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

Overview

Siman 456 Seif 1:

One may not knead for Pesach dough that is larger than the minimum volume for the mitzvah of challah which is forty-three and one fifth average sized eggs and this is the measure called an issaron. The following is the manner to measure this. One should fill a vessel with water and then pour that water into a second utensil. He should place forty-three eggs in the first utensil and then refill that utensil with water from the second utensil. The water that remains in the second utensil should be poured into a third utensil. If that third utensil can hold that precise amount of water it may be used for measuring flour. The flour is measured scraped rather than heaped. Its measure in terms of Egyptian wheat flour is about 520 drams. One should not force the flour into the measuring cup because if one does so it will not knead well. It is appropriate to say when pouring flour into the measuring cup that he is doing so for the sake of the mitzvah.

- Chazal calculated that when one person is involved in preparing the dough he cannot prevent it from becoming chometz if he is working with a quantity that is greater than this measurement. (M.B. 1)
- This measurement includes the shells. (M.B. 2)
- The flour is not measured by weight. Later authorities write that this measure is approximately 3 quarts. (M.B. 3)
- The concern is that it will not knead well since water will not be able to reach all of the flour and will leaven when placed into a cooked food. One should measure the flour in the manner that it is measured for purchase. One should not even place his hand on the flour. (M.B. 4)

Siman 456 Seif 2:

If one kneads a greater quantity it is b'dieved permitted.

- This is no worse than not manipulating the flour altogether for which it does not leaven unless the time it takes to walk a mil passes. (M.B. 6)
- This is true even if one intentionally kneaded a greater quantity of flour than allowed. In the event that one person kneaded the dough for the amount of time it takes to travel a mil before others came to assist in rolling the dough there is a dispute whether the dough may be used b'dieved. Some authorities maintain that nowadays since many people assist in preparing the dough, the ovens are large and people work very quickly there is no reason to be stringent b'dieved. Most people are accustomed to follow this position and one need not protest since they have authorities upon whom to rely. However, those who are G-d fearing should be stringent in accordance with the first opinion. Poskim write that one should only be particular when one is making a numerous batches of dough which combine for the challah obligation but if one is making only a single batch of dough one should not prepare a small amount since it may not contain the quantity of dough necessary to separate challah and one would recite a beracha l'vatalah. (M.B. 7)

Halacha Highlight

Making large volumes of matzah

Shulchan Aruch Siman 456 Seif 1

אין לשין לפסח

We do not knead for Pesach

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') rules that one should not knead for Pesach a quantity of flour that is larger than the minimum volume of flour from which one is obligated to separate challah. This volume is equal to forty-three and one-fifth medium size eggs including their shells (מ"ב סק"ב). The reason for this restriction is that if one person is kneading and rolling that volume of dough, he will not be able to prevent it from becoming chometz since he will not be able to work with so much dough in the allotted time. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ז) cites authorities who are lenient about this matter. The restriction was applicable when people would knead and roll matzah by themselves so that it would take a longer period of time to prepare the matzah for baking and they had smaller ovens that were not as hot. Nowadays that many people are involved in preparing the dough for baking who work quickly and our ovens are larger and hotter, there is no reason for concern when preparing a large quantity of dough since it will certainly not become chometz. Mishnah Berurah concludes that even though common custom follows this lenient opinion and one should not protest against it, those who are G-d fearing will not follow this lenient opinion.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה פסח פ"ז דבר הלכה אות ט"ז) wrote that this halacha was based on Chazal's understanding of the reality of what could be done by a single person. Therefore, if a machine is able to efficiently knead and roll large quantities of dough at once, there is no reason to disallow producing large quantities of matzah at once. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (הערות פסחים צ"ח. ד"ה וכמה) also maintained that a machine may produce a large quantity of matzah, but added that since there is an opinion amongst the Rishonim who asserts that this halacha to not knead more than this volume of dough at once represents an actual enactment there is grounds to beautify the mitzvah and not knead more than this volume.

Siman 456 Seif 3:

Even though it is prohibited to measure flour on Yom Tov for kneading on Pesach since it is prohibited to knead an amount larger than an issaron it is permitted to measure the flour. Other authorities prohibit measuring flour; rather one should estimate that he does not take more than an issaron (and this is the custom.)

- One should not use less than an issaron so that he should be able to separate challah with a beracha. (M.B. 9)
- Regarding the beracha one should bring this dough next to another dough as will be mentioned at the beginning of siman 457 out of concern that it does not contain an issaron. (M.B. 10)