The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תנ"ד סעיף א'-ב'

Overview

Siman 454 Seif 1:

One does not fulfill the mitzvah with matzah made from husks or bran but if one kneads dough that includes the husks or bran he fulfills his obligation. One fulfills the mitzvah with very fine flour and we do not say that it is not lechem oni. It is proper l'chatchila not to make matzah that is too wide which would be like an אשישה.

- These are not considered breads. (M.B. 1)
- סבין is the husk that falls off when it is pounded and מרסן is the thin peel that remains in the sieve after the flour falls through and some explain the opposite. (M.B. 2)
- Once one separated out the husk or bran if it is reintroduced into the flour and it was all kneaded together it does not combine towards the volume of a k'zayis. (M.B. 3)
- One also fulfills the mitzvah with matzah made from grain that was eaten by worms. (M.B. 4)
- The Gemara states that the term לחם עני precludes the use of אשישה. (M.B. 5)

Siman 454 Seif 2:

Regarding bread made for dogs, if the shepherds also eat it one may use it to fulfill the mitzvah but if not, it may not be used since it was not guarded for the sake of the mitzvah. These are the words of Rambam but some maintain that the reason is that it is not called bread if shepherds do not eat it and this appears correct.

- In other words if the employer also feeds this to his shepherds who are Jewish it is assumed that when it was kneaded and baked the intent was to feed people. (M.B. 6)
- The language is not precise because if it was not intended to be eaten by people it is not considered bread even as far as the beracha of hamotzi is concerned. (M.B. 9)
- Rema is relating that there is another reason why it is invalid that is not related to intent. When a large quantity of bran is added so that it is not fit for shepherds it is not considered bread even if one intended to serve it to people. If the bread is good quality it is considered bread even if one's intent was to feed it to dogs but it may not be used for the mitzvah since it was not guarded for the sake of making matzah. (M.B. 10)

Halacha Highlight

Regrinding kernels of wheat

Shulchan Aruch Siman 454 Seif 1

אבל לש הוא את העסה בסבין ובמרסן שבה

But one may knead dough with the husks and bran intermingled in the flour

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') rules that one does not fulfill the mitzvah of eating matzah if he eats matzah made from the husks of the wheat kernel or from its bran. According to one opinion, husks are the part of the kernel that comes off when the kernel is crushed, whereas bran is the thin peel that remains on the kernel and does not become separated until the flour goes through a sieve. According to a second opinion the definitions are reversed. The reason is that "bread" made from these components do not qualify halachically as lechem and it is for that reason that the mitzvah of challah does not apply to dough made from them (מ"ב סק"א). However, one may knead dough using flour that contains in it husks or bran and that dough may be made into matzah to be used to fulfill the mitzvah. The reason why matzah containing husks and bran is acceptable is that poor people commonly eat bread made from flour that is not "clean."

Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) notes that the husks and bran that are intermingled with the flour also contribute to the volume of a k'zayis which is the volume that one must eat to fulfill the mitzvah. However, this is true only if one did not separate the husks and bran and add them later. If the husks and bran were removed and then added again, their volume does not combine towards the volume of a k'zayis. Poskim note that there are varieties of wheat that when ground in a hand mill there remains a large quantity of husks in the sifter and only half of the potential flour is extracted. The custom is to take these remaining pieces and reinsert them into the mill to be ground a second time. This is not considered as though the husks were removed and then added again; rather it is considered as though the husks have not yet been separated since there is so much flour that could yet be extracted from the broken kernels (פסקי תשובות אות א').