



THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

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A continuation of the laws pertaining to *Amirah Le'akum*, instructing gentiles.

Is it permitted to have a gentile turn on the air conditioning on Shabbos?

Preferably, the air conditioning should be connected to a Shabbos clock, which would be timed to turn the unit on and off. The question becomes pertinent when there is no Shabbos clock as yet, or for some reason it did not work and the air conditioning was not turned on. The *Mechaber*¹ rules that in cold countries it is permitted to request a gentile to turn on the heating for children and during fierce cold weather it is even permitted to request a gentile to turn on the heating for adults. The reason for this *heter* is because the cold can make people sick and when illness is involved, one may even request a gentile to violate an *issur d'oraisso*.²

The question is: can we compare severe cold to severe heat?

In so far as much as becoming ill because of the severe heat, one can compare heat to cold, but if the heat will merely cause discomfort, we cannot compare the two. In other words, when the heat will distress a person so much so that one might become bedridden, or cause dehydration, or when it concerns old people or pregnant women who might be affected by the heat, one may request a gentile to turn on a fan or the air conditioning. When it will merely cause discomfort and weariness one may not request a gentile to turn on the air conditioning.

¹ *Simon* 276:5.

² A biblical violation.

What is the reason for this restriction?

Moreinu the *Chazon Ish* זצ"ל ruled that the completing an electric circuit involves an *issur d'oraisso* of *Boneh* (construction) and therefore turning on an air conditioning or fan involves an *issur d'oraisso*. The *halacha* is³ that one may only request a gentile to violate an *issur d'oraisso* in case of illness.⁴

Does it make a difference whether it is for personal use or in shul?

When the issue involves the public at large, such as in shul, a dining room etc. there might be more room for leniency, but a competent *halachic* authority must be asked as to the correct conduct in such an event.⁵

It happened that a gentile mistakenly removed the cholent from the stove on Friday night and turned off the gas. When it was realized that the food was for the morrow, the fire was subsequently relit and the food returned. May it be eaten?

The problem in this case is that the gentile had violated an *issur d'oraisso* for the sake of the Jew, besides the problem of *chazora* – returning food to the fire. The *Elya Raba*⁶ writes about a case where a gentile was about to improve the light emanating

³ *Simon* 328:17.

⁴ HaRav Yitzchak Yakov Weiss זצ"ל refers to this question in *ג' ס"י כג-כד* but he does not take the *Chazon Ish* into account.

⁵ This is in part based on the בעל העיטור mentioned in the *Rama* in *simon* 276:2. The problem is that the *M"B* 24 ruled that this opinion must not be relied upon, except in a case when the gentile is needed to repair the *eiruv*, where without him doing so many Jews will be carrying against the *halacha*.

⁶ Cited in the *Bi'ur Halacha* in *simon* 276:1 ד"ה לצרכו.

from a lamp (which in certain cases is a permitted action) and mistakenly extinguished the lamp. He subsequently relit it and the question was whether a Jew may benefit from this lamp. The *Ehya Raba* rules that one may benefit from this lamp because it is considered as if the gentile lit it for himself, in order to compensate for his mistake. The *halacha* is that when we know that a gentile turned on a light for his own benefit a Jew may benefit from that light as well.

Accordingly, when the gentile made the mistake of removing the food from the fire when he was not supposed to, we can consider the entire episode of him relighting the fire and returning the food as if he is doing it for his own benefit to repair his error and the food is permitted for consumption.

We must add that this case has a plus to it in the fact that the Jew would not have needed the gentile do the *issur* for him had he not made the mistake in the first place. ⁷

May one invite a gentile on Shabbos to partake of the Shabbos meal?

It is permitted to invite a gentile to partake of the Shabbos meal, ⁸ unlike Yom Tov, as we will see.

May one invite a gentile on Yom Tov to eat at the Yom Tov table?

There definitely is a serious problem in inviting a gentile, on Yom Tov, to partake of your Yom Tov meal, for the following reasons:

The *posuk* in (*Sh'mos* 12:17) states **אך אשר יאכל לכם** **לכל נפש הוא לבדו יעשה לכם**, which teaches us that one may cook on Yom Tov for the sake of Yom Tov. However, at the end of the *posuk* the word **לכם** – for you, the *gemora* explains, means that one may not cook or do any *melacha* for a gentile. This means that one may cook and roast chicken for a Jew on Yom Tov, but not for a gentile.

⁷ This would address the problem of a gentile doing a *melacha* for himself, which in certain cases does not permit the Jew to benefit from the *issur* when there is reason to believe that if the Jew benefits from the *melacha* the gentile will *l'chatchila* perform an *issur* on the next Shabbos for the Jew. See *simon* 325:11-12.

⁸ *Simon* 325:1.

What could be wrong, if for example the food is prepared in a single pot?

Chazal prohibited preparing food for a gentile on Yom Tov even though one is cooking it in the same pot without any extra effort. The question becomes more difficult when the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* ⁹ points out that the *halacha* states that one may fill a pot of water and boil it even though one only needs the amount of one cup and the remainder will be used after Yom Tov. ¹⁰ (One may not **say** that the excess is for after Yom Tov and it may only be filled in one occurrence). If so, why is it *ossur* to cook extra for a gentile even though there is no extra effort invested?

The answer is that when one invites a guest over to eat, one makes sure that there is ample food for one's household and for the newly arrived guest. *Chazal* were afraid that one would cook **extra** food for the guest in a separate cooking pot and thus violate the *issur* of cooking for a gentile. Therefore, even though one does not intend to cook in a separate pot for the gentile, there is reason for concern that it might lead thereto. ¹¹

Orchos Chaim LaRosh

ולא תהיה משמש על מנת לקבל פרס בעשותך יומם ולילה זכרו מפיד אל ימוש. בשכבך תשגה באהבתו, ובקומך ובהילוכך תמצאנו, והקיצות בו תשעשע, והוא יישר אורחותיך

Do not let *Hashem* out of your mind. When you lie down to sleep, concentrate on His love; when you are up and about, search for Him; when you arise 'toy' with Him, and it will straighten your ways.

The *Rosh* teaches us remembering *Hashem* and incorporating Him into our day will prevent us straying from the correct path. The idea is rather simple. We tend to make mistakes when we think momentarily that we are masters of our destiny, but if we would constantly think lovingly of *Hashem*, we would not have the audacity to do anything He does not wish us to do.

⁹ *Simon* 512:3.

¹⁰ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav simon* 503:4, *Mechaber* 503:2 and *M"V* 14-15.

¹¹ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav simon* 512:3.

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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.