



Parshas Yisro 5767

February 9, '07
Volume VI Issue 15

Hilchos Chol Hamoed

May one tear toilet paper on Chol Hamoed?

One is permitted to look after one's physical necessities on *Chol Hamoed* and that includes tearing toilet paper. This falls into the category of צרכי הגוף – necessities of the body.

What else falls into this category?

Chazal compared physical necessities to food and almost all that is permitted to be done to food may be done for physical necessities, as will be explained.

For the ill: anything may be done for an ill person, even when life is not endangered and even for slight discomfort and aches. ¹

One may administer any type of medication even when its purpose is to sustain health.

One may spread cream on hands and face, even when not chapped, to prevent chapping and peeling. ²

Must cream be applied b'shinui?

No, anything administered for body care may be done in the regular manner, without need of a *shinui*, ³ because it is compared to *ochel nefesh*. This includes applying cream, administering medication, cutting bandages to size, driving to the pharmacy, writing prescriptions, preparing and grinding various medications.

May one pay a visit to a dentist on Chol Hamoed?

One may visit a dentist to treat toothache or any other discomfort, similar to taking any other medication. ⁴

One should not visit an orthodontist on *Chol Hamoed* because one does not reap immediate relief or benefit on *Chol Hamoed* from this treatment. Obviously if harm or damage might result from not repairing teeth braces etc. on *Chol Hamoed* one may attend.

Rav Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל writes that one may visit a dentist for treatment of even slight ailments, but not for anything else. ⁵

May one visit a doctor for an annual checkup on Chol Hamoed?

Rav Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל writes that it is a *zilzul* – degrades the *Mo'ed* and must be avoided. This is true even if the doctor will not perform any *melachos*. ⁶

What else is included in body necessities?

One may heat water to wash one's entire body, ⁷ unlike Yom Tov.

One may brush teeth, use all soaps – bar and liquid. ⁸

One may brush hair even though hairs will be extracted in the process; make braids and plats. ⁹

¹ *SS"K* 66:20, based on *simon* 532:2 and *M"B* 5, *Chayei Adam c'lal* 110:17.

² Based on *SS"K* 66:20.

³ *Simon* 546:5 *Bi'ur Halacha* "kol".

⁴ See *SS"K* 66 footnote 88.

⁵ *Ig"m orach Chaim* 3 *simon* 78.

⁶ Cited in *SS"K* 66 footnote 92.

⁷ *M"B* *simon* 531:22.

⁸ See *SS"K* 66:21.

⁹ *SS"K* *ibid*.

A woman may apply makeup and lipstick, even though it involves the *melacha* of *memareach* – ¹⁰ smoothing. ¹¹

May one repair glasses on Chol Hamoed?

Glasses may be repaired on *Chol Hamoed*, just like any other physical necessity. However, one should not exchange frames on *Chol Hamoed* because it is a *m'leches uman* (craftsman's work) not necessary for the *mo'ed*.

Rav Moshe Feinstein writes that one may not repair sunglasses on *Chol Hamoed* and yet if one is medically required to wear sunglasses they may be repaired. ¹²

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach writes that one may repair a hearing aid because it is also a physical necessity but a telephone should not be repaired, unless needed by the elderly or the sick. He explains that a telephone is not that necessary and does not warrant repair on *Chol Hamoed*. ¹³

May one take a haircut on Chol Hamoed?

Taking a haircut is definitely one of צרכי הגוף and yet *Chazal* prohibited taking a haircut, other than in extenuating circumstances. The reason for this is because people are extremely busy *erev* Yom Tov and one is tempted to say that there is ample time to take a haircut during *Chol Hamoed* and not take one before Yom Tov.

So what's wrong with that?

One must not begin Yom Tov in a disheveled manner; it shows disrespect to Yom Tov. ¹⁴ Consequently the *halacha* is that it is a mitzvah to take a haircut before Yom Tov. ¹⁵ Even if one took a haircut prior to Yom Tov, one may not take another haircut on Yom Tov, because not everyone knows that one took a haircut before

and people will mistakenly think that one may take a haircut on Yom Tov. ¹⁶

May one shave on Chol Hamoed?

The *Shulchan Aruch* prohibits shaving ¹⁷ and it is the prevalent custom. Rav Moshe Feinstein ¹⁸ discusses this issue at length and many are accustomed to be lenient based on the *Nodah B'yhuda*. Rav Moshe Feinstein concludes that he is not accustomed to be lenient unless in certain cases or for someone who suffers to an extreme from not shaving. One should ask one's Rav.

Vort on the Parsha

Hashem instructed Moshe Rabeinu to tell *B'nei Yisroel* to make themselves holy "today and tomorrow" (19:10). Rav Sternbuch sees from this that *avodas Hashem* requires continual effort and one cannot work for one day and rest on one's laurels.

Food For Thought

May one shave body hair on Chol Hamoed?

May one cut the hair of a child who reached the age of three on Chol Hamoed?

Are there restrictions as to cutting fingernails?

Answers coming be"H next week .

Request

Take 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.

¹⁰ Pronounced me'ma'rei'ach.

¹¹ *Simon* 546:6.

¹² See *SS"K* 66:20 footnote 88.

¹³ *SS"K* *ibid* and *tikunim*.

¹⁴ *M"B simon* 531:3.

¹⁵ *Simon* 531:1.

¹⁶ *M"B simon* 531:4.

¹⁷ *Simon* 531:2, *SS"K* 66:23.

¹⁸ *Ig"m* vol. I *simon* 163.

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 076 187 1451 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.