The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן ת"ס סעיף ד'-ו'

Overview

Siman 460 Seif 4:

One should not prepare shaped matzos, meaning he should not shape the matzos like an animal or a bird. However, what is done with a comb to prevent it from rising is permitted. Similarly, piercing the matzos is permitted but one should perform the task quickly and not delay the process. The matzos should be made thin rather than thick like bread since thin matzos do not leaven quickly.

- This requirement is l'chatchila, but b'dieved it is permitted for consumption assuming that one did not delay long enough that it can leaven. (M.B. 13)
- The reason is that one tarries as he shapes the matzah and it could leaven in the process. Even if the shape will be formed by a mold it is prohibited. (M.B. 14)
- Even if a design is formed on the matzoh it is permitted since that was not his intent and there is no fear that he will tarry for the time it takes the dough to leaven. (M.B. 15)
- Even though in seif 5 Shulchan Aruch rules that matzah may not be a tefach thick, it is preferable for it to be made thin. (M.B. 16)

Siman 460 Seif 5:

Matzos should not be made a tefach thick.

- When it is that thick there is a concern that the heat will not reach the middle and it will leaven while baking. Biur Halacha cites authorities that one must be cautious even if it is less than a tefach. B'dieved if it is already baked it is permitted and there is a disagreement whether a matzah that is a tefach thick is permitted. (M.B. 17)

Siman 460 Seif 6:

One should not be lenient regarding the stringency of the earlier generations to avoid making פאנדי"ש and פלאדוני"ש.

- These are dough filled with meat or cheese. The concern is that while baking fluid that comes out of the meat or cheese will prevent it from baking properly. Additionally, that fluid may constitute "fruit juice" which when combined with water causes the dough to leaven right away. Accordingly, one must fear that when the liquid began to flow it became chometz right away. (M.B. 18)

Halacha Highlight

Thin, round matzos

Rema Siman 460 Seif 4

ויש לעשות המצות רקיקין

The matzos should be made thin

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ד') writes that one should not shape matzos into forms of animals or birds. The reason is the concern that it will take time to properly shape the matzos and in the interim one will delay and the dough could become chometz. Even if one has a mold to press on the dough so that the shape is formed it is not permitted. The reason is that once Chazal prohibited the practice it applies in all circumstances because people may see that one has matzos with a form and will think that it is permitted to prepare animal shaped matzos even by hand (מ"ב ס"ק י"ד). This restriction, however, is only l'chatchila, but b'dieved if someone prepared a matzah in a shape it is permitted for consumption.

Rema adds that one should make thin matzos that resemble wafers rather than thick matzos since thin matzos do not leaven quickly. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק ט"ז) explains that although Shulchan Aruch rules in seif 5 that one should not make a matzah that is more than a tefach thick, Rema is adding that it is, in fact, preferable to specifically make thin matzos. Kaf HaChaim (ס"ק מ"ד) writes that one who is careful to make specifically thin matzos is praiseworthy.

It is common practice for handmade matzos to be made in the shape of a circle. Teshuvas Yehudah Ya'aleh (או"ח סי' קנ"ז) explains that the origin of the custom is rooted in the fact that when the Torah describes the matzos the Jewish People took with them as they left Egypt it uses the term עוגות which means cake. The word עגות is related to the word עיגול or circle. The Torah is teaching us that the Jewish People left Egypt hastily and made round matzos which are easier to make than square ones. Therefore, for generations we eat round matzos to remind ourselves of the haste in which they left Egypt.