The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תק"ז סעיף ד'

Overview

Siman 507 Seif 4:

If some of the clay plaster of an oven falls into it, if it is possible to bake or roast food in it without removing it and the bread or food will not become singed, it is prohibited to remove it since that involves moving *muktzah* for no purpose. It is permitted to lay out the fire and the ash so that it should be smooth and will not touch the bread even though if it were to touch it the food would not become singed. If the broken pieces would singe the food if it touched it, even though without removing the pieces it would be possible to bake or roast food, since it would singe the food it is permitted to remove it since it is considered necessary movement of the *muktzah*. This held true for their ovens where the bread would be attached to the sides so that it is not necessary other than to remove the pieces that fell inside but regarding our ovens, since it would be impossible to bake in them without removing the broken pieces, it is permitted to remove the pieces from the ash and coal even though in the process he will extinguish some of the fire since there is no alternative. Just as it is permitted to kindle a fire in order to cook, so too, it is permitted to extinguish a fire to cook and it is comparable to placing meat on coals and this is our custom.

- Shulchan Aruch refers to ovens in the time of Chazal where the bread was placed on the walls for baking and if some clay or a brick broke off into the oven it could ruin the bread. (M.B. 16)
- The truth is that it should be permitted to remove the ash as well and Shulchan Aruch mentions laying down the fire since one can exercise greater caution to avoid extinguishing the fire in the process. (M.B. 18)
- If the food could become singed it would be permitted to remove the broken pieces. (M.B. 19)
- In other words the food would not burn. (M.B. 20)
- If one could have removed the broken pieces before Yom Tov but didn't, they may not be removed on Yom Tov like any other preparatory food preparation. (M.B. 21)
- If the oven is large enough that it will be possible to bake the bread without removing the coals but one wants to remove them so that they should not be near the bread, it is prohibited. The same is true if one removed the large pieces so that the bread should not burn. (M.B. 22)
- One may even use a brush that had been immersed for this purpose. (M.B. 24)

Halacha Highlight

Moving *muktzah* out of necessity

Shulchan Aruch Siman 507 Seif 4
דחשיב טלטול לצורך
It is considered movement of *muktzah* to satisfy a need

Shulchan Aruch addresses what one may do in the event that pieces of the oven broke off and rest at the bottom of the oven. He differentiates between a circumstance in which it is possible to use the oven without burning the food one is baking or roasting or whether using the oven as is will burn the food. If the food will not burn one may not remove broken pieces since that would involve unnecessary movement of *muktzah*. However, it is permitted to pat down the coals and broken pieces so that the bottom surface should be smooth and will not touch the food at all. This is allowed even though if the food did touch these protruding pieces it would not burn. On the other hand if the broken pieces could cause the food cooking in the oven to burn, it is permitted to remove those pieces since that would constitute movement of *muktzah* out of necessity which is permitted. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק כ"א) writes that moving *muktzah* so that one can eat is permissible since it represents a need. Interestingly, though, Biur Halacha (סי' תרל"ח סע' ב' ד"ה וביום טוב) writes that when *sukkah* decorations fall onto the table and prevent one from eating, although it is permitted to move them directly, nevertheless, if they could be moved indirectly one should do so rather than move them directly.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (שמירת שבת כהלכתה פכ"א הע' ה') writes that the need which allows one to move *muktzah* directly does not have to be great. Even if the need is relatively minor, nonetheless, it is permitted to move *muktzah* directly. Therefore, it would be permitted to move broken pieces of the oven so that the bread should be a better quality or to minimize the effort necessary to bake the bread. Rav Auerbach (שולחן שלמה סק"ג) even permits removing peels and shells that are not repulsive (because if they were, they could be removed even on Shabbos as a *graf shel rei'i*) if it would enhance the appearance of one's Yom Tov table.