



Parshas Shoftim 5765

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What have we learned so far with regards to chazora (returning food to a heat source)?

In the previous shiur we learned that if one wishes to return food to the heat source three rules must be complied with.

#1 – The food or liquid (soup etc.) must be fully cooked.

#2 – The food or liquid must be *yad soledes bo*, according to the *Mechaber* and warm according to the *Rama*.

#3 – The heat source must be covered. Consequently, food or liquid may be returned to a Shabbos hotplate or to a heat source that is covered with a blech.

The reason for the first two rules is to avoid the prohibition of *bishul* (cooking), because if the food is not fully cooked, when returned to the heat source it will cook further. In addition, liquid that has cooled down is subject to *bishul*.

Cold soup may not be returned to the heat source, but what about returning cold solids?

The rule is that *apropos* the prohibition of *bishul*, (cooking) liquids that have cooled down are subject to *bishul*, whereas fully cooked solids that have cooled down are not. ¹ It would therefore seem that one may return cold solids to a hotplate or *blech* (provided that the other conditions of *chazora* are met). Yet we do find a *machlokes* in the matter.

The *Magen Avraham* holds ² that one may not return anything that has cooled down, including solids. This position is supported by Rav Moshe Feinstein. ³

However, the *Bi'ur Halacha* cites the *Vilna Ga'on* who holds that one may **return** a cold solid and he seems to support this position. ⁴ One should ask one's rav as to the correct conduct on Shabbos.

What are the other rules for chazora?

It is evident from the *Shulchan Aruch* that one may not place food directly onto a blech unless it is being **returned**. The reason is to avoid the problem of *mechzi kimvashel* – it appears as if one is cooking and not **returning**.

Consequently, if the pot of food was removed from the heat source and placed on the floor, were one to return it to the heat source (a blech or hotplate) it would appear as if it is being placed there for the first time on Shabbos. Placing on the floor demonstrates that one has disassociated the pot from the fire and it may not be returned. ⁵

We can compare this to placing the food in the refrigerator. The host removed the chicken from the blech, served it and placed the dish containing the remainder in the refrigerator. This obviously shows that there is no intention to return the dish to the fire. Subsequently regretting this action the host then wishes to return the food to the fire. *Chazal* tell us that this is analogous to placing it on the blech or hotplate for the first time and is *ossur*. The *Mechaber* therefore holds that if the food or liquid was placed on the floor (or in the

¹ *Simon* 318:8.

² *Simon* 253:36, cited in *M"B* 253:68.

³ *Iggros Moshe Orach Chaim* IV *simon* 74-31.

⁴ The problem is that the *M"B* 253:68 cites the opinion of the *M"A* totally omitting the *Vilna Ga'on*, which lends us to believe that he supports the position of the *Vilna Ga'on*.

⁵ *Simon* 253:2.

refrigerator) it may not be returned to the fire even if the other conditions are met.⁶

What if the food was placed on the counter?

The *Mechaber* holds that if food was placed on the floor it may not be returned but when placed on a chair or counter, since it is not a total *siluk* (removal from the fire) it may be returned to the fire.⁷

The *Rama* however holds that one must continue holding the pot of food or liquids until returned to the fire. This demonstrates that it was never disassociated from the fire and there was continual intent to return it.⁸

How can I serve food from the pot if I must continuously hold it?

You need not hold it in the air, rather you may lean it on a counter or table, making sure to continuously hold it with one hand and serve with the other. When you are done serving you may return it to the blech or hotplate.⁹

Rule #4 – According to the Mechaber one must not place the pot of food onto the floor (or in the refrigerator) and according to the Rama one should continuously hold the pot until returned.

And the last rule?

The *Rama* adds that one must **intend** returning the food to the fire. This rule is not associated with the prohibition of bishul, because intending or not will not alter the status of the food, but intention will determine whether one is returning food to the fire or placing it there for the first

⁶ See the *Bi'ur Halacha* 'v'lo binicha al' that even if one intended on returning it to the fire, if it was placed on the floor the *Mechaber* agrees that it may not be returned.

⁷ See the *Bi'ur Halacha* *ibid*, which is based on the *Beis Yosef*.

⁸ This opinion is based on certain *Amora'im* in the *gemora*. The *Mechaber* follows other opinions in the *gemora*.

⁹ See the *SS"K* 1:18-2 and footnote 53.

time. We want to avoid the problem of *mechzi kimvashel*.

The *Mechaber* omitted this requirement.

Rule #5 – One must have intention to return the pot of food or liquid to the fire.

Summary:

#1 – Food fully cooked.

#2 – Food not cooled down.

#3 – Fire covered with a blech or a Shabbos hotplate.

#4 – Pot of food continuously held.

#5 – Intention to return.

Vort on the Parsha

The policemen would tell the fresh recruits that anyone fearful and faint of heart should return home and not go to war (20:8). *Rasbi* explains that they were referring to people who are afraid of the sins they have committed.

The problem is that this includes even talking between placing the *tefillin shel yad* and the *tefillin shel rosh*, so who can go to war without fear?

A *rebbe* explained that even though most everyone has some sin, yet one must rise from that sin and overcome it through *teshuva*.

Remove it from the slate and start afresh. If that person remains dejected and heartbroken and cannot rise to new challenges that person is not fit for war.

Food For Thought

What if I did not have in mind to return the pot but I continued to hold it?

What if I did not hold the pot but I had it in mind to return?

May I ever return a pot of food to an oven?

Answers coming be"H next week.

Mazel Tov to Rabbi Don Channen and his family on the marriage of his son.

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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.