



B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

Shabbat Shorts

[With hearts filled with concern and *tefillot* this morning, for Israel and the IDF, a little Torah study in their merit.]

One final coffee installment! Can a [French press](#) be used on Shabbat? In short, the answer is "no". Ah, why devote a Shabbat Short to it? Because on Yom Tov, the answer is "yes". So here we go:

The Halachic issue raised by a French press is *borer*, that of "separating the undesired from the desired" (in this case, the now-soggy grounds from the coffee you want to drink). *Borer* is a member of the *melacha* family that includes threshing and winnowing, which are methods of separating wheat from chaff. On Shabbat, it is permissible to "separate" only under very specific conditions, namely when you are separating the "desired" from amidst the "undesired" (and not vice versa), *and* when you are doing the separating without using an implement specifically designed for that purpose. For example, on Shabbat it is *permissible* to remove the good grapes from among the not-good ones (and not vice versa), as long as you do so by hand. This is *not* how a French press separates grounds from the coffee though. When we use a French press we are:

- Plunging the undesired grounds down and out of the (desired) coffee
- And we are doing so with an implement specifically designed for that function

Clearly then, it cannot be used on Shabbat.

On Yom Tov though, when the Halacha specifically encourages us to prepare fresh and tasty food for the day, the laws of *borer* are more relaxed whenever doing *borer* **on** Yom Tov will result in a higher quality result than if the separating had been done **before** Yom Tov (which is certainly the case with coffee!) Here are these more relaxed Yom Tov *borer* rules:

- When possible, we keep to the Shabbat standards, as outlined above.
- **However**, when it is easier (less work, less fuss and muss) to remove the *undesired* from the desired, then that is what should be done.
- **Furthermore**, it is permissible to use even a specifically designed "separating" implement when this implement produces only enough for that day's use, and is never used to produce quantities for storage purposes.

In the French press situation, the only feasible possibility is to remove the grounds from the coffee (and not the other way around), and the French press

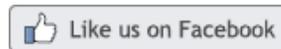
in never used to produce coffee for more than just that day. So on Yom Tov, we're good!

I hope you enjoyed this little series, and found it both useful and educational.

I love feedback!
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