nail clippers are attached to my bunch of house keys, are they muktze? What about the car key on the bunch?*

The same rule applies to a key ring to which a *muktze* item is attached. Even though the nail clippers are *muktze*, nevertheless, since the keys are surely more needed than the clippers, the ring is a *basis* to the *heter* – the keys, and is not *muktze*.

It is advisable to remove the clippers from the ring before Shabbos because one may easily handle the *muktze* item on Shabbos. Also, the *muktze* item may sometimes be more valuable (a car alarm control) than the keys, in which case the ring would be a *basis* to the alarm and hence *muktze*.<sup>2</sup>

As for car keys: if the ignition key cannot be used for opening the doors it is *muktze she'mlachto l'issur*, and since it does not have a permitted function certain *poskim* hold that it may not be handled even *l'tsorech gufo um'komo*, i.e. for a permitted use for its space. If it is used also for opening the car doors it is classified as a regular *k'li she'mlachto l'issur* and may be handled on Shabbos *l'tsorech gufo um'komo*.

*If I need an onion that is buried in a pile of raw potatoes, by extracting the onion the potatoes will move. Am I permitted to extract the onion?*

The indirect handling of *muktze* is called *tiltul min batsad*, and the *halacha* is that when handled for a permitted purpose, it is permitted.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SSK 20:81 and footnote 267.

<sup>2</sup> See the SSK 20:82 and footnote 269.

<sup>3</sup> Simon 311:8.

By extracting an onion from within raw potatoes – which are *muktzeh*, even though the potatoes will move, one may remove the onions due to the abovementioned rule. An interesting point is that although the onions may be buried within the potatoes, the onions do not become a *basis l'davar ha'assur*, i.e. they do not take on the *muktzeh* of the potatoes, because the onions do not perform as a base to the potatoes.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, if one's ice cream is stashed in the freezer behind raw meat (which is *muktzeh* nowadays because most people would not eat raw meat)<sup>5</sup> it is permitted to pull out the ice cream even though it will move the raw meat. However, it is forbidden to handle the raw meat directly because there is no *beter* to move *muktzeh* directly for the sake of a *beter*.

*What would be the halacha if the onions were buried within the potatoes? How am I supposed to reach them?*

The *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>6</sup> tells us that one may use a skewer to stab the onions and extract them from within the potatoes. Although the potatoes may move when inserting the spit, nevertheless, since it is indirect *tiltul* (handling) for a permitted purpose – to get at the onions – it is permitted.<sup>7</sup>

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## Vort on the Parsha

The Torah tells us that you are not **able** to eat the 'second tithe' in your hometowns; rather the place to eat it is within the Holy walls. The question is that it should have said that you are not **permitted** to eat etc, not that you are not – physically – **able**.

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<sup>4</sup> MB 311:29

<sup>5</sup> SSK 20:28.

<sup>6</sup> Simon 311:9.

<sup>7</sup> MB 311:37.

One of the answers is that the Torah is teaching us that something forbidden must be instilled into oneself as if it is physically impossible to do.

*Hagaon* Rav Moshe Feinstein *Ztz"l* was once called to the phone and it required him to walk within the four *amos* of someone praying the *shmoneh esreh*. His escorts remarked that the call was urgent and therefore necessitated his crossing the four *amos*. Rav Moshe replied that there is a wall in front of that person "how can we cross"?

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## Food For Thought

*I had as yet not removed the storm windows and a heat wave broke out on Shabbos. Am I permitted to remove them on Shabbos?*

*As I opened the door to my room I realized that the door handle remained in my hand. Was I permitted to reattach it to the rod protruding from the door?*

*As I was leafing through a calendar hanging from the wall, the nail that fastened it to the wall came out. Am I permitted to loosely reinsert it?*

*I once saw the rod in a door hinge detach itself, and a tall fellow quickly reinserted it. I remarked that he was liable to bring a chatas – a sacrifice. He replied that it was not a problem to reinsert it. Who was correct?*

Answers coming next week.

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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.