

A COMMUNITY AWARENESS BULLETIN

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הקהל

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1. Melacha on Yom Tov During Bain Hashemashos. During the period of bain hashemashos (between sunset and nightfall) there is a halachic doubt whether it is still the previous day or whether the night that belongs to *the next day* has already begun, since at any given moment (unknown to us) during bain hashemashos the switch from one day to the next occurs. It is a Melacha D'oraysa to do work on one day of Yom Tov if you derive benefit for it *only on the next day* (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 503). If work is done during the bain hashemashos period, it is possible that the melacha done on one day of Yom Tov will result in benefit only on the next day. This constitutes a sofek Issur D'oraysa.

Accordingly, one must refrain from doing any Melachos D'oraysa during the bain hashemashos period on Motzei Yom Tov, *which includes Motzei the first day of Yom Tov to the second day of Yom Tov, as well as Motzei Yom Tov Sheni.* Included in this prohibition is cooking, boiling water for hot drinks, heating up baby food, carrying keys, books or machzorim in a Reshus HaRabim and the like, all of which would be forbidden during this time. One should similarly refrain from smoking or kindling candles during bain hashemashos.

Many people are unaware of this prohibition, incorrectly assuming that any melacha of "ochel nefesh" is permitted on Yom Tov even during bain hashemashos. If you have any particular shaila regarding bain hashemashos, please consult with your Rav.

2. Shatnez Alert. In this clothing-buying season, **IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE** that you check with your Rav or Posek as to which Shatnez-Checking Center is acceptable to him.

3. Your Tefilah Is Not Too Small! The Mesilas Yeshorim (end of Chapter 19) writes that one should never say about himself "Who am I that my tefilos should be answered to bring an end to this Golus?" Instead, one should daven for the Geulah with kavana, for it may be your very tefilah that brings the Geulah! Rav Shimshon Dovid Pincus Z'tl in Sh'arim B'Tefilah (page 94) in fact writes that Tefilah does not change nature or create miracles. Tefilah is simply the *natural* manner of modifying nature, built into creation in the same manner as grass, trees, fish and animals.

4. Over the Counter Medications. Is Tylenol kosher? Advil? Mylanta? Pepto Bismol? Rabbi Dovid Heber,

Kashrus Administrator of the Star-K, has performed his own research relating to "over-the-counter" (OTC) drugs. You may obtain a copy of his findings by contacting the Star-K at 410-484-4110.

Not all Rabbonim may necessarily agree with Rabbi Heber's specific conclusions. Additionally, product ingredients may change at any time. Because many over-the-counter drugs are not kosher, you should consult with your Rav after learning more of the facts relating to each particular OTC drug.

Please Note:

The purpose of this Bulletin is to alert the public regarding timely hashkafos and *shailos*, so that the informed person can ask his *Rav* the right questions.

5. Special Kashrus Alerts. Among the scores of extremely valuable consumer alerts published in the most recent issue of *Kashrus Magazine* are the following:

- Marganit & Mastiks (Mastix) Chewing Gum, manufactured by Atlas (Jerusalem) bears an unauthorized claim to be certified by Rabbi Moshe Yehudah Landau of Bnei Brak. These products are being exported overseas. Wherever you are located, if this product is being sold in your area, please contact *Kashrus Magazine* at (718) 336-8544.
- Mehadrin Clementines are a product of Israel and are being sold in the New York/New Jersey area. The word "Mehadrin" is no reflection on the quality of the kosher supervision; it is [merely] the name of the company in Israel—Mehadrin-Tnufort. The supervision is by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel. These [products] are from shemita produce relying on the heter mechirah of the Chief Rabbinate. The company is going to be sending a wide variety of other fruits here shortly.

6. Consumer Alert-Tevilas Kelim. We have been advised of two separate incidents in which two different hardware/houseware stores in Brooklyn with an (unsupervised) mikva offered to tovel an item for a consumer at the point of purchase. (See Bulletin Volume I, Number 3) The owner sent one of his akum employees to the in-store mikva to "do the job". Please note that an Adult Jew should either perform or observe the performance of this mitzva after purchase, and not before.

NOTE: In fact, one should not purchase a gift, tovel it and then present the gift “pre-toveled,” as the item requires immersion only when in possession of the one who intends to use it for food. An immersion performed when there is not yet a mitzva to do so has no validity. (See Teshuvos V’Hanhagos, Yoreh Deah 1:452).

7. Putting on Tefillin. Consider which of the following you would do when wearing the “Crown Jewels” which the King, because of His love for you, permits you to wear for 45 minutes each morning:

- Put them on quickly without reflecting on what you are about to do, and without even looking at them.
- Shorten the 45-minute opportunity by arriving 5-10 minutes late for your fitting.
- Forget that you are wearing them, and start joking around with friends or engaging in idle conversation.
- Take them off 5-10 minutes early because you are late for an appointment, work, carpool, etc.
- Fail to constantly check them to make sure that they are properly situated.
- Leave them unattended in the backseat of your car.
- Carry them under your armpit or in a swinging position parallel to your thighs.
- Kiss and examine them as you take them out, and then, having proper kavana and appreciation for the opportunity, place them in the proper position (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 25:5; 28:3). Demonstrate your reluctance to remove them by saying a chapter of Tehillim or learning for a few extra moments while still wearing them, then kiss and study them as they are put away.

8. Walking into Shul. Consider which of the following you would do when walking into the King’s Palace:

- Walk in talking to a friend whom you just met outside.
- Speak or yell loudly enough to be heard for some distance across the Palace.
- Tell your friend already in the Palace a new amusing joke.
- Wear your most comfortable sneakers and casual clothing—why get “dressed up” to see the King?
- Enter fully “armed” with your beeper or cell phone on.
- Arrive 5-10 minutes late for your scheduled visit to the Palace.
- Walk swiftly and with alacrity to the Palace and enter with humility and contrition, sensing the grandeur of the place, that this is a mikdash me’at, and realizing that the kedusha to be taken out is directly proportionate to the kedusha being put in.

9. Borchu at Maariv. Once one has responded to Borchu at Maariv, he has entered B’emtza Haperek of Kriyas Shma, and can no longer speak, finish a sentence, finish another line of Gemara with his chavrusa or do *anything* except daven (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 236:1, Mishne Berurah Seif Katan 1). If one will sit down for Maariv, he should do so

as quickly after responding to Borchu as possible, since it is forbidden to specifically *sit down* for the Shma of Maariv (just as it is forbidden to specifically *stand up* for the Shma of Shachris), as this would demonstrate an intent to follow the opinion of Bais Shammai, which is not the halacha (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 63: 2, Mishne Berurah Seif Katan 5-8).

10. Study the Cereal Box. When we were younger, many of us would study the back of the cereal box to learn new and fascinating facts or get information on the latest toys. As we grow older, we should be studying the *side* of the box—i.e., the *ingredients*. New cereals are being produced for which the brocha requires a shaila, a phone call or even research. Do not let your child simply make a shehakol or mezonos on all cereals. Besides the fact that the brocha you are permitting your child to make might be a brocha l’vatala, or a b’dieved, you should also be teaching him your concern for a brocha and your integrity in mitzvos by looking into the proper brocha before eating something. We would like to acknowledge and thank Lieber’s Products for including the proper brocha for the cereal it manufactures on the box. We hope many other companies will follow suit.

11. Double Reward. The Chofetz Chaim (Sefer Chofetz Chaim, Aseh 8) writes that if one speaks negatively about an older person who is also a chacham, he has violated the Mitzvas Aseh of V’hadarta *two times*. It follows then, that if one shows the proper respect for an older chacham (such as standing up for him in his presence), he has actually *fulfilled* the mitzva of V’hadarta twice.

12. Im Yirtzeh Hashem. Rav Moshe Sternbach, Shlita, in his last teshuva in Teshuvos V’hanhagos (Volume 3; Choshen Mishpat 481) brings the fascinating opinion of the Maggid of Kelm that, when recognizing one’s dependence on Hashem Yisborach, one should say “Im Yirtzeh Hashem,” rather than “B’ezras Hashem.” The reason is that B’ezras (with the help of) would seem to indicate that you have your own independent power which Hashem would merely augment. In fact, all is done *only* B’irtzos Hashem, only if it is Hashem’s Will that it happen—because *all* is dependent on Hashem’s will.

13. Welcoming Committee. The Chinuch in Mitzva 431 and the Chofetz Chaim in Sefer HaMitzvos HaKatzar (Mitzvas Aseh 61) write that included in *the mitzva of Loving a Ger is to show our love to strangers and to those who come from another city or country to live with us*. (We note that the Minchas Chinuch there learns that this is not actually the mitzva itself of Loving a Ger, which is limited to a convert, but rather a mussar application of the mitzva.) A beautiful innovation has begun in some shuls, a “Welcoming Committee” whose task it is to greet and inquire as to the needs of any new person who appears in shul. Some blocks also go out of their way to warmly welcome their new neighbors. Yashar Kochachem! Try to add your Shul or your block to the growing group of those who are diligent in this special mitzva.

Chag Kosher V’Someach