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משנכנס אדר מרבים בשמחה...

ותלמוד
"תקופת התקנים"
לעשות רצונך
בלבב שלם

ליקוטי ופסקי הלכות "חוקי חיים"



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Kashering a Kitchen for Pesach – 1 | Vayakhel-Pekudei 5783

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Some Rules of Hagalah

Hagalah Today in the Kitchen

1. Back in the day, the halachos of hagalah had much practical relevance since most of Klal Yisroel relied on hagalah to kasher their year-round chometz dishes for Pesach use, as discussed by all the poskim. Today however, most people use dishes designated for Pesach even if people do sometimes kasher certain utensils.
2. Many people, primarily in chutz la'aretz, enjoy the halachic advantage of having a special Pesach kitchen. For people who do not, kashering is still common today to facilitate use of chometz surfaces, sinks, stoves, etc. in the kitchen for Pesach. Most people do not rely on kashering alone though; they also cover surfaces, counters, and the like. We will discuss the reasons and the ideal options. As an introduction, we will discuss some rules of hagalah.

Hagalah Does Not Help for Intact Chometz Matter

3. **Hagalah.** Hagalah, i.e., kashering with boiling water, only helps for chometz flavor absorbed in a dish ["bliyos"] via water or other liquids (שרית חת"ס יו"ד סי' ק"א, חזו"א א"ח סי' ק"יט סק"יט). Hagalah does not help for intact chometz matter. Thus, before doing hagalah, one must ensure that the dish is completely clean without any intact matter on it (שריע סי' תני"א ס"ג, מ"ב סק"ב).
4. Chazal were worried that a dish with grooves or cracks cannot be kashered because it cannot be cleaned well. If so, those spots can only be kashered with libun (שריע תני"א ס"ג, רמ"א שם ס"ה) when libun is possible – but many dishes will be ruined through libun in a fire.
5. **Libun.** Libun is heating a dish to a very high temperature in a fire. If chometz was absorbed directly into a dish without the medium of water, e.g., in a pan or skewer over a fire, hagalah is not enough; only libun works (שריע שם ס"ד). Libun works even for intact chometz, as the fire's heat burns the chometz and turns it into ash (שם ס"ג).

Hagalah with a Heated Libun Stone

6. **Irui kli rishon.** Utensils used in a kli rishon on the fire can only be kashered in a kli rishon on the fire. It is not enough to pour hot water from a kli rishon since the water might be slightly cooler when it touches the utensil. Utensils used by pouring from a kli rishon onto them can be kashered by pouring hot water from a kli rishon. This is in accordance with the rule of "כבולעו כך פלטו" [a dish expels a substance in the same way it absorbed it] (שריע תני"א ס"ה).
7. **Large utensils that require hagalah in a kli rishon.** The poskim give a way to kasher large utensils or surfaces used in a kli rishon that cannot be kashered in a kli rishon due to their size if the majority of their use was not in a kli rishon (א"ר הובא במ"ב סק"נ"א): One can pour hot water from a kli rishon onto them; to prevent the water from cooling down before reaching the utensil, one must place a heated "libun stone," i.e., piece of stone or metal heated in a fire to a very high temperature, on or in the utensil. Then, when hot water is poured over the utensil and the stone, the water is reheated by the stone and is not able to cool down. Hagalah in this manner works like hagalah in a kli rishon (מ"ב סק"נ"א).
8. **Caution for danger.** When doing hagalah with a libun stone, one must be very careful of the danger of getting burned. The stone or metal is extremely hot and one must move it to different areas – this can cause burns ch"v. Thus, only someone who knows how to be careful and has a trained, steady hand should use it.

Hagalah with an Electric Kettle

9. **Like a libun stone.** The poskim discuss whether or not pouring hot water from an electric kettle has the status of pouring water onto a libun stone.
10. Some say pouring water from an electric kettle is better than just pouring hot water from a pot. This is because when water is poured from a pot, the pot is no longer on the fire; this leads to a concern the water will cool down, necessitating the use of a libun stone. However, when water is poured from an electric kettle, the water is still connected to the "fire source," i.e., the heating element in the water, which is still very hot even if it is no longer on, at least immediately after it goes off. Hence, these poskim hold one does not need to use a libun stone at all when kashering with an electric kettle (שרית שבט הלוי ח"א סי' ק"צ).
11. However, others hold that pouring from a kettle after it goes off is not like pouring onto a libun stone. Thus, if one wants to use a kettle to accomplish the level of kashering with a libun stone, he must pour the water while the kettle's heating element is still on.
12. In a kettle that automatically goes off when the water reaches boiling, one should hold down the button the whole time he pours water so the heating element stays on [be careful not to press the button after all the water has been emptied]. For a cordless kettle, one should attach the jug to the base with cable ties or the like so that the water can be poured while the kettle is on and boiling.
13. **Shabbos urn.** It is possible to kasher things by opening the tap of a Shabbos urn while it is on so that the water spills directly onto the surface that needs to be kashered. This is certainly like irui with a libun stone, as the water is connected to the heat source the whole time and it remains on. One must just be extremely careful not to get burned ch"v when moving the urn while it is on. This method is not for everyone.
14. **Pesach kettle.** When it comes to kashering with an electric kettle, some prefer using a Pesach kettle since it has no chometz matter absorbed in it. However, the downside is that when pouring water on a chometz dish, there is a chance that chometz bliyos will enter the kettle via the steam. Hence, the dish being kashered must not have been used with chometz in 24 hours and it must be kashered before the time chometz becomes assur (שריע סי' תני"ב ס"א).
15. **Chometz kettle.** Others prefer using a chometz kettle for hagalah in accordance with the minhag not to use on Pesach utensils that dishes were kashered in. The downside to this is that the kettle has chometz bliyos. However, as long as neither the kettle nor the dish being kashered has been used with chometz in 24 hours, one can use a chometz kettle l'chatchilah (שי קנה בשם פ"ד אות ח'). This is especially so considering there are virtually no chometz bliyos, as chometz is not cooked in a hot water kettle. The only concern is from the chometzdk steam and condensation which may have seeped in throughout the year. Thus, in practice, both a chometz kettle and a Pesach kettle may be used l'chatchilah for hagalah (הגר"ש"א, (הש"פ עמ" 11).

Mechiras Chometz
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Kashering a Sink

Clean It Well

16. **Intact chometz matter.** If one wants to use his year-round kitchen sink on Pesach, he must first clean it out well from any possible intact chometz, especially around cracks and crevices, e.g., under the edge of the sink that is against the counter, around the inbuilt metal strainer where the water drains, etc.
17. **Harsh cleanser.** Some make sure to pour a harsh cleaning agent, e.g., bleach, in the drain hole to ruin the flavor of any possible intact chometz matter there or deep in the pipe. Since the cleaning agent completely ruins any leftover chometz, even if there is a blockage in the sink – something very common on Pesach due to the increase in fatty foods, potato peels, and other fruit skins – and water sits there for 24 hours, there is no concern of the water causing leftover chometz to become absorbed in the Pesach dishes based on the rule of the *chometz* (הגר"ש וואזנר, קובץ מבית לוי פס"ב ס"א) כבוש כמבושל).

Hagalah for a Sink

18. **Metal sink.** A sink made of metal, e.g., stainless steel, can be kashered for Pesach. Before it is kashered, it must not be used with hot chometz for 24 hours. Then, *hagalah* can be done by pouring boiling water on it from a *kli rishon*. This is enough based on the rule of *chometz* (כבולעו כן פולטו): since a sink only absorbs *chometz blyos* through *irui kli rishon* – e.g., when chometz food such as a pot of hot water with noodles is poured in; when hot water is poured over chometz leftovers in the sink; or something similar – it can be kashered through *irui kli rishon* (ש"י ס"א תנ"א ס"ה). When kashering, one should make sure the stream of hot water is unbroken (מ"ב שם סקמ"א).
19. Strictly speaking, after a metal sink is kashered properly, it can be used without being covered and without a sink insert or the like. Still, since it is often difficult to fully clean it, some are careful to always cover the sink or use a sink insert to avoid the potential issue of *blyos* from intact chometz.
20. **Earthenware sink.** Earthenware utensils cannot be kashered from *blyos* (ש"י ס"א תנ"א ס"א). Thus, there is no way to use a chometz-dik earthenware sink, e.g., porcelain or the like (ש"י שם סכ"ג), on Pesach just by doing *hagalah*.
21. Instead, one should clean it well (above, 16); pour a harsh substance inside (17); pour hot water from a *kli rishon* as a *chumra* to help somewhat by causing the sink to release what is absorbed on the outermost surface; and then put in an insert so that the Pesach dishes do not make any contact with the earthenware sink, as will be explained (22).

Special Pesach Sink Insert

22. **Space between.** When using a sink insert, there must be a space between the bottom of the insert and the base of the chometz-dik sink so that water does not sit between them and transfer chometz *blyos* (ספר הגעלת כלים בשם בעל מנחת יצחק והגר"ש וואזנר).
23. **Don't clog sink.** One must also make sure the sink does not get clogged with waste, causing there to be sitting water between the sink and the insert. If this happens, the chometz-dik sink will release *blyos* – if the water is hot, this takes just a moment; if the water is cold, it takes 24 hours.
24. **Marking for fleishigs or milchigs.** It is proper to mark Pesach sink inserts as *milchigs* or *fleishigs*, as they can easily get switched by accident from year to year. If they did get mixed up, one can still use them and designate them as *fleishigs* or *milchigs*. This is because the inserts were not used for a whole year, and the *blyos* are transferred through *irui* for the most part, from kosher food, and "nat bar nat" [a secondary form of transferring *blyos*]. As an extra precaution, one should pour hot water from a *kli rishon* over the inserts (אה"ל יעקב הגעלת כלים עמ' תקכ"ד).

Sink Strainer

25. The loose strainer that goes over the drain hole, which accumulates waste and leftover food, should be switched for one designated for Pesach. This is because the regular strainers have chometz stuck to them from all year and it is hard to clean them fully (ש"י קנה בשם פ"ד אות ל"ד).

Kashering a Tap/Faucet

Clean It Well

26. If one wants to kasher the kitchen sink faucet for Pesach use, he must clean it well from any intact chometz. He should also clean the handles from any chometz stuck to them, as they are used throughout the year with hands full of chometz (רמ"א ס"א תנ"א סכ"ז, מ"ב ס"ק קס"א).

27. **Harsh cleanser.** The faucet should be cleaned with a harsh cleaning agent, e.g., bleach, to ruin any intact chometz in the crevices and any other spots that cannot be fully cleaned. The faucet's opening should also be dipped in a dish of bleach to ruin any intact chometz inside that cannot be reached.
28. **Faucet's filter.** If possible, one should *l'chatchilah* change the filter on the faucet's opening for Pesach, as grime accumulates inside it. However, if this is not possible, one should clean whatever he can with a toothbrush and then ruin any leftover chometz with a harsh cleaning agent (see above, 27).

Kashering It

29. **Only for cold water.** If one only wants to use the faucet for cold water, strictly speaking he does not need to kasher it after cleaning it well. Nevertheless, it is proper to kasher a faucet even just for the use of cold water (ש"י קנה בשם פ"ד אות כ"ג).
30. **Also for hot water.** If one will also use it on Pesach for hot water, he must kasher it so that the chometz *blyos* absorbed in the faucet throughout the year do not transfer to the hot water that comes out on Pesach.
31. **Kashering the faucet.** Thus, one should turn on the hot water for several minutes until the faucet is heated from the inside. Once it is very hot, he should pour hot water from an electric kettle onto the exterior of the faucet. This way, the faucet is simultaneously kashered on the inside and the outside.
32. **Plastic faucet.** *Hagalah* works on a metal faucet. However, the foremost *poskim* argue whether *hagalah* works on plastic. Some are *machmir* and hold *hagalah* does not work for plastic, as it is possible plastic is like earthen material, which cannot be kashered (הגר"מ פיינשטיין הובא בס' הלכות פסח להגר"ש איידער פ"ג הע"י, אג"מ ח"ב ס"י צ"ב, (הגר"ש אלישיב בהש"פ עמ' י"א, הגר"ח קנייבסקי, שו"ת חשב האפוד ח"א ס"ל קל"ז).
33. However, many *poskim* hold that one can rely on kashering for plastic utensils, even for Pesach (שו"ת יצחק ח"ג ס"י ס"ז, שו"ת חלקת) (יעקב מהדו"ר ח"ב ס"י קס"ג (הגר"ש וואזנר קובץ מבית לוי) Others are *meikel* if *hagalah* is done three times (מרא דשמעתתא אות קע"ג).
34. Thus, one can also kasher a plastic faucet (see above, 31). Since it was not used with chometz in 24 hours and its primary use is not with chometz – there is merely a concern chometz got absorbed in it throughout the year – one can be *meikel* to even use it for hot water throughout Pesach. Nevertheless, one who is *machmir* not to use water hotter than *yad soledes bo* throughout Pesach deserves a *brachah*.
35. **Pull-out faucet.** It is very common today to have a pull-out faucet in the kitchen. The end of the faucet can be pulled out along with its spray hose. In these faucets, the water comes through a flexible tube that is inside the outer faucet piece. This means that the water inside does not touch the outer faucet at all. Thus, kashering the outer faucet does not do anything. On the other hand, kashering it is unnecessary since the water inside does not touch it and there is no concern chometz fell on it. The spray hose itself consists of an inner plastic piece covered with a spiral coil, such that no hot chometz touches the inner tube.
36. To kasher it for Pesach, one should extend the entire length of the hose and clean it well with a harsh cleaning agent. The end of the spray hose where the water comes out, should be dipped in a harsh cleaning agent and also dipped in boiling water. This kashers it to whatever extent possible.

Covering It

37. After cleaning and kashering a faucet as described above, one should *l'chatchilah* cover it and its handles with something. This is because it is possible they did not get cleaned well in the cracks and crevices and they are used all year long with dirty hands.
38. *L'chatchilah*, one should also put fabric over the faucet's opening to filter the water that comes out due to a concern for the presence of chometz crumbs even though this is not strictly necessary since the water that comes from the tap today is completely clean (Chukai Chaim Issue 162, par. 41).

Next issue: Preparing Counters and Other Kitchen Items for Pesach

גליון זה נתרם לע"נ האשה החשובה
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