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Keshering Utensils

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Hag'alah

Halachos of Hag'alah Nowadays

1. Once, the halachos of hag'alah took up a major portion of the Pesach preparations. Most people did hag'alah on all their utensils for Pesach. Nowadays, however, people generally have separate Pesach utensils, as the poskim write regarding certain things, that it is best to buy new for Pesach (מ"ב סק"יט). As a result, hag'alah is not as common as it once was. Still, there are things on which hag'alah is done even today. Also, hag'alah is used all year round for issur v'heter.

"Kebol'o Kach Polto" [As is the Absorption, So is the Expulsion]

2. **Hag'alah.** The removal of absorbed matter from a vessel must follow the method through which it was absorbed. Therefore, if matter got absorbed through water or some other fluid, it must be extracted through a process whereby the vessel expels the absorbed matter into water, which nullifies it. This is called hag'alah.

3. **Libun** is the process of using fire to burn out absorbed matter. It is used if a substance was transferred from the food into the vessel without the presence of liquid, as will be explained below.

4. **Kli rishon.** Based on the rule of *kebol'o kach polto*, a utensil used as a kli rishon, i.e., one that is used over a fire, for example, a pot or a spoon used to stir food over a fire, must be kasher in boiling, bubbling water, (רמ"א תנ"ב ס"א), in a kli rishon specifically (ש"ע תנ"א) (מ"ב סק"יז), over a fire (מ"ב סק"יז). If it is used as a kli rishon not over a fire, hag'alah may be done in boiling water in a kli rishon without a fire (פמ"ג משב"ז סק"ט).

5. If the absorbed substance was kosher, e.g., meat or milk, some permit hag'alah to be done in a kli rishon even not over a fire (ש"ע). Some also apply this leniency to chametz, since there are those (ע"י מ"ב סק"יח) who hold that absorbed chametz prior to Pesach is considered heter, not issur (ש"ע הרב סכ"ה).

6. **Pressure cooker.** Even utensils used with heat levels above water's boiling point [100 °C], e.g., pressure cookers, or with oil, which gets much hotter than that, may undergo hag'alah with boiling water, as Chazal did not differentiate between different heat levels; they only focused on the heating method (ש"ע מנחת שלמה מהדו"ת סי נא).

7. **Iru'i kli rishon.** When only the external surface absorbed something ["*kedei klipah*"], e.g., something was poured from a kli rishon onto it, or something hot went on top of something cold [based on *tata'ah gavar* (מ"ב סק"מא)], hag'alah may be done by pouring boiling water from a kli rishon in a continuous stream (מ"ב סק"מא); a kli sheni does not suffice (ש"ע ס"ה) even bedieved (מ"ב סק"מ).

8. **Kli sheni.** A utensil used as a kli sheni (ש"ע שם), i.e., one that is never used over a fire (מ"ב סק"מ), may undergo hag'alah in a kli sheni. This is done by pouring boiling water from one vessel into a second vessel, and then placing the utensils requiring kashering into the second vessel.

9. **Plates or cutlery,** despite being used for the most part in a kli sheni, are sometimes [at least for a significant minority of the time (פמ"ג)] used in a kli rishon. The poskim debate how to kasher them. The Mechaber holds that we follow their majority usage and they may undergo hag'alah in a kli sheni (ש"ע ס"ז) unless they may have been used (חזו"א סי ק"ט סק"יז) within 24 hours with chametz in a kli rishon (מ"ב סק"מ).

10. The Rama holds that they should be kasher in a kli rishon to cover their minority usage (רמ"א שם). However, bedieved [i.e., one cooked something with it (ש"ע הרב סכ"ח ול"ג)] one can rely on the Mechaber (מ"ב סק"מ).

Cleaning Prior to Hag'alah

11. Hag'alah only works on absorbed matter; not on intact matter. Therefore, before hag'alah, one must clean the utensil from any substances (ש"ע ס"ג) and remove any grime from its crevices.

12. If there is a substance which cannot be removed, one must first burn it out through libun, and then do hag'alah (ש"ע ומ"ב סק"ה). Libun kal suffices [see below, 30-31] (רמ"א ס"ד ומ"ב סק"ה).

13. If fire will ruin the utensil, one may pour bleach on the substance and then do hag'alah (ספר הגעלות כלים פ"ז סעיף ד).

Silver

14. Strictly speaking, utensils made of silver [e.g., bechers, cups, plates, etc.] that are used all year do not require hag'alah for Pesach, as they are not used with heat. Still, they are sometimes cleaned with hot water in a sink containing chametz utensils. Therefore, many kasher silver.

15. Often, silver utensils have nicks which accumulate black tarnish. Also, many cups have a groove under the lip which accumulates grime. In general, any dirt must be removed before hag'alah. However, since silver does not really require hag'alah, the hag'alah may still be done with the tarnish in the crevices.

16. Candlesticks do not require hag'alah, since they are not used with food. However, if they are on the table throughout the year, it is customary to cover their base, since many people avoid placing anything that was on a table with chametz on the table on Pesach. They may be covered with saran wrap/cling film, which looks nicer than aluminum foil.

Urn

17. Stainless steel water urns are not generally used with chametz. However, since they are in the kitchen with chametz, are used to add water to a chametz dish, and sometimes have chametz [e.g., challah] placed on them, they can easily absorb chametz matter. Therefore, they must be kasher for use on Pesach.

18. Often, scale forms on the inner walls of an urn. Hag'alah may not be performed in this state, out of concern that there may be chametz under the scale (ש"ע אבן ישראל ח"ז סי נא). Therefore, just like rust must first be removed (מ"ב סק"ב), scale must also first be removed. [This can be done by boiling vinegar in the urn.]

19. **Q:** I lost the lid to my Pesach urn, so I want to use the lid to my regular urn. Sometimes I heat up challah on top of the urn. Does the lid need hag'alah since it is heated with water, or does it need libun since any chametz it absorbed was not through water? **A:** Since it absorbed chametz directly from the challah, it requires libun. However, bedieved, if this will cause great trouble, hag'alah works, as it does bedieved for anything for Pesach (below 31).

Women's Rings

20. Often, women wear rings while making chametz. It is possible that chametz got absorbed into them or that there are actual bits of chametz stuck to them. Therefore, they should be removed during the preparation of food for Pesach. Some women clean them and perform hag'alah before Pesach through irui kli rishon (above, 7).

21. If a woman did not clean her ring and it touched hot food on Pesach, the food remains permissible, since it is mostly used with cold food, and since people don't generally touch food so hot that the hand recoils. (מור"ד בשבט הקהתי ח"ו סי' קצ"ג.)

New Utensils

- 22. In Eretz Yisrael, many do hag'alah on every stainless steel vessel they buy all year round out of concern that oil from a treif animal was applied in the making of the utensil (משמרת שלום יו"ד סי' קכ"א סק"ב, חזו"א) (י"ד סי' מד סק"ד). They also do hag'alah on any new utensil they buy for Pesach out of concern for chametz (שיעורי קנה בשם פ"ד אות ד).
- 23. It should be pointed out that this is just a chumra. It is highly implausible that treif oil was applied, and even if it was, it certainly got ruined in the factory machinery. There are other reasons this is not necessary (ש"ת משנה הלכות ח"ו סי' קיב), especially since today, usually only vegetable oil is used. In most communities in the rest of the world, they do not do this.
- 24. Also regarding the concern of chametz, since we buy utensils from stores, and not secondhand from Goyim, there is no reason to be concerned they were used with chametz.
- 25. **Two vats.** Since toveling new utensils is only a chumra, in public areas for hag'alas keilim there should be two vats; one for new utensils which practically have no issur absorbed, and the other for utensils that may have chametz absorbed inside. This prevents the new utensils from absorbing anything from the old utensils which would defeat the purpose of doing hag'alah. Bedieved, the utensil would be permitted.

Pot in Which Hag'alah is Done

- 26. When hag'alah is done before the 5th hour on Erev Pesach [which is suggested, to avoid Erev Pesach pressure], it can be done in a Pesach or chametz pot. If it is done after the 5th hour, if it is in a chametz pot, that pot must first undergo hag'alah and the utensil being kashered cannot have been used within 24 hours, unless the koshering water contains 60 times the wall volume of the utensil being kashered (ש"ע סי' תנ"א ובמ"ב).
- 27. The vessel does not need to undergo hag'alah all at once. The hag'alah can be done part by part as long as it covers everything.

Libun

Libun Chamur

- 28. A utensil used in fire, e.g., a skewer on which chametz was roasted, must be kashered in fire to the point that sparks shoot out of it (ש"ע סי' תנ"א ס"ד). This standard was relevant to the utensils used in Chazal's times; nowadays, even when subject to intense heat, sparks do not shoot out due to different utensil material (יד אהרן להגרי"א פפיפר).
- 29. Several poskim hold that 400 °C is enough for libun chamur (יד אהרן שם).

Libun Kal

- 30. There is another type of libun called "libun kal." The Rama (שם) characterizes this as heating the utensil to the point that straw placed on the outside of it, would burn. The poskim say this is 250 °C. The consensus of the poskim is that libun kal does not work where libun chamur is needed, because chametz is primarily treated as absorbed issur. Therefore, libun chamur is required (מ"ב סק"ח). Where the libun is just a chumra, one can rely on libun kal (רמ"א ס"ד).
- 31. There are several instances given where one can rely on libun kal. For example: **1.** Something which needs hag'alah but may get ruined through the hag'alah, may undergo libun kal. **2.** Where one needs to do libun on grooves and crevices in a utensil (רמ"א שם). **3.** Bedieved if, where libun chamur should have been done, libun kal was done, and to fix it would cause significant losses or prevent Yom Tov joy, and it did not absorb chametz in the last 24 hours (פמ"ג, מ"ב סק"ב), one can rely on the opinion that chametz is treated as absorbed heter.

Kashering a Gas Stove

- 32. **The grate.** If one wants to use the grate [the iron piece upon which the pot sits] he uses all year round, ideally it needs libun (רמ"א ס"ד) after getting cleaned from any bits of chametz. Libun kal suffices, because even if chametz spilled onto the grate, it can be assumed it got burned off by the fire. Bedieved if one used it without libun, it does not become forbidden (מ"ב סק"ד).
- 33. Some say that our grates, which extend further than the fire does, must undergo libun chamur on their whole surface, since we are

concerned that chametz spilled on a part that the fire does not touch (הגר"ש וואזנר, קובץ מבית לוי ח"א עמ' כט).

- 34. Sometimes, the grate's coating gets ruined by libun chamur. If one is afraid of this, he may not do libun at all (ש"ע סי' תנ"א ס"א). Therefore, it is best to buy new grates for Pesach.
- 35. If a proper libun cannot be performed, one may cover the entire surface of the grate with thick aluminum foil in such a way that the pot does not touch the grate at all.
- 36. **Burners.** The burners, from where the fire comes out, must first be cleaned from bits of chametz. Then one should leave the flame on for approx. 15 minutes. This constitutes libun since the fire encircles the whole burner (מור"ד בשיעורי קנה בשם פ"ד אות מג).
- 37. **Stovetop.** The stovetop must be cleaned well from any bits of chametz. Then it must be kashered through irui kli rishon, since any chametz that spilled there was through irui kli rishon. However, since it's generally impossible to remove all the gunk, especially from the crevices and the like, the stovetop should also be covered with thick aluminum foil.
- 38. Another way to kasher a stove is to place a metal sheet [a blech] on the four burners and then to turn all four burners on a high flame for a half hour. Then it can be assumed that anything underneath is kashered. However, it's always better to also cover the surface.

Hot Plate

39. A Shabbos hot plate will break if it undergoes libun in a fire. Therefore, it can be kashered by turning it on to its highest setting and then pouring boiling water onto it from a kli rishon [one must take great care that the water doesn't touch the electrical connection. It is advisable to raise the side of the hot plate with the socket and rest it on something. Then the water will slide down the hot plate]. In any case, it should also be covered with thick aluminum foil.

Glass Stovetops

40. Electric stovetops made of glass cannot be kashered because they need libun. Turning on the burners to the highest setting does not help for the rest of the surface. Libun cannot be done with fire, as that would ruin the unit. [Some say that the Mechaber, who holds that glass does not absorb (ש"ע סי' תנ"א ס"ז), would agree that glass used over fire, such as these stovetops, does absorb (ש"ת טוב טעם) (ודעת מהר"ג ח"ב סי' כה, ש"ת מהר"ם ש"ק י"ד סי' קמא)].

Stovetop Attached to Chometz Oven

- 41. If the Pesach stovetop is attached to a chametz oven that is not being used on Pesach, the oven must be cleaned of all chametz particles.
- 42. If one sells the oven to a Goy, but wants to use the stove, he must specify in the bill of sale that the gas stove is not included, and he must mark on the oven that it is sold to a Goy and secure the door shut with a cord or tape.

Oven

- 43. It is customary nowadays not to rely on kashering a chametz oven used all year long. Kashering it properly relies on many lenient opinions, and it does not reach the heat level of libun chamur. Therefore, it is proper for one to only use a designated Pesach oven.
- 44. **Self-cleaning oven.** Many use ovens with a self-cleaning feature that can get to 500 °C, considering that libun chamur. Therefore, after cleaning it thoroughly inside and out and making sure not to use it with chametz for 24 hours, they run the self-clean and rely on that to kasher it for Pesach. They have what to rely on.
- 45. Nevertheless, there are those who are doubtful about this since there are metal parts of the oven that are not in the interior space and that do not undergo proper libun. They are concerned about the rule that states that metal which got partially heated can absorb from a different part of the metal absorbing chometz (מילתא) (דשכיחא הגעלת כלים סי' ה). Also, they are worried that the glass oven door and rubber parts of the oven do not get kashered.

Supervision of a Posek

46. When performing hag'alah or libun in a public facility, one must make sure it is under the supervision of someone who can pasken in hag'alah matters, as there are many utensils that cannot be kashered through hag'alah, and these halachos are complicated (מ"ב סי' תנ"ב סק"ח). Often in Eretz Yisrael, bochurim arrange kashering stations on the streets without any supervision which can cause many potential issues.

Mechiras Chometz at "Cheder Horaha"

משגרים, אנו ברכת מול טוב לידידנו ראש וראשון לכל דבר שבכרושה הר"ר אנררה נסים הכהן יודייקין הי"ו לונגון לרגל לידת בתו שתהי

לעי"נ האשה החשובה מרת שרה ע"ה בת יבלחמ"א הר"ר אנררה הענרי כ"ה אדר תשע"ג נתרם ע"י אביה מיקי מנשסט

ברכת מול טוב שגורה, לרגל שמחה האופרין ונישואין של החתן שלמה בלייער ני"ו בן הרח"ב ר' יוסף יהודה בלייער שליט"א מרבין תורה עיר מנשסט עב"ג בת הרח"ה ר' אליעזר ויספיש הי"ו לונגון מוז"ש שגורה לוקנו הרח"ה ר' יחושע שמואל בלייער ולוקנו הרח"ה ר' אפרים ולמן רבינוביץ הי"ו

נרבת ידידנו הרב ר' משה הענרי הי"ו מחשובי אברכי מנשסט לרגל לידת בנו שיהי שיוכה לנדרלו לתורה לחופה ולמעש"ש ולהנסיסו בבריתו של א"א בעתו ובזמנו

