The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן שכ"א סעיף י"ב

Overview

Siman 321 Seif 12:

One who finely cuts a vegetable is liable for grinding. It is also prohibited to cut figs and carob for the elderly. The restriction applies to fruit and the like but it is permitted to make crumbs out of bread and place it before chickens since it was already ground and the principle אין טוחן אחר טוחן applies. The restriction applies when one grinds the food to set aside for later but if one will eat it immediately, any type of cutting is permitted similar to the selecting that is permitted when one intends to eat it immediately as mentioned above in *siman* 319.

- The implication is that grinding applies even to vegetables that could be eaten raw. (M.B. 38)
- We do not follow the majority that would consider these foods edible as is because we are discussing foods that grew from the ground and they must be treated more stringently. (M.B. 39)
- This is permitted even if they will not be eaten until later. (M.B. 40)
- Accordingly, it is forbidden to finely cut potatoes or vegetables for animals unless the animals will immediately eat them. Even still it is preferable to cut slightly larger pieces. (M.B. 41)
- It is also permitted for one to finely cut food for someone else who will eat it immediately. (M.B. 43)
- Bais Yosef writes that even one who will eat the vegetable immediately should not cut small pieces, rather they should be cut slightly larger than what is normally considered small. Later authorities cite Bais Yosef's position but there is no reason to protest against those who cut onions or radish finely. If one finely cuts vegetables an hour or two before the meal he may have violated the Biblical prohibition and the vegetable is prohibited for consumption. Biur Halacha asserts that the allowance to cut finely is when one cuts with a knife but it is prohibited to use a knife designated for this purpose. Cutting wood or clods of earth into fine particles is Biblically prohibited as טוחן. Similarly, one who saws wood or files metal for the shavings is liable when he produces any quantity of shavings. If one cut wood into small pieces in a size that could be used to cook a fig's volume of egg is liable. If he cuts large pieces into a particular size he has violated the prohibition against מחתך. (M.B. 45)

Halacha Highlight

Grinding a banana

Shulchan Aruch Siman 321 Seif 12

המחתך הירק דק דק

One who cuts a vegetable into very fine pieces

Shulchan Aruch rules that cutting a vegetable into very fine pieces violates the prohibition against grinding – טוחן. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק ל"ח) notes that since Shulchan Aruch does not draw any distinctions it would seem that the prohibition of grinding applies even to foods that could be eaten raw. *Poskim* debate whether the prohibition against grinding applies to all foods or only those foods that are ground into small pieces. Chazon Ish (או"ח סי' נ"ז ד"ב ולענין) writes that it is prohibited to grind a banana. Even though as one grinds the banana it remains a clump so that one does not see small pieces of banana, it is prohibited. His reasoning is that regarding the prohibition against grinding we do not find a distinction between dry foods that become small pieces when ground and moist foods that became a clump as they are ground. As proof to his position he cites Rema who rules that it is prohibited to finely cut figs for the elderly even though the pieces of fig will clump together. Shevet HaLevi (ח"ז סי' צ"ב ה"ה) finds support for this position from Yerushalmi that prohibits grinding garlic even though it is known that when grinding garlic it becomes a thick clump rather than small pieces.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (אג"מ או"ח סי' ע"ד טוחן אות ב') disagreed and wrote that the prohibition against grinding is limited to grinding a food that will become small pieces. Therefore, the prohibition against grinding does not apply to bananas since as they are ground they form a large clump. He further explains that there is a difference between ground figs and a ground banana. When figs are ground they do become small pieces; it is just that the pieces attach to one another as a result of their moisture. When a banana is ground it remains a single clump and it is not small pieces that are merely attached as a result of moisture. However, he concludes that one should adopt a stringent position in accordance with Chazon Ish and grind a banana with the handle of a fork rather than its tines but if that is not possible one may grind it in the normal manner immediately before eating.