The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, March 26, 2022 ■ כ"ג אדר ב', תשפ"ב
סימן תמ"ז סעיף ו'-ז'

Halacha Highlight

Cutting and grinding unripe grapes

Rema Siman 447 Seif 6

אבל אם חתכו בסכין של חמץ

But if they were cut with a chometz knife

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ז') discusses grinding unripe grapes in a chometz mortar before Pesach and rules that the ground grapes are permitted for consumption. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק פ"א) explains that Shulchan Aruch is working under the assumption that unripe grapes are not a sharp food (דבר חריף) and as such since the grapes are not hot the chometz taste that is absorbed in the walls of the mortar will not be extracted. This is because generally taste cannot be extracted without the presence of heat. Mishnah Berurah also emphasizes that the concern for those who maintain that unripe grapes are sharp is limited to a mortar that is used for chometz. Nowadays, mortars are generally used only for spices that are not chometz. Consequently, the only concern is for a chometz crumb that may have a fallen into the mortar and regarding this concern as long as the grinding of the unripe grapes is done before Pesach whatever crumb may have been there is nullified.

Rema then mentions that if the unripe grapes were cut with a chometz knife there is reason for concern even for those who maintain that unripe grapes are not a sharp food. The concern is that there is a halachic presumption that knives are not clean and as such they can transfer chometz residue to the food that is being cut. This concern is limited to those unripe grapes that are cut on Pesach but those that were cut before Pesach are permitted. The reason for the distinction is that before Pesach whatever residue may be transferred to the food can be rinsed off and what remains is nullified but on Pesach since chometz prohibits a mixture even in the minutest amount the grapes are prohibited (מ"ב ס"ק פ"ה). In the event that some prohibited grapes become intermingled with other food the mixture is permitted since we do not know for sure there was any residue that remained on the knife and the requirement to be cautious is limited to the food that was cut with the knife.

Stories to Share

Necessary Precautions

ש"ע ס' תמ"ז, ז': "ויש לחוש לחמץ הדבוק עליו..."

On today's amud we find that one must also be careful of chometz that is stuck to something which comes in contact with food.

There are so many chumros regarding Pesach for a reason. Since even an infinitesimal amount of chometz is prohibited it is very easy to trip up and consume a tiny amount of chametz, G-d forbid.

One man ran out of eggs which he required for use on Pesach. Just before yom tov, he purchased some eggs and cooked them in his pesachdik pots. But when one of the members of his household noticed this, he wondered aloud if there wasn't a problem with this.

He asked, "Although the eggs themselves are not chometz, what about what is stuck to them? Since you didn't clean the eggs, maybe you need to worry that they had chometz on them!"

But the man scoffed at this possibility. "I agree that I probably should have washed off the eggs before cooking them. Nevertheless, I doubt there could be a problem here. It is not even Pesach now and you are already getting nervous just because I didn't clean the eggs?"

Nevertheless, he agreed to ask Rav Nissim Karelitz.

Rav Nissim agreed that this was not such a problem. "If eggs were cooked for Pesach in a pot designated for Pesach but they were not washed or inspected first, there is only the possibility of an issue. If the eggs were clean, there is no problem. There is only a problem if one notices matter that could be feed stuck to the eggs. Take a good look at them!"

חוט שני, ע' ק"א

Overview

Siman 447 Seif 6:

Salt that was placed in a mortar may be used for salting meat on Pesach since it will not extract taste in cold.

- Even if the mortar is ben yomo as long as it is clean Shulchan Aruch's ruling applies. (M.B. 78)
- The principle "salting is like boiling" does not mean that salting can extract taste from a utensil. If the salt was ground in the mortar it will extract taste from the utensil due to the combination of sharpness and the pressing that occurs while grinding even if it is not ben yomo and is done before Pesach. Later authorities write that since our mortars are used for spices rather than chometz if the salt was ground before Pesach it is permitted for use on Pesach. (M.B. 80)

Siman 447 Seif 7:

Unripe grapes that were crushed before Pesach in a chometz mortar may be eaten on Pesach because taste is not extracted in cold. Even if it was prepared on Pesach it is not prohibited if the utensil was clean. If it was cut with a chometz knife on Pesach one should be stringent since knives are not clean and there is a concern that chometz adheres to the knife. However, if that food intermingles with another food one need not be concerned and prohibit the mixture out of doubt. This is what appears to me.

- Shulchan Aruch assumes that unripe grapes are not sharp but according to the opinion that maintains that sour fruit is sharp unripe grapes are also sharp. Accordingly, since the fruit is sharp and there is pressure from the knife the food is prohibited even if it is prepared before Pesach. Later authorities write that that in a circumstance of significant loss one may rely upon the authorities who maintain that sour fruit is not sharp. The stringency that applies when one there is no loss is limited to where the mortar is used for chometz but since our mortars are used for spices whatever chometz taste that may have been there is nullified in shishim before Pesach. (M.B. 81)
- We assume a mortar is clean unless we know for certain otherwise in which case it is prohibited according to many authorities even if it was ground before Pesach since the pounding causes the taste to enter the food and it cannot be rinsed out. (M.B. 83)
- Although the pressure from the knife is not enough to extract taste there is concern for chometz that adhered to the knife. (M.B. 84)
- Before Pesach the unripe grape may be rinsed. According to Magen Avrohom this stringency applies to foods regularly prepared by a gentile but if it was prepared in the home of a Jew and they happened to use a chometz knife the food may be rinsed. (M.B. 85)
- If the food was sharp then even if the knife was clean and the food was cut before Pesach it is prohibited. This applies only for knives used to cut hot chometz. (M.B. 86)
- Some authorities are stringent even in a mixture if the knife was not first rinsed but in a situation of loss or if it will diminish one's joy on Yom Tov one may rely upon the lenient position. (M.B. 88)