



# THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

## HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

Published by



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 Acharei Mos/Kedoshim 5766

May 5, '06  
Volume V Issue 22

### *Is bathing in hot water permitted on Shabbos?*

Several factors are taken into account in providing a ruling.

- The bathing itself.
- The hot water system used; a boiler, sun heater etc.
- Was the water heated before or on Shabbos?

### *What can be wrong with bathing - I don't see any melacha involved?*

Indeed bathing does not involve a *melacha* but is nevertheless prohibited.

The *gemora Shabbos* 40a<sup>1</sup> relates that initially people would bathe (in bath-houses) in water heated before Shabbos, but the attendants would heat the water on Shabbos and declare that it was heated before Shabbos.

So *Chazal* prohibited **bathing** but permitted the sauna.

People would continue to bathe in hot water and declare that they were wet from sweating in the sauna, so they prohibited the sauna as well.

The *gemora* concludes that bathing in hot water and sweating are prohibited but bathing in cold water is permitted. This will be dealt with later.

### *Well maybe a shower in hot water is different to bathing?*

Another *gemora* on *Shabbos* 39b<sup>2</sup> cites a *machlokes* between R' Me'ir and R' Yehuda and *halacha* is in accordance with R' Yehuda, who states the following.

<sup>1</sup> 10 lines from the bottom.

<sup>2</sup> Center of *amud*.

One may not shower one's entire body with hot water on Shabbos and *Rashi* annotates that this is even with water heated before Shabbos.

**To summarize:** one may not shower or bathe in hot water on Shabbos, even with water heated before Shabbos and even if a 'water-heating' system is not involved. It is the actual bathing that is prohibited.

### *Why does the gemora say one's entire body?*

The *gemora* on the same *amud* makes a distinction between water heated before or on Shabbos and states that one may wash one's **face, hands and legs** with water heated **before** Shabbos but not with water heated on Shabbos.

Although one could argue that the same reason that prohibits washing one's entire body should prohibit washing face, hands and legs, nevertheless *Chazal* only prohibited bathing the entire body.

The *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*<sup>3</sup> (based on the *Magen Avraham*) adds that the majority of one's body is considered the entire body, whereas face, hands and legs are the minor parts. Consequently, one may wash the minor parts of one's body - not only face, hands and legs, provided that one does not wash the majority.<sup>4</sup>

### *Isn't there something about washing one limb at a time?*

That leniency is applied to Yom Tov not to Shabbos.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Simon* 326:1. See also *M"B* 326:2.

<sup>4</sup> *Rama simon* 36:1.

<sup>5</sup> *Simon* 326:1.

*You mentioned that one may not bathe even one limb with water heated on Shabbos, how was the water heated?*

We find several permitted heating modes.

- **Heated by a gentile for a sick person.**  
A gentile may heat water to bathe a sick person but a healthy person may not bathe even a single limb in that water. <sup>6</sup>
- **Water placed near a heat source**, in a way that it would not reach the temperature of *yad soledes bo*. <sup>7</sup> Certain restrictions exist, such as it cannot be placed on a hot-plate or *blech* <sup>8</sup> on Shabbos, nor can it be placed near heat if it can reach *yad soledes bo* over a period of time. One may not place cold water on a radiator intending to remove it before it reaches *yad soledes bo*. If it cannot reach *yad soledes bo* it is permitted.

This water is heated on Shabbos and may not be used to wash hands or an arm etc.

*And water heated before Shabbos?*

Water placed on a hot-plate or *blech* before Shabbos and heated on Shabbos, is considered as heated before Shabbos. Sun heated water may also be used to wash face, hands and legs. <sup>9</sup>

*Do the sick and infirm share the same halachos as the rest of the populace?*

R' Akiva Eiger writes that an ailing person may bathe in hot water heated before Shabbos even though he is not a *choleh she'ein bo sakana* (sick in bed). <sup>10</sup>

*May one use water from a solar heater (when water was heated before Shabbos)?*

We have dealt with this issue in vol. V shiur 9, where it was demonstrated that while drawing water from the water boiler, fresh cold water

enters and might be heated from the existing water. Another problem was how to define the solar panels.

A regular boiler heated with a heat element is far more severe and is off limits on Shabbos; it is far too complicated.

---

### Vort on the Parsha

R' Akiva taught that loving your fellow man is a major rule of the Torah. The *K'sav Sofer* writes that one might think that loving your fellow man applies to physical and maybe even psychological aid but with Torah it is each man to his own. That is not so. One must take responsibility for another man's Torah and learning and teach others whenever possible. One must also assist others financially to enable them to perform *mitzvos*.

זה כלל גדול בתורה which also means it is a major rule in 'keeping' the torah and everything involved.

---

### Food For Thought

*What about taking a cold shower during heat spells?*

*Are there leniencies on Yom Tov Sheini?*

*What problems are directly associated with bathing in cold water?*

*What are the laws related to bathing on Yom Tov?*

Answers coming be"H next week.

---

### Request

Please **take part** in the publication of the Shabbos Sheet by sending a small donation of \$5-\$10, either on a monthly or quarterly basis. It may be sent to:

Shabbos Shiur  
POB 43034  
Jerusalem 91430

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

---

<sup>6</sup> SS"K 14:2.

<sup>7</sup> Above 40-45°C, 104-113°F.

<sup>8</sup> Metal sheet covering stove burners.

<sup>9</sup> SS"K 14:3.

<sup>10</sup> *Bi'ur Halacha simon* 326:1 ד"ה במים.

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](mailto:shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com), or [www.shemayisrael.com](http://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](mailto: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.