



THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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RABBI DOVID OSTROFF shlita

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I want to peel the fish from its skin before the meal, how must it be done?

The question related to serving pink salmon where the host wished to serve the salmon without its skin. In the previous shiur we learned that one may separate *ochel* from *p'soles* immediately before the meal and not only before one actually puts the separated *ochel* into one's mouth.

The host is permitted to remove the fish from its skin (not the skin from the fish) and thus serve it at the table.¹ The *mode d'employ* would be to insert a knife or a fork in between the skin and the fish, and lift the fish from the skin.

I am leaving the house at 12:00 and before I leave I want to take a sweater from a pile of sweaters for use at 16:00. May I do this?

It is very difficult to find a way out of this predicament because after all one is separating for later. The fact that one will not be in a position to get one's sweater at 16:00 should not permit one to do '*borer*' before the time. To try and compare a 'journey' to a meal and say that the first leg of the journey is comparable to the first course and 16:00, when the sweater is required, is the second course, is a major *chidush* and therefore Rav Sternbuch *shlita* says that one must be stringent and not remove the sweater, seeing that it involves an *issur d'oraiso* - a biblical prohibition.

Either one should plan ahead and remove the sweater before Shabbos, or one can remove the sweater before leaving the house and wear it for a while, thus having immediate use of the sweater.

¹ Removing the skin from the fish immediately prior to serving is the subject of the *Bi'ur Halacha* in *siman* 319:4 'מתוך אוכל'.

One is not sure how many eggs will be consumed at the meal; may additional eggs be peeled just in case they are needed?

Let us refine the question. Sometimes a person eats one egg and sometimes (health risks aside) two. May one peel two eggs before sitting down to eat or is one required to only peel according to an explicit need?

Rav Sternbuch says that since sometimes one eats two eggs it is also called a necessity and it is not necessary to use a measuring cup to measure exact quantities before eating. One may prepare quantities of food on Shabbos in the same manner one would normally prepare, because the focus is on the present meal only.

Therefore one may peel, separate etc. everything that one would normally prepare (right) before a meal and does not have to be exact in measuring the quantities to be consumed. Needless to say that one may only have the forthcoming meal in mind and not prepare extra for afterwards.

A gabbai in shul wants to arrange the table for Kiddush held after shul and the only time he has to do it is before mussaf. If borer is involved may he do it?

As often explained, convenience does not lead to any special leniencies with regards to *borer*, and therefore the gabbai may not prepare the *Kiddush* separating items prior to the *Kiddush*. His only reason to prepare before *mussaf* is in order to facilitate his own personal need to *daven mussaf* and not for the sake of the *Kiddush*.

The same would apply to (Jewish) waiters in a hotel where the regular routine is to set the tables for the morning meal after the Friday night meal. Since this preparation is not

done prior to the meal it is forbidden when *borer* is involved.

If however each item of silverware is kept separate, i.e. forks with forks and knives with knives then they may set the tables at night because in effect there is no *borer* being done.

Is one permitted to remove food from the freezer, from within a mixture,² long before a meal (or on Friday night) in order for it to defrost before the next meal?

This is a difficult question. According to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach³ זצ"ל the answer is that it depends on the nature of the food. If it is food that is regularly kept in the freezer and one would normally only remove it a few hours before consumption in order to prevent the food from spoiling, then it is *דרך אכילה* and one may do so on Shabbos as well. If however it is food that can be kept in the refrigerator as well (or it can even be stored in a cupboard) and one is merely freezing it to prolong its shelf life, since it could have been removed from the freezer long before eating without any negative consequences, it is not called *דרך אכילה* to remove it from the freezer, and it should either be removed before Shabbos, or placed in the freezer in such a way that it is not within a mixture.

Others hold that since *borer* involves a *melacha d'oraissa* one should only prepare close to the meal.⁴

I wish to refrigerate a tin of peaches 3-4 hours before the meal. The problem is that the tin is in a jumble together with other tins. May I remove that particular tin and refrigerate it, when after all it is being removed 3-4 hours prior to consumption?

This question is similar to the previous one by way of preparing long before the upcoming meal but without a possibility of doing the separating any closer to the meal.

² If the item is not within a mixture there is no problem whatsoever in preparing on Friday night for Shabbos day.

³ Based on his writings in the 'תקונים ומילואים פרק ג' הערה ר'.

⁴ See שו"ת תשובות והנהגות ח"ב סי' קעט in the name of the *Chazon Ish*.

From Rav Shlomo Zalman⁵ we can understand that since this preparation need not have been done 3 hours before the meal, rather it could easily have been done before Shabbos, it is not necessarily called *דרך אכילה* and it may not be done. According to the stringent opinion mentioned in the previous answer, this preparation is prohibited regardless.

What if I have a bunch of tinned fruit in a jumble (the same with drinks) and I remove one of them for later but without looking at which one I take?

In such an event the tins are not regarded as two types or species and removing one from within the mixture is not separating. This is similar to a bunch of assorted colored socks and one does not need any particular color. Removing one for later would not be *Borer* because they would not be classed as a mixture, rather as "socks" *per se*.

Orchos Chaim LaRosh

להתרחק מן הרכילות – To distance oneself from telling tales about others.

The *mitzvos* of *bein adam lachveiro* are central and it seems almost impossible to master this vast amount of *mitzvos*. An important tool is to master the major theme – to love every Jew. One who loves a certain person will only want to hear and talk good about that person and try assisting him whenever possible. If we reach that level of love towards every Jew, we would not want to talk *rechilus* about a fellow Jew. So instead of concentrating on every detail and trying to overcome it, try loving every Jew and thus all *mitzvos* will be easier to master.

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לזכר נשמת חנה בת ברוך

⁵ See footnote 2.

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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.