



## Overview

## Halacha Highlight

### Medicines that contain *chometz*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 442 Seif 4

דבר שנתערב בו חמץ ואינו מאכל אדם כלל וכו'

**A mixture that contains *chometz* but is not considered a food by anyone etc.**

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ד') writes that although one may retain possession of a mixture that contains *chometz* that is not a food at all or at least most people do not treat it as a food, nevertheless, one may not eat that mixture until after Pesach. An example of this is תריאק"ה, which was a medicine that contained *chometz* and healthy people would not eat it because it had a foul taste. The reason it may not be consumed is that once a person decides to eat it he elevates it into the category of food and once it is considered food it is prohibited because of the presence of the *chometz* in the mixture.

Poskim write that nowadays even medications that contain *chometz* but have medicine in them that makes it inedible may be consumed on Pesach and the principle that consuming them elevates them into the status of food does not apply (עי' פסקי תשובות אות ה'). The reason that principle does not apply is that the intent is for the medicinal part of the medication and not the *chometz* that is mixed in. All the more so is this true when the *chometz* is added to serve as a binder. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (שש"י פרק מי העי קס"ג) was of the opinion that even if the manufacturer coats the medication with something to improve its taste while it is one's mouth it is still permitted. His rationale is that despite the good tasting coating, the patient's intent is for the medication and consequently the principle that eating it elevates into the status of a food does not apply. There are those (עי' פסקי תשובות אות ה' והע' 24) who adopt a stringent approach to this and write that when available one should put in the effort to obtain a medication that does not have *chometz* rather than use a medication that contains *chometz* even though it is permitted. It must be emphasized that this stringency is limited to those whose lives are not in danger from their illness but one whose life is in danger may take medication containing *chometz* without having to invest extra effort to obtain medication that is *chometz* free.

"The Chazon Ish explicitly discusses tablets which have flour mixed in. If they have no water added to them, even if they do contain fruit juice, it is permitted to take them on Pesach. If they have water mixed in, they are *chometz nokshah* which is prohibited even if it is only fitting to be eaten by a sick person, as we find Orach Chaim 242:4. Now if the medicine is so dry that it is not fitting to be eaten at all, it is permitted. But if the mixture includes both water and fruit juice which we hold becomes *chometz* very quickly, it is very difficult to determine the exact shiur when they are permitted or not.

He concluded, "In the final analysis, if the medicine is mixed with very harsh elements and is definitely inedible for humans, it is permitted, since the flour cannot be separated from the remedy and the person taking it only wants the medicine, not the binding agent which is *chometz*."

חז"א, אורי"ח, קט"ז, ס"ק ג', די"ה לר"מ

### Siman 442 Seif 4:

Although one may possess a mixture that contains *chometz* if it is not a food or is not considered a food for most people, e.g. תריאק"ה or something similar, it is prohibited to eat that mixture until after Pesach. Even if there is only a minute quantity of *chometz* in the mixture it is prohibited for consumption. In Rema siman 447:4 a lenient opinion is recorded that permits the mixture for consumption if the *chometz* was nullified before Pesach and we follow that lenient opinion.

- ❖ The *chometz* that was in the mixture reawakens when Pesach arrives. (M.B. 18)
- ❖ Shulchan Aruch refers to regular *chometz* since according to many authorities if it was חמץ נוקשה it would be permitted for consumption even on Pesach. (M.B. 19)
- ❖ Even if something is inedible if one eats it he elevates it to the status of food. (M.B. 21)
- ❖ Rema maintains that once it was nullified before Pesach it does not reawaken on Pesach. The statement of Rema that we follow this opinion is surprising since he writes there that it is only true regarding "liquid" mixtures and not regarding mixtures of "solids." (M.B. 23)

### Siman 442 Seif 5:

**Beer made from wheat and barley must be destroyed before Pesach. Similarly, if one made cheese from vinegar made from wheat or barley beer it must be destroyed before Pesach.**

- ❖ One violates ימצא ובל יראה for this beer and will also be subject to *kares* if he consumes a *k'zayis* within פרס. (M.B. 24)
- ❖ Even if the cheese is sixty times the vinegar it is not nullified since a substance that is made to solidify something is not nullified even at a ratio of 1000:1. (M.B. 25)
- ❖ If the beer was not enough to curdle the cheese and another substance was added the mixture may be consumed after Pesach. (M.B. 25)
- ❖ *B'dieved*, if one mistakenly did not destroy the cheese that contained *chometz* that was added to solidify it or provide taste it is permitted after Pesach in a circumstance of great loss, if one throws away a quantity of cheese equal to the size of the prohibited substance. (M.B. 27)

## Stories to Share

### **An Admixture**

ש"ע סי' תמ"ב, ד': "דבר שנתערב בו חמץ ואינו מאכל אדם כלל.."

A certain person was required to take medication every day. When Pesach came around, he checked the ingredients and much to his chagrin, found that there was flour mixed in with his medicine. He wasn't certain what to do. There was no kosher for Pesach substitute available. Refraining from the medicine could be detrimental to his health but not dangerous. He decided to ask Rav Nissim Karelitz, zt"l, whether he could take the medicine or not.

Rav Karelitz replied that the answer was somewhat complex.