



Parshas Va'era 5765

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Is one permitted to cut a surgical dressing or bandage to the required size?

This is a real problem of *Kore'ah*¹ and possibly one of *Mechatech* as well. Briefly, one may not tear anything for a specific use, because the tearing is beneficial and involves an *issur* of tearing on Shabbos.² This is not to be confused with tearing a packet, which is torn in order to obtain the contents. Tearing a dressing is to enable its proper use.

Mechatech is the *melacha* of tearing or cutting something to a very specific size. This does not mean that every time one cuts a bandage one will be violating *Mechatech* as well, because often one does not need to cut to a specific, exact size.

If I cannot cut the bandage how am I to dress a wound?

If it is the type of bandage that comes as a roll, one should wrap the entire roll around the wound without cutting it, and then hold it in place with the regular clips or a safety pin. When the person being bandaged is ill, one may ask a gentile to cut the bandage to size. This is based on the *halacha* that one may ask a gentile to violate the Shabbos for the sake of an ill person.³

If I happen to buy a special fruit or a tasty pastry, must I leave it for Shabbos or may I eat it during the week?

¹ Based on *simon* 340:13 and 14 and *M"B* 41.

² Although the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* holds that tearing only applies to the tearing and separating of two pieces that are stuck or sewn together, the *M"B* holds that tearing applies to a single entity as well.

³ *Simon* 328:17.

There is a famous *machlokes* between Shamai Hazaken and Hillel regarding the issue of setting aside something special for Shabbos.⁴ The Torah states וזכור את יום השבת לקדשו, and Shamai learns from this that one must have Shabbos in mind throughout the week. It was said about Shamai that he would constantly think about Shabbos. When he would purchase a pleasant item, he would set it aside for Shabbos. It is also said that throughout the week he would eat for Shabbos, because when he found a pleasing portion he would dedicate it for Shabbos. When he found a more pleasant item, he would eat the first one and dedicate the new one for Shabbos. Hillel had a different outlook on life and he said ברוך ה' יום יום, meaning *Hashem* will provide what one needs for Shabbos and it is unnecessary to dedicate anything for Shabbos from the beginning of the week.

As we tend to follow Hillel, it would therefore seem from this that one need not dedicate anything for Shabbos.

Not so fast - this is not quite accurate: one needs a generous amount of *bitachon* – trust in *Hashem* in order **not** to have to prepare early in the week for Shabbos. The *Mishna Berura* writes that many *poskim* hold that even Hillel agrees that Shamai's method is the preferred one, but Hillel had full trust in *Hashem* that *Hashem* would send him the best for Shabbos and in order to strengthen his trust in *Hashem* he would not dedicate the best for Shabbos early in the week. Regular people who do not possess such a magnitude of *bitachon*

⁴ *Mechiltah d'Rashbi*, mentioned in the *Ramban* on this *posuk*.

in *Hashem* must surely dedicate the best for Shabbos, even from the beginning of the week. ⁵

May I buy the challos before davening on Friday morning, or only after davening?

The basis for this question is that one is not permitted to engage in any activity before davening, as the possuk states – צדק לפניו יהלך, one must not engage in activities before praying for one's life.

However, this *possuk* pertains to mundane matters. One may engage in matters which involve *mitzvos* and honor of *Hashem* before davening as well.

Another important issue is that one should purchase the Shabbos needs early on Friday, as this is learned from the Manna that was gathered early in the morning. ⁶

Accordingly therefore one should purchase all that one needs for Shabbos soon after davening, but if one will not find what one needs in the store for Shabbos after davening, one may purchase them before davening.

How should one go about shopping for Shabbos?

The optimal method (time permitting) is to buy the Shabbos food and treats on Friday being that it is more noticeable that it is done to honor the Shabbos. This obviously refers to the items that do not require preparation, such as fruit, candies etc. ⁷ When buying items for Shabbos it is correct to say לכבוד שבת – to honor the Shabbos, so as to apply holiness to the purchased item with one's lips. ⁸

If one has servants and help, may they be sent to do the shopping and all the Shabbos preparations, or should one be personally involved as well?

We learn from the greatest *Amora'im* ⁹ that they themselves prepared something for Shabbos. Rav Chisda would prepare the salad and Rabah and Rav Yosef would chop the wood. Rav Nachman would remove all the weekday articles and prepare the Shabbos ones. One should learn from these great sages that one should be involved with the Shabbos preparations. The *Mishna Berura* adds ¹⁰ that this is even more important in the winter months when Friday is short and help is needed in order to finish everything on time.

Vort on the Parsha

The four cups of wine that are imbibed on seder night are a reminder of the phrases of redemption mentioned in this weeks parsha "I shall take you out of Mitzrayim, I shall rescue you etc.". Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *ztz"l* explained that *Chazal* specifically chose four cups of wine instead of four nuts, or any other food, because the nature of wine, as opposed to other foods, is that the more one drinks the tastier it becomes, and it is thus analogous to the phrases of geulah which were more intense then each other. Rescuing the *B'nei Yisroel* is greater than just taking them out of Egypt. Redeeming them is more than just rescuing them.

Food For Thought

How close to Shabbos may one travel to another destination?

What is the reason one should sharpen knives for the Shabbos?

Answers coming next week.

⁵ *M"B simon* 250:2.

⁶ *Simon* 250:1 and *M"B* 1.

⁷ *M"B Simon* 250:2.

⁸ *M"B* ibid from the *M"A* in the name of the *Arizal*.

⁹ *Simon* 250:1.

¹⁰ *M"B simon* 250:4.

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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.