

# 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

Parshas Bereishis 5770

**Is one permitted to squeeze lemons in order to make lemonade on Shabbos?**

In the first instance we would say that it is forbidden, because in previous shiurim it was explained that when people squeeze fruit for juice, it is forbidden for everyone to do so. The *Beis Yosef*<sup>1</sup> himself was perturbed by this as he says that the people of Egypt were accustomed to squeezing lemons into sugared water and the sages did not remonstrate against them for doing so.

Accordingly the *Beis Yosef* offers two explanations why it should be permitted: The first being that the prohibition of squeezing fruit only applies when the beverage is consumed undiluted, but when always mixed with another beverage it is permitted. The second being that squeezing fruit is prohibited when squeezed into an empty cup but is permitted when always squeezed into a beverage. Lemons in Egypt were always squeezed into sugared water and therefore that custom complies with both explanations.

**Nowadays however lemons are squeezed into empty containers as well and therefore should it not be forbidden to do so?**

Correct, the *Mishna Berura* himself points that out. The *M"B*<sup>2</sup> says that since nowadays lemons are squeezed to fill barrels in the thousands and only later is the juice mixed with sugared water and the like, one must squeeze lemons onto sugar<sup>3</sup> and add the

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concoction to water. (As to the amount of sugar required for this method, we will soon see). He does not permit squeezing lemons into an empty cup or into water. The *Kaf haChaim*<sup>4</sup> brings many other *poskim* who prohibit squeezing lemons on Shabbos to make lemonade and he also advocates squeezing the lemon onto sugar and then adding it to water.

**Does that mean that I am forbidden to squeeze a lemon into my tea on Shabbos?**

I am afraid so because one is squeezing a fruit into a liquid and therefore the squeezed juice is classified as liquid and forbidden. The *modus operandi* would be either to squeeze a lemon onto sugar and add the sugar to the tea or to squeeze lemons before Shabbos and add the juice to tea on Shabbos.

**When squeezing lemon onto fish or salad, how much of the juice must be absorbed into the food?**

The lemon that is squeezed onto fried fish is absorbed into the fish and therefore it is considered as separating a food from food. When squeezed onto lettuce salad, for example, it is not absorbed into the lettuce but since it enhances the lettuce, it is permitted.

We find proof in *Hilchos Yom Tov* that such an action is permitted. The *Mechaber* deals with the problem of milking on Yom Tov, which as we know is a Biblical prohibition. The proffered solution<sup>5</sup> was to milk onto bread, by which the milk is absorbed into bread thereby

<sup>1</sup> Page 434 in the *Machon Tur* 5 lines from the bottom.

<sup>2</sup> *M" B siman* 320:22.

<sup>3</sup> The *Chazon Ish* in *siman* 56:7 disagrees with this solution saying that if the intention is to drink the

lemon juice it does not help to first squeeze it onto sugar.

<sup>4</sup> *Siman* 320:36.

<sup>5</sup> See the *Shulchan Aruch* in *Hilchos Yom Tov siman* 505:1 and *M" B* 6.

utilizing the rule that says that squeezing onto food is permitted.

Obviously it would be ineffectual milking 10 liters of milk onto one slice of bread, but when the majority of milk is absorbed in the bread this solves the problem. The next solution was to milk onto food that would be enhanced by the milk. Here too the *Mishna Berura*<sup>6</sup> says that it suffices if the majority of the milk enhances the food. We see that the liquid does not have to necessarily be absorbed into the food – suffice that it enhances it. Therefore we are safe to say that one may squeeze lemons onto lettuce salad.<sup>7</sup>

If we revert to our case of squeezing lemon onto sugar, the *halacha* is that the majority of the squeezed lemon must be absorbed into the sugar. It would not help to squeeze an entire lemon onto a few grains of sugar. If one requires more lemon one must use more sugar.

### **What is the halacha with regards to squeezing the excess liquid from a pickle?**

The reason for prohibiting squeezing a fruit for its juice is because one ascribes importance to the extracted juice and promotes it from being a food to a beverage. Were one to squeeze out the juice for a different reason the ramifications would be different.

Accordingly:

Pickles are often saturated with excess brine or vinegar and one's sole purpose when squeezing the pickle is to rid it of the excess liquid. Since one is not squeezing it for the sake of its juice, it is permitted.<sup>8</sup> One may even squeeze it into a cup or plate;<sup>9</sup> it need not be squeezed into a tissue or napkin.

The *Mishna Berura*<sup>10</sup> says that the same *halacha* applies when squeezing *lokshen* from excess fat or lettuce after being soaked in water. The purpose for extracting the liquid is not to produce a beverage; rather it is to rid the food of excess liquid.

<sup>6</sup> *M" B siman* 505:5.

<sup>7</sup> See the *SS"K* 5:7.

<sup>8</sup> *Siman* 320:7.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *M" B siman* 320:24-25.

### **Does that mean that one may squeeze fruit to rid it of its excess liquid?**

The *Mishna Berura*<sup>11</sup> writes that one may not squeeze olives and grapes in order to rid them of excess juice, because one might easily squeeze them for their juice. This implies that one may squeeze all other fruit to rid them of excess juice.

According to some opinions,<sup>12</sup> one should refrain from squeezing juice from oranges for the very same reason.

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### **Orchos Chaim LaRosh**

שלא יספר לשון הרע ושלא יקבלו – one must not speak *lashon harah* or believe it.

The severity of this prohibition is all too well known, and yet we might find it hard to adhere to. It is possible that if we devise a different tactic it will be easier to overcome. *Lashon Hara* is but one of many *issurim* dealing with **בין אדם לחייביו** and if we would strongly love every Jew we would not want to speak or have *lashon hara* spoken about him, just like we would not want people to speak or harm close relatives.

If we love others like close relatives, we would not want to speak *lashon hara* or believe it.

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לזכר נשמת חנה בת ברוך

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<sup>11</sup> End of *M" B* 320:24.

<sup>12</sup> This is based on the *Rashba* who writes that grapes and olives are *d'oraisso* because most of the fruit is squeezed for its juice. Accordingly, since today most oranges are squeezed for their juice, squeezing oranges on Shabbos to produce a beverage involves a *d'oraisso*.

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