



Parshas Nitzavim/Vayeilech 5767

September 7, '07
Volume VI Issue 39

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 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 Kehilchaso* 1-footnote 111. The same applies to moving a pot on a hot plate to a hotter spot. [A *blech* is an iron or copper sheet placed over the flames].

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. One school of thought understands that since you did not intend on returning the pot of food in your hands, it may not be returned once it has been set down. If still in one's hands it may be returned, based on the *halacha* that one may return food if all conditions were adhered to, save for either holding in one's hands or intention to return, see *shiur* #37.

The other school understands that since your intention was never to remove this particular pot, the fact that it is in one's hands is of no consequence and it is as if it never left the heat source.

HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל³ holds that one may return the food, see the reference in the footnote.

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?

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

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

³ *Sh'miras Shabbos Kehilchaso* vol 3 1:20

Yes you may. Since you never took your mind off heating the food, it is as if you are standing all the time holding the pots in your hand with the intention of returning them to the fire.⁴ Here too the other *chazora* conditions must be kept, namely the food is fully cooked and still warm.

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

Option #1. Move the *cholent* away from the heat source, or place a metal plate below the pot.⁵

Option #2. According to the **Sephardim**: there is a *machlokes* amongst the *poskim* as to whether one may pour boiling water from the urn into another pot that is on the fire,⁶ which means that it is not simple to permit pouring from the urn into the *cholent*.

According to the **Ashkenazim**: it is *mutar* to pour hot water from an urn on a *blech*, or from an electric urn, directly into the *cholent* pot. HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל⁷ holds that it is also *mutar* to pour from the urn into a cup and from the cup into the *cholent* pot. The *cholent* must be on a *blech* or hot plate in order for one to add hot water to it. If possible one should lift the cholent from the heat source before adding the water and then set it down.⁸

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

Dealing with issues addressing non-Jews is tricky, since many are under the pretence that

⁴ *SS"K* 1 footnote 69.

⁵ *Simon* 253:3.

⁶ *Ohr L'tzion* B, 17-8. *Yechave Da'at* 4-22

⁷ *SS"K* 1 footnote 44.

⁸ Rav Sternbuch *shlita*.

everything is permitted, especially when *oneg Shabbos* is involved.

One may not ask a non-Jew to relight the fire because lighting a fire is an *issur d'oraisso* (a Torah prohibition) and the *halacha* is that one is forbidden to ask a non-Jew to do an *issur d'oraisso* even for the sake of a *mitzvah*, unless in dire circumstances, where a Rav should be asked.⁹ If a non-Jew relit the fire **on his accord** and the food was still warm, it may be eaten.¹⁰

Hatmana

Is one permitted to put a challah, wrapped in foil, into the oven before Shabbos (and the oven is either on or off)?

The problem of totally wrapping a *challah* is the issue of *hatmana* – meaning enwrapping. In *simon* 257:1 we find that one is permitted to do *hatmana* **before Shabbos** in towels etc. if there is no heat source present. If a heat source is present, one may not entirely wrap an item even before Shabbos and all the more so on Shabbos. Therefore, the answer to this common question must be divided as follows:

1. If the *challah* is not entirely¹¹ enwrapped in the aluminum foil it is permitted even if the oven is turned on.
2. If the *challah* is entirely enwrapped in foil, it depends:
 - a. If one's intention is to enhance the heat, it is forbidden even if the oven is turned off.¹²
 - b. It might be permitted if one's intention is only to prevent the *challah* from drying out, because one's intention is not to store heat and a *rav* should be asked. However, the correct way is to leave the foil a little open and not entirely enwrap the *challah*.¹³

⁹ *M"B simon* 276:24.

¹⁰ *Simon* 253:5.

¹¹ It must be **noticeable** that the wrapping does not entirely wrap the item.

¹² In *M"B* 257:43 we see that even when the oven is turned off, according to some opinions it is considered a heat source. The *M"B* concludes in such a case that one need not reprove the *mekillim*. It is possible that contemporary ovens cool quicker and it not considered a heat source, a *rav* should be asked.

¹³ There are *poskim* who are of the opinion that aluminum foil is like any container, which is not

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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.

Does the same apply to placing it on pots or on the urn?

Yes it does. If one wishes to warm *challos* before a meal, they may be placed on top of an urn or on top of other pots. If the *challos* are wrapped in aluminum foil, one should expose a noticeable section of the *challah* and thus avoid the issue of *hatmana*. If one's purpose is merely to prevent the *challos* from drying out, one need not expose a section of the *challos*.

Erev Rosh Hashana

The *gemora* writes that the Book of Life and the Book of Death are open on Rosh Hashanah and it is for this reason we do not say *shira*.

How can we "persuade" the Heavenly Court to inscribe us in the Book of Life. The *seforim* write that the theme of Rosh Hashanah is *malchus* – anointing *Hashem* King of the world, as is evident from much of the *tefillah*, and if *Hashem* is King, we are His servants. Being a faithful servant means fulfilling the master's every wish and demand to the utmost, on every occasion, constantly.

One can get inscribed in the Book of Life by making oneself a servant of *Hashem*. When saying *melech* or *malchus* during the Rosh Hashanah davening, one must strike home the ideal to become *Hashem's* servant, which in turn will give reason to the Heavenly Court to inscribe one in the Book of Life.¹⁴

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לזכר נשמת חנה בת ברוך

hatmana, unless the container is wrapped in something else. See *Otzros haShabbos* 2-54.

¹⁴ Based on the *Nesivos Shalom* and *Siftei Chaim*.