



# THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

## HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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These halachos were shown by Rabbi Ostroff to **HaGaon HaRav Moshe Sternbuch, shlita**



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*Is one permitted to prepare a saline solution for a vegetable salad on Shabbos?*

At first glance one might ask what is wrong with mixing salt and water on Shabbos? The answer is that certain saline solutions are used for pickling vegetables etc.<sup>1</sup> and *Chazal* were afraid that if it were permitted to make certain saline solutions it would ultimately lead to the processing of items (other than food, such as leather etc. Pickling food is only an *issur d'rabanan*) which is an *issur d'oraisso*.

This applies to the mixing of vinegar and salt and any other type of pickling solution. Rav Sternbuch *shlita* pointed out that the prohibition only applies to saltwater that would be used for pickling but a small amount of salt in a large volume of water is not a problem at all.

*Which saltwater solutions are permitted?*

The *Mechaber*<sup>2</sup> tells us that one must prepare a small quantity and not a large one. A small quantity is not usually used for pickling and thus the entire issue of pickling is avoided. If one needs to make a large quantity of salt water because one is catering for many guests, one should either prepare small quantities in several bowls or add oil to the water before adding the salt. The oil,

according to some *poskim*,<sup>3</sup> will weaken the effect of the saltwater thus disabling its ability to be a pickling agent.

*Are there any limitations as to salting vegetables on Shabbos?*

Here too *Chazal* were afraid that if one were permitted to salt vegetables in the normal fashion it would ultimately lead to processing in a forbidden manner. Therefore, one should not salt vegetables that are usually pickled such as cucumbers, onions radishes etc.<sup>4</sup> unless a) one pours oil onto them, either before one adds salt or immediately after adding salt,<sup>5</sup> b) one dips an individual piece of vegetable in salt and eats it.<sup>6</sup>

*Does this apply to salting eggs as well?*

Eggs are not usually pickled and therefore one may salt any food item in this category as long as it is being salted for that Shabbos.<sup>7</sup> There is a bonus for salting it close to the meal.<sup>8</sup> Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *ztz"l* adds that sliced tomatoes may be salted in

<sup>1</sup> *Simon* 321:2 and *M"B* 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>3</sup> *M"B simon* 321:10.

<sup>4</sup> *SS"K* 11:1.

<sup>5</sup> *M"B simon* 321:14. Adding oil disables the pickling agent.

<sup>6</sup> *M"B simon* 321:20.

<sup>7</sup> *M"B simon* 321:21 according to the *Ehya Raba* and the *Vilna Ga'on*.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, seeing that there are *poskim* who only permit salting such food items prior to the meal.

the regular fashion because only whole tomatoes are pickled and salting sliced tomatoes does not appear as pickling.<sup>9</sup>

### May one crush peppercorns on Shabbos?

Crushing – טחינה is one of the 39 *melachos* of the *Mishkan* and hence violating the prohibition of crushing involves an *issur d'oraisso* (a biblical prohibition) and the bringing of a *korban chatas*.

Accordingly, if one were to crush peppercorns in a grinder on Shabbos one would be violating a biblical prohibition! Crushing directly onto one's food does not alleviate the prohibition.

Another weekday crushing method is with the aid of a pestle and mortar. The pestle is the implement used to grind and the mortar is the vessel into which the peppercorns are ground. Crushing in this manner on Shabbos incorporates an *issur d'oraisso*. The *Mishna Berura*<sup>10</sup> explains that even though one is only liable to bring a *korban* if one were to grind a quantity equivalent to the size of a *g'rogeres* – a dried fig, nevertheless it is an *issur d'oraisso* to grind even a single peppercorn.

### Is there a permitted method to crush peppercorns on Shabbos?

The permitted method is to modify the crushing implement and the vessel used to retain the peppercorns. Accordingly one may crush peppercorns with a knife handle on a table or in a plate.<sup>11</sup> Cutting the peppercorns with the blade of the knife is problematic as we will see later *be"H*.

### Is one permitted to use a salt grinder on Shabbos?

<sup>9</sup> SS"K 11 footnote 6.

<sup>10</sup> M"B *simon* 321:23.

<sup>11</sup> *Simon* 321:7 and M"B 25.

The same applies to the using of a salt grinder on Shabbos. The only way to crush salt on Shabbos is with a knife handle on a plate or on a table.<sup>12</sup>

## Vort on the Parsha

We see in *Parshas Korach* (16:15) that when Moshe Rabeinu was criticized by Dasan and Aviram for exercising power over them he replied that he had never benefited from anyone nor did he harm anyone.

R' Yerucham, the spiritiul *mashgiach* in Mir points out that Moshe did not automatically disregard their rebuke even though they had been antagonizing him since Egypt, rather he examined himself and concluded that he was 'virtuous'.

Human nature deflects rebuke especially when it is mouthed by an enemy.

R' Yisorel Salanter thus explained Dovid haMelech's verse in Tehilim where he says *בְּקוֹלִים עָלַי מְרִיעִים תִּשְׁמַעֲנָה אָזְנִי*, meaning that even when my enemies rise against me and rebuke and curse, I still listen and inspect myself to see whether there is any truth in their words – I listen.

## Food For Thought

*Is one permitted to crush cooked eggs into small pieces?*

*What about cutting up a salad into very small pieces?*

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

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

Answers coming next week.

<sup>12</sup> *Simon* 321:8 and M"B 28.

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