



Parshas Shoftim 5767

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We commence with the laws of *chazora* – returning a pot of food to the stove as part of the *Melacha* of *Bishul*. This shiur contains 3 conditions with 2 more to follow in the next issue.

### *Under what conditions may a pot of food be returned to a blech or hotplate on Shabbos?*

The critical issue here is that of *bishul* – cooking. The *halacha* is that any food or liquid that is not fully cooked is subject to the *issur* of cooking. By removing and returning food to the fire several prohibitions might be violated.

Let us take the following example: on Friday night, a family member removes a pot of chicken from the hotplate, which is intended for the Shabbos day meal, takes a portion and returns the pot to the hotplate. If the remaining portions of chicken are not fully cooked, that family member has violated a biblical prohibition of *bishul*. [Whether or not the chicken returned to the hotplate may be eaten is a separate issue and was dealt with a few weeks ago.<sup>1</sup>]

The additional cooking of partially cooked food is a biblical prohibition.<sup>2</sup> Had the partially cooked food not been removed no problem would have occurred.

Before one may return food to a heat source one must ascertain whether the food is fully cooked.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. VI issue 34.

<sup>2</sup> Although several prominent *Rishonim* are of the opinion that food cooked to the degree of *ma'achal Ben Derusai* is no longer subject to the *issur d'oraisso* of *bishul*, many other *Rishonim* are of the opinion that *bishul* applies to any food not fully cooked. See *Bi'ur Halacha Simon* 318:4 “*afilu*”.

### **Rule #1 – food or liquids must be fully cooked prior to being returned to a blech or hotplate.**

#### *What if I am not sure if it is fully cooked?*

Then it may not be returned to the heat source.<sup>3</sup> Since it involves a biblical prohibition, the rule is *safeik d'oraisso l'chumra* – a doubt involving a biblical prohibition must be stringently resolved.

#### *What is the next problem?*

Food removed from a heat source tends to cool down and returning it to the heat source will inevitably raise its temperature. In certain cases this will also involve *bishul* – cooking. The *Shulchan Aruch* rules<sup>4</sup> that reheating a cold cooked liquid involves *bishul* and is prohibited.<sup>5</sup>

#### *How does one define “cold” with reference to returning liquid to a heat source?*

It is a *machlokes* between the *Mechaber* and the *Rama*.<sup>6</sup>

The *Mechaber* holds that food or liquid below the degree of *yad soledes bo* is considered cold and

<sup>3</sup> *Bi'ur Halacha Simon* 318:4 “*shayach*”, *SS”K* 1:17 footnote 55.

<sup>4</sup> *Simon* 318:4.

<sup>5</sup> Although several *Rishonim* (*Rambam*, *Rashba* and the *Ran*) hold that one may reheat a cooked food or liquid, the *Mechaber* ruled according to the other *Rishonim* (*Rashi*, *Rabeinu Yona*, *Rosh* and *Tur*) that it is *ossur* to reheat a cold cooked liquid. Everyone agrees though that it is *ossur* to place it directly onto a heat source such as a blech or hotplate – *Bi'ur Halacha Simon* 318:4 “*yesb bo*”.

<sup>6</sup> *Simon* 253:2.

may not be returned. We know that *yad soledes bo* is defined as somewhere between 40°-45°C, 104°-113°F. The problem is that it is possible that this may not be taken as a leniency and accordingly *l'chumra* (stringently) must be calculated as 71°C, 160°F.<sup>7</sup> The *Rama* holds that as long as it has not completely cooled down it may be returned.<sup>8</sup>

**Rule #2 – Food<sup>9</sup> or liquids must not have cooled down. According to the Mechaber it must be *yad soledes bo* and according to the Rama it must not have cooled down.**

### *What is the next rule?*

Even when food is fully cooked and hot it may not be placed or returned onto an open flame.<sup>10</sup> The reason is because it is *mechzi kimvasel* – it appears as if one is cooking on Shabbos. In previous shiurim we mentioned the concept of *garuf v'katum* – raking coals or sprinkling ash onto coals. The modern equivalent is a blech and hotplate, because one does not regularly cook on them. Accordingly the hotplate must be one that is used for warming and not for cooking. Both these items are considered covered heat sources and one may return pots of food onto a blech or hotplate.

**Rule #3 – Food may only be returned to a blech or hotplate.**

### *May one cover the flame on Shabbos?*

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<sup>7</sup> Based on *Igros Moshe Orach Chaim* vol. IV *Simon* 74, *bishul*–3.

<sup>8</sup> See the *Igros Moshe Orach Chaim* IV *Simon* 74, *Bishul*–3. This definition is based on the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav Simon* 318:9. I heard from Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל that he defined it as Rav Moshe did.

<sup>9</sup> Although there is no bishul when reheating a cooked solid, several poskim require that the solid remain warm when wishing to return it to the flame (*M"B Simon* 253:68).

<sup>10</sup> *Simon* 253:2. *SS"K* 1:18-3.

One may cover the flame on Shabbos with a blech,<sup>11</sup> provided that the blech does not become red hot, as that would be *hav'arah* – making a fire.

### *Does the covering not affect the flame beneath the blech?*

No, it merely modifies the flame's direction or shape but does not affect the amount of gas escaping the burners.

Thus, even if the pot was removed from an open flame where it was placed before Shabbos, one may cover the flame with a blech on Shabbos and one may then return it provided, of course, that the other conditions have been fulfilled.

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## Vort on the Parsha

Before Jewish soldiers enter battle, they would be told (Chap 20 V. 3 & *Rashi*) not to fear the clatter the enemy causes when striking their spears on the shields; not to fear the sounds of horses trampling; not to fear the enemy's trumpets and not to fear their shouting. They are four different frightening sounds. But how is it possible and how can we be warned not to fear? The answer heard from R' Dovid Orlofsky is that sound is an illusion. It is not real. There is nothing there. The Torah did not say do not fear flying bullets, because that is real; the Torah warned us not to fear illusions.

The *Yetzer Hara* is an illusion. Rav Dessler said that the *Yetzer Hara* creates one illusion and substitutes it with another, thus the four different "noises" in the *posuk*. It is up to us to see through the illusions and triumph!

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<sup>11</sup> *Simon* 253:3. *SS"K* 1 appendix\* on *se'if* 18.

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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.