

HALOCHOSCOPE

This week's question:

May one 'ride' roller-blades or skates on *Shabbos*? To analyze the issues, we will recap an old issue of Halochoscope (XIII:42) on riding a bicycle inside an *eruv* bound area. The primary issue in this case is the manner of 'walking', which will be dealt with first.

The issues:

A) *Maiasos derachecha*, walking differently on *Shabbos*

B) *Hotza'ah*, carrying issues

A) *Shema yaavirenu, shema yesaken, shema yaitzai*, decrees to prevent *chilul Shabbos*

B) *Shaboson; uvdin dechol; zilusa*, non-*Shabbos* activity

A) *Maiasos derachecha*

The *Navi* lists activities restricted on *Shabbos* due to their mundane nature, including “*vechibadeto maiasos derachecha*”. Literally translated, this means to honor *Shabbos* by refraining from 'doing your own ways' – a reference to refraining from business preoccupations. *Derachecha* is interpreted as a restriction on walking on *Shabbos* in the ways that one walks during the weekdays. One should not hurry about on *Shabbos*, but should walk at a leisurely pace. Usually, on a weekday one hurries to take care of his business. Some derive the same thing from the language at the beginning of the statement of the *Navi*: “*im tashiv mishabbos raglecha*”, if you hold back from *Shabbos* your foot.

The actual restriction is to take long strides. The prohibition is either viewed as a Rabbinical ordinance to enhance *Shabbos*, or as a Prophetic *mitzvah*, that is quasi-Scriptural. The language used by the poskim is to restrict running. The general definition of running is that part of the time both feet are in the air. Walking means that one foot is on the ground at all times. The Talmud discusses what one should do if he must cross a large puddle or stream. Should he take the long way around it, take small steps through it, take a long stretched out step, or may he leap? The first view is that as long as he can place his foot on the ground on the other side before lifting his foot on this side, he may step over it. Some maintain that this is how he must cross it. Otherwise, he must go around it. Others maintain that as long as he could do it this way, he may cross it with a leap as well, if he so wishes. The second view asks: What if the puddle is wider! One may not wade through the puddle, because he will wet his clothing, and might come to wring them out. This is a *melacha* of *sechita*, wringing, a sub-category of laundering. Since the alternative is to take a long way around, one should not be compelled to exert himself so much on *Shabbos*. Thus, even if one cannot cross with one foot on the ground, he may leap. The point of the *Navi* is to reduce the total exertion. The poskim debate whether leaping is permitted. Some maintain that it is only permitted across a puddle.

The entire issue is exerting oneself on *Shabbos*. Therefore, for the sake of a *mitz-*

vah, it is permitted to run and jump, such as to run to a *shiur*. It is also permitted if it is enjoyable. Therefore, young people who have fun running and jumping may do so. Doing it for exercise is forbidden. This could also be included in the general restrictions against medicine. However, if one has fun doing exercise, this could be permissible.

In our case, the person roller-blading usually does it for fun. In addition, one could debate whether this is a form of non-*Shabbos* type walking. It is not the usual manner that one rushes to his business. It does not show a preoccupation with one's non-*Shabbos* affairs. On the other hand, it clearly involves taking longer strides, due to the rollers. On the other hand, by its very nature, one needs to keep one skate on the ground, and much of the time, both skates are on the ground. It does involve faster movement. The question is whether it is the fast motion of the body that should be restricted, or the exerting of the legs and feet that is too mundane. While we might not be able to answer this part of the question, the fact remains that the person skating does so for fun. Therefore, from the perspective of *maiasos derachecha* it should pose no problem. [See *Shabbos* 113a-b, *Poskim*. *Tur Sh Ar OC* 301:1-4, commentaries.]

B) Hotza'ah

In regard to cycling, the first issue is *hotza'ah*, carrying. It is Scripturally forbidden to transport an object between *reshuyos*, domains that the Torah considers public and private. Rabbinically a semi-public domain is also treated stringently, and considered both public and private to forbid carrying into, out of or within it. Between private domains one may transport an item when an *eruv* is made. This way, the entire domain is nominally considered a single area.

Clothing or jewelry, when worn normally, is not considered a burden. Therefore, it is not considered carrying on *Shabbos* or *Yomtov*. For some people, an item might be considered clothing, while for others it would be considered carrying. Amputees wear a prosthetic foot as though it is a shoe. They might have a device like a crutch, somewhat attached to their hands, if they cannot walk without it. A cane can often be included in this category. For a healthy person, carrying a cane is a Scriptural violation.

The Talmud discusses carrying a live person as opposed to a dead body. 'The living carry themselves.' Therefore, it is not forbidden Scripturally to carry a living person in a *reshus harabim*. [This does not apply to a baby unable to walk.] Rabbinically, it is forbidden, even in a *karmelis*. However, such a doubly Rabbinical restriction can be relaxed for the needs of the public or of a *mitzvah*. When carrying a person this way, the chair or bed on which he sits or lies is considered secondary to him. Therefore, whatever restrictions or relaxations apply to the person, are extended to the chair or bed.

Accordingly, one may not carry a person in a chair, whether or not it has wheels. Pushing a baby in a carriage is forbidden Scripturally. Pushing an older person who is able to walk is forbidden Rabbinically. What about a person propelling himself in a wheelchair or on a bicycle? A living person may not intentionally carry himself unaided. Perhaps the rider is not carrying himself, but moving along. If he is able to move without it, the vehicle is not an extension of his feet. He would then be considered carrying it.

Interesting observations are made. A bike is propelled by feet pushing pedals. This unusual way to carry might reduce the gravity of the *melacha* to a Rabbinical decree.

Nonetheless, this is the normal way to 'carry' this item. A second interesting observation is that for certain *melachos* indirect action is permitted. Some actions are doubly indirect, and some are triply indirect. In the case of the pedals, the action by the foot is on a pedal, that in turn pushes a lever, that in turn rotates the wheel. This type of indirect action might also mitigate the *melacha* of carrying. However, many poskim maintain that riding a bike in a *reshus harabim* is a *melacha*, and forbidden Rabbinically in a *karmelis*, or on city streets with no *eruv*. Some raise the concern that on tough terrain one might get off and carry his bike. Our question is whether there is any issue on streets within an *eruv*, or for that matter, in any *reshus hayachid*. [See Shabbos 2a-6a-9a 96b 99b-101a Eruvin 6a 59a 97b-101a, Poskim. Tur Sh Ar OC 345-347 349:1 5, commentaries. Halochoscope XII:41. Rav Pe'alim OC 25. Tzitz Eliezer VII:30.]

Wheels are integral to a skate, which is worn like a shoe. The Talmud forbids wearing an over-sized shoe. It might fall off and one will carry it. One may not wear a single shoe. If people laugh, he will remove it and carry it due to embarrassment. We may assume that there is no real concern that one will remove his skates in the street and carry them. [See Shabbos 60a 61a 141b, Poskim. Tur Sh Ar OC 301:7, commentaries.]

C) *Shema yaavirenu; shema yesaken; shema yaitzai*

The Rabbis forbade certain activities due to concern that one might carry. The best known are the restrictions on the *mitzvos* of *shofar* or *lulav* when the *Yomtov* falls on *Shabbos*. There is concern that if one is involved in the *mitzvah*, he might walk out into a *reshus harabim* with the item, or that he might walk four cubits in a *reshus harabim* with the item in his hands. Some suggest that the same decree could apply to other items that could lead to the same. Items used indoors do not raise this concern. A bicycle is used outdoors in the street. If one is permitted to ride it on a street inside the *eruv*, he might come to ride it out of the *eruv*. This does not seem to arise with regard to skates.

It is forbidden to repair a broken utensil. This includes minor repairs that would not normally be considered real changes to the utensil. If the utensil is unusable before the repair, it is forbidden to repair it. For this reason, one may not play an instrument. Tuning it is a minor repair that the user might make, forgetting that it is *Shabbos*. Pumping air into a bike tire or tightening a screw or wheel is also forbidden. Therefore, some say that one should not be allowed to ride a bicycle, lest he is tempted to make these repairs. Skate wheels do not have air, and one does not make minor repairs to them.

On *Shabbos*, one may not venture outside the *techum*, boundary of two thousand cubits outside the built-up area, or from one's home if he lives in the country. Various activities are forbidden as a preventive measure to avoid going outside the *techum*. These include going to the edge of the *techum* for certain purposes, and riding in a wagon driven by gentiles. [That is forbidden for a variety of reasons, this being one of them.] Some suggest that riding a bicycle should be forbidden based on these considerations as well. [See OC 304:18 305 306 307 404:1, Kaf Hachaim 8. etc. refs to section A.] Skates are used like shoes, for short walks. They do not raise the same concern as bicycles do.

D) *Shabboson; uvdin dechol; zilusa deshabbos*

Apart from the restrictions on *melacha*, *Shabbos* is also a day of rest from strenuous activity. Many poskim consider this a Scriptural requirement based on the word *sha-*

bosson, literally translated as cessation of activities. Some say that being jolted around is a violation of *Shabboson*. Accordingly, they forbid riding a train, even if other issues are mitigated, because it causes one to be jolted around. Based on this, some say that one may not ride a bicycle, since the roads are likely to cause jolting.

Certain activities are totally permissible, but are forbidden by the Rabbis because they can cause one to forget that it is *Shabbos*. These are known as *uvdin dechol*, activities of weekdays. It is difficult to determine what is included in this. We rely on the particular instances cited by the poskim. Some poskim suggest that riding a bike could be included in this category. Some say that it is inconceivable that this should not be included in it. A possible reason to include it is that one usually rides a bike further distances than he walks. Therefore, it implies an activity associated with a workday.

Zilusa deshabbos, cheapening of *Shabbos*, is a group of restrictions connected to the *mitzvah* to honor *Shabbos*. This is a larger group of activities, and there is more leeway to include things that arise based on cultural changes. This is actually the basis of the debate about bike riding. The Talmud discusses the permissibility of carrying a Torah scholar or elderly person on a sedan chair or post-chaise, carried by two or more people. The Talmud's reference is to *Yomtov*. *Shabbos* is mentioned as well. However, that might be a reference to indoor carrying, similar to what is done for a *choson* at his wedding. The Talmud permits the sedan only under certain conditions. The issue, according to the commentaries, is *zilusa deyomtov*. In ruling, some poskim cite the ruling in connection with *Yomtov* only, omitting it on *Shabbos*. Others include it in the laws of *Shabbos*. Based on how the later poskim debate the reasons for this, the poskim discuss riding a bicycle, even when it could not involve the actual *melacha* of carrying. [See Beitza 25b, poskim. Tur Sh Ar OC 301:17 522:2-3, commentaries. Shmiras Shabbos Kehilchasa 15:13^{note} 25. Teshuvos Chasam Sofer VI:97, end. Rav Pealim OC 25. Tzitz Eliezer VII:30.]

We have mentioned that riding skates is done for fun. One would not usually ride them to a destination. Doing so would require having shoes to change into on arrival. Riding a bicycle can be fun, but it is also a regular means of transportation. It would appear that the concern raised by the poskim of *zilusa* would not apply to skates.

In conclusion, the concerns are all particular to bicycles, except, possibly, jolting. Accordingly, skates would be permitted on *Shabbos* when worn for fun.

On the parsha your consecrated animals .. you shall carry [them] and you shall come to [the Bais Hamikdash] .. [12:26] Why does the Torah say 'you shall carry them and you shall come? It could tell us to carry them to the *Bais Hamikdash*! Or it could say that we should eat them before Hashem, as is says with regard to *maaser shaini*! Although the animals are being carried, they are living. The Rabbis debate whether 'a living being carries itself' applies to animals [see *Shabbos 94a*]. The Torah allows both interpretations here. You shall carry, and you shall come. It could be considered carrying, but not necessarily.

<p>Sponsored in the <i>zechus</i> of a speedy <i>refuah shelaimah</i> for Menacham Manale ben Rochel Devorah and for Yosef Yitzchok ben Yehudis Chaya besoch <i>shear cholei Yisroel</i>.</p>
--

© Rabbi Shimon Silver, August 2014.

Subscriptions and Sponsorships available. (412) 421-0508. halochoscope@hotmail.com