

WEEKLY HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

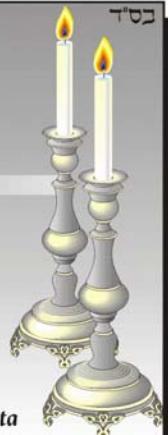
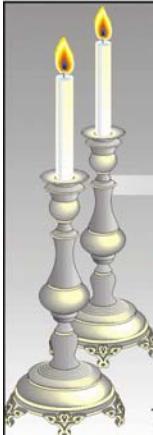
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Parshas Vayeishev 5762

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Is it muter to move pots on the blech closer to the flames?

In the *Iggros Moshe*¹ it says that if the food is fully cooked, and is situated on the blech on a spot that is *yad soledes bo*,² one may move the food closer to the flames. See also *Sefer Sh'miras Shabbos Kehilchoso* 1-footnote 111.

If after closing a pot I realized that the food was not yet fully cooked, may the food be eaten?

Last week we learned that it is *osur* to put a lid on a pot of food not fully cooked. If however, the food was already cooked to the degree of *ma'achal Ben Derosai*,³ and the lid was put back, the food may be eaten.⁴

By mistake I took the cholent pot off the blech thinking that it was the soup pot, may I put the cholent pot back?

This is a difficult one, and there are various opinions on this matter. HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *Ztz"l*⁵ holds that one may return the food, see the reference in the footnote.

Are there any halachos as to how one is allowed to wrap towels around pots on the blech?

Yes there are, and the source for these *halachos* is in *simon 257*. In a nutshell: It is *osur* to enwrap (*batmana*) with towels, pillows etc. a pot of food that is on the fire (or blech or hot plate). If, however, a noticeable amount of the pot remains uncovered, it is permitted.⁶ For example: if one leaves the top uncovered and only enwraps the sides,⁷ or if only covers the top. Therefore, when placing a *challa* to warm on top of the urn, one must take care not to totally enwrap the *challa* with a towel.

¹ *Orach Chayim* 4, *simon* 61. However see *simon 74-12*.

² See last weeks page for an explanation. Roughly it means a temperature of 40°–45° C.

³ *Ben Derosai* is a name of a thief, mentioned in the *Gemora*, who would eat his meal before it was fully cooked. There is a *machlokes* (dispute) between *Rashi* and the *Rambam* as to whether this degree is $\frac{1}{3}$ cooked or $\frac{1}{2}$.

⁴ Based on *M"B* 318:27.

One of the conditions of chazora is that the pot must be held in one's hands. I also recall that one should not take food out of the pot while it

⁵ *Sh'miras Shabbos Kehilchasa* vol 3 1:20

⁶ *Sh'miras Shabbos Kehilchasa* 1:66 in the footnote.

⁷ *M"B* *simon* 278:2

is still on the blech or hot plate,⁸ yet I am not a magician. How is it done?

If there are two people, one can hold the pot and the other can take out the food. If you are by yourself, you may place the pot on the counter all the while holding the pot with one hand, take out the food, and return the pot to the blech or hot plate.⁹

A Vort on the Parsha

It says in the possuk (37:24), that the pit was empty, it had no water.

Rashi explains that although it did not contain water, it contained snakes and scorpions instead.

The Vilna Gaon explains that since the Torah is compared to water, when a person is void of Torah, he becomes filled with evil ideas and inclinations.

This is analogous to the explanation of the Gaon to the Possuk in Mishlei that says that a person must strive in his daily actions to raise himself to higher levels in order to prevent one from going down. The Gaon explains that if a person does not continually rise, he will automatically plunge downwards.

Picture yourself climbing the going-down escalator, if you ascend slower than the descending speed of the escalator **or if you stand still for even a split second, you immediately descend.** This world pulls us downwards, and to remain spiritually high, one has to continually ascend to higher levels.

⁸ The *Chazon Ish* (37:15) however, permits taking food out of a pot even while it is on the fire, taking care not to stir the ingredients.

Food For Thought

If the flames or electricity has gone out from under my pots, may I take the pots to a neighbor's blech or hot plate?

If the cholent is burning, what may be done to save it?

If the fire extinguished under the blech, may I ask a non-Jew to relight the fire?

Food was cooked for an ill person, is it muter for someone healthy to eat the leftovers?

Answers coming next week.

Iggeres HaGra - (part 1)

It is well-known that this world is all emptiness, that every amusement is worthless, and woe is anyone who pursues vanity, which is worthless. And don't envy the rich, for "riches are hoarded by their owner to his misfortune" (Koheles 5:12); "As he had come from his mother's womb, naked will he return...exactly as he came he must depart, and what did he gain by toiling for the wind?" (ib. 14, 15); "Even if he should live a thousand years twice over, but find no contentment - do not all go to the same place?" (ib. 6:6); "Even if man lives many years, let him rejoice in all of them, but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is futility" (ib. 11:8); "And of joy, what does it accomplish?" (ib. 2:2). Tomorrow you will cry for having laughed today.

⁹ The *Rama*, by the way, in *simon* 253:2 says *oda b'yado* – in his hand (not hands).

In memory of HaRav HaGaon Aryeh Lieb ztl ben HaRav HaGaon Refoel Shmuel Shilita

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Note: The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive p'sak.