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Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תס"א סעיף א'

# Overview

Siman 461 Seif 1:

**Regarding an oven used for baking chometz one must be careful when firing it to bake matzos to run coals over the entire surface and merely igniting a flame is insufficient. Since the taste is absorbed with coals, coals are necessary to extract that taste and sparks must jump off the surface. Therefore, if it was lit numerous times before Pesach it is not sufficient unless one intended to kasher it for Pesach out of concern that he did not run the coals over the entire surface since he was not thinking about this matter. Some have the custom to put new dirt on the floor so that one should not have to burn it and this is a proper custom.** When kashering it with fire it is proper to light it a second time for baking rather than do it all from one fire.

- Even our ovens that are constructed from bricks which are categorized as earthenware from which taste is not extractable, nevertheless, lighting a fire is effective since the fire is inside the oven and he is not concerned that it will shatter. There is no distinction between an oven that opens from the side and an oven that opens from the top. (M.B. 1)
- The fire used to kasher the oven may be used to bake the matzos. If one fired up the oven many times, even if one did not intend to kasher it for Pesach it is b'dieved permitted because once it was used numerous times we assume the entire surface was fired up. (M.B. 2)
- It should be the thickness of a finger. The chometz that was absorbed in the roof or walls is extracted when one fires up the oven to bake the matzos. The same is true for a stove in that one should fire it up and run coals over the surface or place dirt on the floor and walls to the height of the pots. (M.B. 3)
- In other words, although firing the oven once is sufficient to kasher and then bake, nevertheless, there is a concern that he missed a spot or that it wasn't properly heated. Therefore, it is proper to fire the oven a second time after the oven cooled down a bit and this is our custom. Later authorities write that one who forgot to kasher his oven before Yom Tov may kasher and bake with the same fire rather than ignite a fire unnecessarily but one should be careful to run coals over the entire surface. (M.B. 4)

# Halacha Highlight

## Covering the bottom of the oven with clay

Shulchan Aruch Siman 461 Seif 1

**להטיל בו קרקע חדש**

**To add a new floor**

Shulchan Aruch discusses the oven that one uses throughout the year for baking chometz that he wishes to now use for the baking of matzos. Before the oven could be used for baking matzos it is necessary to kasher the oven. This is done by firing up the oven and running coals over the entire surface. This follows the principle כבולעו כך פולטו—as the taste was absorbed is the manner in which it is extracted. Since the taste was absorbed when the chometz was placed on the coals, so too, it must be extracted with the more powerful heat of coals. Simply firing up the oven is not sufficient for this task. As the coals are run over the surface they must remain in each place long enough for the sparks to jump from the surface. Shulchan Aruch then mentions that there are those who have the custom to put a new floor on the bottom of the oven so that they should not be required to fire up the oven to kasher it and he comments that this is a proper custom. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) in the name of Levush writes that one should add the thickness of a finger to the floor of the oven.

Teshuvas Maharsham (ח"ג סי' קי"ב ד"ה ומ"ש) questions why adding to the thickness of the floor of the oven is effective. Seemingly, the absorbed taste should pass through the thickness of the new floor the same way it passes through any utensil from the inside to the outside and vice versa. He answers by citing the Gemara in Bava Basra (7a) that states that new earthenware does not adhere to old earthenware to become a single utensil. Since the new layer of clay does not adhere to the old layer, it constitutes a barrier that does not allow the taste to penetrate.