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

Overview

Siman 459 Seif 2:

One should not leave the dough without being worked even for a moment. While one is working the dough it does not leaven even over the course of the entire day. If one did not work with the dough for the time it takes to walk a mil it becomes chometz. The amount of time it takes to walk a mil is ¼ of an hour plus 1/20 of an hour, i.e. 18 minutes. One should be stringent and work quickly out of concern that the pauses will combine to the measure of a mil or that one will be working in a hot place where it will leaven more quickly. **After working the dough and it becomes heated in one's hands if one allows it to sit without working it the dough leavens immediately. If people began working with two different pieces of dough simultaneously and one of them leavened it is clear that the other leavened as well even if one does not see signs of leavening. If it leavened to the degree that it cracked, even if the cracks are not intertwined but run in different directions it is chometz and one who eats it is subject to kares. If the dough did not crack but paled** (meaning it turned white) **like a person whose hairs are standing on end, one who eats it is exempt.** If the matzah is formed and one is afraid that it will become chometz he may break it and start working it again to stop the leavening process but it is proper l'chatchila to be cautious about this.

- Shulchan Aruch refers to dough after it was kneaded but before it was rolled. (M.B. 11)
- Working the dough is when one kneads it or uses a stick to roll it but merely striking the dough with a stick is not effective to prevent the dough from becoming chometz. (M.B. 12)
- This is eighteen minutes. (M.B. 15)
- Terumas HaDeshen maintains that small pauses while one is actually working the dough, e.g. beating it or flattening it, do not combine for the measure of a mil but pauses when one is merely making holes in the matzah do combine. Maharil is stringent in all cases. (M.B. 16)
- Accordingly, when placing the matzah in front of the one who will make holes he must make the holes immediately and from there it should be placed immediately in the oven. It is possible that the term מיד is not specific and means a small amount of time but one should certainly avoid leaving it alone for even a minute if possible. (M.B. 18)
- Even if there are cracks on a small portion of the dough it is all chometz. (M.B. 20)
- It is nonetheless prohibited for consumption and benefit. (M.B. 21)
- Placing one's hands on the dough and rubbing it is ineffective. (M.B. 22)
- The concern is that when preparing it a second time one will not prepare it properly. (M.B. 23)

Halacha Highlight

Leaving the dough without being worked

Shulchan Aruch Siman 459 Seif 2

אם יניחוהו בלא עסק מיד יחמיץ

If one leaves it without being worked it becomes chometz immediately

Shulchan Aruch writes that after one worked the dough and it became warmed by one's hands if he sets it aside and stops working with it, it will immediately become chometz. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק י"ח) presents two approaches whether Shulchan Aruch's wording מיד—immediately—is literal or not. The first approach he cites maintains that the word מיד should be understood literally and if one sets aside the prepared dough without continuing to work it, it will turn to chometz right away. Accordingly, after the dough was shaped and flattened and is placed before the one who will make the holes in the matzah that person must make the holes right away. Similarly, after the holes were made the matzah must be placed into the oven as quickly as possible since otherwise it will turn to chometz. The second approach contends that the word מיד should not be taken literally and the intent is that if it sits for a short period of time without being worked it will turn into chometz. He concludes that l'chatchila one should be careful that the matzah should not sit for even one moment.

Chazon Ish (או"ח סי קכ"א ס"ק ט"ז ד"ה סי' תנ"ט וד"ה מן האמור) argues that Rosh who is the source for Shulchan Aruch's ruling did not mean that after working the dough it can turn into chometz immediately. Rather his intent is that it may more quickly turn into chometz. Therefore, the requirement to continuously work the dough until it is in the oven is a requirement l'chatchila but b'dieved one need not be concerned since it is uncommon for dough to leaven so quickly. He cites another ruling in our seif as proof to this assertion. Shulchan Aruch discusses a circumstance in which two batches of dough at the same time. Shulchan Aruch rules that if one of the batches shows signs of leavening the other batch is assumed to be chometz as well. However, if neither batch shows signs of leavening they are both permitted as long as the time it takes to walk a mil does not transpire.