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

Overview

Siman 455 Seif 1 (b):

When Pesach begins on Sunday the water should be drawn the night of the 13th which is Thursday night. L'chatchila, water should be drawn from a river rather than a well but when the rivers are full from melting snow it is better to draw water from a well. Water that rested overnight need not be poured out if someone dies or if the tekufah begins but l'chatchila it is preferred if one places iron in the water. It is prohibited to have a gentile draw water to be used for matzos that will be used for the mitzvah and even for other matzos it is preferable if a Jew draws the water. The custom is to draw the water specifically for the mitzvah of matzos. There is a custom to take new earthenware utensils and one should not deviate from that custom but this is not required when using wooden utensils.

- According to Shulchan Aruch in siman 458 the dough is kneaded on Friday so it is obvious that the water must be drawn by Thursday night and Rema is referring to those who will bake matzos after Shabbos. (M.B. 14)
- It should not be drawn on Friday afternoon out of concern that one will be delayed and will be engaged in this activity even after bein hashemashos. If one forgot to draw water on Thursday night it may be drawn on Friday even early in the day. When baking matzah on Sunday the water should be drawn on Thursday night, but b'dieved it may be drawn on Friday. (M.B. 15)
- During Nissan the sun travels beneath the earth and the water in wells becomes heated, as opposed to rivers. (M.B. 16)
- During this time well water is colder since the sun melts the snow and warms that water. (M.B. 17)
- One who keeps mitzvos will not be harmed, however, if one could easily obtain different water it is appropriate to do so for other matzos but the water that was prepared for the matzos that will be used for the mitzvah should not be spilled out since it appears as one is disrespecting the pasuk that indicates that those who keep mitzvos will not be harmed. (M.B. 18)
- One should obtain a new or clean piece of iron and hang it by a string in the water but one should not insert his arm in the water since one's arm will warm the water. (M.B. 20)
- This requirement is only l'chatchila. (M.B. 21)
- The concern is that he may put chometz in the water but it is not such a concern since we filter the water. (M.B. 22)
- One should announce that he is drawing the water for the sake of the mitzvah. (M.B. 23)
- Old earthenware utensils are repulsive and therefore do not beautify the mitzvah. (M.B. 24)
- The same is true for stone and earthenware utensils. The utensil used to draw water may not have contained any other beverage besides water but if it contained another beverage one should first perform hagalah on it since the presence of the other beverage causes the dough to leaven more quickly. L'chatchila the water should not be drawn in a copper utensil even if it is new since it heats the water but b'dieved it is not a problem even if the water was stored in the utensil for many days. Even l'chatchila it is acceptable to knead the dough in copper utensils and the precaution is limited to the utensil used to draw water since copper utensils do not allow the water to properly cool down. (M.B. 25)

Halacha Highlight

Using tap water for matzah

Rema Siman 455 Seif 1 (b)
ונוהגין ליקח כלי חרס חדשים
The custom is to take new earthenware utensils

Rema discusses the type of utensil one should use to draw the water that will be used to make matzos. He writes that one should take a new earthenware utensil and one should not deviate from this custom. He then adds that if one uses a wooden utensil he need not be particular that it should be new. The reason old earthenware utensils should not be used is that they are repulsive and detract from the beauty of the mitzvah. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק כ"ה) adds that it is best to refrain from drawing water in a copper utensil, and according to Shulchan Aruch HaRav (סע' י"ז) the same is true of any metal utensil. The reason is that copper warms the water. B'dieved, however, water that was drawn in a copper utensil may be used.

Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק כ"ה) warns against using utensils that had fruit juice (the halachic term in this context for any beverage other than water) unless one first performed hagalah on that utensil. The reason is that when fruit juice mixes with water it causes the dough to leaven at a faster rate. Therefore, it is prohibited to take a utensil that contained honey and simply wash it and use it for the water that will be used to make matzah. This concern is raised in a more practical context. Poskim discuss whether one can simply take water that comes out of the faucet and use that for making matzah after the water is left to sit overnight. Sefer Moadim U'Zemanim (ח"ג סי' רס"א אות ב') cites authorities who maintain that one may not use water that comes out of the faucet. Their rationale is that the municipality adds chemicals to the water to assure that it is clean and they are concerned that those chemicals have the status of fruit juice and raise the concern that the dough will leaven at a faster rate. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה פסח פ"ז סע' ג') maintains that the additives are not categorized as fruit juice and as such one may use tap water to make matzah.