



THE HAKHEL COMMUNITY AWARENESS BULLETIN

SPECIAL EDITION

Summer 5765

HALACHOS WITH RELEVANCE TO THE SUMMER MONTHS-PART THREE

From a Special Shiur given for Hakhel by HaRav Yisroel Belsky, Shlita

With the summer months upon us, Hakhel is distributing the following questions and answers relating to issues which come up during the summer. Part One (5763) dealt with issues for those traveling to and from bungalow colonies and summer homes. Part Two (5764) was related to toys and games children play with regularly.

Overcoming Summer Time *Nisyonos*

QUESTION: Can one take his children to Hershey Park and similar places while on vacation?

ANSWER: There is another question that is related to the above. How can you work in Manhattan in the summer?

Rabbosai, I would like to tell you that we are subjected to very big *nisyonos*. It is not comparable to a person who is occasionally subjected to things that one's eyes shouldn't see. It is more than that. It is an incessant bombardment from all sides and at all times, especially in Manhattan, where all the *pritzim* come together to display their immorality in the most provocative manner.

For a person who has to pass through the streets in order to get to his work place, this constitutes a major challenge that would seemingly require him to keep his eyes focused towards the ground with the exception of not bumping into another person or crossing the street without getting struck by the traffic. It might seem that by my humor I am declaring that this is too much to ask of a person. It is not too much to ask.

A person should keep his eyes down and avoid looking directly at those whose aim is to stimulate one's passions in order to encourage them to purchase a certain brand of cigarettes or liquor, or a car or even a screwdriver for that matter, associating their product with something that a person has an attraction to because of his *yetzer hora*.

A person should definitely keep his eyes away and it is not easy. The designers of these advertisements do it in a very expert way, with the knowledge that their provocative appeals will be very

difficult to ignore. That is just the reason why we must thwart their enticements they swamp us with and try to float in front of our eyes.

One has to avoid these influences unless it is absolutely impossible to avoid them. In such cases, one should avoid looking directly at these enticements. While it is true that one may look ridiculous in the eyes of others, it is worth it, gaining many precious *zechusim*. We must struggle to clear things away from our eyes that we shouldn't be seeing.

It is best that if one sees something and one wonders whether or not such a sight is *mutar* or *assur*, one should refrain from taking a second glance. Better to remain ignorant. You won't regret it.

Calling Someone Else's Spouse by Their First Name

QUESTION: We have all been in the same bungalow colony for the last ten years. Is there anything wrong with referring to somebody else's spouse on a first name basis?

ANSWER: The way the question is worded, there is an implication that something is not correct about calling somebody's spouse by his or her first name if you have only known them for eight or nine years—but that ten years is different, and at that point, a first-name basis would be permissible. However, the opposite is true. The longer one knows a person of the opposite gender, the less likely you should call him or her by his or her first name. There is more danger in such situations when you become very familiar with another person's spouse.

Tznius is something that has to be learned. The best way is to promote an elevated level of *tznius* in the relaxed, summer setting, whether in the bungalow colony or elsewhere. During the weekdays, when women are alone in the country, they should still not go out to the swimming pool from their bungalow without the proper outerwear attire. *Tznius* should be an important issue at all times.

A person should use *chachma* and *seichel* and not put themselves into potentially harmful situations. We live in a world where everyone else considers normal those activities that we recognize as *to'aivah* (abominations). Therefore, you have to be careful that you behave and talk in a manner that reflects *tznius* and self-control. These tiny breaches if not controlled can be the openings for dangerous situations.

Making Shabbos Kiddush on the Grass

QUESTION: On *Shabbos* my bungalow colony makes *kiddush* after *davening*. Can we make it on the grass?

ANSWER: The *Shulchan Aruch* says that you shouldn't drink water on *Shabbos* near where there are plants growing, because it might fall upon and nurture them, thus constituting *toldos* of *zorea* and *choresh*. But, drinking wine is acceptable, because it doesn't help the grass or growing plants.

QUESTION: What about other drinks?

ANSWER: They should be treated as water. Since most of the drinks that we have fall into that category,

one shouldn't have a lawn *kiddush* on *Shabbos*.

QUESTION: What about drinking over lawns where one doesn't care about the grass or the grass is half-dead anyway? Or if it has just rained?

ANSWER: This is a strange question. As far I know, in most places, people do pay a lot of attention to ensure that the patches of ruined grass are re-seeded or patches of sod are put on them. It is the wish of each individual or bungalow colony committee to see that the place looks nice. Whenever there is a drought for a period of time and grass begins to turn yellow, people do worry. Therefore, it is practically never true that people are not concerned about the condition of the grass. You will see directly before and after the summer season, large amounts of money are spent on improving or restoring the grass.

If we just had a heavy rain outside and the grass was soaked, it would be permitted to have a *kiddush* on the grass. However, I don't think that people would really want to attend such a *kiddush* on unpleasant, heavily rain-soaked grass.

Using Insect Repellant on *Shabbos*

QUESTION: On *Shabbos* is a person permitted to spray insect repellant on one's hands?

ANSWER: Yes. There is no *choleh* and the spray is not remedying an ailment.

Returning a Window Screen on *Shabbos*

QUESTION: If someone's window screen fell out on *Shabbos*, is a person allowed to put it back on *Shabbos*?

ANSWER: I think that if the screen is of the old simple type that you easily put in and take out, it is not considered a *chelek* or part of the actual window. In such a case, you would be allowed to either insert or remove it. However, the more modern window screens which are more a *chelek* of the window would be forbidden to insert or remove on *Shabbos*.

Asking a Goy to Do Certain *Melachos* for You on *Shabbos*

QUESTION: Are you allowed to ask a *goy* to turn on the air conditioner on *Shabbos*?

ANSWER: I remember when air conditioning was non-existent. However, today, it has become such a necessity. I imagine that if the situation was very uncomfortable, one could ask a *goy* to turn on the air conditioner, especially as air conditioners work on electricity. Unlike creating heat, creating electricity that runs the air conditioner is not a *melacha deoraysa*. It is probably even less problematic to ask a *goy* to turn off the air conditioner if the room is too cold. Just as you can ask a *goy* to put on the heat in winter in order to prevent people from becoming sick, you can similarly ask a *goy* to turn off the air conditioner if you

are trying to prevent people from getting sick from the extreme cold generated by the air conditioner.

QUESTION: If the circuit breaker went off on *Shabbos*, is one allowed to ask a *goy* to restore it?

ANSWER: Simply put, there are times at night when if you don't have electricity, it constitutes *sakanos nefoshos*. It is simply dangerous, especially if you have children who are going around at night without light. In such a dangerous situation, you can certainly ask a *goy* to restore the electricity.

QUESTION: Are you allowed to ask a *goy* to restore the electricity merely in order to save the food from spoiling?

ANSWER: The answer is yes. However, if the food is not endangered, but it is a question of just keeping the soda colder, you should not ask a *goy* to fix the circuit breaker. If you had *cholent* in an electric crock pot when the circuit breaker went out, the cholent is still hot and the electricity, if restored, will stop other food from spoiling, as before, you may ask a *goy* to restore the electricity.

Opening Ices on *Shabbos*

QUESTION: Is one permitted to break open freeze pops or ices on *Shabbos*?

ANSWER: The main concern is to make sure that you don't tear any letters in the paper or plastic housing the freeze pop or ices. This might be very hard to avoid doing. However, one need not be concerned about creating a *kli* or vessel when breaking open these treats.

Trapping a Bee or Wasp on *Shabbos*

QUESTION: If I notice a bee or wasp flew into my home, can I close the window if that will cause the bee or wasp to be trapped in between the window and the screen?

ANSWER: The *Klal* is that if you have a little creature that can sting you and you are afraid that it will sting you, then you are allowed to capture it. The reason is because it is something that you really don't want to capture for any use or purpose. Indeed, you would like it to just go away and escape to the wilds of Australia. Therefore, you are allowed to trap it on *Shabbos*, but you should try to avoid trapping it directly.

Use of Electric Water Coolers on *Shabbos*

QUESTION: I have an electric water cooler. Is it a problem to use on *Shabbos*? If not, am I permitted to change the empty bottle?

ANSWER: A water cooler is like a refrigerator. In fact, it is a refrigerator. It contains a chamber with five,

six, seven or eight cups of water. You take a cup of water and another comes into it from the bottle. The temperature rises by a couple of degrees and after a while, a mechanism will trigger the thermostat to start the compressor, kicking in the cooling system again.

With a refrigerator, there are many people who are *machmir* not to open it in order to take something out (or return a food item) unless the motor is running. If the motor is running, you will not trigger the thermostat to turn it on.

It is possible that with a water cooler, there is less stringency involved than with regard to a regular refrigerator, because the hot air that comes in when you open a refrigerator, is going to result in the release from the refrigerator itself of a lot of cold air into the room, because it is a very large appliance. The release of the cold air from the refrigerator will result in the influx of warm air from the room into the refrigerator, which will surely trigger the compressor to start within a very short period of time.

The water cooler on the other hand is a closed system and only that one cup that you take will be replaced by another cup. Maybe five or six cups are required to trigger off the system. Regarding replacing an empty bottle of water into a water cooler on *Shabbos*, doing so would surely trigger the thermostat and compressor to initiate the cooling system and should not be done, if you are *machmir* about opening refrigerators when the motor is not running.

Repeating *Havdalah* for Little Children on Sunday Morning

QUESTION: I have small children who cannot stay up until the end of *Shabbos*. Do they have to make *Havdalah* on Sunday morning?

ANSWER: *Rabbosai*, you have to make *Havdalah* for little children. I'll tell you a very interesting *halachah*. If a little child did not hear *Havdalah*, but the parent was *yotzei Havdalah* in shul, the father could make *Havdalah* with a brocha and be *motzi* the little child. I have always made an effort to have my children listen to *Havdalah* (on *Motzoei Shabbos*). And if that was not possible, I would have the child recite *Havdalah* from a *siddur* the next morning. If the child is too young to make *Havdalah* the next morning, then he is not considered to have reached the age of *chinuch* (education in *mitzvos*) for *Havdalah* and can do without hearing it.

Use of One Sink for Both Milk and Meat

QUESTION: My kitchen in the bunagow has only one sink. In the past I used a separate rack in the sink for milk and a second rack for meat. Is there anything else I need to do since I wash my dishes with hot water?

ANSWER: Yes, there is absolutely something that you can and must do. Throw out the racks and get large dish pans (*shisselach*). *Rabbosai*, racks are not a good system. Whenever someone tries to use racks, there is cutlery (i.e. forks and knives) that slip through the holes in the racks. The bottom of the sink has a fine layer covering of *fleischig schmaltz* combined with cheese and cream, butter and who knows what else. It is almost impossible to control. There will be backups and the water will rise and maybe it will be a *keli sheni*. The backup will get all over the dishes and it will be an impossible situation for you to wash

off all the dishes. You shouldn't use racks. If you want to use a rack, put it under a dish pan. The stores have plenty of these plastic dish pans in every color or shape to fit your particular need.

***Yichud* Issues**

QUESTION: My husband goes shopping on Thursday night and oftentimes some neighbors want to go along. Sometimes it is just one woman. Is there a problem of *yichud*?

ANSWER: The answer is yes! It can become a *yichud* issue when you travel on a dark country road late at night that is not well-traveled. Again, even if it is something that is done once, it is a problem.

QUESTION: Sometimes I have to go to the City during the week and stay late at night. I would like a female counselor to stay overnight in the bungalow to watch over the children. What is the best thing to do to ensure that there will not be a problem with *yichud*?

ANSWER: If the female counselor is going to stay in the bungalow with a nine year-old boy, there is really no way to get away from the problem of *yichud*. If the child is seven or eight years old, young enough to not have an active *yetzer hora*, it might be permissible to have the counselor stay overnight to watch the children.

Am I Required to Help a Stranded Motorist?

QUESTION: If I see someone pulled over to the side of the road with car trouble, am I required to stop and help? Does it matter if I have my family with me and my stopping will inconvenience and make it harder for them? What if my wife is expecting me home?

ANSWER: This is a very serious question and you have to utilize a lot of judgment. To help someone and yet in the process cause a lot of *tsar* (hardship) and hurt others is not a simple thing to do. One must think very carefully and make a judgment. I was once driving up to the country and it was a very difficult ride. It was very hot outside and there was a major traffic jam just north of the City. There was a *Yid* who was stuck changing a tire on a very crowded spot on a little traffic island, surrounded by traffic on both sides. There was no place to park. I decided it would be better to drive on to the toll booths which was another five minutes away and inform them that there was a motorist stuck and that they should send an official vehicle to help him out. As I was driving, a *goy* pulled up to me and stated loudly, "You didn't stop to help your brother!"

***Ganeivas Da'as* – Telephone Operators**

QUESTION: Is it permitted for my son to call me from camp collect or person-to-person merely as a signal which I can refuse and then call him back?

ANSWER: I do remember when I was a *bochur* in yeshiva there was a boy who would call his parents person-to-person and ask to speak to a Mr. "Ven-kum-stu". His family would tell the operator that Mr.

Ven-kum-stu wasn't home but that he would be coming Monday morning. One time when this boy asked the operator to place a person-to-person phone call to a Mr. Ven-kum-stu, the operator, without hesitation, replied in Yiddish that Mr. Ven-kum-stu wouldn't be coming at all this week. Don't get used to scheming. Keep away from such things.

Can Returning Borrowed Eggs Become a *Ribis* Issue?

QUESTION: If I borrow large eggs from my friend, do I have to return *davkah*, large eggs? Will there be a *ribis* problem if I return extra large eggs which is what I use?

ANSWER: Hillel held that it is *assur* even to return one egg in this manner. *L'halacha*, it is not allowed for a larger amount, such as a dozen eggs, however, there are some *poskim* today who hold that if it would constitute a considerable *tircha* (effort) to get the same size egg that you borrowed, one is allowed to return an item that is slightly, but not significantly larger, than the item borrowed.

Removing *Yarmulkes* and *Tzitzis*

QUESTION: May my son take off his *yarmulke* when playing ball?

ANSWER: While one is playing ball or engaged in any sport, G-d forbid that he should remove his *yarmulke*, for this leads to lightheadedness and stems from a lightheaded attitude. One who fears that his *yarmulke* might fly off should attach it with bobby pins or the like.

QUESTION: May I take off my *tzitzis* when going to the pool?

ANSWER: A *ben Torah* should walk to and from the pool wearing *tzitzis* (and when playing ball). *Tzitzis* should not be the clothing which we show we are more lax in during the summer months.

If you are going in the swimming pool and take off your *tzitzis* for more than an hour's time, you must make a new *brocha* when putting them back on. When taking off the *tzitzis* for only a half-hour, no new *brocha* is needed. If the *tzitzis* are off from anywhere between a half-hour and an hour, you should not make a new *brocha* based on *sofek brochas l'hakel*.

Food-Related Items Under Bed

QUESTION My wife and children say that because of lack of space in their bungalow/bunk in camp, they would like to store snack foods, drinks and plastic eating utensils underneath the beds. Is this permissible?

ANSWER: One should not use the space to store food or drinks, but utensils may be kept there. If you mistakenly left food or drink there, you may use them.