



Parshas Vayechi 5766

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May one load a dishwasher on Shabbos?

We previously learned that one may not operate a dishwasher on Shabbos even when set to operate with a time switch.

The issue at hand involves *bachana* – preparing for after Shabbos. *Chazal* prohibited preparing on Shabbos for after Shabbos and this *halacha* manifests itself in many ways. For example, one may not bring wine on Shabbos from a storeroom for *havdalah*,¹ because one is performing an action for after Shabbos even though it does not involve a *melacha*. One may not prepare clothes on Shabbos to wear after Shabbos.²

Preface: It is extremely complicated to define *bachana* and therefore we will only present basic concepts.

...and dishes in a dishwasher?

It depends on one's routine. If during the week one places dirty dishes straight from the table into the dishwasher, one may do so on Shabbos as well.³ This is not considered *bachana* because it is similar to placing dishes in the sink after eating.

We are referring to a dishwasher that is also used to store dishes after washing. If the dishwasher is only used for washing and the dishes are subsequently removed, a *rav* must be asked.⁴

But is that not preparing dishes for washing?

¹ M"B *simon* 667:5, *SS"K* 28:73 and footnote 170.

² With regards to preparing clothes for 'the nine days' on Shabbos, *SS"K* 28:76.

³ *SS"K* 12:35.

⁴ Based primarily on *Machze Eliyahu simon* 60.

It is in a way but not entirely. Just like one does not view placing dishes in the sink as *bachana*, rather as merely clearing the table and putting dirty dishes in order, so too placing dishes in the dishwasher is clearing the table and not *bachana*. We do not attempt to fool ourselves in thinking that dishes in the dishwasher or sink are not intended for washing. However, since the action is not a direct *bachana*, because it is viewed as 'clearing the table', it is permitted.

What if I first put them in the sink?

If during the meal the dirty dishes are placed in the sink it is prohibited to then subsequently transfer them to the dishwasher. This is a perfect act of *bachana*.⁵ However, if the sight of dirty dishes bothers members of the household, one may place them in the dishwasher.⁶ One needs to be honest and think of why one places them in the dishwasher.

And yet, there still remains a problem. Many dishwashers will not clean the dishes properly unless rinsed before being placed in the dishwasher. Rinsing them in the sink and placing them in the dishwasher is *bachana*, because if one merely wished to put them out of site, one would place them in the dishwasher without rinsing them. See below.

To summarize:

- If one routinely places dishes from the table into the dishwasher, one may do so on Shabbos as well.
- Once placed in the sink they may not be transferred to the dishwasher unless the

⁵ See the *SS"K* 12:35.

⁶ *Igros Moshe Orach Chaim simon* 74, *rechitza* 4.

sight of dirty dishes bothers members of the household.

- The dishes may not be rinsed before being placed in the dishwasher. See below.

Are there problems of borer when loading a dishwasher?

Silverware and dishes that are in a mixture may not be sorted out in order to place them in the dishwasher.⁷ One may remove the large dishes from the table that are not in a mixture and place them in dishwasher and then remove the small dishes. The same can be said of the silverware.

Is it permitted to wash dishes on Shabbos?

One may wash dishes on Shabbos when those dishes are to be used again that Shabbos.⁸ Accordingly therefore, one may wash dishes on Friday night when the same dishes are to be used on Shabbos day. If one is eating out on Shabbos day, the Friday night dishes may not be washed because it is *bachana* for after Shabbos.

What about soaking pots and dishes on Shabbos?

This too relates to *bachana* because it is one thing to place dishes, pots and silverware in the sink after use, but soaking or lightly rinsing them seems to be *bachana*.

And yet, there is a solution.

If for example, flies are attracted to dirty pots and pans, one may rinse or soak them in water.⁹

It is accepted practice to soak or rinse dishes in water in order to prevent food residue from sticking, which will make cleaning harder.

Although this appears as *bachana*, the *poskim* tend to define such an action as 'prevention'.¹⁰

⁷ *Igros Moshe* ibid, *SS"K* ibid.

⁸ *Simon* 323:6 and *M"B* 28.

⁹ *SS"K* 12:2.

¹⁰ *SS"K* 12 footnote 8 citing the *MaHarshag*.

An action performed on Shabbos that is intended to prevent a loss; or intended to prevent extra work is not *bachana* prohibited by *Chazal*. Soaking dishes on Shabbos to prevent food sticking to the dishes is to prevent extra work after Shabbos and therefore permitted. If however the food has already stuck to the plates, it is *assur* to soak or rinse them in water, because it is something one will have to do after Shabbos in any case and is *bachana*.¹¹

As per the dishwasher above, one would be permitted to lightly rinse the dishes before inserting them in the dishwasher to prevent residue sticking to the dishes.

Vort on the Parsha

Yosef's brothers said to each other "perhaps Yosef will hate us and repay us...". The word used in the *chumash* for perhaps is *לָא*, which *Rashi* oft explains to mean "it should be". The brothers seemingly say, we wish Yosef will hate us and repay us for the bad we did unto him, which obviously requires understanding. Rav Sternbuch explains that the brothers were afraid of the consequences the future generations will be required to pay in order to atone for their deed. (Even though they were certain they were right in doing what they did, nevertheless they should have taken pity on Yosef). Indeed we find that *Chazal* tell us that the ten holy martyrs were to atone for the sale of Yosef. They therefore hoped that Yosef would be 'unkind' to them, which absolve further atonement from their offspring.

Food For Thought

May a gentile wash my dishes in hot water?

May a gentile wash my dishes in a dishwasher?

What must be avoided when washing dishes?

If I need five dishes, may I wash all ten that were used on Friday night?

Answers coming be"H next week.

¹¹ *SS"K* ibid.

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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.