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Digest
Mishna Berura
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סימן תנ"ט סעיף ה'-ו'

Halacha Highlight

Precautions when making matzah

Rema Siman 459 Seif 6
וירחיק המצות מהקמח
One should distance the matzos from the flour

Rema (סע' ו') cautions that one should be careful to keep baked matzos away from the flour. The concern is that some flour will end up on the matzos and if one were to cook those matzos in liquid that flour would become chometz. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק מ"ה) adds more cautionary advice to keep one's matzos from becoming chometz. The person who measures the flour should not approach the dough unless he cleans his clothing and hands to assure that he has no flour on them. Similarly, the one who measures the flour should not pour water into the mixing bowl out of concern that some moisture will remain on his hands and make contact with the flour. Along the same lines, the one who pours the water should not be the one who measures the flour. The bottom line is that each person should perform his job in his place and there should be no overlap of jobs or moving from one station to another to avoid potential cross contamination that could produce chometz.

Poskim add other precautions that should be observed to further prevent possible cross contamination. One is that the one who measured the flour should not pour the flour into the mixing bowl at the same time that the water is poured into the bowl. The flour should be poured into the bowl first and then the water should be poured in gently, at a slight distance from the flour. At the time the water is poured on the flour, the room that contains the flour should be closed. The water should initially be drawn from the barrel of water with one utensil and it should then be poured into a second utensil from which the water is poured on the flour. The basis for this practice is the concern that if the same utensil is used to draw the water and to pour onto the flour, perhaps some flour will become attached to the water utensil and if that utensil is inserted into the barrel that flour would become chometz and the remaining water in the barrel would no longer be usable for matzos (פסקי תשובות אות י"ב).

Overview

Siman 459 Seif 5:

If one kneaded under the sun the matzah is permitted.

- Even if it was done intentionally. Later authorities agree that it should not be consumed if it was in the sun long enough for the dough to become heated. The same is true if it was kneaded near an oven. (M.B. 41)

Siman 459 Seif 6:

If the dough is soft one should not add more flour; rather he should make a small batch of dough that is hard and mix it with the soft dough. One should keep the matzos away from the flour since the flour which adheres to it will be placed in cooked food and become chometz.

- The additional flour will not mix well and some of it will remain intact in the dough. (M.B. 42)
- Later authorities write that a second person should make the hard dough since it is difficult for one person to knead two batches of dough at the same time. B'dieved if one person kneaded them both they are permitted. (M.B. 43)
- If one cannot make another batch of dough he should add flour but should not put that matzah into cooked food. B'dieved if it fell in cooked food, it is not prohibited since we do not know if there was any flour in the dough. (M.B. 44)
- The one who measures the flour should not approach the dough until he cleans his clothing and washes his hands. The one who measures the dough should also not pour water into the bowl since moisture will remain on his hands. In other words, each person should remain at his station. (M.B. 45)