

THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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based on the shiurim given by

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Parshas Bamidbar 5766

May one heat water for bathing on Yom Tov?

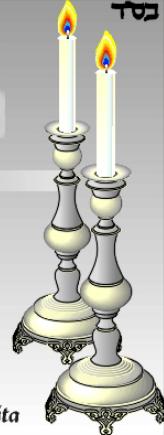
Bathing on Yom Tov involves two issues. The first and major issue deals with **heating water** to wash one's body or at least parts of one's body. The second is bathing on Yom Tov and how it differs from Shabbos.

Heating Water

The *Shulchan Aruch* teaches us ¹ that it is permitted to heat water on Yom Tov to wash face, hands and legs but not the entire body.

Why the distinction?

Yom Tov is unique in a way that one may perform *melachos* such as cooking, carrying without an *eiruv* etc. but still limited. For example, one may cook on Yom Tov for Y"T but not for after Y"T. One may cook for Jews but not for gentiles. A central rule applying to *melachos* says that the *melacha* may be performed when the majority requires it – *דבר השוה לכל נפש*. Something required by the minority or for finicky people is unnecessary and a *melacha* may not be performed. Based on this premise, *Chazal* tell us that washing face, hands and legs is a necessity for most people and washing the entire body is not. ² Hence heating water, which involves the *melachos* of *Bishul* – cooking and *Hav'arah* – lighting a fire, may be done for face, hands and legs but not for the entire body.



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Can this definition change over the years?

It would seem that this definition should change according to the majority's needs but this is difficult to ascertain. Consequently the *halacha* remains unchanged. ³

Besides, one may not turn on a boiler on Y"T, making it quite impractical to heat sufficient water to wash one's entire body.

What about heating water to bathe a baby?

The same rule applies and one may not heat water to wash the entire body. However, since it is sometimes necessary to bathe the entire baby's body ⁴ one may utilize a rule called *rabovi shiurim* – additional amounts.

When one is heating water for drinking or washing dishes (an urn on the gas range or adding water to the electric kettle) one may add more than necessary and use the additional water for the baby's body.

HOWEVER –utmost caution must be used when doing this, because there is a right way and a wrong way.

The correct way is to fill the utensil with more water than necessary **before** placing it on the fire. It is totally forbidden to add more water (for the baby's body) once the utensil is on the fire. ⁵ Adding water to an electric urn is more complicated because one usually uses a cup or jug, and one may add that which is necessary for face, hands and legs and drinking but one may not use the jug solely for the entire body.

¹ *Simon* 511:2.

² See *M"B simon* 511:9.

³ See *SS"K* 14:7.

⁴ *Rama simon* 511:2 and *M"B* 12.

⁵ *Rama ibid* and *M"B* 14.

What are the laws related to bathing on Yom Tov?

In previous shiurim we learned that one may not bathe on Shabbos, save for face, hands and legs, with water heated before Shabbos.

We find a *machlokes haposkim* as to whether bathing on Y”T is different than Shabbos. The *Rif* and *Rambam* hold that one may bathe one’s entire body on Y”T albeit not in a bathhouse. The *Mehaber* rules accordingly.⁶ The *Rosh* argues⁷ and holds that this is forbidden, and the *Rama* rules accordingly. However, all agree that one may wash one’s entire body **limb by limb.**⁸ The *Mishna Berura* concludes that although the majority of the poskim rule in accordance with the first opinion, the custom is to follow the stringent opinion and the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* writes that one must not deviate from this custom.⁹

The bottom line is one may use hot water (that was heated before Y”T) on Y”T to bathe one’s entire body – limb by limb.

Do similar rules apply to using soaps and sponges?

Y”T and Shabbos share the same rules, and just as using hard soaps and sponges is forbidden on Shabbos, so too it is forbidden on Y”T. Accordingly, when bathing in a permitted manner on Y”T, one should use liquid soap (details in the previous shiur) and without a sponge or facecloth.

Are there leniencies on Yom Tov Sheini?

Generally the second day Yom Tov shares the same rules as first day Y”T, in which case one may not bathe in the normal manner, as stated above.

⁶ *Simon* 511:2.

⁷ *Rama simon* 511:2.

⁸ *Eya Raba* cited in *Sha’ar Hatsiun* 511:21.

⁹ *M”B simon* 511:18.

And yet there are manners to relieve stickiness etc. on both days of Y”T. One may bathe in cold or lukewarm water when necessary,¹⁰ or in hot water limb by limb when the water is heated in a permitted manner.

Vort on the Parsha

Males over 20 years of age were counted whereas the Levi’im were counted from 1 month old. Rav Sternbuch explains that since the Levi’im served a holy position in the Beis HaMikdash their upbringing had to be ‘holy’ from the start. Correct education in the early years of a child is crucial to ensure total devotion to *Hashem*.

He adds that this is not exclusive to Levi’im. Anyone wishing to raise children to serve *Hashem* must do his utmost to instill Fear and Love of Heaven from an early age.

Food For Thought

May one spray insect repellant into the air on Shabbos?

What may I do to a mosquito buzzing around my ears?

A lizard is in the room and the children are scared, what are my options?

Ants are crawling on the counter, what are my options?

Answers coming be”H next week.

Request

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¹⁰ See previous shiur in the name of Rav Moshe Feinstein זצ”ל.

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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.