



*Halachos of*  
**CHOL HAMOED**

# Halachos of CHOL HAMOED

Please note that the material presented is not meant to be a comprehensive guide to the halachos of Chol Hamoed.

In any case of question or doubt a Rabbi should be consulted.

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# Halachos of CHOL HAMOED

This months learning has been  
sponsored in loving memory of  
מרדכי בן יצחק  
פעגה בת אסתר

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# Day 1

Introduction : The mishnah in Pirkei Avos (3:11) emphasizes the tremendous care one must take to properly honor the *moadim* (holidays). The commentaries explain that the Mishna is referencing honoring *Chol Hamoed* in particular. Unfortunately, sometimes people have a tendency to treat *Chol Hamoed* as a mundane, regular day. It is towards this concern that the remarks of the mishnah are directed. The days of *Chol Hamoed* have special sanctity, and must be treated accordingly. With the help of Hashem, this month we will learn about many of the relevant *halachos* of *Chol Hamoed* which will serve to enhance and elevate our observance of these special days.

This month we will learn about:

- 1) actively honoring *Chol Hamoed*
- 2) doing melacho on *Chol Hamoed*
- 3) laundering on *Chol Hamoed*
- 4) making purchases on *Chol Hamoed*.



## Day 2

*Chol Hamoed* is not quite Yom Tov, yet it is also not a mundane weekday. Rather, *Chol Hamoed* possesses its own unique character. As such, there are specific *halachos* pertaining to how one honors *Chol Hamoed* and guards its sanctity. First we will discuss the active way in which one honors *Chol Hamoed*. This is fulfilled by dressing in special, non-weekday clothing and by eating special food. By doing so, one demonstrates that the days of *Chol Hamoed* possess sanctity and are of a different quality than mundane weekdays (to be continued).

מ"ב ס' תקל סק"א, פסקי תשובות ס' תקכט ס"ו



## Day 3

On *Chol Hamoed* one is not required to dress in Shabbos clothing. Nevertheless, one should wear a nicer outfit than they would wear on a typical weekday. Many have the practice to wear Shabbos clothing on *Chol Hamoed*.

מ"ב ס' תקל סק"א, שעה"צ סק"ד, חיי"א ס' קו ס"א



## Day 4

It was previously mentioned that there is an obligation to honor *Chol Hamoed* by eating meals that are more special than regular weekday meals. During *Chol Hamoed*, it is a mitzvah to eat one bread meal a day and one bread meal at night; however, it is not obligatory to do so.

מ"ב ס' תקל סק"א



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# Day 5

A woman who forgot to insert **יעלה ויבוא** in *bentching* on *Chol Hamoed* or on Yom Tov does not repeat *bentching*.

שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ד ס' יח



## Day 6

On *Chol Hamoed* one does not greet a friend with a regular mundane weekday greeting, such as "good afternoon" or the like. Rather, one greets their friend in a manner which acknowledges the nature of the day, and says "*moadim l'simcha*" or "*gut moed.*"

שש"כ פס"ו ס"א



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# Day 7

As mentioned, *Chol Hamoed* is not quite Yom Tov, yet it is also not a mundane weekday. The unique days of *Chol Hamoed* are governed by a unique set of *halachos*. Thus far, we have learned about the appropriate manner to actively honor *Chol Hamoed*. Now we will move on to discuss doing *melacho* on *Chol Hamoed*. Many people are under the impression that during the days of *Chol Hamoed*, all *melacho* is permitted. This is incorrect. As we will learn, there are many instances in which doing *melacho* on *Chol Hamoed* is prohibited. Some say that in these instances the prohibition of *melacho* is *m'derabanon*, while others maintain that it is *m'deoraysa*. Broadly speaking, there are five categories of *melacho* that are **permissible** on *Chol Hamoed*. They are:

- 1) *Melacho* done for food preparation
- 2) *Melacho* done to prevent a loss (known as *davar ha'aveid*)
- 3) *Melacho* done in an unskilled, amateur manner (known as *ma'ase hedyot*)
- 4) *Melacho* done for the needs of the public
- 5) *Melacho* done by a worker who does not have what to eat

The parameters of the first three categories will be discussed below.

שׁוֹׁעַ ס' תְּקַל ס"א, מ"ב סק"א



## Day 8

It is permitted to do *melacho* on *Chol Hamoed* to prepare food for the *moed* (i.e. *Chol Hamoed* or Yom Tov). The food may be prepared in the regular manner and one need not employ a *shinui* in its preparation. Additionally, one may even expend great effort in preparing the food.

מ"ב ס' תקלג סקו"א



# Day 9

One may not do a *melacho* on *Chol Hamoed* to prepare food for after the *moed*. To illustrate: Sukkos ends on Wednesday, and Sarah anticipates having guests for supper on Thursday night. On Sunday of *Chol Hamoed*, Sarah may not cook a soup for the Thursday night meal because this is food preparation for after the *moed*. However, one who is preparing food to be consumed on the *moed* may prepare it in a generous manner and use the excess food after the *moed*. This is provided that preparing the excess food does not require great exertion. Therefore, if Sarah is cooking soup for the last two days of Yom Tov, she is permitted to prepare a generous amount and use the excess for her meal on Thursday night (to be continued).

שו"ע ס' תקלג ס"א



# Day 10

One may prepare food on *Chol Hamoed* for Shabbos which falls out immediately after the conclusion of the *moed* (i.e. in *chutz laaretz*, when Shabbos is the final day of three-day Yom Tov).

שש"כ פס"ו ס"ו



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# Day 11

Any *melacho* that is necessary to perform in order to enable food preparation is permitted on *Chol Hamoed*. For example, one may run the dishwasher on *Chol Hamoed* despite the fact that this is not direct preparation of food. Since it is needed in order to facilitate eating on the *moed*, it is permitted. Similarly, one may repair a broken kitchen appliance on *Chol Hamoed* because it will enable future food preparation for the *moed* (to be continued).

שו"ע ס' תק"מ ס"ז, שש"כ פס"ו סי"ד



## Day 12

It was previously mentioned that it is permitted to repair a broken kitchen appliance on *Chol Hamoed* to facilitate subsequent food preparation for the *moed*. One may even pay a worker to perform the repair. When possible, one should have a non-Jew perform the repair (to be continued).

בה"ל ס' תקמב ד"ה אפילו



# Day 13

It has been discussed that *melacho* is permitted on *Chol Hamoed* for both a) direct food preparation (i.e. cooking) and b) to enable food preparation (i.e. repairing a broken kitchen appliance).

However, it is important to note that there is a significant distinction between the two cases.

*Melacho* directly involved in food preparation may be deliberately scheduled to be performed on *Chol Hamoed*; one does not need to prepare all of their food prior to the *moed*. However, *melacho* that merely enables food preparation may not be deliberately scheduled to be done on *Chol Hamoed* if it can be done before the *moed*. Thus, if one's oven broke before the *moed*, one should have it fixed then and may not deliberately plan to have it repaired on *Chol Hamoed*. If the repair was deliberately postponed for *Chol Hamoed*, it is prohibited to be performed.

מ"ב ס' תקלז סקט"ו, שש"כ פס"ו סי"ז, הל' חוה"מ  
זכרון שלמה ע' 55



## Day 14

We have seen that *melacho* is permitted on *Chol Hamoed* to prepare food. In a similar vein, *melacho* is generally permitted on *Chol Hamoed* to provide for one's personal physical needs. Therefore, one may use hot water on *Chol Hamoed* to shower, brush teeth, and apply makeup (to be continued).

שו"ע ס' תקמו ס"ה, בה"ל ד"ה כל



# Day 15

It was previously mentioned that *melacho* performed for physical wellbeing is permitted on *Chol Hamoed*. Here are a few practical illustrations of this halacha:

- a) Sarah's glasses broke on the first day of *Chol Hamoed*. Because fixing her glasses will enhance Sarah's eyesight, she may take them in for repair on *Chol Hamoed*, despite the fact that *melacho* will be done to fix them.
- b) Rivkah has a toothache on *Chol Hamoed*. She may see a dentist because this will relieve her pain.
- c) The toilet in the Cohen family's house is broken. It may be repaired on *Chol Hamoed* since its usage is essential to their physical wellbeing.

שש"כ פס"ו הערה פ"ח, הל' חוה"מ זכרון שלמה ע' 37



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# Day 16

An amateur is permitted to touch up their own *shaitel* on *Chol Hamoed*. However, one should not take their *shaitel* in to be professionally done on *Chol Hamoed*.

שש"כ פס"ו סל"ב



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## Day 17

It was previously discussed that *melacho* may be performed for physical wellbeing on *Chol Hamoed*. An exception to this rule is getting a haircut or shaving any part of the body.

Why? It is a mitzvah to get a haircut in anticipation of a *moed*, and Chazal were concerned that one may push off getting a haircut until *Chol Hamoed* when they have more time and will thus come into the *moed* in an unbecoming manner. Therefore, in order to prevent this from happening, Chazal prohibited getting a haircut on *Chol Hamoed*.

שו"ע ס' תקלא ס"ב, מ"ב סק"ג



## Day 18

For Sephardim, nail-cutting is permitted on *Chol Hamoed*. Among Ashkenazim, the *minhag* is not to cut one's nails on *Chol Hamoed*. There are three scenarios in which Ashkenazim do permit nail-cutting on *Chol Hamoed*:

- a) One who cuts their nails on erev Yom Tov may cut them on *Chol Hamoed*.
- b) One who always cuts their nails on erev Shabbos may do so on erev Shabbos *Chol Hamoed*. Additionally, one who always cuts their nails on erev Yom Tov may cut their nails on erev Yom Tov of the second days.
- c) One who is cutting them because the *halacha* requires them to do so may cut them on *Chol Hamoed*.

רמ"א ס' סקלב, מ"ב סק"ב, שש"כ פס"ו סקל"ג



## Day 19

Thus far, we have learned that *melacho* may be done on *Chol Hamoed* for food preparation and for personal well-being. Additionally, *melacho* may be performed on *Chol Hamoed* even if it does not fall under one of the two aforementioned categories, provided that it meets the following three criteria: a) it is being done for a *moed* need, b) it is being done in an unskilled, amateur manner, and c) the *melacho* was not intentionally postponed to be done on *Chol Hamoed*. The details of these criteria will be expounded upon below.

מ"ב ס' תקנ"ס סק"ט



## Day 20

It was previously mentioned that *melacho* may be performed on *Chol Hamoed* for the sake of a *moed* need, in an unskilled manner. To illustrate: mowing the lawn is prohibited on *Chol Hamoed* because it does not constitute a *moed* need. Conversely, one may assemble a bed or a crib for guests because this is a legitimate *moed* need. Enjoyment on *Chol Hamoed* is considered a legitimate *moed* need, and as such one may perform *melacho* to enhance their enjoyment of the *moed*. Oftentimes, *Chol Hamoed* trips involve multiple acts of *melacho*. This is permitted because enjoyment of the *moed* is a legitimate *moed* need.

שו"ע ס' תקמ"ז סי"ב, שו"ע ס' תקלו ס"א,  
הל' חוה"מ זכרון שלמה פ"ג



# Day 21

Writing is one of the thirty-nine *melachos* and is therefore subject to the aforementioned limitations on *Chol Hamoed*. Calligraphy is considered “skilled writing” and is generally prohibited on *Chol Hamoed*, but regular cursive and print writing are permitted on *Chol Hamoed* when done for a *moed* need. Thus, it is permitted to write a shopping list on *Chol Hamoed* or to write out a check. In these scenarios, *melachos* is being done for a *moed* need. Additionally, it was mentioned above that enjoyment of the *moed* is considered a legitimate *moed* need. Therefore, coloring and drawing etc. are permitted on *Chol Hamoed* because they provide *moed* enjoyment. However, an artist may not draw on *Chol Hamoed* because their drawing is a skilled *melachos*.

שו"ע ס' תקמה ס"ע, הל' חוה"מ זכרון שלמה ע' 85



## Day 22

Thus far, we have learned about the propriety of doing *melacho* on *Chol Hamoed*. We will now move on to discuss the *halachos* of laundering on *Chol Hamoed*. Generally speaking, all laundering is prohibited on *Chol Hamoed*. This includes laundering clothing, towels, linens, tablecloths, etc. One may not even ask a non-Jew to perform laundry on their behalf (i.e. asking cleaning help to do a load of laundry, giving dirty clothing to the cleaners). Drying wet clothing in a dryer is permitted on *Chol Hamoed*. Additionally, ironing clothing one intends to wear during the *moed* is permitted, but making new folds or pleats is prohibited (to be continued).

שו"ע ס' תקלד ס"א, ס' תקמא ס"ג,  
הל' חוה"מ זכרון שלמה ע' 48



## Day 23

It was previously mentioned that laundering is generally prohibited on *Chol Hamoed*. An exception to this rule is if one ran out of clean clothing for young children on *Chol Hamoed*. In such an instance, one may launder whatever will be needed for the child for the duration of the *moed*. Another exception to this rule is women's support hose and nursing-wear. These items may be laundered on *Chol Hamoed* if one does not have a sufficient quantity for the whole *moed*.

שו"ע ס' תקלד ס"א, הל' חוה"מ זכרון שלמה ע' 47



# Day 24

A garment that became dirty and may possibly become permanently damaged if left unwashed may be cleaned on *Chol Hamoed*.

הל' חוה"מ זכרון שלמה ע' 48



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# Day 25

Mopping and vacuuming is permitted on *Chol Hamoed*.

שש"כ פס"ו סמ"ז



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# Day 26

We will now discuss the special leniency of doing *melacho* on *Chol Hamoed* in order to prevent a loss, known as *davar ha'aveid*. It is permitted to do *melacho* (in its regular manner) on *Chol Hamoed* in order to prevent a loss. Even if one merely suspects the possibility of suffering a loss, they may perform *melacho* to ensure that it will not happen. For example, one who has plants that require regular watering may water them as needed on *Chol Hamoed* if there is concern that without water, they will die. However, in the event that one must exert themselves excessively to prevent the loss, *melacho* is prohibited (to be continued).

שו"ע ס' תקלז ס"א, שש"כ פס"ו סי"ד



## Day 27

It was previously mentioned that one may do *melacho* on *Chol Hamoed* in order to prevent a potential loss. Thus, it is permitted to pay a bill on *Chol Hamoed* if delaying the payment will possibly cause a loss. If postponing the payment until after *Chol Hamoed* will certainly not result in a loss, the bill may not be paid on *Chol Hamoed*.

שש"כ פס"ז סי"א



## Day 28

Let us now turn our attention to the propriety of making purchases on *Chol Hamoed*. Purchasing items on *Chol Hamoed* is typically permitted only if the items are needed for the *moed*. Thus, one may not go grocery shopping on *Chol Hamoed* and buy food that is not intended for the *moed*. When buying something for the *moed*, one need not be exact in purchasing the precise quantity needed for the *moed*. For example, one may buy a case of water bottles on *Chol Hamoed* if they need some water, even if they will not use up the entire case during the *moed*.

שו"ע ס' תקלט ס"א, שש"כ פס"ז סכ"ז



## Day 29

Although purchasing items not needed for the *moed* is typically prohibited on *Chol Hamoed*, nonetheless, one who encounters an unusual sale on *Chol Hamoed* may make a purchase. The money one can save by purchasing the item on sale is considered *davar ha'aved*, and as such, the purchase is permitted. Included in this is one who is in a different city on *Chol Hamoed* and is presented with a unique buying opportunity that they would not usually have.

שו"ע ס' תקלט ס"ט מ"ב סקכ"ט, שש"כ פס"ז סכ"ג



# Day 30

It has been discussed previously that purchasing items not needed on the *moed* is prohibited on *Chol Hamoed*. Ordering items online is considered purchasing and is therefore prohibited on *Chol Hamoed*, even if the items will not be delivered until after the *moed* is over. Conversely, one may order items prior to the *moed* even if they will arrive at one's home on Chol Hamoed.

בה"ל ס' תקלט ס"א ד"ה בפרעון



# *Halachos of* CHOL HAMOED



Mazel Tov  
on completing a month  
of Halacha Yomi!