



THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

Published by **פרחי שושנים** **PIRCHIEI SHOSHANIM**

A Project of
The Shema Yisrael Torah Network

based on the shiurim given by
RABBI DOVID OSTROFF shlita

developed from the Chabura of the
Shulchan Aruch Project

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



Parshas Devarim 5766

July 28, '06
Volume V Issue 33

Why is it forbidden to light a fire on Yom Tov?

The *Rambam*¹ writes one may not produce fire from wood, stones or metal, for example by rubbing or striking them, one against the other until fire is produced, or by shaking flammable oil until it ignites, or placing a glass bottle filled with water in the sun and directing the rays onto flax or such until it ignites. All this is prohibited, as it was only permitted to transfer fire from existing fire. Igniting a fire is prohibited because it can be ignited before Yom Tov.

We see that igniting is classed as **מכשירין** – a preparatory stage, with the *halacha* being that **מכשירין** that can be prepared before Yom Tov must be done so.

The *Ra'avad* however argues with the *Rambam*'s reason and says that the *gemora*² is concerned with 'creating' a new entity – **מוליד**.

Which reason do we follow?

The *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*³ and *Mishna Berura*⁴ cite both reasons, which appears contradictory, and yet the *P'ri Chadash* writes that the *Rambam*'s reason is not enough because if not for the issue of 'creating a new entity' one would be permitted to ignite a fire even though it could have been done prior to Yom Tov. The *Machsis haShekel* writes that if not for the *Rambam*'s reason we would think that if indeed one wrongly ignited a fire on Yom Tov it would be *ossur* to use, where in fact the *Magen Avraham*⁵ says that *b'diavad*

(post factum) one may use the fire. The *Mishna Berura* adds⁶ that most *poskim* rule that one may use fire ignited on Yom Tov.

So then I suppose striking a match is prohibited?

Indeed yes because one is producing fire. The *K'sav Sofer* writes⁷ that one may not insert a matchstick into hot ash because hot ash is not fire. Likewise, it appears that it is *ossur* to graze a matchstick on red-hot metal, such as a stove grate, but one may touch the matchstick to coals even when the coal does not have a flame.

What about lighting a match from the heat above a flame?

It is possible to ignite a matchstick by placing it **above** a flame – not in the flame, but it appears from the *K'sav Sofer* that such an action is *ossur* because the flame appears from 'nowhere'. Conversely Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach held that it is permitted, as was his custom to ignite a match above a kerosene lamp, because the heat of a fire is part of the fire.⁸

May I use a match to transfer fire?

One may use a match to transfer fire and it is not considered as lighting superfluously. Although *bav'arab* is a *melacha*, lighting a match to transfer fire from one place to another is normal and may be done for permitted purposes.⁹

¹ *Hilchos Yom Tov* 4:1.

² *Beitz'a* 33b.

³ *Simon* 502:1.

⁴ *Simon* 502:1.

⁵ *Simon* 502:1.

⁶ *Simon* 502:4.

⁷ Cited in *M"B simon* 502:4.

⁸ See the *SS"K* 13:3 and footnote 13 the various opinions.

⁹ *SS"K* 13:3.

May one start a fire with a magnifying glass?

One may not ignite a fire with a magnifying glass because one must transfer fire, not produce a new one.

May I singe the wicks on Yom Tov?

It is customary for the husband to prepare the Shabbos and Yom Tov candles and singe the wicks.¹⁰ This question is applicable mostly in *chutz la'aretz* towards the end of first day Yom Tov when preparing candles for the second day Yom Tov. It also applies in Eretz Yisrael when Yom Tov is on *erev Shabbos* and one lights Shabbos candles on Yom Tov. This may not be done on Yom Tov because one extinguishes the fire – מכבה, which is not permitted.¹¹

Why is it *ossur* to turn on a light on Yom Tov?

Halachically, an electric filament, like the type found in an incandescent light bulb, is fire and turning on a light on *Shabbos* is *hav'arah* – igniting a fire. Based on the above we can appreciate that turning on a light on Yom Tov is *ossur* because it is a new entity.¹² Flowing current is not fire and hence its transformation from current to fire is מוליך. In addition, the *Chazon Ish* ruled that completing an electric circuit is “constructing”, which is *ossur* on Yom Tov as well and therefore even if the filament was not ‘fire’ it is *ossur* on account of *boneh*.

May one benefit from electric light turned on *b'issur*?

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach understands that it is *ossur*.¹³ We mentioned above that one may benefit from a fire ignited on Yom Tov even though it was done *b'issur*, because a new flame

is created all the time, whereas an electric light is for all purposes and intent the same ‘fire’. Although current alternates 50 to 60 times a second, to the naked eye it is the same original light and is *ossur*.

Food for Thought

Is there a limit to the amount of candles one may light on Yom Tov?

Is it permitted to light candles in shul?

May one smoke on Yom Tov?

Answers coming be"H next week.

Request

Take a part in disseminating Torah to thousands of people by sending your donation to:

Shabbos Shiur
POB 43034
Jerusalem 91430

Birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, yohrtzeits or such can be advertised on the sheet as well.

We pray for the welfare and safety of our soldiers.

¹⁰ *Rama simon* 264:9 and *M"B* 28.

¹¹ Based on the *Mechaber* (502:1) who writes that one may not ‘make coals’ and the *Ran* says because of מכבה. *M"B* 502:5.

¹² *JS"K* 13:2, footnote 7.

¹³ *JS"K* 13 footnote 8.

One may receive and distribute these weekly shiurim by calling or writing: Office 99 Rechov Bayit Vegan, Yerushalayim,
Phone Numbers: U.S. and Canada 732-370-3344 Israel 972-3-616-6340
South Africa 078 1655 242 UK 44-020-8731-6666 Australia 61-296835626 Switzerland 0114143 333 0288
• e-mail: shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com, or www.shemayisrael.com,
weekly sponsorships are available as well.

If you would like to send a question to Rav Ostroff, you can write to him at 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.