



THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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Hilchos Chol Hamoed

May one make tzitzis on Chol Hamoed?

As explained in last shiur, one may perform a *melech hedyot* (non-professional craft) for a mitzvah, even for after Chol Hamoed.¹ Tying tzitzis onto a four-cornered garment is a *melech hedyot* and permitted even for after Chol Hamoed. If one will have ample time after Chol Hamoed to fashion tzitzis one should avoid tying them **during** Chol Hamoed.²

May one tie tzitzis at night or only during the day?

Tzitzis is a daytime mitzvah, as it says that one should “see” one’s *tzitzis*. (Although the *Rambam* and *Rosh* argue whether one is obligated to wear *tzitzis* on a daytime garment that is worn at night, it is nevertheless a daytime mitzvah).

Consequently the question is whether *tzitzis* may be tied onto a garment at night, when it is not time for the mitzvah, or only during the day. Several *poskim* wrote that daytime is preferred,³ but the *Chazon Ish*, Ben Ish Chai and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach⁴ wrote that one may *lechatchila* tie *tzitzis* onto one’s garment at night.

May one write a note advising the time of a b’ris that takes place a day after the last day of Yom Tov?

This question was posed to the *gedolei hador* a few years ago and the answer is not so simple. Based

on the above it should be permitted because writing is a *melech hedyot* and when done for a mitzvah it may be done even on *Chol Hamoed* for after Yom Tov. The point is how important is it to announce a *b’ris* when it is known that even without announcing the *b’ris* there will be a *minyan* of adult males. It is best to ask your rav.

May one pay bills and write checks on Chol Hamoed?

Although our writing is a *melech hedyot*, to permit such writing there must be a *tzorech moed* – some necessity for *Chol Hamoed*.

For example, the *Shulchan Aruch* writes⁵ that one may write a letter to a friend and relative on *Chol Hamoed* and the *Mishna Berura* explains⁶ that writing to a friend is a necessity. The *Rama* however writes⁷ that others prohibit writing a letter to a friend and the custom is to write implementing a *shinui* – either writing all the lines at a slant or at least the first line.

But the letter might only reach its destination after Chol Hamoed?

This is a very good point as raised by the *Oruch Hashulchan*, which answers that the *poskim* omitted the requirement that the letter arrive on *Chol Hamoed* because writing a letter is effortless and performed in private. Consequently *Chazal* were not particular on this issue.

Accordingly, if necessary to pay bills and write checks on *Chol Hamoed* to prevent a loss or for another reason, one may do so.

¹ *Simon* 545:3.

² See *S”K* 66:45 and footnote 189.

³ Cited in *Teshuvos Vahanbagos* vol. II *simon* 13.

⁴ *Halichos Shlomo* 3:23, see footnotes.

⁵ *Simon* 545:5.

⁶ *Simon* 545:30.

⁷ *Simon* 545:5.

But I cannot write a slanted check?

When writing for something necessary for the mo'ed one may do so even without writing at a slant, because our writing is accepted by most poskim to be a *meleches hedyot* and the slant is only a custom to be applied when possible.⁸

May I purposely set time for Chol Hamoed to write letters and pay bills?

Writing letters to friends and paying bills may only be done on *Chol Hamoed* when not purposely intending to do so. In other words, because people have extra free time on *Chol Hamoed* one might plan to use that time for writing letters and paying bills and this is not permitted.⁹ One may pay bills and write letters if one did not have time to do so before *Chol Hamoed* or if the need arose on *Chol Hamoed*.

May one use a computer on Chol Hamoed?

Writing on a computer is not a *meleches uman* and is permitted on *Chol Hamoed*.¹⁰ As stated above, even though it is not possible to write at a slant, it is unnecessary to do so when not possible. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach added that there is a problem to write and **store** information on a disk on account of *boneh* – construction.¹¹ He explained that a disk without information is worthless and by feeding it and storing information on it, one is ‘constructing’ it. Consequently, writing and storing unimportant information¹² or typing without storing information is not a problem.

May one print one's work on Shabbos?

Typing on the computer is one thing and printing is another. One may only print that

which one may write. The problem is that printing is probably worse than writing because the printout is usually block letters, as opposed to handwriting which runs.¹³ If necessary to print to avoid a loss, it may be performed.

May one use a rubber stamp on Chol Hamoed?

It is also a *meleches hedyot* and permitted when necessary for the *mo'ed*.¹⁴

Vort on the Parsha

Chazal tell us that the gates of tears are not sealed, but, asked the Kotzker Rebbe, why are there gates at all, what purpose do they serve? He answered that the gates are closed to bar entrance to tears shed over nonsensical matters!

Food For Thought

May one fold clothing on Chol Hamoed?

Is ironing permitted on Chol Hamoed?

May one fix plumbing on Chol Hamoed?

Answers coming be"H next week .

⁸ See *SS"K* 66 footnote 209.

⁹ *M"b simon* 545:31 and *Sha'ar Hatsiun* 31, *SS"K* 66:55.

¹⁰ Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach in *SS"K* 66 footnote 209, and in the *tikunim*.

¹¹ *SS"K* 66 footnote 211.

¹² Based on the *tikunim* on the mentioned footnote.

¹³ One of the factors to permit writing is that the letters are not block letters.

¹⁴ *SS"K* 66:55.

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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.