

Going Kosher

ספר

כשרון המעשה

על

הלכות כשרות הבית למעשה

Going Kosher

An easy, user friendly guide to keeping
kosher

By

Rabbi Amiram Markel



Kosher Certification of America
www.KCAKosher.com

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Going Kosher

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www.TrueKabbalah.com

email - rabbiamarkel@gmail.com

Going Kosher

From *HaRav*, Rabbi Fishel Jacobs *Shli'ta*

Author of the acclaimed books:

Chochmas HaTahara-On the laws of *Niddah*

Zemonim-On the laws of menstrual cycles

Family Purity-A *Halachic* guide to marital fulfillment

Study Guide for Choson and Kallah-A guide to family purity

The Blech Book-On the *Halachos* of *Shabbos* hotplates

To whom it may concern,

With great pleasure, I have reviewed the manuscript of *Going Kosher*, written by the illustrious Rabbi Amiram Markel *Shli'ta*. Rarely have I seen a book on *Halacha* combine scope and accessibility so delightfully.

For over twenty years, Rabbi Markel has been involved in many aspects of kosher food production in a way of *Halacha LeMaaseh*. This includes supervising food production plants, wineries, dairy farms for *Cholov Yisroel*, canneries and bottling plants, as well as hotels, restaurants, bakeries and caterers etc. The author has been instrumental in training *Mashgichim* in Southern California and has been a pivotal point from whom many questions in *Halacha* have been answered.

All this and more, is reflected in his excellent book *Going Kosher*. The extensive footnotes from *Shulchan Aruch* and its accompanying commentaries testify to its authority. In addition, the user-friendly, contemporary English, supplies a refreshing balance.

Rabbi Markel's achievement through this comprehensive work is a shining example of the saying, "He who learns Torah in order to do, merits to learn and to teach, to keep and to do (*Avos* 4:5)." I encourage the author to bring his labor of love to fruition by publishing it in a quick and auspicious time. May his wellsprings flow forth and may he and his family merit health, and continued success in spreading Torah and blessings in all their endeavors.

Anxiously awaiting the quickly approaching redemption,

Rabbi Fishel Jacobs

Going Kosher

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From *HaRav*, Rabbi Hillel L. Simon *Shli'ta*

Executive Head Supervisor, *Kashrut* Division, London Beth Din.
Director of Rabbinic Ordination, *Machon Mayim Chayim*,
England

I have carefully reviewed the manuscript of *Going Kosher*, authored by Rabbi Amiram Markel, *Shli'ta*. The book displays tremendous depth of knowledge and research into many areas of kosher law, and a profound grasp of the practical issues facing the modern kosher consumer.

As Rabbinic coordinator for the *Kashrut* Division of the London Beth Din, I have heard many of the questions presented in this book posed by the kosher supervisors for caterers, restaurants and bakeries, as well as members of the public. During my 10 years as a campus rabbi for many campuses in the west of England and South Wales, many students approached me with their difficulties in using a kitchen shared with others who did not keep kosher and all the mistakes that inevitably arose. With this book in hand, the English reading public will feel confident in their understanding of the *kashrut* issues they face and can consult their local rabbi from a vantage point of sophistication, such as they have in other academic pursuits.

With so many of our Jewish brothers and sisters eager to embrace anew the *mitzvot* of *kashrut*, and the frequent changes of abode common in our time, how to “*Go Kosher*” is a most current crucial issue, and one made so much easier, meaningful and enjoyable by this wonderful book. I eagerly await the publication of this work, so that English speakers all over the world will be able to benefit from its wisdom, inspiration and practicality.

I would encourage further publications by the author to include the equally practical areas of cooking, baking and handling of wine by non-Jews, as well as the in-depth coverage of forbidden mixtures etc. which he promises in this volume. With the approach of *Shavuot*, the celebration of the gift of the Torah, may the Almighty open our minds and hearts to the study of Torah and let us speedily hear new Torah teachings from our Righteous Redeemer.

With Blessings,

Rabbi Hillel L. Simon

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From *HaRav*, Rabbi Binyomin Lisbon *Shli'ta*

Rav HaMachshir of Kashrus Supervision of America-KSA

Greetings and blessings,

I have reviewed the manuscript of *Going Kosher*, by the esteemed Rabbi Amiram Markel *Shli'ta*, and was very impressed by the wide scope and caliber of his important work. Through fine writing, coupled with a wide knowledge of Torah, Rabbi Markel has succeeded in bringing order and clarity to a vast and often confusing subject and has bridged the gap between presenting a popular *Kashrus* guide and writing a work of scholarship and erudition. He has accomplished this through backing virtually all his *Halachic* statements by citing many pertinent and authoritative sources throughout the length and breadth of *Halachic* literature. Thus, this book promises to be an outstanding source book, to be referenced by teachers and students, as well as a popular guide for all.

Moreover, Rabbi Markel brings with him more than two decades of practical experience in almost all aspects of the kosher supervision field. Through years of involvement, Rabbi Markel has supervised in many diverse venues, from large production plants to small kosher establishments. He is often called upon to train *Mashgichim*, both one-on-one and in group seminars and is regarded as an expert in *Halacha*, especially in the kosher field. He is often sought after when *Kashrus* questions arise.

I give Rabbi Markel my highest praise and accolades. I pray that the Master of the Universe gives him a long and healthy life and that He bless him with wisdom, understanding and knowledge to continue advancing the practice of Torah and *mitzvos* through his writings.

Rabbi Binyomin Lisbon

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From *HaRav*, Rabbi Moshe D. Bryski *Shli'ta*

Renowned lecturer and Chief Chabad Rabbi of the Conejo Valley

To whom it may concern,

I was delighted to read the manuscript of “*Going Kosher*” by the acclaimed author, Rabbi Amiram Markel *Shli'ta* and found it to be “head and shoulders” above any other kosher guide in the English language today. As with his writings on Jewish mysticism and philosophy, the book is fully researched and displays brilliance, scholarship and mastery, this time in the field of *Halacha*. Above all, it is the superbly crafted product of a clear and orderly mind. By concisely explaining the broad spectrum of *kashrus* issues facing the modern Jew, this book fills a great need and promises to be an instant success. I am confident that the English speaking public will receive it with eagerness and will benefit greatly from its wisdom and counsel.

On a personal note, I have known Rabbi Markel for many years and can testify to his refined character, fear of heaven and scrupulous observance of the *mitzvos*. Moreover, as *Rav HaMachshir* of the “Kosher Council of Ventura County and Conejo Valley-KCA”, Rabbi Markel has greatly enhanced Jewish life here by providing kosher supervision to all our kosher restaurants, butcher stores, markets etc. Throughout, in his confident, but mild mannered and unassuming way, he has commanded the trust and respect of all those who have had the honor and privilege of associating with him.

I am sure this book will be instrumental in bringing many people closer to *kashrus* observance and I thank Rabbi Markel for presenting this wonderful gift to *Klal Yisroel*. May *HaShem* bless him with health, wealth and *nachas* from his children and grandchildren and may he merit beholding the true and complete redemption, through our righteous *Moshiach*.

Rabbi Moshe D. Bryski

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Acknowledgements

With gratitude to *HaShem* for all the bountiful blessings He has bestowed upon me, I would like to express my deepest heartfelt gratitude to all my dear friends and associates who have aided and encouraged me during the research and writing of this book.

First and foremost, I thank the renowned author of many important *Halachic* books, **Rabbi Fishel Jacobs שליט"א**, for his encouragement and counsel throughout this difficult and laborious process. Thank you, Rabbi, from the bottom of my heart, for sharing your experience and expertise and especially for your great faith in me. You have been a tremendous source of strength and inspiration and for this I am eternally grateful.

I would also like to thank **Rabbi Hillel L. Simon שליט"א**, Executive Head Supervisor of the “London Beth Din-Kashrut Division”, for carefully sifting through the manuscript and for his kind comments, pointers and suggestions. Rabbi, your notes were very helpful and are much appreciated.

Very special thanks to the acclaimed author and expert on all things kosher, **Rabbi Eliezer Eidlitz שליט"א** of the “Kosher Information Bureau – Kosherquest”. Thank you for taking time out from your very hectic schedule to go through my manuscript with a “fine-tooth comb”. Your notes and comments were indispensable and I thank you for that. I

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would especially like to express my deep-felt **הכרת הטוב** (gratitude) for all the tremendous trust, confidence and support you have always shown in recommending my kosher supervision through the years. My family and I will forever be indebted to you for the kindness and friendship you have shown us.

I would also like to thank my illustrious colleague, **Rabbi Binyomin Lisbon שליט"א**, *Rav HaMachshir* of “Kosher Supervision of America-KSA”, for reviewing my manuscript and for your kind comments. I pray that you continue your holy work of assuring quality kosher food for the Jewish community for many healthy and prosperous years to come.

Special thanks to my colleagues in the former “Kosher Council of Ventura County and Conejo Valley”. These are the highly acclaimed, **Rabbi Moshe Bryski שליט"א** of Chabad of Agoura Hills and the esteemed **Rabbi Yaakov Latowicz** of Chabad of Ventura, **Rabbi Yisroel Levine** of Chabad of Oak Park, **Rabbi Yitzchok Sapochkinsky** of Chabad of Westlake Village, **Rabbi Eli Broner** of Conejo Jewish Day School and **Rabbi Chaim Bryski** of Chabad of Thousand Oaks. Thank you for your continued support of **KCA Kosher-Kosher Certification of America**.

Also, thank you to my dear friends, **Dr. Martin and Deborah Goodman**. It was your commitment to living a kosher lifestyle that inspired the writing of this book. May it be G-d's will that you continue to go from strength to strength in your spiritual growth and may you have health, wealth and much *nachas* from your children for many years to come.

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Special acknowledgement to all my wonderful children and grandchildren; **Yaakov Yosef Markel, Rabbi Yehudah Shimon and Rochel Chana Markel** and their endearing children **Yisroel Hillel and Pessia Gittel, Rabbi Shaul and Chaya Feige Teller** and their lovable daughter **Chana Rochel, Rabbi Shmuel Leib Markel and Rabbi Dovid Markel**. I love you all! You are a tremendous source of *nachas* to me.

Last, but not least, I thank my dear wife and life-partner of over 34 years, **Rebbetzin Esther Markel שתתי**. Esther, if all the oceans were ink and the heavens were parchment, they would be insufficient in holding the account of all the love, faith, wisdom, counsel, understanding, patience, trust, nurturing, support, self-sacrifice etc. etc. that you have given me. You, Esther, are a true אשת היל¹ (woman of valor) and about you the words כאמה בתה² (like mother, like daughter) are applicable, for you are truly your mother's daughter. Esther, thank you for being mine!

¹ Proverbs 31:10, Proverbs 12:4

² Ezekiel 16:44

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מפתח ראשי תיבות הפוסקים והספרים

א.

אג"מ - אגרות משה
אדמו"ר - אדוננו מורנו ורבנו
אהע"ז - אבן העזר
או"ה - איסור והיתר
או"ח - אורח חיים
אעפ"כ - אף על פי כן
אפ"י - אפילו

ב.

באה"ט - באר היטב
בא"ח - בן איש חי
בדה"ש - בדי השלחן
ב"ח - בית חדש
ב"י - בית יוסף
ביה"ל - ביאור הלכה
ב"מ - בבא מציעא
ברכ"י - ברכי יוסף

ג.

גמ' - גמרא
גרא"א - גאון רבנו אליהו
גרבי"צ - גאון רבי בן-ציון (אבא שאול)
גר"מ - גאון רבי משה (פיינשטיין)
גר"מ - גאון רבי מרדכי (אליהו)
גר"מ - גאון רבי משה (שטרן)
גר"ע - גאון רבי עובדיה (יוסף)
גרע"א - גאון רבי עקיבא איגר

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גרש"ז – גאון רבי שלמה זלמן (אוייערביך)

ז.

דגמ"ר – דגול מרבבה
דרכ"ת – דרכי תשובה
דע"ת – דעת תורה

ה.

הל' – הלכות
העוה"ז – העולם הזה

ח.

ח"א – חיי אדם
ח"א – חלק א
ח"ב – חלק ב
ח"ג – חלק ג
חז"מ – חושן משפט
חזו"א – חזון איש
חיד"א – חיים יוסף דוד אזולאי
חכ"א – חכמת אדם
חכמ"א – חכמת אדם
חלק"י – חלקת יעקב
חת"ס – חתם סופר

ט.

ט"ז – טורי זהב

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י.

יבי"א – יביע אומר
ידי"נ – ידיד נפש
יו"ד – יורה דעה
יחו"ד – יחווה דעת
יעב"ץ – יעקב עמדין בן צבי
ישוע"י – ישועות יעקב

כ.

כה"ח – כף החיים
כ"מ – כסף משנה
כס"מ – כסף משנה
כ"ק – כבוד קדושת
כת"ס – כתב סופר

ל.

לח"מ – לחם משנה

מ.

מבי"ט – משה בן יוסף טראני
מג"א – מגן אברהם
מהד"ת – מהדורא תניינא
מהר"ם – מורנו הרב רבי מאיר (מרוטנברג)
מהר"ם שיק – מורנו הרב רבי משה שיק
מהרמ"ם (מרימנוב) – מורנו הרב רבי מנחם מענדל (מרימנוב)
מהרש"א – מורנו הרב רבי שמואל אידלס
מהרש"ם – מורנו הרב רבי שלום מרדכי
מחצה"ש – מחצית השקל
מלבי"ם – מאיר ליבוש בן יחיאל מיכל
מנח"י – מנחת יצחק

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משנ"ב – משנה ברורה

ג.

נ"ט בר נ"ט – נותן טעם בר נותן טעם

ס.

סוס"י – סוף סימן

ע.

ע"א – ענף א

עאכו"כ – על אחד כמה וכמה

ע"ב – ענף ב

ע"ז – עבודה זרה

עכו"ם – עובדי כוכבים ומזלות

עמ' – עמוד

עפ"י – על פי

ערוה"ש – ערוך השלחן

פ.

פיהמ"ש – פירוש המשניות

פרי"ח – פרי חדש

פמ"ג – פרי מגדים

פת"ש – פתחי תשובה

צ.

צי"א – ציץ אליאזר

צ"צ – צמח צדק

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ק.

קו"א – קונטרס אחרון
קצוה"ש – קצות השלחן

ר.

ראב"ן – רבי אליעזר בן נתן
רא"ה – רבי אליהו הלוי
רא"ש – רבנו אשר
רדב"ז – רבנו דוד בן זמרה
ריטב"א – רבנו יום טוב בן אברהם
רי"ף – רבנו יצחק אלפסי
רמ"א – רבנו משה איסרלש
רמב"ם – רבנו משה בן מימון
רמב"ן – רבנו משה בן נחמן
ר"ן – רבנו נסים
רע"ב – רב עובדיה ברטנורא
רע"ק – רבי עקיבא (איגר)
רעק"א – רבי עקיבא איגר
רשב"א – רבנו שלמה בן אדרת
רשב"ם – רבנו שמואל בן מאיר
רש"י – רבנו שלמה יצחקי

ש.

שד"ח – שדי חמד
שו"ע – שלחן ערוך
שו"ע הרב – שלחן ערוך הרב
שו"ע המקוצר – שלחן ערוך המקוצר
שו"ע הקצר – שלחן ערוך הקצר
שו"ת – שאלות ותשובות

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שיטמ"ק – שיטה מקובצת
ש"ך – שפתי כהן
של"ה – שני לוחות הברית
ש"ע – שלחן ערוך
שעה"צ – שער הציון
שע"ת – שערי תשובה

ת.

תבו"ש – תבואות שור
תוס' - תוספות
תפא"י – תפארת ישראל
תשב"צ – תשובות שמעון בן צמח

Going Kosher

This book is dedicated to my dear friends

Dr. Martin and Deborah Goodman

It was your commitment to leading a kosher lifestyle that inspired the writing of this book

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Why Go Kosher

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Testimonies, Statutes and Judgments

Besides narrative, the Torah is also comprised of 613 commandments (*mitzvot*). There are several ways these *mitzvot* may be categorized. The most fundamental is that there are 248 positive commandments³ and 365 negative commandments.⁴ In other words, there are 248 do's and 365 don'ts. For the most part, the dietary laws are amongst the 365 don'ts. Another way to categorize the *mitzvot* is that there are those which address man's relationship with G-d and others which address man's relationship with his fellow man.⁵ Here, the laws of kosher are amongst those that address man's relationship with G-d. However, the Torah⁶ gives us a third way of understanding the *mitzvot*. It states, "If your son asks you, 'What are the testimonies, the statutes and the judgments which HaShem our G-d commanded you etc.'" (העדות החוקים והמשפטים).

Judgments refer to all those *mitzvot* that make sense to our human understanding. These are laws such as "Do not

³ These correspond to the 248 organs that make up the human body.

⁴ These correspond to the 365 sinews that make up the human body, as well as the 365 days of the solar year.

⁵ For example, the first five of the Ten Commandments, which were engraved on the first tablet, address man's relationship with G-d. The last five, which were engraved on the second tablet, address man's relationship with his fellow man. The fourth commandment, to honor one's parents, is part of the first tablet and acts as a bridge between the two. This teaches us that since parents are partners with G-d in the creation of a child, we must honor our parents with the same kind of respect that we honor our Creator.

⁶ Deuteronomy 6:20

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steal”,⁷ “Do not murder”⁸ etc. which make logical sense to us and are therefore readily accepted. Had G-d not commanded them we could have likely arrived at them through our intellect.

Testimonies refer to those *mitzvoth* that we would never have arrived at had G-d not commanded them. However, now that they were given, they make sense to us and we can understand why we should keep and observe them. These are either commemorative *mitzvoth*, such as *Passover*⁹, *Succoth*,¹⁰ and *Shavuoth*¹¹ or *mitzvoth* that the Torah gives a reason for, such as the *mitzvah* of wearing fringes (*Tzitzit*) on a four cornered garment. The Torah tells us,¹² “They shall be fringes for you so that you shall see them and remember all the *mitzvoth* of *HaShem*, to do them.” By ourselves, we would never think to wear fringes on our garments. However, now that the Torah has told us, it makes perfect sense that they serve as a mnemonic by which to remember the *mitzvoth*. Likewise with the holidays; by ourselves we would never think to eat unleavened bread on Passover or dwell in huts on *Sukkoth*, but now that the Torah commands us, we understand that it is to commemorate and relive what our forefathers experienced when they were liberated from Egyptian enslavement.¹³

However, statutes are those *mitzvoth* which we cannot understand through human intellect at all. Rather, we keep

⁷ Exodus 20:12

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Leviticus 23:5-7

¹⁰ Ibid. 23:33-36

¹¹ Ibid. 23:16-21

¹² Numbers 15:37-40

¹³ Leviticus 23:43, Numbers 15:41

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them solely because they are the decree of our King; the King, King of kings, the Holy One, blessed is He. All the laws of ritual purity and impurity fall into this category. It makes no logical sense that if one touches or is in the same building as a corpse, he becomes ritually impure and that with the sprinkling of the ashes of the red heifer he becomes pure again, whereas the *Cohen* who sprinkled him becomes impure, with a lesser degree of impurity.¹⁴ It makes no logical sense that during her menstrual cycle a Jewish woman is ritually impure and forbidden to her husband and that after counting seven clean days and immersing in a kosher *mikvah*, she becomes pure and permissible to him.¹⁵ Furthermore, the *mitzvah* of *mikvah*¹⁶ itself makes no logical sense. Why do the waters of a kosher *mikvah* purify her, whereas the waters of a bathtub or swimming pool not purify her? There is no physical difference between the two waters.

As stated above, these are decrees of the King and we do them, not because we understand them, but because, as His subjects, we have accepted the yoke of His kingship upon ourselves. Similarly, all the kosher dietary laws are statutes of the King. If one would examine a kosher beef steak, using the most advanced scientific equipment, and compare it to a non-kosher beef steak, he would find that there is scarcely any physical difference between them. They would be practically identical in every way; chemically, molecularly and atomically. Nonetheless, this is a kosher steak and may be consumed by a Jew, and this is a non-kosher steak and is forbidden to him. Ultimately, we keep kosher because G-d

¹⁴ Numbers 19:1-20

¹⁵ Leviticus 15:19-28

¹⁶ Ibid. 11:36

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decreed it and as His subjects we do His will, whether we understand it or not.

Divine Universal Standards

All this notwithstanding, even though these *mitzvoth* are beyond human understanding, nonetheless, since G-d invested us with the faculty of intellect, not only are we permitted, but it is even incumbent upon us, to try to fathom their meaning to the limit of our reach and to the fullest of our capacity. However, this must be done with the full awareness that ultimately, we keep the *mitzvoth*, not because we understand them, but simply because they are G-d's will. Moreover, ultimately, even the *mitzvoth* that are called judgments and testimonies (which we *think* we understand) are in reality, beyond our reach and grasp. This is because, upon closer examination, we come to the deeper realization that the only reason not stealing or not murdering makes sense to us, is because G-d has instilled it into us.

When we study the animal realm, however, we find quite the opposite to be true. By nature, animals have no compunctions, whatsoever, about stealing or killing etc. The concepts of value of life, property rights, or morals and ethics, simply do not exist for them. Their *only* law is "The law of the jungle", i.e. "Might makes right", and they are completely devoid of any sense of conscience or morality. Man on the other hand has an innate sense of justice and the sense of right and wrong. These are inborn characteristics unique to man, that were instilled in him by his Creator.

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This being the case, we see that, ultimately, even the mitzvot which fall into the category of judgments are kept only because they are G-d's will. We keep them because they are *universal standards set by G-d* rather than social standards set by human convention. Therefore, if any nation or society would deviate from them and decide to abrogate them by consensus, such as what happened in Nazi Germany, (may the name of the wicked be obliterated and may their bones be ground into dust) then that nation or society would be evil and unjust.

With all the above in mind, and with the understanding that whatever reasons or explanations we arrive at, do not represent the ultimate depth and intent of the *mitzvot*, we will now examine the meaning of the kosher dietary laws to the best of our ability.

What does kosher mean?

Fit, Proper and good

The word Kosher (כשר) means fit, proper and good.¹⁷ In the context of diet it means, "That which is fit to eat according to biblical dietary laws". All the kosher laws were either commanded by G-d at Sinai, and are therefore part and parcel of the Torah along with the other *mitzvot* (Commandments); are oral traditions which go back to

¹⁷ ספר השרשים, שרש כשר.

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Moses¹⁸ who received them from G-d; or were ordained by the sages for the purpose of safeguarding and strengthening their observance¹⁹ or with health considerations in mind.²⁰

Eating the Limb of a Living Animal

Originally, until the time of Noah, mankind was not meant to eat meat. Adam was commanded,²¹ “You may certainly eat of all the trees of the garden but as for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, do not eat from it etc.” From this we surmise²² that, except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam was permitted by G-d to eat only fruits and vegetables. Only later did G-d permit the consumption of meat when He told Noah,²³ “Every creeping thing that is alive will be yours to eat similar to green vegetables etc.”

Nonetheless, as the Torah relates,²⁴ the generations until the great flood were very evil in G-d’s eyes and, over time, descended into lower and lower levels of perverseness and depravity. Eventually, they fell so low that, in addition to other matters, not only did they eat meat, but they also ate the limbs of living animals,²⁵ similar to wild beasts, which

¹⁸ This is called, “Halacha l’Moshe m’Sinai” (הלכה למשה מסיני)

¹⁹ This is called, “D’Rabbanan” (דרבנן)

²⁰ Deuteronomy 4:15, שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ה, ראה גמ' חולין י ע"א, שו"ע או"ח קעג:ב, שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ה

²¹ ראה סנהדרין נ"ט ע"ב

²² גמ' סנהדרין נט:ב.

²³ Genesis 9:3

²⁴ Genesis 6:11-13

²⁵ ראה ספר מקבציאל, גליון ט"ו:כ

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tear apart and devour their prey while it still lives. One can imagine the terrible savagery and cruelty of such acts.

As mentioned above, after the great flood, when Noah, his family and all the animals which survived with him, left the Ark, he and all his descendants were permitted by G-d to eat meat.²⁶ However, the only caveat was the prohibition against eating the flesh of a living animal.²⁷ The animal would first need to have died or be slaughtered and only then could it be consumed. Even part of the animal, such as a limb, could not be eaten while it still lived. This law, which is one of the seven laws received by Noah from G-d, is a universal law which applies to all mankind to this very day.

Today, as citizens of the western world, living in the 21st century, it is very difficult for us to imagine how anyone would want to eat a living animal. We cringe at the thought of committing such a cruel and gruesome act. It seems utterly barbaric and animalistic beyond description. However, it must be understood that we only have such sensitivity because, by now, during this juncture of history, most of the world has already been profoundly influenced by and imbued with the ethics and mores of Torah, either directly or indirectly.

Nonetheless, even today, in those parts of the world which have been relatively untouched by the influence of Torah, such practices are still prevalent and are every day occurrences. One example of this is Thailand, where it is considered to be a delicacy to scoop out and eat raw monkey brains while the victim is still alive and quite conscious.

²⁶ Genesis 9:3

²⁷ Genesis 9:4, וראה רמב"ם הל' שחיטה א:ב,

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Furthermore, this is not just the practice of uncultured village primitives living in a remote corner of the Siamese jungles. Rather, this is a normal practice within the great metropolises of Thailand and is regarded as a delicacy of the rich and famous.

The Seven *Noachide* Laws

The seven *Noachide* laws are:²⁸

- 1) Do not commit Idolatry
- 2) Do not Blaspheme G-d
- 3) Do not murder
- 4) Do not steal
- 5) Do not commit forbidden sexual acts
- 6) Do not eat the limb of a living animal
- 7) Set up courts of law

Six of these laws were originally received from G-d by Adam, and the additional law concerning eating the limb of a living animal was given to Noah.²⁹ Though G-d is the source of these seven laws, just as He is the source of the Torah, nonetheless, they serve a completely different function than the 613 *mitzvot* (commandments) of the Torah. This is not merely a quantitative difference. It is not just that Jews have more commandments and therefore greater responsibility toward G-d than non-Jews. Rather, there is a profound difference between these two sets of laws. This is so much

²⁸ סנהדרין נ"ו ע"א

²⁹ רמב"ם הל' מלכים פרק ט:א

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so, that they cannot be compared to each other altogether, in that they are of a different order and category.

The purpose of the seven commandments given to Noah is to civilize mankind, so that rather than being a “dog eat dog” world; a world of cruelty, bloodshed and violence, which degenerates into ever increasing chaos and turmoil, it becomes a world of lawfulness; a world of civilized, orderly society dictated by social mores, standards and customs. We, therefore, see that the function of these commandments is to make the world a settled, wholesome place.³⁰

Preventing Sadistic Tendencies

Now, in regard to the subject at hand, the commandment forbidding man from eating the limb of a living animal is to prevent him from sinking into sadistic tendencies of cruelty and bloodlust toward animals, which inevitably will spill over into his relationship with his fellow human beings as well. A person could rationalize to himself, “Of course, I would never be cruel to my fellow man. However, what is wrong with eating a live animal? First of all, it is for the purpose of eating, which I must do to survive, and secondly, it is quite normal in the animal world. I would not be doing unto them anything that they would not do unto me.”

The response to the first argument is that eating the animal alive is unwarranted cruelty.³¹ Animals, such as

³⁰ ספר ברית עולם ט"ו

³¹ גמ' ב"מ ל"ב ע"ב

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wolves or tigers, have no choice in how they hunt their prey. The only method available to them is to tear their prey apart with their teeth. Once they do this they become totally driven by the instinct of bloodlust and there is no stopping them. A human being, on the other hand, does not kill with his teeth. He could just as well kill the animal before he eats it, thus putting it out of its misery. Eating it alive would only be because he gets some kind of perverse pleasure and thrill in being cruel.

Such an act would only fuel his love of cruelty and fan the flames of his basest nature, and as we said above, inevitably this tendency to sadism would spill over into his relationship with his fellow human beings. As known, many sadistic serial murderers initially tortured and killed animals before graduating to torturing and murdering humans.

Now, as far as the answer to the second argument, i.e., that “animals do it”, he testifies against himself, because such an argument is itself proof that he equates himself with animals and has sunk to the level of a beast of prey.

The Ultimate Purpose of Creation

As we said above, the purpose of the seven *Noahide* laws is to civilize the world in order to make it a settled, wholesome place. However, on a deeper level, the ultimate purpose of the *Noahide* laws is to prepare the world by civilizing it, specifically so that the Jew may have the proper environment to *fulfill his mission*, which is to bring about the *ultimate* purpose of Creation. The role of the Jew is not

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merely to be a good, wholesome, law-abiding citizen. His role is to sanctify this physical world and to reveal G-dliness in it. His function is not merely to make the world a place where man can dwell, but rather, to make the world a place where G-d can dwell *with* man.³²

Of the 613 *mitzvot* of the Torah, 365 are negative, “don’t” *mitzvot*, and 248 are positive, “do” *mitzvot*. The 365 negative commandments serve as a means to sanctify the Jew by distancing and separating him from those matters which are spiritually detrimental and damaging to his soul.³³ The Hebrew word for sanctity is *kedushah* (קדושה) which means holy, separate and removed. In other words, by removing himself from doing these 365 negative acts, which are spiritually detrimental, impure and damaging to his soul, a Jew sanctifies and purifies himself, thus making himself a fitting receptacle to receive the light of G-d’s revelation.³⁴

However, the negative *mitzvot*, in and of themselves, do not draw down the actual G-dly revelation itself. Rather, through their observance one becomes purified of the gross materiality and impurities of the world. Because of this he becomes a pure and fit vessel to receive G-d’s light. On the other hand the 248 positive, “do” *mitzvot*, are actual Divine acts which literally draw G-dliness into the vessels, thus revealing G-dliness into the world.

³² Exodus 25:8 ראה תנחומא בחוקותי ג,

³³ עיין זהר פרשת משפטים, "כל מאן דאכיל מאינון מאכלי דאיסורא איתדבק בסיטרא אחרא ורוח מסאבא שריא עליו כו', וראה ספר גדחי ישראל פרק כח. וראה רמב"ן דברים כב:ו

³⁴ אבן עזרא ויקרא יא:מג, מלבי"ם שם.

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In general, the kosher dietary laws fall into the first category, i.e. they are negative commandments.³⁵ (Later, we will discuss the fact that there are also positive commandments associated with diet, such as making special blessings before and after eating.³⁶) By desisting from eating forbidden foods we purify and refine ourselves,³⁷ thus making ourselves fit vessels for the revelation of G-dliness through the performance of the positive *mitzvot*. In fact, as mentioned above, the meaning of the word Kosher (כשר) is “fit”. In other words, not only does it mean, “That which is fit to eat”, but it also means that through keeping kosher we become “fit” vessels, thus making it possible for a “bond” to take place between us and G-d.

This is because the consumption of non-kosher foods causes insensitivity to G-dliness and matters of Torah and *mitzvot*.³⁸ Conversely, the consumption of kosher food makes it possible to be sensitive to matters of G-dliness and to study Torah and perform *mitzvot* with an open heart.

Besides meaning fit, proper and good, the word kosher (כשר) also means “bond”, as in the verse, “He frees those who are imprisoned in bonds”³⁹ (מוציא אסירים בכושרות). Thus, by keeping the negative aspects of the dietary laws, i.e. by distancing ourselves from forbidden foods; we create the proper conditions to bring about a bond between us and G-d. By fulfilling the positive aspects of the dietary laws, such as

³⁵ ראה ספר החינוך, ספר המצות להרמב"ם

³⁶ Deuteronomy 8:10 גמל ברכות מ"ח ע"ב

³⁷ See commentary of Rashi on Leviticus 11:43

³⁸ See commentaries of Ibn Ezra and Malbim on Leviticus 11:43. Also see Talmud, Shabbos page 145b.

³⁹ Psalms 68:7

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making blessings before and after eating; we make the actual connection and draw down G-dliness into the physical world. The biblical word for blessing is “*Brachah*”⁴⁰ (ברכה) which also means to “draw down”.⁴¹

This matter, of making the physical a fit vessel for G-dliness, is especially true of the *mitzvah* of keeping a kosher diet. As we explained above, the negative commandments purify and sanctify us by separating and distancing us from that which debases and defiles us, whereas the positive commandments draw and reveal G-dliness to us. However, since most *mitzvot* primarily relate to such matters as thought, speech and actions etc. they only affect those levels of our being.

However, since the dietary laws directly affect the physical body itself, as in the well known adage, “You are what you eat”, therefore, by keeping kosher we literally transform, purify and sanctify our very physicality, *the body itself*, by refining it and making it a worthy and holy receptacle for spirituality. This is profoundly connected to the ultimate mission of a Jew, which, as mentioned above, is to transform *this physical world*, literally, and make it a dwelling place for G-d.⁴²

⁴⁰ ראה ספר השרשים ערך ברך

⁴¹ Mishnah, Kilayim 7:1

⁴² תנהומא נשא טז.

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What Makes It Kosher

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As stated above, all the kosher laws were either commanded by G-d at Sinai and incorporated in the Torah along with the other *mitzvot*; or are oral traditions which go back to Moses, who received them from G-d; or were ordained by the sages for the purpose of safeguarding and strengthening their observance and with health considerations in mind. Kosher (כשר) means, “That which is fit⁴³ to eat according to biblical dietary law”. Now, though the kosher dietary law is comprised of many diverse subjects, nonetheless, since they chiefly revolve around the consumption of meat, we will, therefore, begin by explaining the requirements of kosher meat. Before meat may be consumed several prerequisites must be fulfilled:

Kosher and Non-Kosher Animals

Only the meat of certain animals may be consumed.⁴⁴ The Torah specifies the signs by which to recognize kosher animals.⁴⁵ They all are herbivores which chew their cud (That is, they must be ruminators) and have completely split hooves.⁴⁶ Of the domesticated animals, this includes cows, sheep and goats.⁴⁷ Kosher undomesticated animals include the addax, antelope, bison, buffalo, deer, gazelle, ibex, and reindeer,⁴⁸ as well as others too numerous to enumerate here. (You are not likely to find them in your neighborhood

⁴³ ספר השרשים, שרש כשר

⁴⁴ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות, פרק ב: א

⁴⁵ Leviticus 11:2-3

⁴⁶ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות, פרק א: ב

⁴⁷ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות פרק א: ה

⁴⁸ שם פרק א: ה

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grocery store.) The Torah also lists four animals that only have one of these characteristics, but not the other.⁴⁹ They include the pig, which has split hooves but does not chew its cud, and the camel, hare and rock-badger, which chew but do not have split hooves.⁵⁰ These animals are not kosher.

It is interesting to note that though much of the world; such as Australia, North America, South America, Antarctica and great portions of Africa, Asia and Europe, were as yet, undiscovered when the Torah was written, the Torah, nonetheless, emphatically states that these four species possess only one kosher characteristic and not the other. The *Talmud*⁵¹ concludes that since only these species were named, no other such species exist. Incredibly, though tens of thousands of previously unknown creatures have since been discovered, categorized and studied, not a single additional one fits this description. This, itself, is ample proof of the Divine authorship of the Torah. Only the Creator Himself could know with certainty that no other such animals exist.

Indeed, the *Malbim* writes⁵² that had a human being, such as Moses, authored the Torah himself; he would never have risked destroying his credibility by listing these four animals. He could simply have stated that only animals that possess both these signs are kosher and left it at that. That would have been sufficient information for us to recognize the kosher animals and to reject the non-kosher ones, including those which possess only one of the two signs.

⁴⁹ Leviticus 11:4-8

⁵⁰ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות פרק א:ב, ופרק ב:א

⁵¹ גמ' חולין נט ע"א עד ס ע"ב

⁵² On Leviticus 11:4

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Kosher and Non-Kosher Fowl

The Torah lists twenty-four families of non-kosher birds⁵³ which, according to modern scientific classification, include thousands of known species and sub-species. Some of the non-kosher birds listed in the Torah are the barn owl, bat, cormorant, eagle, falcon, gull, hare, hawk, hoopoe, ibis, kite, magpie, ossifrage, osprey, ostrich, owl, pelican, raven, stork, and vulture. Though it is a mammal, the Torah includes the bat in the list because it uses different criteria for classification than modern science. The word “*Auf*” – עוף in Hebrew, which is usually translated as fowl, actually means *any* flying creature.

Though the Torah does not specify the signs by which to recognize a kosher bird,⁵⁴ as it does with other animals, nonetheless, the rabbis⁵⁵ gave us four general indicators by which to differentiate between kosher and non-kosher fowl.⁵⁶ Not all kosher birds possess all four indicators and some non-kosher birds may possess one of them, therefore, they are general guidelines rather than sure signs. Two of these signs are primary indicators of the kosher status of the bird and two are secondary.

The two primary indicators are:

⁵³ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות, פרק א:יד, שו"ע יו"ד פב:א.

⁵⁴ שו"ע יו"ד פב:א.

⁵⁵ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות א:טז.

⁵⁶ רמב"ם, מאכלות אסורות א:טז, שו"ע פב:ב.

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a) The muscular wall of the gizzard of a kosher bird may be easily peeled off by hand, whereas the gizzard of a non-kosher bird will not peel easily.⁵⁷

b) Non-kosher birds tend to be birds of prey that hunt for their food. Therefore, they will use their claws to capture and hold their prey as they devour it.⁵⁸ Kosher birds do not eat in this fashion.

The secondary indicators are:

a) Kosher birds will tend to have three toes in the front and one extra toe in the back, whereas non-kosher birds may have two, three or four toes. They may have three toes in the front and one in the back, two toes in the front and two in the back or all four toes in the front.⁵⁹

b) Many kosher birds will possess a crop which non-kosher birds do not have. This is a pouch-like organ on the wall of the esophagus which temporarily stores undigested food before it goes to the stomach to become fully digested. Ducks and geese do not have crops. However, since they possess the other three indicators of a kosher bird they are kosher.⁶⁰

Since the four above indicators are not of biblical origin and it would be extremely difficult to determine the kosher status of all the thousands of bird species, therefore, generally, only birds that are known to be kosher by tradition

⁵⁷ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות שם, שו"ע יו"ד פב:ב.

⁵⁸ משנה חולין נט ע"א, וראה רמב"ם, מאכלות אסורות שם, שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁵⁹ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות שם, שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁶⁰ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות שם, שו"ע יו"ד שם.

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are consumed.⁶¹ The most common birds that are traditionally accepted as being kosher are:

- a) All members of the chicken family.
- b) Domesticated ducks.
- c) Domesticated geese
- d) Pigeons and doves
- e) Domesticated turkeys⁶²

Geese that have been forced fed by ramming a metal funnel down their throat could lose their kosher status because this method of feeding can puncture the esophagus. This would render the goose a *treifah*, which, as will be explained, means that the animal has a physical condition which will lead to its death.

Prohibition of Eating *Neveilah* or *Treifah*

It is forbidden to eat the meat of an animal that died by itself or was not slaughtered in accordance to the laws of *Shechitah*⁶³ (kosher slaughter). Such an animal is called a *neveilah*⁶⁴ (נבילה). Moreover, the meat may not come from

⁶¹ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות א:טו, שו"ע פב:ב.

⁶² השל"ה אסר אכילתו אבל בספר נחל אשכול סי' כב כתב שנאכל במסורת מדורות וכן נהוג, ואעפ"כ אם יש מסורת משפחתי שלא לאכלו ראוי שאנשי המשפחה לא יאכלוהו.

⁶³ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות, פרק ד:א

⁶⁴ Deuteronomy 14:21

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an animal that has some kind of physical condition that will cause its death.⁶⁵ If it is diseased, has a birth defect, is mortally wounded, has a defective organ or limb which will lead to its demise, or is otherwise close to death,⁶⁶ either due to frailty, old age or sickness; that animal is called a *treifah*⁶⁷ (טריפה) and is forbidden to eat.⁶⁸

In his magnum opus, *Mishneh Torah*, Maimonides gives a complete list of seventy defects that render an animal *treifah*.⁶⁹ Only the symptoms mentioned there render it so and no others. If veterinary science would determine that an animal will imminently die from different causes, this would have no bearing on the kosher status of an animal.⁷⁰ In the same vein, if science would determine that a defect which is included in the list is not so serious and does not indicate imminent death, the animal would still be considered to be a *treifah* and would be forbidden.⁷¹

Kosher Slaughter

The animal must be slaughtered in the proper manner as prescribed by *Halacha*.⁷² This is done by a highly trained certified ritual-slaughterer (*shochet*). The certification for

⁶⁵ Exodus 22:30

⁶⁶ That is, it will likely die within a twelve month period.

⁶⁷ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות, פרק ד:ו-יב, הל' שחיטה פרק ה:א

⁶⁸ Exodus 22:30

⁶⁹ רמב"ם הלכות שחיטה י:ט

⁷⁰ שם י:יב

⁷¹ שם י:יג

⁷² Deuteronomy 12:21. ראה גמרא חולין כה ע"א.

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ritual-slaughter is called “*Kabbala*” (קבלה). In order to receive *kabbala* a person must be both learned in Torah and G-d fearing.⁷³ Nowadays, many people learn to be a *shochet* as a post-rabbinical study after they have already received rabbinical ordination (*Semichah*). To receive *Kabbala*, a person must:⁷⁴

a) Study all the laws of *shechitah* (slaughter) until he is thoroughly familiar with them and review them on a regular basis. Even a *shochet* with years of experience is required to review these laws regularly.

b) Practice properly sharpening the knife on a whetstone until it is perfectly sharp and free of all nicks and imperfections.

c) Master the skill of checking the blade for perfect sharpness and any imperfections. This is done by sliding the thumbnail up and down the length of the blade. Sensitivity must be developed to notice even the tiniest nicks.

d) Learn all the techniques of proper slaughter from a qualified, experienced *shochet*.

e) Successfully slaughter at least three animals in close succession without hesitation or squeamishness.

f) Be tested on all the above by a recognized rabbinical authority. Most people begin with slaughtering chickens and only later graduate to slaughtering larger animals, such as goats and sheep and finally beef cattle.

⁷³ חולין כח:א, שו"ע יו"ד א:א.

⁷⁴ רמ"א יו"ד א:א.

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The Slaughtering Knife

A special knife, called a *chalef* (חלף) is used for kosher slaughter. The blade must be at least twice as long as the neck-width of the animal being slaughtered.⁷⁵ For chickens it is approximately from 3 to 6 inches long and for larger animals it may be as long as 18 inches. To insure that the blade is exposed throughout the cut and that it slices, rather than tears, the blade is rectangular in shape. It must be razor sharp and have no nicks in it,⁷⁶ whatsoever.

Until a little over two hundred years ago most *chalefs* were made of wrought or cast iron blades. Then, the leader of the *Chassidic* movement, Rabbi Dovber of Mezeritch, the “Great *Maggid*”, introduced the use of *chalefs* made of honed steel with a tapered blade. This innovation instigated a great outcry amongst the opponents of the *Chassidim*, and they used it as justification to ban the consumption of all *Chassidic* slaughter, declaring it to be “non-kosher”. However, today the use of high quality tapered stainless steel blades is universal, not only in *Chassidic* circles, but by all Jews, everywhere.

⁷⁵ שו"ע יו"ד ח:א ורמ"א שם, ש"ך יו"ד ח:ב.

⁷⁶ שו"ע יו"ד ו:א.

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Five General Rules of Slaughter

There are five basic rules which apply to the slaughter itself.⁷⁷ These were given to Moses by G-d at Sinai. They are:

a) **Shehiyah** (שהייה). There should not be any pause or hesitation in the movement of the knife during slaughter.⁷⁸

b) **Derisah** (דרסה). The blade must slide smoothly without pressing down on the neck.⁷⁹

c) **Chaladah** (חלדה). The blade must be exposed throughout the slaughter; therefore, before the slaughter of sheep, the wool must either be removed or brushed apart. If mud is encrusted on the neck of cattle, it must be washed off. The feathers of poultry must be pushed aside.⁸⁰

d) **Hagramah** (הגרמה). The cut should neither be too high or too low on the neck. Rather, it should be in the central area of the trachea and esophagus.⁸¹ Moreover, care must be taken to avoid cutting the spine.⁸²

e) **Ikoor** (עיקור). Great care must be taken that the blade slices rather than tears the trachea and esophagus. Therefore,

⁷⁷ גמ' חולין ט ע"ב, רמב"ם הל' שחיטה, פרק ג:א, שו"ע יו"ד כג-כד.

⁷⁸ רמב"ם הל' שחיטה, פרק ג:ב-ח, שו"ע יו"ד כג.

⁷⁹ שם פרק ג:יא, שו"ע יו"ד כד.

⁸⁰ שם פרק ג:יז, שו"ע יו"ד כד.

⁸¹ שו"ע יו"ד כ:ג.

⁸² שם פרק ג:יב-יג, שו"ע יו"ד כד.

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the blade must be perfectly sharp and contain no nicks, which could cause tearing.⁸³ In order to assure this, the knife is checked before and after slaughter.⁸⁴ Besides these five above mentioned rules being essential requirements of kosher slaughter itself, they also assure that the slaughter is done in the most humane way possible. Thus they are also in accord with the *mitzvah* against causing undue pain to animals.⁸⁵

Draining the Carcass of Blood

The Torah forbids⁸⁶ the consumption⁸⁷ of blood.⁸⁸ Therefore, the carcass is drained of its blood. In many slaughterhouses the carcass is hung upside-down to facilitate this.

Post-Mortem Inspection

Following the slaughter, the animal is checked to ascertain whether it is a *treifah* or not. (As mentioned above, a *treifah* is an animal which has a terminal condition and

⁸³ שו"ע יו"ד כד.

⁸⁴ שו"ע יו"ד יח:יב, רמב"ם הל' שחיטה, פרק ג:יד-יז, חכמ"א ג:טז.

⁸⁵ Deuteronomy 22:4 גמ' ב"מ ל"ב ע"ב,

⁸⁶ The prohibition against the consumption of blood excludes the blood of kosher species of fish and locusts (שו"ע יו"ד ס"א).

⁸⁷ It is permissible to swallow one's own blood as long as it is still internal. However, if it exits the lips it is forbidden (שו"ע יו"ד ס"ג).

⁸⁸ Leviticus 7:26

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would die even without being slaughtered.⁸⁹) This is done by checking the lungs internally and externally.⁹⁰ They are checked by a highly trained inspector (*Bodek*) who feels for adhesions.⁹¹ He also checks them by inflating and placing the lungs in water to ascertain that they are airtight.⁹² If they are completely smooth they are declared to be *glatt* (smooth). This means that the animal probably had a good health history. If they have too many adhesions, especially ones that are large or not easily removed, they are declared to be *treifah*. If the lungs have small adhesions which are easily removed⁹³ and prove to be airtight,⁹⁴ they are declared to be kosher but non-*glatt*.

The lungs of poultry are generally not checked since they usually do not have the problem of developing adhesions. They are therefore regarded as *glatt* even without examination.⁹⁵ They are only checked if there is cause to suspect that there might be a problem. However there are varying opinions as to when they should be checked.⁹⁶ In Israel, many slaughterhouses customarily check the lungs of all chickens slaughtered, as an extra precaution.

⁸⁹ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות פרק ד:ו-יב

⁹⁰ שו"ע יו"ד לה-לט.

⁹¹ רמב"ם הל' שחיטה פרק ז, שו"ע יו"ד לט.

⁹² רמ"א יו"ד לט:א.

⁹³ רמ"א יו"ד לט:יג, ש"ך יו"ד לט:לג.

⁹⁴ ש"ך יו"ד לט:לד.

⁹⁵ רמב"ם הל' שחיטה פרק יא:יב, גליון מהרש"א על שו"ע יו"ד לט:א, חכ"א יד:לד.

⁹⁶ לענין במקום או זמן ששכיח מחלת הריאות בעופות ראה משכנות יעקב סי' ט"ו ודרכ"ת סק"ג וכן ראה אבן ישראל פרק ז, וראה שבט הלוי סי' יד:טו, דעת סי' מ"א סק"כ, מנח"י סי' ל"ח ענף ב סעיף א, ראש אפרים סי' ל"ח, ועוד.

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Disjointed or Broken Wings or Bones

Nonetheless, it must be pointed out that if, upon buying poultry, one finds injuries that could have caused death, such as reddish-blue bruising, disjointed bones or wings, broken ribs or bones etc. a rabbinical authority should be consulted to determine if this was caused before or after slaughter. Of course, if such a problem arises, the entire chicken should be set aside and not cooked until the rabbi decides its kosher status.

Eating Glatt Kosher Meat

Sephardim, who follow the rulings of Rabbi Yosef Caro (The *Beit Yosef*)⁹⁷ are required to consume only *Glatt* kosher meat. *Ashkenazim*, who follow the rulings of Rabbi Moshe Isserles (The *Rema*)⁹⁸ may consume non-*Glatt* meat. However, since today *Glatt* kosher meat is readily available and it has become prevalent that most observant *Ashkenazim* eat only strictly *Glatt* kosher meat, therefore, *Ashkenazim* too should make every effort to keep to this norm.

⁹⁷ שו"ע יו"ד לט:י.

⁹⁸ רמ"א יו"ד לט:יג.

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Forbidden Fats, Arteries and Veins

Certain fats, arteries and veins must be removed⁹⁹ within seventy-two hours¹⁰⁰ after slaughter. These are found in the thighs and legs, tongue, shoulder, chest, ribs, heart and spleen. This is a difficult process and requires skill. In most countries today (except for Israel), only the forequarter is purged of these vessels. The hindquarter, which has the sciatic nerve¹⁰¹ running through it, is particularly difficult to purge and requires a high level of expertise. It is also a time consuming procedure. Much of the problem is therefore avoided by selling the hindquarter to non-kosher packinghouses.

Kosher Cuts of Meat

The following cuts of meat are from the hindquarter and usually will *not be found* in a kosher butcher store:

The T-bone, porterhouse sirloin, filet minion, whole flank, club steak, rump roast and round of beef.

The following cuts of meat are from the forequarter and *may be found* in a kosher butcher store:

⁹⁹ Leviticus 7:23.

¹⁰⁰ Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 64. However, according to the Rema (Yoreh Deah 64:18) even though, in the first place, this should be done within seventy-two hours, nonetheless, after the fact, if it is done after seventy-two hours, the meat is still permissible.

¹⁰¹ Genesis 32:33

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The rib eye, rib steak, rib top, flank rib, London broil, brisket, neck, chuck roast, deckle, minute steak and shoulder roast.

Removal of Blood

The Torah prohibits the consumption of blood,¹⁰² including the blood of kosher animals or poultry. Therefore, with the exception of liver, meat is soaked, salted and rinsed to remove the blood. This process is usually referred to as “koshering”. However, in actuality, it is only one stage in the koshering process. If the stages mentioned above did not precede it, the meat is not kosher. Moreover, in order for it to remain kosher, great care must be taken to adhere to the stage that follows it. (Since liver is saturated with blood, this method is ineffective. The procedure for removing blood from liver will be explained later.)

Nowadays, in the United States of America, kosher meat has already been soaked, salted and rinsed before it is sold at the kosher butcher store. Because of this, many young people are unfamiliar with the process. If they would find themselves in a foreign country, where the butcher does not soak and salt the meat, they would be at a loss of what to do.

¹⁰² Leviticus 7:26-27, 17:10-12, Deuteronomy 12:23. The blood of kosher species of fish or locusts is the exception to this rule and is permissible (שׁוֹרֵעַ יוֹדֵד טָרֵא). However, except for Yemenite Jews, most Jewish communities today do not know the signs by which to recognize kosher locust. Furthermore, it is becoming a lost art, even amongst Yemenite Jews.

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What was elementary for our mothers and grandmothers, has become a mystery to the modern family. The koshering process consists of three basic steps, as follows:

a) The meat is thoroughly rinsed of all surface blood.¹⁰³ It is then soaked in a vessel containing sufficient water to cover all its surfaces¹⁰⁴ for approximately thirty minutes.¹⁰⁵ Hot water should not be used, because it causes the blood to coagulate nor should very cold water be used since it causes it to adhere to the meat.¹⁰⁶ The soaking should *not* be done in a vessel normally used for eating or cooking. If possible, a special vessel should be reserved for this specific purpose.¹⁰⁷ However, if there is no such vessel and the need arises, a vessel normally used for eating and cooking may be used, on condition that afterwards it will be cleansed thoroughly of all residual blood.¹⁰⁸

b) The meat is removed from the water and the excess water is permitted to drip off it. This is to assure that the salt will not become too diluted and ineffectual in drawing the blood out of the meat. However, a certain degree of wetness is desirable so that the salt should properly adhere to the meat.¹⁰⁹

Medium coarse salt¹¹⁰ (commonly sold as “Kosher salt”), rather than table salt, should be used. Nonetheless, if this is

¹⁰³ שו"ע יו"ד סט:א. וראה ש"ך סט:א וט"ז שם.

¹⁰⁴ דרכ"ת יו"ד סט:כ.

¹⁰⁵ רמ"א יו"ד סט:א.

¹⁰⁶ פת"ש יו"ד סט:א.

¹⁰⁷ רמ"א שם, וראה ש"ך יו"ד סט:ז, ט"ז סט:ה.

¹⁰⁸ חכמ"א ל:ו, כה"ח יו"ד סט:כד.

¹⁰⁹ רמ"א יו"ד סט:א, ט"ז סט:ד, ש"ך סט:ו, ביאור הגר"א סט:ז.

¹¹⁰ שו"ע יו"ד סט:ג.

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unavailable, fine salt may be used, even though it absorbs into the meat and does not draw out the blood as effectively.¹¹¹ Likewise, very coarse salt should be avoided as it tends to fall off the meat.¹¹² Nevertheless, if this is the only salt available it should be pounded into smaller pieces and then used.¹¹³ However, if this was not done, and the meat has already been salted with very coarse salt, it is still acceptable and does not require re-salting.¹¹⁴

All surfaces¹¹⁵ of the meat, including the inner cavity of poultry,¹¹⁶ should be liberally covered with salt¹¹⁷ and placed on a draining board for one hour.¹¹⁸ To enable the blood to drip off the meat, the draining board should either have grooves in it, be slanted or be perforated.¹¹⁹

c) The meat is then thoroughly rinsed in a vessel three times¹²⁰ removing the salt and blood until the water is clear. Fresh water should be used for each consecutive rinse and the vessel should be cleansed between each rinse.¹²¹

¹¹¹ שו"ע יו"ד סט:ג, ש"ך סט:יז, ט"ז סט:יב, וראה פת"ש סט:ט.

¹¹² שו"ע סט:ג.

¹¹³ ש"ך יו"ד סט:יח, ט"ז סט:יב.

¹¹⁴ ש"ך סט:יז, חכמ"א ל:ז.

¹¹⁵ שו"ע יו"ד סט:ד, ביאור הגר"א סט:כב.

¹¹⁶ שו"ע שם, ביאורי הגר"א שם.

¹¹⁷ שו"ע יו"ד סט:ד, ביאור הגר"א סט:יט.

¹¹⁸ רמ"א סט:ג.

¹¹⁹ שו"ע יו"ד סט:טז.

¹²⁰ רמ"א יו"ד סט:ז, ביאורי הגר"א סט:לג.

¹²¹ שו"ע יו"ד סט:ז.

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Removal of Blood from Liver

As said above, because liver is saturated with blood, salting and soaking is ineffectual in removing blood from it, as it is with other meat. The only method of removing the blood is through roasting. However, because it is troublesome, it is recommended that you forego the effort and buy liver that has already been “koshered” by the butcher. Nonetheless, if you wish to do so, it is important to **carefully** adhere to the following instructions:

1) Though there are opinions that permit roasting frozen liver,¹²² it is recommended to thaw it before roasting.¹²³ This must **not** be done in a microwave oven or by placing it in hot water¹²⁴ as this will cook it and cause the blood to coagulate in it. If necessary, liver may be thawed somewhat in lukewarm water.¹²⁵

2) Thoroughly rinse the liver in water to remove all surface blood.¹²⁶

3) Permit the water to dry off the liver.¹²⁷

4) Make crisscross cuts on the outer surface of the liver. This makes it possible for the blood to drip freely during roasting.¹²⁸

¹²² שבט הקהתי ה:קלא.

¹²³ ספר מתת ידו פט.

¹²⁴ רמ"א יו"ד סח:יא.

¹²⁵ שו"ת ישיב משה יו"ד ג.

¹²⁶ שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד ע:ב. וראה ש"ך יו"ד ע:א.

¹²⁷ דרכ"ת יו"ד עג:יז ועו:ג.

¹²⁸ שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד עג:א, דרכ"ת שם.

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- 5) Immediately before roasting sprinkle a little salt on the liver.¹²⁹
- 6) The liver may be placed on an electric, gas or barbeque grill. It may also be skewered.¹³⁰
- 7) Because of its size, beef liver should be placed on the grill with the cuts facing down toward the heat source. In this way the blood will drip freely.¹³¹
- 8) The liver should not be roasted wrapped in tin or aluminum foil or any other wrapping.¹³²
- 9) The liver should be roasted at medium rather than high temperatures so that the heat will penetrate it more efficiently. Furthermore, one should not constantly turn the meat over because this will not allow the blood to drip off it properly.¹³³
- 10) If several livers are roasted at once they should not be piled one on top of the other on the grill.¹³⁴ Optimally, there should only be one layer of livers laying side-by-side.
- 11) The liver should not be cut while it is roasting on the fire. However, if this is done the knife must be rekoshered with fire before its next use.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ רמ"א יו"ד עג:ה, עו:ב.

¹³⁰ בארות אברהם יו"ד יב.

¹³¹ שו"ע יו"ד עג:א.

¹³² חכמ"א לד:טז, כה"ח סה:ד, פת"ש יו"ד עג:א.

¹³³ רמ"א יו"ד עו:ב.

¹³⁴ מועדים וזמנים ג:קלו, ח:רלו.

¹³⁵ שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד עו:ד.

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12) Other meat, poultry or vegetables should not be roasted together with the liver.¹³⁶

13) Care should be taken that water does not spill on the liver while it is roasting.¹³⁷

14) The grill and the fork, or any other instruments that are used to handle the liver, should be designated solely for this purpose. If a regular fork was inadvertently used it must be rekoshered with fire before its next use.¹³⁸

15) It is only necessary to roast the liver until it is edible and its outer surface is dry.¹³⁹

16) The liver should not be left on the grill or skewer once it is completely roasted lest it reabsorb the residual blood left on them.¹⁴⁰

17) The liver should be rinsed and soak in fresh water three times.¹⁴¹

18) Unless they are designated solely for this purpose the skewer, grill and other instruments used to kosher liver should be koshered through fire prior to regular use.¹⁴²

¹³⁶ שו"ע יו"ד עג:ד.

¹³⁷ דרכ"ת עג:יז.

¹³⁸ שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד עו:ד.

¹³⁹ רמ"א יו"ד עו:ב, וראה ט"ז שם.

¹⁴⁰ שו"ע יו"ד עו:ד, וראה ט"ז וש"ך שם.

¹⁴¹ רמ"א יו"ד עג:ה, וראה ש"ך יו"ד עו:טו.

¹⁴² שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד עו:ו.

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Soaking and Salting within Seventy-Two Hour Period & Problem of Frozen Meat

1) Meat should normally be soaked, salted and rinsed within seventy-two hours after slaughter. Beyond this time limit the blood may dry and harden and become impossible to purge, except through roasting.¹⁴³ Nonetheless, even though the option of roasting remains open, it is best not to leave meat unsalted for longer than three days lest one will forget and cook it instead. Moreover, after three days, it may not be cooked even after it is roasted. The same rule applies to liver.¹⁴⁴ However, the koshering process may be extended for an additional three days on condition that the meat is soaked in water during that time period.¹⁴⁵ Due to the above reasons, kosher butcher stores should not sell meat that has not been soaked and salted beyond this time limit.¹⁴⁶

2) There are several conflicting opinions as to whether frozen meat may be “koshered” beyond this time limit.¹⁴⁷ To avoid controversy, most kosher meat today is soaked, salted and rinsed at the slaughter house or processing plant within seventy-two hours after slaughter and before freezing. It is then shipped, either fresh or frozen. However, should this problem ever arise, (that a person has frozen meat in his possession which has not been soaked and salted, beyond the prescribed seventy-two hour limit) a rabbinical authority should be consulted for a *Halachic* ruling.

¹⁴³ שו"ע יו"ד סט:יב.

¹⁴⁴ אלא בדיעבד מותר, שו"ע סט:יב וראה ט"ז סט:לב, ביאור הגר"א סט:ג.

¹⁴⁵ שו"ע יו"ד סט:יג, ש"ך יו"ד סט:נג.

¹⁴⁶ אג"מ יו"ד ג:ז.

¹⁴⁷ דרכ"ת יו"ד סט:ג, פת"ש סט:ו, באה"ט סט:ח.

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Separating Meat and Milk

The Torah emphasizes three times, “Do not cook a kid in its mother’s milk”.¹⁴⁸ Since there are no superfluous words in the Torah this teaches us three things:¹⁴⁹

- a) That we are not to cook meat and milk together.
- b) That we are not to eat meat and milk together.
- c) That we are not to derive any benefit from meat and milk which were cooked together.

Therefore, even though all the above qualifications have been fulfilled, nonetheless, the meat is not kosher if it is cooked together with any dairy product. This being the case, meat may not be cooked in any vessel that may have absorbed dairy. Likewise, dairy may not be cooked in any vessel that may have absorbed meat. Because of this, separate pots, pans, utensils and dishes are used for meat and separate ones are used for dairy. If a mixture of meat and dairy has been cooked, this food is prohibited. It may not be eaten, nor may it be sold or even given as a gift to a non-Jew. It may not be given to any animal to eat. This rule applies not only to one’s own animal, but even to a stray dog which is ownerless.¹⁵⁰ Rather, the food must be discarded in such a manner that no creature will derive benefit from it.¹⁵¹ Therefore, it must be buried or flushed down the toilet etc.

¹⁴⁸ Exodus 23:19, Exodus 34:26, Deuteronomy 14:21.

¹⁴⁹ גמ' חולין קח ע"ב, וראה שו"ע יו"ד פז:א.

¹⁵⁰ שו"ע יו"ד פז:א, חכמ"א מ:ב.

¹⁵¹ ערוה"ש יו"ד פז:ז.

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The rules regarding the separation of meat and milk will be given later in greater detail.

Reciting Special Blessing

Lastly, a blessing must be recited over all food before¹⁵² and after¹⁵³ eating or drinking. The Torah states,¹⁵⁴ “Blessed is Abram to G-d Most High, Who possesses the heavens and the earth.” G-d is the Creator and Master of the universe. The entire cosmos, from the vastest galaxies billions of light years away, to the most insignificant creature on our planet, is part and parcel of G-d’s possessions. Not a single thing; not even the tiniest sub-atomic particle, exists outside of His domain.

This also includes the human being. Even though G-d instilled the power of free will into us, nonetheless, we are His creatures and are thus totally dependant and beholden to Him in every way. If we eat or drink without blessing and thanking Him for the goodness He has bestowed upon us, it is tantamount to theft and displays our total lack of gratitude and appreciation for all He has done for us. It is as if we are taking someone else’s property without asking permission,¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² The recital of a blessing before the consumption of food is a rabbinical injunction.

¹⁵³ The recital of blessings after the consumption of a formal meal is a biblical commandment. A formal meal is defined as any meal that involved the breaking of bread, which is the staff of life. The after-blessing recited after consuming other foods is rabbinical in origin.

¹⁵⁴ Genesis 14:19

¹⁵⁵ תהילים כד:א, שו"ע הרב קסז:א.

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However, by reciting a blessing and thanking G-d, it is as if we are asking permission from Him. If all the qualifications for the preparation of kosher food have been fulfilled (such as the above qualifications of kosher meat), He grants us His permission and His blessings, and we may eat.¹⁵⁶ (Albeit, if a person ate kosher food but failed to recite the blessing, he is not guilty of eating non-kosher food. He only is guilty of not thanking G-d for the blessing of having food, thereby receiving Divine permission to eat.¹⁵⁷)

Now, regarding the words of the blessings, it must be pointed out that they were coined by our holy sages¹⁵⁸ thousands of years ago. These were men of great renown and learning who possessed tremendous spiritual and moral stature. Some, such as several members of the “Great Assembly” (אנשי כנסת הגדולה) were prophets¹⁵⁹ who received direct communication from G-d¹⁶⁰ and all were men imbued with the Holy Spirit (רוח הקודש), so much so, that some were even capable of raising the dead.¹⁶¹

Therefore, a person should not compose blessings of his own accord, using his own words and disregarding the words of our holy sages,¹⁶² G-d forbid. Rather, he should recite the blessings exactly as our holy sages coined them. However, to give informal thanks to G-d, *in addition* to the obligatory

¹⁵⁶ ברכות לה:א-אסור לו לאדם שיהנה מהעוה"ז בלא ברכה, וכן בברייתא-כל הנהנה מהעוה"ז בלא ברכה מעל.

¹⁵⁷ תוספתא ד:א-לא יטעם אדם כלום עד שיברך שנאמר לה' הארץ ומלואה וגו'. הנהנה מן העוה"ז מעל עד שיתירו לו כל המצות.

¹⁵⁸ אג"מ או"ח חלק ה:ח.

¹⁵⁹ חגי זכרי' ומלאכי- These are Chagai, Zechariah and Malachi

¹⁶⁰ פירוש הרע"ב ב' בריש מס' אבות.

¹⁶¹ גמ' מגילה ז:ב.

¹⁶² ב"י או"ח סוף סי' מ"ז.

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blessings and prayers, using our own words in appreciation of all the bountiful goodness He has bestowed upon us, is not only permissible and commendable, but should be encouraged. Such informal prayer may be done in any language a person feels comfortable with. Speaking to G-d in our own words enhances our sense of personal relationship with Him and draws us closer to Him.

The blessing recited before eating meat is:

“Blessed are you, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe that everything came into being according to His word”

(ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שהכל נהיה בדברו)

A detailed list of the appropriate blessings for each category of food and some of the underlying principles regarding the order of their recital will be given later.

Kosher Fish

There are thousands of kosher and non-kosher species of fish. The Torah therefore does not identify kosher species by name, but rather, gives us definitive signs by which to recognize them. It states,¹⁶³ “This is what you may eat from all that is in the water: anything that has a fin and scale, in the water, in the seas and in the streams, those you may eat. Anything that has no fin and scale, in the seas and in the

¹⁶³ Leviticus 11:9-12

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streams, from anything creeping in the water and from any living creature that is in the water, they are abhorrent to you. They shall be abhorrent to you; do not eat from their flesh and abhor their carcass. Anything that has no fins and scales in the water is abhorrent for you.”

However, only those species that have *true* scales are kosher. This means that the scales are similar to a coat of mail¹⁶⁴ and come off readily without part of the skin ripping off when they are removed.¹⁶⁵ There are four types of fish scales: These are the ctenoid, cycloid, placoid and ganoid scales. The ctenoid and cycloid scales are true scales that readily come off. All kosher fish have these types of scales. Fish that possess placoid or ganoid scales are not kosher. They are not regarded as being *true* scales because of the difficulty in removing them.

All fish that possess scales, most certainly possess fins.¹⁶⁶ On the other hand, fish that possess fins do not necessarily possess true scales.¹⁶⁷ This being the case, if one receives a piece of fish, such as a filet which has scales on it, even if there are no fins, the fish is permissible. However, if the filet has no scales, even if it has fins, it is forbidden. Fins, in and of themselves are insufficient in identifying the fish as kosher.¹⁶⁸ Fish do not require slaughter as do birds and animals,¹⁶⁹ nor is the consumption of their blood

¹⁶⁴ גמ' חולין נט ע"א, שו"ע יר"ד פג:א

¹⁶⁵ רמ"א יר"ד פג:א

¹⁶⁶ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות א:כד, שו"ע יר"ד פג:ג.

¹⁶⁷ שו"ע יר"ד שם.

¹⁶⁸ גמ' חולין נט ע"א, רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות א:כד, שו"ע יר"ד פג:ג.

¹⁶⁹ שו"ע יר"ד יג:א.

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prohibited.¹⁷⁰ Additional rules regarding the consumption of fish will be given later.

Checking Eggs for Blood

As stated above, the Torah prohibits the consumption of blood.¹⁷¹ This also includes blood found in eggs, especially fertilized ones.¹⁷² Therefore eggs should be checked for blood before use. The standard procedure is as follows:

- a) Fertilized eggs have a high rate of blood spotting and should be checked before use. Though blood is found less frequently in unfertilized eggs, they should be checked as well.¹⁷³
- b) It is preferable to use white eggs because brown ones have a higher frequency of blood spotting. However, this is merely a suggestion. Brown eggs may certainly be used.
- c) Prepare a glass cup, preferably one with a flat, clear bottom. Also, have a bowl handy to deposit the eggs that have been checked.
- d) Break each egg into the glass individually and examine it for blood spots. Lift the glass to examine the bottom of the

¹⁷⁰ שו"ע יו"ד סו:א.

¹⁷¹ Lev. 7:26-27, 17:10-12, Deut. 12:23 ובג' דברים יב:כג

¹⁷² שו"ע יו"ד סו:ב, אג"מ יו"ד א:לו.

¹⁷³ אג"מ יו"ד א:לו.

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egg too. Once you are satisfied that it is blood free, pour it into the bowl and examine the next egg.

e) Fertilized eggs that have blood spotting should be discarded. However, if a blood spot is found in an unfertilized egg, it could be removed and the rest of the egg may be consumed.¹⁷⁴ **Nonetheless, the prevalent custom is to be stringent and discard it as well.**¹⁷⁵ Ask your rabbi for his opinion.

f) Since it is impossible to check eggs for blood before boiling them in their shell, many are accustomed to boil an odd number of no less than three eggs at a time. This assures that if one contains blood it will be in the minority. The eggs may then be consumed without further checking. Of course, in the unlikely event that, after boiling, one finds evidence of blood spotting, the affected egg should be discarded.

¹⁷⁴ אג"מ יו"ד שם.

¹⁷⁵ אג"מ יו"ד שם.

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Setting Up Your Kosher Kitchen

The very first step to living a kosher lifestyle takes place in the kitchen. In an ideal situation, such as a new home in which the kitchen has been built according to kosher specifications; there would be separate meat and dairy countertops, including cabinets and sinks on opposite sides of the kitchen. The sinks would be made of stainless steel which is easily koshered and the countertops would likewise be made either of stainless steel or granite which also is easily koshered.

The dairy cabinets would be situated on the dairy side of the kitchen and the meat cabinets would be on the meat side. There would be a dairy stove, oven, microwave oven, dishwasher and refrigerator on the dairy side and a meat stove, oven, microwave oven, dishwasher and refrigerator on the meat side. The interiors of both dishwashers would be made of stainless steel so that if they accidentally became non-kosher they could easily be koshered. In effect, it would be as if there were two kitchens separated by an imaginary line. Everything would be brand new, including all the pots, pans, cooking utensils, dishes and cutlery. All that would be necessary is to immerse the pots, pans, utensils, dishes and cutlery in a *mikvah* (Ritual pool), and the kitchen would be ready to go.

Even more ideal would be to have an additional separate Passover kitchen built in. This would be in a completely separate room in the house and would be locked and out of use except for Passover preparations and on Passover itself. During Passover all food would be cooked exclusively in this

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special kitchen and the regular kitchen would be locked up and inaccessible. It also would be fully equipped with two sets of stainless steel sinks, countertops, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers and cabinets; one side for meat and the other for dairy.

However, since this scenario is not possible for most of us, different measures must be taken to assure the kosher status of our kitchen. Your kitchen may not possess many of these ideals. It may only have one sink made of porcelain, one countertop made of tiles or Formica, one stove and oven unit, one microwave oven, one refrigerator and no dishwasher. If it has a dishwasher, it may be the standard home model made with a plastic, enamel or porcelain interior. Moreover, if you are committing to a kosher lifestyle just now, all the equipment has probably been used for non-kosher food, as well as all the pots, pans, cooking utensils, dishes and cutlery. How do we kosher such a kitchen?

Seeking Expert Assistance

The very first step is to call your local orthodox rabbi, synagogue or Jewish organization and ask them for assistance. Though most synagogues would be overjoyed to learn that you are interested in going kosher and would be happy to assist you as much as possible, they may not have the adequate manpower to do so. However, there are many Jewish organizations which perform this service on a regular basis and would be thrilled to help you in every possible way. If the synagogue you contact cannot assist you, they

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may refer you to an organization in your community that can.

Once you contact them, they will most likely make an initial visitation to your home to inspect your kitchen and to evaluate what procedures would be necessary to kosher it. They will advise you as to how to proceed in preparing the kitchen for koshering. They will explain which equipment and utensils may be koshered and which will need to be replaced, which may be cleaned in preparation for koshering and which must be discarded etc. Later, once you are ready, they will return to help you with the actual koshering process itself.

However, if you live in a remote area or simply cannot find anyone to assist you, abide by the following rules and instructions and, with G-d's help, you will successfully kosher your kitchen.

Assess What May be Koshered

The basic principle to keep in mind is that any utensil or piece of equipment which has absorbed non-kosher flavor needs to be koshered before use.¹⁷⁶ Absorption generally occurs through heat. However, it may also occur through soaking a non-kosher substance in them for a period of twenty-four hours¹⁷⁷ or through cutting sharp foods, such as

¹⁷⁶ ראה במדבר לא:כג, שו"ע או"ח תנה:ה, שו"ע יו"ד קכא:א

¹⁷⁷ שו"ע או"ח תנא:כא, שו"ע יו"ד קלה:טו

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garlic, onion, radish, horseradish, chili peppers, lemon or very spicy or sour pickled items¹⁷⁸ etc. even if they are not hot. If a utensil was used with hot non-kosher meat or dairy, we assume that it has absorbed some of it into its walls. It, therefore, must be koshered. Even if the meat and dairy were kosher but were cooked together, we assume that the equipment absorbed some of the forbidden admixture and it must be koshered. In a non-kosher kitchen, such as the one in our scenario, it must be assumed that all the equipment and utensils have absorbed non-kosher substance and must be koshered.

Step One

The very first step in koshering your kitchen is to assess what may or may not be koshered and to separate the unkosherable items from the rest. These items will need to be replaced by acquiring new ones.

1) Generally, anything made of metal;¹⁷⁹ such as steel, iron, copper, bronze, silver, gold, pewter or aluminum¹⁸⁰ etc. may be koshered.

2) Vessels made of solid stone may be koshered.¹⁸¹ However, there are varying opinions as to whether pulverized stone that has been reconstituted and pressed into

¹⁷⁸ שו"ע יו"ד צו:א-ב, דעת תורה למהרש"ם יו"ד צו:ב.

¹⁷⁹ שו"ע או"ח תנא:ח

¹⁸⁰ אג"מ או"ח ג:נח

¹⁸¹ שו"ע או"ח תנא:ח, שו"ע יו"ד קכא:ב

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vessels or countertops may be koshered or not.¹⁸² This being the case, if possible, it is best not to kosher pulverized stone. However, if this would entail a large monetary expenditure, such as changing a pulverized countertop for a solid granite one, a rabbinical authority should be consulted for a *Halachic* ruling.

3) Wooden vessels may be koshered on condition that their surface is smooth and that there are no dents grooves or cracks in the wood.¹⁸³ If they do have dents, grooves or cracks they should be sanded down to the virgin wood.

4) There is controversy as to whether metal vessels overlaid with enamel may be koshered or not.¹⁸⁴ Most authorities rule that they are kosherable. However, it is best to be strict in this regard and to immerse them in boiling water three times, rather than once, as is regularly done.¹⁸⁵ Ask your rabbi for his opinion. (The various methods of koshering vessels and how they are applied will be explained later.)

5) Vessels made of earthenware, china or porcelain cannot be koshered.¹⁸⁶ However, if high quality¹⁸⁷ china or porcelain has been unused for a period of twelve months or more, it could possibly be koshered¹⁸⁸ by immersing it in

¹⁸² דרכ"ת יו"ד קכא:כה, שו"ת בית יצחק יו"ד ח"א- במפתחות סי' קמו:ח, תבואות שור נג.

¹⁸³ שו"ע או"ח תנא:ח, ורמ"א שם

¹⁸⁴ חתם סופר יו"ד קיג, שו"ת כת"ס יו"ד ע"ה, שו"ת מהר"ם שיק יו"ד קמ.

¹⁸⁵ ערוה"ש יו"ד קכא:ז, שו"ת מלמד להועיל או"ח צד, שו"ת רב פעלים ח"ג:כח, משנ"ב בשעה"צ תנא:קצא, שו"ת שבט לוי ב:מג, שו"ת חשב האפוד א:קיו, שו"ת בית אבי א:קח.

¹⁸⁶ ויקרא ו:כא, גמרא פסחים ל ע"ב, שו"ע תנא:א.

¹⁸⁷ מטעמי השלחן צא:יט.

¹⁸⁸ חכמ"א נה:ד.

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boiling water three times.¹⁸⁹ However, a rabbinical authority should be consulted beforehand for a *Halachic* ruling.

6) There is controversy amongst the *Halachic* authorities regarding the status of glassware. Some are of the opinion that it is similar to earthenware and cannot be koshered.¹⁹⁰ The view of others is that under special circumstances¹⁹¹ it may be koshered.¹⁹² Still others say that since glassware is nonporous it does not need to be koshered altogether.¹⁹³ According to them, all that is necessary is a thorough cleansing, after which the glass may be used.

In practice, the custom amongst *Sephardic* Jews is merely to thoroughly cleanse the glassware.¹⁹⁴ On the other hand, as a general rule *Ashkenazic* Jews do not kosher glassware. However, according to many, under certain circumstances,¹⁹⁵ if the glassware was used with cold food or liquid, it may be koshered by immersion in cold water for three days, making sure to change the water after every 24 hour period. The three days need not be consecutive.¹⁹⁶ If it was used with hot food or liquid, it should generally be koshered by immersion in boiling water, as will be explained later. However, this is only if it will not shatter from the heat. If there is any fear that it will shatter, it should not be koshered.¹⁹⁷ This is because, out of fear of shattering them, a person may come

189. אג"מ יו"ד ח"א מג, אג"מ יו"ד ח"ב מו.

190. רמ"א או"ח תנא:כו.

191. היינו בדיעבד

192. שעה"צ תנא:קצו, משנ"ב תנא:קנה, ח"א קכה:כב, זרע אמת ח"ב יו"ד מג.

193. שו"ע תנא או"ח תנא:כו.

194. יבי"א ח"ד יו"ד ה.

195. היינו בדיעבד

196. שו"ע יו"ד קלה:יב.

197. משנ"ב תנא:קנו, צי"א ח"ח כ, וח"ט כו, משנה הלכות ט:קסח, שו"ע הרב או"ח תנא:ט.

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to not immersing them properly during the koshering process. Consult your rabbi before proceeding.

7) Likewise, there is controversy as to whether Pyrex may be koshered or not.¹⁹⁸ A rabbinic authority should be consulted for a ruling.

8) The prevalent custom is not to kosher plastic. However, according to some authorities, vessels made of hard rubber or plastic may be koshered on condition that they will not melt or be ruined by immersion in boiling water.¹⁹⁹ However, even according to this opinion, since plastic items are usually rather inexpensive and may be difficult to thoroughly cleanse, it may be advisable to purchase new ones, especially in regard to Passover.²⁰⁰ Consult your rabbi for his opinion.

9) Teflon pans are generally not koshered. Even if they would be it could be problematic. Pans used with little or no oil would need to be heated to extreme temperatures²⁰¹. Those used with substantial oil or liquid would need lesser, but very high heat nonetheless²⁰². Therefore, for fear of destroying the Teflon one may come to not applying the correct level of heat. This being the case, **it is recommended that they not be koshered.**²⁰³ However, according to some, even if the Teflon is destroyed, the pans still retain their

¹⁹⁸ מחכמי אשקנז שבט הלוי ב:מג אסר, וצ"א ח:כא ומנחת יצחק א:פו התירו, ומחכמי ספרד הגר"ע יוסף שליט"א מתיר, והגר"מ אליהו שליט"א אוסר.

¹⁹⁹ שו"ת מנחת יצחק ג:סז, שו"ת חלקת יעקב ב:קסג, שו"ת אג"מ ב:צב.

²⁰⁰ שו"ת אג"מ ב:צב

²⁰¹ ליבון קשה.

²⁰² ליבון קל.

²⁰³ משנ"ב תנא:קנו, שו"ע הרב או"ה תנא:ט.

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utilitarian value as regular pans and may, therefore, be koshered.²⁰⁴ Consult your rabbi.

Step Two

A further separation must be made:

- 1) All pots, pans and utensils that are impossible to thoroughly cleanse and which would be destroyed by koshering them with excessive heat, must be set aside and replaced.
- 2) Some pans or utensils have lips (such as certain types of sheet pans) or crevices (such as certain types of tongs). Since it is almost impossible to clean these areas thoroughly, it is advisable to discard and replace them.
- 3) Some colanders, or the like, are made of fine wire mesh or are cone shaped and come to a sharp point at the very bottom. These are also almost impossible to properly clean. They should be discarded and replaced.
- 4) The wooden handles of many knives become somewhat separated near the blade after much use. Since foodstuff tends to lodge within these crevices and it is very difficult to clean them properly, without dismantling and thus destroying them, they should be discarded and replaced.

²⁰⁴ משנה הלכות י: צח, אג"מ אהע"ז ח"ד סוס"י ז.

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The general rule is; if it cannot be properly cleaned before the koshering process and would be destroyed by applying excessive heat to it in the koshering process, it should be discarded and replaced.

The Dishwashing Machine

The Kosherability of the dishwasher is dependant on the makeup of its interior. The best Dishwashing machines, in terms of the kosher dietary laws, are those whose interior is made of stainless steel. Many high quality dishwashers belong to this category. Since they are made of stainless steel they are very easy to kosher. It is also much easier to maintain their kosher status, since if any mistakes are inadvertently made, causing them to become non-kosher, they are readily rekosherable. All industrial dishwashing machines are made of stainless steel and are easy to kosher.

Unfortunately, except for the most expensive, “Top of the Line” dishwashing machines, many standard home dishwashers are not of this kind. Their interiors may contain plastic, porcelain, enamel or a combination of these.

1) As we mentioned above, in most circumstances, porcelain may not be koshered.²⁰⁵ Even in those cases that some authorities allow it to be koshered it must remain unused for a period of at least twelve months, and must then be koshered three times with boiling water.²⁰⁶ Even if such a dishwasher could be koshered, one error, such as

²⁰⁵ ויקרא ו:כא, גמרא פסחים ל ע"ב, שו"ע תנא:א

²⁰⁶ אג"מ יו"ד א:מג, אג"מ יו"ד ב:מו.

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inadvertently washing meat and dairy dishes together with hot water, would render it non-kosher and unusable again. This type of dishwashing machine is unpractical for kosher homes and is not recommended. You should replace it, preferably with a stainless steel one.

2) As mentioned before, there is controversy as to whether metal overlaid with enamel may be koshered.²⁰⁷ Though some authorities rule that it is kosherable if it is koshered three times with boiling water,²⁰⁸ nonetheless, if the interior of your dishwasher is made of enamel, it is best to consult a rabbinical authority before proceeding.

3) As mentioned before, though the prevalent custom is not to kosher plastic, according to some opinions hardened rubber or plastic may be koshered.²⁰⁹ Accordingly, if the interior of your dishwasher is made of these materials, it could possibly be koshered. However, as mentioned above, the interior of many home dishwashing machines may also include porcelain and may not be koshered.²¹⁰ Therefore, unless your dishwasher is made exclusively with a stainless steel interior, it is best to consult a rabbinic authority as to how to proceed. The procedure for koshering a dishwasher will be explained later.

²⁰⁷ חת"ס יו"ד קיג, מהר"ם שיק יו"ד קם, שו"ת כת"ס יו"ד עה.

²⁰⁸ ערוה"ש יו"ד קכא:ז, שו"ת מלמד להועיל או"ח צד, שו"ת רב פעלים ח"ג כה, משנ"ב בשעה"צ תנא:קצא, שו"ת שבט הלוי ב:מג, שו"ת חשב האפוד א:קיו, שו"ת בית אבי א:קה, שו"ת בית יצחק יו"ד מא מפתחות קמו, חזון עובדיה הגעלה ט.

²⁰⁹ שו"ת מנחת יצחק ג:סז, שו"ת חלקת יעקב ב:קסג, שו"ת אג"מ ב:צב.

²¹⁰ קובץ מבית לוי ח"א עמ' ל.

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The Toaster

It is difficult to kosher toasters for three reasons: Firstly, the bread-slots are too narrow and it is extremely difficult to thoroughly clean them. Secondly, the koshering process would ruin their electrical system. Lastly, they would have to be heated to extreme temperatures to be koshered. Since they are not built to endure such heat, it could destroy them. Therefore, the toaster may need to be replaced.

The Toaster Oven

Toaster ovens come in many different sizes, models and designs. Often, because of their size, they are very difficult to clean thoroughly. If your toaster oven falls into this category, it cannot be koshered and should be replaced.

Dishes, Cups, Saucers and glassware

If your dishes, cups, mugs and saucers are made of porous material, such as china, porcelain, ceramic or melmac etc. they will need to be replaced. There are differing opinions regarding glassware. As said above, Sephardic authorities follow the opinion of Rabbi Yosef Caro, the author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and consider glass to be non-porous.²¹¹ They are, therefore, lenient²¹² in this regard. Accordingly, if

²¹¹ שו"ע או"ח תנא:כו, שו"ע יר"ד קלה:ח

²¹² שו"ת יבי"א ח"ד יר"ד, חזון עובדיה הלכות הגעלה ח.

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you are *Sephardic* your glassware need only be thoroughly cleansed and may then be used. *Ashkenazim*, on the other hand, follow the opinion of the *Rema*, who says that glassware is similar to ceramics and cannot be koshered.²¹³ However, many *Ashkenazic* authorities agree that glass is non-porous or very near non-porous²¹⁴ and allow it to be koshered under certain²¹⁵ circumstances.²¹⁶ If you are *Ashkenazic*, consult a rabbinical authority if you wish to kosher your glassware.

Pot Lids and Handles

Just as pots and pans must be koshered, so also their lids, covers²¹⁷ and handles²¹⁸ must likewise be koshered.

Blenders and Food Processors

Since most home-use blenders and food processors are constructed of more than one material, such as metal, plastic and rubber etc. koshering them may be problematic. If your blender or food processor is of this variety it is best to

²¹³ רמ"א או"ח תנא: כו.

²¹⁴ ט"ז יו"ד קלה: יא, וש"ך שם כתב שבליעת כלי זכוכית מועטת מאד.

²¹⁵ דהיינו בדיעבד.

²¹⁶ ט"ז יו"ד תנא: ל, ש"ך יו"ד תנא: מט, שו"ע הרב או"ח תנא: עג, משנ"ב או"ח תנא: קנה, שער הציון תנא: קצו, חיי אדם קכה: כב, זרע אמת ח"ב יו"ד מג, ועוד.

²¹⁷ שו"ע או"ח תנא: יד.

²¹⁸ שו"ע תנא: יב, ורמ"א שם כתב שלכתחילה הכשרת הידיות יכולה להיות בעירו וּבדעבד מהני בלא הגעלה כלל אפילו בעירו.

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replace it. If you desire to kosher it, consult your rabbi. After close examination, he may determine that it could be koshered. Heavy-duty blenders and food processors, manufactured for industrial use, are often built completely of stainless steel and may be koshered easily. If you are able, it is best to purchase this kind of food processor. Though they tend to be expensive they are very sturdy and will last a lifetime.

Mixers

Since foods stuffs mixed by most mixers are cold, the mixer could therefore be koshered. This applies both to hand-held and stationary models. However, if you have used your mixer with hot items, this may be problematic. The stainless steel mixing blades may definitely be koshered. However, if the bowl is not made of stainless steel, a rabbinical authority should be consulted. He will determine if it can be koshered depending on the material it is made of.

Step Three

After everything has been sorted and it has been decided what will be koshered and what will be replaced, the next step is to clean everything that needs koshering.²¹⁹ This cleaning must be totally thorough, so that everything is as clean as humanly possible. Great care must be taken to make

²¹⁹ שו"ע אר"ח תנא:ג, שו"ע הרב אר"ח תנב:ז.

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sure that the pots and pans have been scrubbed very well; making sure that no residual grease or food stuffs are left caked on their walls and that they are free of rust. This refers to the outer walls as well as the inner walls.

Mere discoloration on the vessel walls is insignificant to the koshering process. There is only a problem if there is substantive rust which, if scraped, will produce dust. Nonetheless, this only applies if the vessel will be koshered through immersion in boiling water or any lesser form of koshering. However, rust on a vessel that must be koshered by means of fire need not be removed since it will be utterly consumed.²²⁰

All the cooking and serving utensils, knives, forks, tablespoons and teaspoons, platters and mixing bowls must be washed and dried. Special care should be given in assuring that the oven and stove top are properly cleaned. If possible, all parts that may be disassembled from the oven and stove, or any other equipment, should be taken apart and cleaned separately.

It is not enough just to clean the top of the stove. Rather, the panel should be lifted and the interior cleaned of all grease that may have dripped in etc. When cleaning the oven it is important not to forget to clean the door, back wall, ceiling, corners and whatever crevices there might be. The racks and shelves must also be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned. If there is a broiling unit, it must not be forgotten. It too must be scrubbed and cleaned.

²²⁰ ט"ז אר"ח תנא"ר.

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In short, there must be a very serious cleaning of the kitchen. This being the case, if possible, it is advisable to hire a cleaning crew to perform all the difficult and menial tasks. However, it is important that they be instructed and supervised throughout the process to assure that they do as good a job as possible. Remember, the cleaner everything is, the easier the actual koshering process will be.

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Koshering the Kitchen

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Methods of Koshering

In the previous chapter we explained which substances and utensils may be koshered. We will now address the various methods of koshering and which items need which form of koshering. There are several different methods by which utensils may be koshered:

When koshering utensils, the general, overarching principle to keep in mind is that a vessel may be purged of a substance in a manner similar to how it absorbed it.²²¹

A) Vessels that were used for cooking through fire without liquid, such as barbeque grills, roasting spits, broiler grills and pans, sheet pans or baking pans, must be koshered through fire. This is to say that they must be heated to very high temperatures. This method is called *liboon kasheh* – severe heating. The vessel must become red hot and emit sparks²²² or it must become so hot that its outer surface peels off.²²³

B) Vessels that were used for frying or for roasting with oil, such as frying pans, turkey roasters etc. should be koshered through fire of a lesser temperature. This is called *liboon kal* – light heating. Nonetheless, this is still very high heat. The vessel must be heated to the point that if a piece of straw or cord would be placed on the other side of the wall being applied with fire, the straw or cord would catch fire.²²⁴

²²¹ כבולעו כך פולטו, גמרא פסחים ל"ב.

²²² שו"ע תנא:ד

²²³ משנ"ב תנא:כט, כה"ח סז.

²²⁴ שו"ע יו"ד קכא:ד, וראה שו"ע הרב תנא:טז.

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However, even though, optimally, they should be koshered through *liboon kal*-light heating, nonetheless, according to some opinions, if they were already koshered through immersion in boiling water, this is sufficient.²²⁵ Furthermore, according to some opinions, an electric frying pan which is constructed in such a way that *liboon kal* would ruin it, may be koshered, in the first place²²⁶, through being immersed in boiling water that is upon the fire.²²⁷

C) Vessels that absorbed a non-kosher substance or an admixture of meat and milk through boiling in water or any other liquid, such as soup or consommé pots, sauce and gravy pans, stewing pots etc. must be koshered through full immersion in water²²⁸ that has reached a boil and which is still set upon the fire.²²⁹ Optimally, the water should be at a rolling boil. However, as long as the vessels are koshered in water that is boiling, even if it is not at a rolling boil, this is sufficient.²³⁰

D) Vessels that absorbed a non-kosher substance or an admixture of meat and milk by being poured onto from a pot that had been on the fire, such as metal serving bowls for soups and stews, metal gravy serving cups, serving trays etc.

²²⁵ אג"מ יו"ד ח"ג, יד אות י"ב.

²²⁶ לכתחילה.

²²⁷ שו"ת באר משה ח"ז קנב.

²²⁸ רמ"א או"ח תנב:ה, וראה שו"ע הרב תנא:יג, ואם הגעיל בנוזלים אחרים צריך לחזור ולהגעיל שוב במים, פמ"ג תנב:ה ופר"ח שם ומטה יהודה שם, וראה משנ"ב תנא:כו, ולענין שעת הדחק ראה רמ"א או"ח תנב:ה, שו"ת אג"מ יו"ד א:ס, ויו"ד ח"ב מא, וראה שו"ת מלמד להועיל או"ח צו.

²²⁹ ר"ן סוף ע"ז לח ע"ב, שו"ע הרב תנא:כה.

²³⁰ ספר מועדים וזמנים רפא.

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may be koshered by pouring boiling water directly from a pot on the fire.²³¹

E) Vessels that absorbed a non-kosher substance or an admixture of meat and milk by being inserted into a vessel that was not directly on the fire but that received from one that was, such as meat teaspoons inserted into a dairy coffee cup, dairy spoons inserted into a gravy serving cup, ladles inserted into a serving bowl for soup or stews etc. may be koshered by immersion in a secondary vessel that is not directly on the fire.²³²

However, the general principle is that anything that may be koshered through a lesser degree may be koshered through a greater degree. In other words, if something may be koshered through immersion in a secondary vessel that was not on the fire, it certainly may be koshered through being poured upon from a primary vessel that was on the fire. Likewise, if something may be koshered through being poured upon from a primary vessel, it certainly may be koshered by being immersed in a vessel that is boiling upon the fire. Furthermore, if something may be koshered through being immersed in a vessel that is boiling upon the fire, it may also be koshered through *liboon kal*-light heating (as defined above).²³³

Furthermore, in the matter of koshering utensils, there is a difference of opinion between *Sephardic*²³⁴ and

²³¹ שו"ע או"ח תנא:ה-ו, שו"ע יו"ד קכא:א.

²³² שו"ע או"ח שם.

²³³ רמ"א או"ח תנא:ד.

²³⁴ דעת המחבר, שו"ע שם.

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*Ashkenazic*²³⁵ authorities as to whether we go according to the majority of how the vessel was used, as opposed to going according to the most stringent manner in which it was used. *Sephardim* generally follow the opinion that we go according to the majority use of the vessel, whereas *Ashkenazim* generally follow the opinion that we take into account the most stringent manner in which it was used.

For example, usually, hot liquid is poured into a metal mug from a teakettle or coffee urn. Only on rare occasion is it used as a ladle and inserted into a pot of boiling liquid. *Sephardim* would rule that, in such a case, it may be koshered by pouring boiling hot water on it from a primary pot on the fire. *Ashkenazim*, however, would rule that it must be immersed in a pot of boiling water which is on the fire.

This being the case, since it is difficult to ascertain the exact manner of how and how often each vessel was used, they should generally be koshered in the most optimal manner. Whenever possible, vessels that were used in fire should be koshered through fire and all other vessels should be koshered by full immersion in boiling water that is on the fire. Also, in practical terms, when koshering an entire kitchen, it is much quicker and more efficient to kosher all the utensils by these two methods than to ascertain the exact kosher status of each utensil individually. However, when in the course of usage, a vessel or utensil becomes non-kosher; it may be koshered according to how it was used, as explained above.

²³⁵ דעת הרמ"א שם.

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Koshering an Oven

The best oven to own is the self-cleaning type because it is readily kosherable with great ease. Unless it is heavily caked with grease etc. all one must do is turn on the self-cleaning cycle, and it does the rest. It reaches temperatures well in excess of 1,000 degrees and is generally accepted as being *liboon kasheh*-severe heat. Any grease, sauces or foodstuffs that may have spilled or splattered on the floor or walls etc. become completely incinerated and turned into ash. Moreover, because it is so easy to kosher, if you will be using the same oven to alternately cook meat and dairy meals, this is the kind of oven you will want.²³⁶ They tend to be more expensive than standard ovens but are well worth the extra cost. If the oven is heavily caked with grease etc. it is best to clean it first before setting the self-cleaning cycle. However, it is recommended that you wipe the cleaning chemicals off before turning on the oven, as they are toxic. Because the walls of continuous cleaning ovens are generally made of ceramic, **they cannot be koshered and are to be avoided.**

However, if buying a new oven is out of the question, you may kosher your old one through a process of *liboon kasheh*-severe heating. As stated above, this entails heating the oven until it becomes red hot. Since your oven is not of the self-cleaning variety, this must be accomplished with a blowtorch. Unfortunately, most ovens made for home use are not made to withstand such high temperatures and may become warped or ruined due to overheating. Unless you are

²³⁶ ראה שו"ת מנחת יצחק ה:כ.

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experienced, you will, most likely, not want to do so yourself. It is best to contact your local synagogue or Jewish organization and ask for expert assistance.

If you live in a remote area or cannot find help, abide by the following instructions and you will successfully kosher your oven:

1) Do not use your oven for a period of at least 24 hours:

(This is because only foodstuffs that have been absorbed in the walls of a vessel and are beneficial to the flavor of food subsequently cooked in it, render the food non-kosher. However, after a period of 24 hours, foodstuffs that have been absorbed into the walls of a vessel, including an oven, are considered to have been spoiled. Therefore, the taste emitted during subsequent cooking will be detrimental to the flavor of the food and, therefore, ineffectual in rendering it non-kosher. Nonetheless, out of concern that the vessel may inadvertently be used to cook food which is *not* harmed by the bad taste infused in it or that it will be used *within* the 24 hour period,²³⁷ the sages decreed that the vessel be koshered anyway.²³⁸ However, the requirements for koshering such a vessel are less stringent than the requirements for koshering a vessel which is still within 24 hours of use.)

2) Thoroughly clean your oven. It needs to be scrubbed clean with caustic chemicals (such as oven cleaner). This is especially true if the oven is being koshered before a period of 24 hours of disuse, because the caustic chemicals will ruin the flavor infused in the oven walls. Make sure to clean all

²³⁷ גמרא ע"ז עה ע"ב, וראה ספתי דעה קג:יז, יד יהודה קג:כג ע"א.

²³⁸ ראה הגרע"א על יו"ד קג:ה.

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the corners, cracks and crevices as well as the racks and shelves. Do not forget to thoroughly scrub the oven ceiling and door.

3) Turn the oven on to its highest temperature for approximately two hours but not less than one hour.

4) Using a heavy-duty blowtorch go slowly over all the surfaces of the oven, including the floor, ceiling, corners and walls. Blowtorch the racks and shelves too, preferably outside the oven. (It goes without saying that; of course, all the rules of fire safety should be kept with great caution.) It is greatly advised to take great care not to apply direct fire to the thermostat. This will surely destroy it, thus disabling your oven.

Koshering Oven-Another Method

Since the ovens we use today are very different from the ovens used in ancient times, many contemporary authorities rule that they may be koshered with *libun kal*-light heat (as defined above). The *Tanoor*-oven of our forefathers was very much like the *Tandoori* oven still in use in India, in which they make their *Chapati* bread. The dough is rolled into thin sheets and then stuck onto the inner walls of the oven. This being the case, since the food comes in direct contact with the oven walls it must be koshered by *liboon kasheh*-severe heat.

However, foods cooked in our ovens do not come in direct contact with the oven at all. Rather, only the steam

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emitted from the food touches the oven walls. This being the case, according to this opinion, our ovens may be koshered through *liboon kal*-light heat (as defined above). This has become common practice. To do this, just follow the first three instructions mentioned in the previous section, after which, you may use your oven.²³⁹ Some authorities are of the opinion that, in addition, a pot of boiling water should be placed in the oven during the heating process.²⁴⁰

However, since some foodstuffs may have splattered or spilled on the racks, shelves and oven floor, it may be advisable to blowtorch them with *libun Kasheh*-severe heat, in addition to turning your oven on to the highest temperature. If you are in doubt as to which of these methods to use, inquire of your Rabbi for his opinion.

Koshering a Microwave Oven

A microwave oven cooks the food differently than a conventional oven in that only the food becomes hot, rather than the oven. This being the case, it becomes non-kosher due to vapor emitted by the hot food. Therefore, the method of koshering it is through steam²⁴¹. You may kosher it as follows:

²³⁹ פיסקי תשובות תנא:י

²⁴⁰ אג"מ יו"ד א:נט, מנחת יצחק ג:סו.

²⁴¹ כבולעו כך פולטו.

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- 1) If possible, do not use your microwave for at least 24 hours²⁴².
- 2) Clean the oven thoroughly. Be sure to clean the walls, ceiling, floor, corners or any crevices. Do not forget the oven door.
- 3) Insert several water-filled (Styrofoam) cups into the oven. Turn on the microwave oven bringing the water to a boil so that the chamber becomes filled with steam²⁴³.
- 4) If your microwave oven has a rotating glass plate, it may have become non-kosher through spillage of hot liquid, rather than through vapors. According to *Sephardic* authorities all that is necessary is a thorough cleaning²⁴⁴. According to *Ashkenazic* authorities the plate should be cleaned thoroughly and then boiling water poured on it²⁴⁵. Inquire of your rabbi.

Koshering a Dishwashing Machine

As stated above, dishwashing machines that have porcelain components may not be koshered.²⁴⁶ On the other hand, if the interior of your dishwasher is made of stainless

²⁴² שו"ת תשובות והנהגות ב:ריב, קובץ מבית לוי ז עמ' כה.

²⁴³ כבולעו כך פולטו.

²⁴⁴ שו"ע או"ח תנא:כו, שו"ע יו"ד קלה:ח, שו"ת יבי"א ח"ד יו"ד, חזון עובדיה הל' הגעלה

ח.

²⁴⁵ ט"ז יו"ד תנא:ל, ש"ך יו"ד תנא:מט, שו"ע הרב או"ח תנא:עג, משנ"ב או"ח תנא:קנה,

חיי אדם קכה:כב ועוד.

²⁴⁶ ויקרא ו:כא, גמ' פסחים ל:ב, שו"ע או"ח תנא:א.

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steel, it may be koshered.²⁴⁷ Some opinions also allow it to be koshered if plastic components are included.²⁴⁸ Ask your rabbi for his opinion. If he decides that you may kosher your dishwasher, you may do so in the following manner:

- 1) Clean the dishwasher thoroughly including the jets that spray the dishes with hot water. If there are filters or the like, make sure that they are perfectly clean too.
- 2) Do not use the dishwasher for a period of at least 24 hours.
- 3) Run the dishwasher for three cycles with the water set at the highest possible temperature. For extra precaution, it is best to operate it with detergent for at least the first cycle.
- 4) Drain the remaining water out. Your dishwasher is now kosher.

Koshering Utensils

As explained above, the method of koshering vessels that have absorbed non-kosher substance or an admixture of meat and dairy through being cooked in a hot liquid is by immersing them in water²⁴⁹ that is on²⁵⁰ the fire²⁵¹ and has

²⁴⁷ שו"י או"ח תנא:ח.

²⁴⁸ מנח"י ג:סז, חלק"י ב:קסג, אג"מ ב:צב.

²⁴⁹ ראה שו"ת שבט הלוי ו:קטו אות ד על הכשרת כלים בנוזלים אחרים חוץ ממים.

²⁵⁰ שו"ע או"ח תנא:ג ורמ"א שם.

²⁵¹ לענין אם חשמל גם נקרא אש ומה דינו ראה שו"ת אבני נזר יו"ד דיא, וראה שו"ת שבט הלוי ו:נו, כה"ח או"ח תנב:פ, שדי חמד, אסיפת דינים מערכת ה:כד.

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reached a boil,²⁵² preferably a rolling boil. However, the water must come to a boil through being heated by fire,²⁵³ hot coals²⁵⁴ or electricity,²⁵⁵ rather than heat from a solar panel,²⁵⁶ microwave oven²⁵⁷ or hot spring.²⁵⁸ There is some controversy regarding the use of steam to heat the water. However, many authorities permit it²⁵⁹ and it has become accepted practice. The koshering process is as follows:

1) A large pot which has not been used for at least 24 hours should be used for the koshering process. However, the pot must be koshered first before proceeding to kosher other utensils in it. This is done in the following manner:

A) The pot must be thoroughly clean before koshering.

B) It must be filled to the brim with water so that when it is brought to a boil some of the boiling water will overflow upon its outer surface too.²⁶⁰

C) Once this has been done the pot is kosher. Empty out its contents, clean it, refill it with fresh clean water²⁶¹ and bring

²⁵² שו"ע או"ח תנב:א ורמ"א שם. ט"ז יו"ד צד:ג.

²⁵³ שו"ע או"ח תנא:ג ורמ"א שם

²⁵⁴ תבואות שמש מ:ד, וראה פסקי תשובה יו"ד סז.

²⁵⁵ שו"ת אבני נזר יו"ד קיא, שו"ת פאת שדך עז, יסודי ישורון ח"ו עמ' קצב, פסקי תשובה

סי' קכא.

²⁵⁶ שו"ע או"ח תנב:ה.

²⁵⁷ קובץ הדרום חוברת טו עמ' עז.

²⁵⁸ שו"ע או"ח תנב:ה, וראה שו"ע הרב שם כז, חיי אדם קכה:כט, ערוה"ש שם יט.

²⁵⁹ שו"ת אבני נזר יו"ד קכא:טז, דרכ"ת יו"ד קכא:טז, שו"ת מהרש"ם א:צב, הגהות

מהרש"ם לשו"ע תנא:יד.

²⁶⁰ שו"ע הרב או"ח תנב:א.

²⁶¹ Specifically water rather than any other liquid should be used for koshering.

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it back to a boil.²⁶² You may now begin koshering other utensils in it.

D) If it is impossible to wait the 24 hour period to kosher the utensils; use a pot that has a proportion of sixty to one²⁶³ water compared to the utensils that will be immersed in it or add some detergent or Ajax to the boiling water.²⁶⁴

E) If possible, the water in the pot should be a proportion of sixty to one compared to the utensils immersed in it. However, if this is impossible and the pot has not been used in 24 hours or more, this does not obstruct the koshering process.

2) Under normal circumstances the utensils that are to be koshered should be set aside and not used for a period of at least 24 hours.²⁶⁵ If this is impossible, the procedure mentioned above should be used. That is, they should be immersed in a pot that contains water which is sixty times greater²⁶⁶ than the utensils being immersed or detergent or Ajax should be added to the boiling water.²⁶⁷ According to some, if the pot is not large enough and there is no detergent or Ajax available, the utensils may be koshered by

²⁶² שו"ע הרב או"ח תנב:ב.

²⁶³ This means 59 parts water to one part utensil in volume. In other words the volume of the utensil should be $1/60^{\text{th}}$ of the volume of water.

²⁶⁴ שו"ע יו"ד צה:ד, וראה שו"ת הת"ס או"ח קכ, שו"ת חכם צבי קא, יסודי ישרון ח"ו עמ' קפו, חזו"א יו"ד כג:א ואו"ח קכב:ו ועוד.

²⁶⁵ שו"ע או"ח תנב:ב ורמ"א שם, וראה שו"ע יו"ד קכא:ב

²⁶⁶ 59 parts water to one part utensil.

²⁶⁷ שו"ע יו"ד צה:ד, וראה ט"ז שם וש"ך שם. וכן ראה שו"ת צמח צדק צא, שו"ת חכם צבי קא ושו"ת הת"ס או"ח קכ

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immersing them in boiling water twice.²⁶⁸ Consult your rabbi.

3) The utensils that are to be immersed in the boiling water should be clean and dry.²⁶⁹

4) If the vessels or utensils have been painted this does not obstruct the effectiveness of the koshering process.²⁷⁰

5) One should be careful not to immerse too many utensils at once even if they are placed in a perforated basket and then immersed. However, if the basket is shaken during the immersion, thus insuring that the boiling water will reach all their surfaces, it is permissible.²⁷¹ If tongs are used to hold the utensil while it is immersed, once the vessel is removed, it should be held with the tongs on a different part of the utensil and then re-immersed. An alternate method is to hold the utensil with two tongs and alternately loosen the grip with one tong while holding it with the other. Also, very heavy duty rubber gloves, that are unaffected by the heat of the boiling water, may be used.

6) The optimal method of koshering is to immerse the utensil in its entirety into the pot.²⁷² However, if this is impossible, it may be inserted partially, taken out and inserted again, until its entire surface, including the handles, has been immersed.²⁷³

²⁶⁸ שו"ת אג"מ יו"ד ב:לד.

²⁶⁹ מג"א תנב:ט, שו"ע הרב או"ח תנב:ז.

²⁷⁰ ערוה"ש תנא:מו, וראה תבואות שמש פא.

²⁷¹ שו"ע או"ח תנב:ג, ועין משנ"ב פב.

²⁷² ט"ז או"ח תנב:ה, וראה ביה"ל שם, וראה שו"ע הרב כו.

²⁷³ שו"ע או"ח תנא:יד.

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7) Even if only part of a vessel was used with non-kosher foodstuffs, nonetheless, the entire vessel must be koshered.²⁷⁴

8) The utensils should not be immersed in the boiling water too long because this may cause them to re-absorb that which was purged from them. Rather, they should be inserted for a short time;²⁷⁵ just enough for their pores to open and eject what was absorbed in their walls.²⁷⁶

9) It is not necessary to immerse the utensils deeply into the boiling water. Rather, it is sufficient that they be fully submerged.²⁷⁷

10) Optimally, the utensils should be rinsed or immersed in chilled water immediately after being taken out of the boiling water.²⁷⁸ This causes their pores to close so that they do not re-absorb anything that may remain on their surface. However, if it is impossible to do so it does not obstruct the koshering process.²⁷⁹

11) If the water has cooled due to the immersion of previous utensils, so that it is no longer at a boil, no further utensils should be immersed in it until it again reaches a boil.²⁸⁰ Optimally, it should be a rolling boil. However, as long as

²⁷⁴ שו"ע יו"ד קכא:ו, וראה ט"ז וש"ך שם.

²⁷⁵ טור תנב.

²⁷⁶ עיין ט"ז שם ב, שו"ע הרב או"ח תנב:ד.

²⁷⁷ רמב"ם הל' חמץ ומצה ה:כו.

²⁷⁸ שו"ע או"ח תנב:ז, שו"ע יו"ד קכא:א, שו"ע הרב או"ח תנב:ה.

²⁷⁹ כה"ח תנב:עה, וראה משנ"ב שם לד, והיי אדם קכה:לו, ועיין שו"ת שבט הלוי ו:קטו.

²⁸⁰ שו"ע או"ח תנב:א ורמ"א שם, ט"ז יו"ד צד:ג, שו"ע הרב או"ח תנב:ג.

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the water is boiling, even if it is not a rolling boil, this is sufficient.²⁸¹

12) If the water has become murky due to many vessels having been immersed in it, it should be replaced with fresh water and brought to a boil before continuing²⁸² to kosher further vessels. As stated above, optimally, it should be a rolling boil.

13) When koshering two vessels together, one of which has been used for dairy and the other of which has been used for meat, it is important that at least one of the vessels has not been used within the last 24 hour period²⁸³ or for there to be a proportion of sixty to one²⁸⁴ more water than at least one of the vessels.²⁸⁵ If, however, both of them were used within the last 24 hours or there is insufficient water, not only do they not become kosher but one may be cooking an admixture of milk and meat, which is forbidden,²⁸⁶ G-d forbid. In order to avoid this, whenever possible, it is advisable not to use the utensils for at least 24 hours before koshering them.²⁸⁷

After the vessels have been koshered they now have a status of being pareve (neither meat nor milk). They remain so until they are used specifically with meat or dairy. However, as soon as a vessel is used with meat or dairy it

²⁸¹ ספר מועדים וזמנים רפא.

²⁸² רמ"א תנב:ה, ועין כה"ח שם סא, ואהל מועד שער או"ח דרך ט נתיב ו, ומשנ"ב

תנב:כז.

²⁸³ שו"ע או"ח תנב:ב, וראה משנ"ב שם.

²⁸⁴ 59 parts water to one part utensil.

²⁸⁵ מג"א תנב:ח, וראה משנ"ב יח, כה"ח לו.

²⁸⁶ רמ"א יו"ד צה:ג.

²⁸⁷ שו"ע הרב או"ח תנב:יד.

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loses its pareve status and becomes either a meat utensil or a dairy utensil.

Koshering Countertops

Stainless steel or granite countertops may be koshered by pouring boiling hot water on them. Merely applying steam to them is insufficient. Before pouring, the countertops should be clean and dry. Likewise, wooden countertops or cutting blocks may be koshered in a similar manner on condition that their surfaces are smooth and have no dents, grooves or cracks in them. However, if there are dents, grooves or cracks they must be sanded down to the virgin wood.

Countertops made of ceramic tiles or Formica may not be koshered. They should be replaced with stainless steel or granite. However, if this is not possible, great care should be taken never to place hot food or hot pots directly upon them. Rather, something that will act as a barrier, such as a trivet, should be placed on the counter and the food or pots should be placed on it instead.

Koshering Sinks

Similarly, stainless steel sinks may be koshered by pouring boiling hot water on them. However, as explained above in regard to countertops, they should be thoroughly clean and dry before doing so. If the sinks are made of ceramic or porcelain they may not be koshered. Optimally,

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they should be replaced for stainless steel. However, if this is impossible, great care must be taken never to place any dishes or utensils directly into them. Rather, the dishes and utensils should be placed on a sink rack or in a basin.

Cabinets and Refrigerators

All that needs to be done to kosher a refrigerator is to thoroughly clean it. Moreover, since all the foodstuffs in it are cold, there is no concern about storing meat and dairy in it simultaneously. Nonetheless, care should be taken to avoid the accidental spillage of one food onto another. Therefore, it is recommended that all foods be sealed, stored in containers or wrapped in plastic or foil. If possible, containers holding liquids, such as soup, should be stored on the bottom shelves to avoid spillage onto other foods. Cabinets and pantries, likewise, need only be cleaned to ready them for kosher use. Here too, meat and dairy items may be stored in the same pantry as long as they are in sealed packages.

Separation of Meat and Dairy Utensils

1) Generally, in order to avoid error and confusion, it is important that the meat and dairy utensils be recognizably different from each other. This is accomplished by buying different shaped, colored or patterned plates, cups, saucers, pans and pots etc. Also, there are special adhesive labels available for indicating meat and dairy. These are made to withstand high temperatures. They may be placed on pots and pans etc. without fear of burning. It is also advisable to

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label the cabinets in which meat and dairy utensils, dishes etc. are stored.

2) There should be two separate dishwashing machines, one for meat dishes and one for dairy dishes. However, if there is only one dishwasher, it is advisable to designate it only for whichever type of food is eaten most by the members of the household.

3) Generally, there should be two different ovens for meat or dairy, especially in regard to conventional ovens, as opposed to self-cleaning ones. However, there are *Halachic* authorities that permit koshering a conventional oven from meat to milk and vice versa on a regular basis if acquiring two ovens is not possible.²⁸⁸ Consult with your rabbi for his opinion.

²⁸⁸ מנה"י ה ס"י כ:יד, יב"א ה:ז.

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Immersing Vessels In Mikvah

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Immersing vessels in Mikvah

1) Vessels or utensils manufactured, purchased or received from non-Jews²⁸⁹, which come in contact²⁹⁰ with food²⁹¹ during preparation, cooking or eating²⁹², require immersion in a ritual pool, called a *mikvah*.²⁹³ This brings them from a state of impurity into the domain of the holy²⁹⁴ similar to the transition of a convert to Judaism from the impurity of the Gentiles to the holiness of the Jewish People through immersion in a *mikvah*.²⁹⁵

2) Therefore, unless the manufacturer is Jewish, such as vessels manufactured in Israel; new vessels must be immersed in a *mikvah*.

3) On the other hand, if the manufacturer is Jewish, even if he is non-observant, the vessels need not be immersed.²⁹⁶ However, if they were owned by a non-Jewish middleman, they do require immersion.

4) All vessels that require immersion in a *mikvah* require the recitation of the appropriate blessing. However, if there is

²⁸⁹ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:א.

²⁹⁰ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:ד.

²⁹¹ ראה ב"י שם וערוה"ש יו"ד קכ:לב.

²⁹² ט"ז יו"ד קכ:א.

²⁹³ במדבר לא:כג וראה רש"י שם. וכן גמ' ע"ז עב ורש"י שם. וראה שו"ע יו"ד קכ:א.

²⁹⁴ ריטב"א על ע"ז ע"ז עה בשם הירושלמי

²⁹⁵ ט"ז יו"ד קכ:א, רשב"א על יבמות מז.

²⁹⁶ חת"ס לשו"ע יו"ד קכ:טו, שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ג:ד, שו"ת דובב מישרים א:סה, שו"ת

יבי"א ח"ב יו"ד ט, שו"ת צי"א ח:יט.

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doubt whether a vessel requires immersion or not, it should be immersed without a blessing.

5) Since there is a high probability in the United States of America that Jews own, are partners, or have a majority of shares in companies that manufacture vessels, they should be immersed in a *mikvah* without reciting a blessing.²⁹⁷

6) If an American company imports vessels from a foreign manufacturer, even if their company logo is engraved upon the vessel, nonetheless, since they are merely acting as importer and distributor, the vessel should be immersed with the appropriate blessing. On the other hand, if they own the factory in the foreign country, immersion is not required altogether. Since it is not common knowledge whether they are the original manufacturers or just the importers, or whether there were non-Jewish middlemen who owned the vessels in-between, the vessel should be immersed without a blessing. However, if it is certain that the original manufacturer is not Jewish, as in the case of knives produced in Germany, a blessing must be recited.²⁹⁸

7) The Torah requires metal vessels made of gold, silver, iron, copper, bronze, brass, tin and lead to be immersed in a *mikvah*.²⁹⁹ They therefore are immersed with a blessing. However, since aluminum does not exist naturally, but is produced chemically, there is controversy amongst the rabbinic authorities as to its status as a metal in regard to

²⁹⁷ ראה שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ג:ד ואג"מ יו"ד ב:מ. וראה דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:פא ושו"ת תשובות והנהגות ב:רנח.

²⁹⁸ על פי הבנת אג"מ או"ח ג:ד, אג"מ יו"ד ב:מ וכו'.

²⁹⁹ במדבר לא:כא, וראה רמב"ן שם. וראה רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות יז:ו ולה"מ וכו"מ שם. וכן ראה ערוה"ש יו"ד קכ:ד.

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immersion.³⁰⁰ Therefore, aluminum vessels should be immersed without a blessing. On the other hand, alloys, such as bronze, brass and steel, which contain a majority of the above pre-existing metals, require immersion with a blessing.³⁰¹

8) Metal vessels coated with enamel or Teflon should be immersed in a *mikvah* without reciting a blessing. This is because there is doubt whether the metal should be taken into consideration, in which case they require immersion, or whether the enamel or Teflon should be taken into consideration, in which case they may not require immersion.³⁰²

9) Metal vessels should be scrubbed free of rust before being immersed in a *mikvah*. However, if they were scrubbed or severe heat was applied to them, but residual rust still remains, it is considered to be inconsequential and does not obstruct the immersion process.³⁰³

10) According to most opinions glassware must be immersed in a *mikvah*³⁰⁴ with a blessing, by rabbinical ordinance.³⁰⁵ However, a minority of authorities hold that the obligation is biblical.³⁰⁶ In any case, the practical outcome is that glassware is immersed with a blessing. Crystal, Pyrex and Corelle also fall into this category. However, as stated above

³⁰⁰ לגר"מ בשו"ת אג"מ יש ספק אם כלי אלומיניום צריך טבילה מדאורייתא, אולם לפי התפא"י אולי צריך טבילה. וראה מבקש דעת מד.

³⁰¹ אג"מ יו"ד ב:קסד. היינו מפני שהכתוב מנה מתכות אלה דוקא הם מקבלים טומאה.

³⁰² פמ"ג או"ח תנא.

³⁰³ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:יג.

³⁰⁴ גמ' ע"ז עה ע"ב.

³⁰⁵ ראה פמ"ג או"ח תנא.

³⁰⁶ ראה דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:א שיש הסוברים שהחיוב מדאורייתא.

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in regard to vessels manufactured in the United States of America, if it is likely that they were manufactured by a Jewish owned company, they should be immersed without a blessing.³⁰⁷

11) Since there are varying opinions as to whether³⁰⁸ or not³⁰⁹ glazed china and porcelain need to be immersed in a *mikvah*, it is common practice to immerse them without reciting a blessing. Corning-ware also falls into this category.³¹⁰

12) Stone, wood, unglazed china, clay pots, paper and nylon do not need immersion in a *mikvah*.³¹¹

13) Though it is not common practice to immerse them³¹² there are opinions that plastic-ware should be immersed in a *mikvah* without reciting a blessing.³¹³ Consult your rabbi for his opinion.

14) Vessels that were used exclusively for kosher food on a long term basis but failed to be immersed in a *mikvah* must be immersed regardless of how much time has elapsed.³¹⁴ However, it must be pointed out, that though these vessels required immersion in a *mikvah*, the food consumed from them before they were immersed was not rendered non-

³⁰⁷ אג"מ או"ח ג"ד, אג"מ יו"ד ב:מ, דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:פא.

³⁰⁸ ש"ך יו"ד קכ:ב שכן צריכים טבילה, וראה דרכ"ת יב:יח.

³⁰⁹ שאילת יעבץ א:סז, וראה דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:ב.

³¹⁰ ערוה"ש יו"ד קכ:כט.

³¹¹ רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות יז:ו, ערוה"ש יו"ד קכ:כט, שו"ת חלקת יעקב ב:גז, דרכ"ת

יו"ד קכ:ע.

³¹² שו"ת מלמד להועיל ח"ב מט.

³¹³ דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:יד, וראה שו"ת מנחת יצחק ג:עז.

³¹⁴ חכמ"א א:עג:כ וערוה"ש יו"ד שם.

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kosher.³¹⁵ Nonetheless, if one finds himself in such a situation, he should not eat the food directly from the vessel until it is immersed.³¹⁶

15) Of course, non-kosher vessels that have been koshered must also be immersed. However, it is important that they be koshered before immersion. If they were first immersed and then koshered, the immersion should be repeated after koshering them.³¹⁷ However, if a kosher vessel became non-kosher and was subsequently rekoshered, it does not need to be re-immersed in a *mikvah*.

16) However, with all the above in mind, it must be pointed out that only vessels that are owned by a Jew require immersion. Vessels rented or borrowed from non-Jews, such as from a party rental business, need not be immersed in a *mikvah*.³¹⁸

17) According to some opinions, vessels owned by kosher bakeries, restaurants, caterers, banquet halls or Jewish owned party rental businesses etc. which are for customer use only, need not be immersed in a *mikvah*.³¹⁹ Nonetheless, if the policy of the kosher certifier follows the stricter view that these vessels should be immersed,³²⁰ it should strictly be adhered to.

³¹⁵ רמ"א יו"ד קכ:טז, וראה ערוה"ש יו"ד קכ:יו.

³¹⁶ שו"ת אג"מ יו"ד ח"ב מא.

³¹⁷ שו"ע יו"ד קכא:ב, וראה פרי תאר קכא:ד.

³¹⁸ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:ח.

³¹⁹ דרכ"ת על יו"ד קכ:ע וקכ:פח, וראה שבט סופר יו"ד סז, שו"ת לבושי מרדכי חיו"ד פג, שו"ת מנחת יצחק א:מד. אבל הגר"מ פיינשטיין במאסף לתורה והוראה, חוברת ב עמ' כ מחייב טבילה.

³²⁰ דעת הגר"מ פיינשטיין, ראה מאסף לתורה והוראה חוברת ב עמ' כ, וכן דעת החזו"א.

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18) If a Jew takes possession of an ownerless vessel that has been abandoned by a non-Jew, such as an item placed outside for trash pickup, he should kosher it and then immerse it in a *mikvah* without reciting the blessing.³²¹

19) If a vessel which has already been immersed is given to a non-Jew for repair and in the course of doing so he dismantles and reconstructs it, it must be re-immersed in a *mikvah* without a blessing. This is likewise the case if a vessel is given to a non-Jew for refurbishing or re-plating.³²² However, knives that are given to a non-Jew for sharpening need not be re-immersed.³²³

20) A convert to Judaism must immerse his vessels in a *mikvah* after koshering them. However, he does so without reciting the blessing.³²⁴

21) A vessel that requires immersion should not be used, even on a one-time basis, until it is immersed.³²⁵

22) However, disposable vessels that were manufactured for one-time use need not be immersed. Nonetheless, if they will be used repeatedly, they should be immersed before the second usage.³²⁶ However, if they are

³²¹ שו"ת הר צבי יו"ד קט. אחרי מלחמת סיחון ועוג כאשר נשמדו הם וכל עמם לא נצטוו ישראל בטבילת הכלים שנשארו הפקר. על כן יש חשש אם צריכים טבילה כלל ולפיכך טובלים בלא ברכה.

³²² שו"ע יו"ד קכ"י. וראה חכמ"א עג:ד ובינת אדם שם. וראה דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:צה.

³²³ שו"ת מנחת יצחק ד:כח.

³²⁴ דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:ד, וראה מערכת השלחן עמ' קמד.

³²⁵ רמ"א יו"ד קכ:ח.

³²⁶ ראה מאסף לתורה והוראה, חוברת ב עמ' מ.

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flimsy and become unusable after several usages, such as aluminum pans, they need not be immersed.³²⁷

23) Food sold in metal or glass jars with lids may be used without immersion until their contents are emptied.³²⁸ However, if they will be reused, they should be immersed before their second usage.³²⁹

24) Metal cans that must be opened with a can-opener are not considered to be vessels before opening. Therefore, if they are opened by a Jew he is the one creating a vessel. This being the case, they do not require immersion, even when reused.³³⁰ Cans, such as sardine cans, that are always discarded after use even by poor people, are not considered to be vessels even after being opened.³³¹

25) In principle, vessels that do not come in contact with food but only with the vessel in which the food is placed do not need to be immersed in a *mikvah*. An example of this is a tea saucer. The tea is poured into the cup which sits upon it³³² and the saucer never comes in contact with the tea. Even if there is some spillage onto the saucer, it is never consumed but is, rather, discarded. However, if it is not used exclusively as a saucer, but is sometimes used as a plate, it must be immersed in a *mikvah*, as does any other plate. Since it is common practice that saucers are sometimes used as

³²⁷ .אג"מ יו"ד ח"ג כג.

³²⁸ .ראה ספר טבילת כלים עמ' קד. וראה המאור-כסלו תשט"ו.

³²⁹ .שו"ת פרי השדה ג:קט, שו"ת חלק"י ב:נז, ספר שמלת חיים ד, ה אות ד וב, טו.

³³⁰ .ראה שו"ת צי"א ח:כו.

³³¹ .אלא דינם כקליפה. אג"מ או"ח א סי' קכב:י.

³³² .ב"י ושו"ע יו"ד קכ:ד. ראה גר"א שם וכן ראה ערוה"ש שם.

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plates, they should be immersed in a *mikvah*. However, this should be done without a blessing.³³³

26) Covering a vessel with baking parchment, a napkin or even aluminum foil does not constitute a sufficient partition between the food and the vessel. The baking parchment and napkin are absorbent, thus causing leakage onto the vessel, whereas the aluminum foil has a tendency of ripping. Besides this, these are temporary, rather than permanent coverings. The vessel would, therefore, still require immersion in a *mikvah*.³³⁴

27) However, a vessel which is used exclusively with disposable plastic inserts and, therefore, never comes in contact with the food, does not need to be immersed in a *mikvah*. An example of this is baby bottles designed to hold plastic inserts. These have no bottoms and are impossible to use without the inserts. Even if they are made of metal they do not require immersion in a *mikvah*.³³⁵

28) Likewise, any vessels that are used only as decorations, such as decorative plates that are hung on the wall or vases displayed in a salon for their aesthetic value; do not need immersion in a *mikvah*.³³⁶ Moreover, even if they are needed for one-time use for serving food or drink, this may be done without immersion.³³⁷

³³³ או"ה נח:פה.

³³⁴ ספר הכשרות ד:יח הג' מא.

³³⁵ ספר טבילת כלים עמ' נה, על פי דעת הגרש"ז אויערבך.

³³⁶ ש"ך יו"ד קכ:יז. וראה חכמ"א עג:ז.

³³⁷ פר"ה יו"ד קכ:יט.

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29) Generally, vessels which do not need immersion should not be immersed lest an unnecessary blessing be inadvertently said over them.³³⁸

30) An easy remedy to avoid all the above mentioned complications and to be safeguarded from error is to always begin by immersing a utensil that definitely needs immersion with a blessing, such as a knife or spoon manufactured in Germany, and to continue by immersing vessels that may not need to be immersed.³³⁹

31) As stated above, vessels that are borrowed or rented from non-Jews do not need to be immersed in a *mikvah*. Therefore, if a person lives in an area where there is no *mikvah* or any other body of water that qualifies as one, he should give his vessels to a non-Jew as a gift and then borrow them back from him. In this way, the vessels do not require a *mikvah* and may be used without immersion.³⁴⁰

Electronic Appliances

1) According to some opinions an electric bread toaster does not require immersion in a *mikvah*. This is because it is used exclusively to toast bread slices or bagels which were edible before toasting and is, therefore, a vessel which is superfluous to the meal.³⁴¹

³³⁸ אר"ה נח:פה.

³³⁹ ספר הכשרות ד:טו הע' לד.

³⁴⁰ רמ"א יו"ד קכ:טז.

³⁴¹ ראה אג"מ יו"ד ג:כד. וכתב שם שאין להחשיבו צורך הסעודה.

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2) In regard to appliances that have removable parts which are attached to an electronic base, such as mixers, blenders and food processors etc., only the attachments require immersion in a *mikvah*. The base itself need not be immersed.³⁴²

3) Appliances, such as electric pots or frying pans that would usually require immersion in a *mikvah* and will not suffer electrical damage, should be immersed.

4) If there is concern about electrical damage to the appliance there are several available options to avoid this:

a) According to some, since electrical appliances must be plugged in to be functional, they are considered to be attached to the ground³⁴³ and do not require immersion in a *mikvah*.³⁴⁴ Of course, if there are any detachable parts, such as metal blades etc. they still would require immersion.

b) The appliance may be dismantled to the point that it no longer is considered to be a vessel and then reassembled by a Jewish technician. It then is a vessel made by a Jew and does not require immersion.³⁴⁵

c) The appliance may be given to a non-Jew as a gift and then borrowed back from him.³⁴⁶ As stated above, vessels

³⁴² שו"ת מנחת יצחק ג:עז.

³⁴³ מחובר לקרקע.

³⁴⁴ מובא בספר טבילת כלים עמ' קז.

³⁴⁵ ראה חכמ"א עג:ג, בינת אדם שער או"ה סו.

³⁴⁶ דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:קיב, שו"ת זכר שמחה קה, שו"ת מנחת יצחק ה:קכו.

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that are borrowed from a non-Jew do not require immersion.³⁴⁷

However, before doing any of the above consult your rabbi for his opinion.

Performing the Immersion

1) When immersing a vessel in a *mikvah* one should have in mind that he is doing so to purify it. However, if he failed to do so, the vessel does not need to be re-immersed, even if it slipped out of his hand unintentionally and fell into the *mikvah*. If he wishes to re-immense it, he should do so without a blessing.³⁴⁸

2) Though some are accustomed to immerse each vessel three times, it is not a *Halachic* requirement. Rather, one immersion per vessel is sufficient.³⁴⁹ Ask your rabbi for his opinion.

3) Vessels may be immersed in a *mikvah* at any time of day or night.³⁵⁰ To be immersed vessels must be clean and free of rust. Furthermore, to assure that all surfaces are covered by water, any labels and stickers should be removed before immersion. This includes the adhesive that may be stuck

³⁴⁷ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:ח.

³⁴⁸ שו"ת מהר"ם ערה, שו"ת רדב"ז לד, ט"ז יו"ד קכ:טו, וראה משנ"ב ח:יט, ס:ז.

³⁴⁹ רשב"ם באור זרוע ע"ז סי' רפ"ט.

³⁵⁰ שו"ע יו"ד קצ"ג, ועין גדה סז ע"ב ורש"י ומאירי שם.

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onto the surface of the vessel.³⁵¹ Moreover, if they were immersed without removing the labels, the immersion must be repeated, minus the labels.³⁵²

4) However, if there is a small label that is extremely difficult to remove,³⁵³ the vessel may be immersed without its removal.³⁵⁴ Nonetheless, this only applies if it is on the outside surface of the vessel. If it is on the inside, it must be removed regardless of size.³⁵⁵ Consult your rabbi.

5) If a vessel requires immersion with a blessing, the blessing should be recited in a standing position³⁵⁶ even if it is necessary to crouch to perform the immersion. However, if it was recited while crouching, it is still a valid blessing and does not need to be repeated while standing. The blessing should be recited immediately before the immersion³⁵⁷ and there should be no interruption³⁵⁸ between the blessing and the immersion, but rather, the one should lead directly into the other. However, if something must be said or done which is directly necessary to the immersion, it is not considered to be an interruption.³⁵⁹

If only one vessel is being immersed, the blessing is:³⁶⁰

³⁵¹ שו"ע יו"ד קכ"ב, ועיין שו"ע רב"ב.

³⁵² או"ה נח:צג

³⁵³ או"ה נח:צג.

³⁵⁴ שו"ע יו"ד קכ"ג, וראה דרכ"ת ק, ערוה"ש יו"ד קכ"ג.

³⁵⁵ ספר הכשרות ד:לג בהג' צד.

³⁵⁶ שו"ע הרב ח:ג, כה:כז.

³⁵⁷ שו"ע הרב סי' תרנא.

³⁵⁸ שו"ע הרב מז:ז, נט:ד, קסז:ט, רו:ג, תלב:ו, תעה:ח, תקצב:ז.

³⁵⁹ שו"ע הקצר נ:טו.

³⁶⁰ שו"ע יו"ד קכ"ג.

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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על טבילת כלי

Blessed are you, HaShem our G-d, King of the universe, who sanctified us through His commandments and commanded us concerning immersing a vessel.

If two or more vessels are being immersed, the blessing is:³⁶¹

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על טבילת כלים.

Blessed are you, *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe, who sanctified us through His commandments and commanded us concerning immersing vessels.

6) The vessel must be immersed fully into the *mikvah* so that it is all submerged at once and covered with water, including the inner chamber of the vessel.³⁶² This being the case, the lid should be removed and immersed separately. If the lid is attached to the vessel it does not need to be disassembled from the vessel in order to be immersed. Rather, it must be put in an opened position to allow water to enter the inner chamber as well. Likewise, cups, glasses, jars, carafes, pitchers or bottles should be immersed on their sides in order that they fill with water.³⁶³

7) As stated above the vessel must be fully submerged with all its surfaces covered with water. In order to facilitate this,

³⁶¹ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:ג.

³⁶² חכמ"א עג:טו, ראה פת"ש יו"ד קכ:ג, וכן ראה קצור שי"ע לז:ו.

³⁶³ שו"ע יו"ד רב:ח, חכמ"א עג:יז, דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:כ.

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it is best to submerge it in a perforated basket even if there are several vessels, side by side, in the basket.³⁶⁴ However the vessels should not be piled on each other since this may interfere with water reaching all their surfaces.³⁶⁵ Similarly, all folding utensils, such as folding corkscrews or pocketknives, should be immersed in an open position to assure that all their surfaces be covered with water.³⁶⁶

8) If the use of a basket is impossible, the vessel may be held by hand. However, it is important to wet one's hand³⁶⁷ in the *mikvah* water³⁶⁸ before lightly grasping and immersing the vessel into it. Since his hand is wet, it is not regarded as an obstruction between the vessel and the water.³⁶⁹ In addition, once the vessel is in the *mikvah*, it is advisable to release one's grip momentarily³⁷⁰ or to grip the vessel on a different spot by rotating it somewhat.³⁷¹

9) If necessary, a pot may be immersed by tying a rope onto it loosely³⁷² or by suspending it from a hook, such as a clothes-hanger.

³⁶⁴ שו"ע יו"ד רא:ט

³⁶⁵ ש"ך יו"ד רב:ו, וראה משנ"ב תנב:כב.

³⁶⁶ ערוה"ש קכ:יח, דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:קב

³⁶⁷ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:ב.

³⁶⁸ רמ"א יו"ד קכ:ב.

³⁶⁹ טהרת ישראל אות לז.

³⁷⁰ שו"ע יו"ד קכ:ב, וראה פת"ש שם קכ:ה, וכן עיין באור הגר"א ו.

³⁷¹ דרכ"ת יו"ד קכ:ב.

³⁷² שו"ע יו"ד רב. ראה ש"ך הת חכמ"א עג:טז. קצור שו"ע לז:י.

Going Kosher

Separation of Meat and Milk

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Torah Prohibitions

There are many laws regarding the separation of meat and milk. However, these are too numerous and complex to fully be explained within the scope of this small book. If in His infinite kindness the Living G-d will grant health and length of days, these laws will be addressed in a subsequent book dedicated to this subject. Nonetheless, here we will deal only with those rules that apply to keeping a kosher lifestyle on a daily basis.

As mentioned before, the Torah reiterates three times, “Do not cook a kid in its mother’s milk”.³⁷³ Since there are no superfluous words in the Torah, the rabbis taught us that through these verses the Torah forbids three matters in relation to the mixture of meat and milk:³⁷⁴

- A) Cooking a mixture of the meat of domesticated kosher animals, such as goats, sheep and cows, with the milk of domesticated kosher animals.³⁷⁵
- B) Eating a mixture of the cooked meat and milk of domesticated kosher animals.³⁷⁶
- C) Deriving any benefit from a cooked mixture of the meat and milk of domesticated kosher animals.³⁷⁷

³⁷³ Exodus 23:19, Exodus 34:26, Deuteronomy 14:21.

³⁷⁴ גמ' חולין קח ע"ב, וראה שו"ע יו"ד פז:א.

³⁷⁵ רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות ט:א, וראה שו"ע יו"ד פז:א

³⁷⁶ שו"ע יו"ד שם וש"ך א, וראה רמ"א יו"ד קה:א

³⁷⁷ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

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Rabbinical Prohibitions

In order to avoid error and confusion the rabbis extended the prohibition to include:

A) Eating a mixture of meat and milk of domesticated kosher animals, such as goat, sheep and beef, even if they are uncooked.³⁷⁸

B1) Eating cooked or uncooked meat of kosher poultry, such as chicken or undomesticated kosher animals, such as deer, mixed with the milk of kosher domesticated animals, such as cows;³⁷⁹

B2) Eating cooked or uncooked meat of kosher domesticated animals, such as beef, mixed with the milk of kosher undomesticated animals, such as deer;³⁸⁰

B3) Eating cooked or uncooked meat of kosher poultry, such as chicken or kosher undomesticated animals, such as deer, mixed with the milk of kosher undomesticated animals, such as deer.³⁸¹

(Because they are from impure animals, the meat and milk of non-kosher animals are forbidden regardless of mixture. Therefore, the rabbis did not find it necessary to make the additional prohibition against mixture.³⁸²)

³⁷⁸ שו"ע יו"ד פז:א

³⁷⁹ שו"ע יו"ד פז:ג

³⁸⁰ פת"ש פז:ז.

³⁸¹ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות ט:ד.

³⁸² ראה ט"ז יו"ד פז:ב ושו"ך יו"ד פז:ג דפליגי על הב"ח שם.

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C1) Eating meat that has soaked in liquid together with dairy for a period of 24 consecutive hours.³⁸³ However, this rule does not apply to harsh liquids, such as brine or vinegar, in which case the meat becomes prohibited within a much shorter³⁸⁴ time span.³⁸⁵

C2) Eating dairy that has soaked in liquid together with meat for a period of 24 consecutive hours.³⁸⁶ As above, this rule does not apply to brine or vinegar.

(However, in both of the above cases, if the liquid was changed within the 24 hour period or even if the items were taken out and returned later, their consumption is not necessarily prohibited.³⁸⁷ Nonetheless, a rabbinical authority should be consulted.)

D) Eating heavily salted meat and dairy that came in contact with each other, even if only one of them was heavily salted.³⁸⁸ This will be explained later at greater length.

1) However, the rabbinical injunction only prohibits the act of eating these additional mixtures. It does not prohibit cooking or deriving benefit from them.³⁸⁹ It is, therefore, permissible for a Jew to cook a mixture of poultry and milk for medicinal purposes, to sell to a non-Jew or to feed his animals. Nonetheless, so that people should not get the

³⁸³ שו"ע יו"ד קה:א, וראה חכמ"א נח:א.

³⁸⁴ 6 to 18 minutes. Consult a rabbi in the event this occurs.

³⁸⁵ שו"ע יו"ד סט:יה, שו"ע יו"ד קה:א, דרכ"ת קה:מב.

³⁸⁶ שו"ע שם, חכמ"א שם.

³⁸⁷ חידושי רעק"א יו"ד קה:א.

³⁸⁸ שו"ע צא:ה, וראה רמ"א שם.

³⁸⁹ שו"ע שם. וראה ט"ז וש"ך שם, וכן ראה חכמ"א מ:ג.

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wrong impression³⁹⁰ and suspect him of cooking it for his own consumption,³⁹¹ this is permissible only under the following caveats:

a) It must be readily recognizable as poultry or venison rather than goat, mutton or beef.³⁹²

b) It must be recognizable that it is not being cooked for consumption by a Jew.³⁹³

2) Likewise, though it is forbidden to eat, nonetheless, it is permissible to derive benefit from an **uncooked** mixture of the meat and milk of domesticated kosher animals, such as goats, sheep or cows. Therefore, such a mixture may be sold to a Non-Jew or fed to an animal.³⁹⁴ However, as with the previous case, this too must be done in a way that is recognizably not for Jewish consumption.³⁹⁵

Business in Non-Kosher Food

3) As stated above, a Jew may not derive benefit from any cooked mixture which is forbidden by the Torah. In addition, even if it is not a mixture of meat and milk, a Jew may not make a regular business of selling food which is forbidden

³⁹⁰ היינו מראית העין.

³⁹¹ רמ"א שם סעיף ג', וראה שי"ע שם סעיף ד'.

³⁹² ראה יד אברהם על רמ"א סי' פ"ז:ב.

³⁹³ חכמ"א מ:ד.

³⁹⁴ שו"ע סי' צא:ח, וראה רמ"א פז:א.

³⁹⁵ חכמ"א מ:ד.

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by Torah.³⁹⁶ This is because he may inadvertently sell it to non-observant Jews³⁹⁷ or he may come to accidentally eat some of it himself.³⁹⁸ However, if it came into his possession inadvertently, such as through inheritance or through the death of his animal etc. he may dispose of it by selling it.³⁹⁹ A Jew may, nonetheless, engage in business dealings involving foods that are forbidden only by rabbinical injunction.⁴⁰⁰

4) Since the intent of a kosher slaughterhouse is to produce kosher meat and it is inevitable that a percentage of animals slaughtered there will not be kosher, a kosher slaughterhouse may regularly sell non-kosher meat to non-Jewish packinghouses or distributors. However, it should not retail such meat to the general public, as this may lead to the inadvertent sale of non-kosher meat to non-observant Jews.⁴⁰¹

5) As stated above, the prohibition against cooking meat and milk together applies whether or not one will eat it or derive any benefit from it. Therefore, a Jew should not even light the fire under the pot of a non-Jew because it likely contains a mixture of meat and milk.⁴⁰² This being the case, a Jew should not work as a chef in a non-kosher restaurant, since under such conditions, it is almost impossible to avoid cooking an mixture of meat and milk or using pots that had a mixture of meat and milk cooked in them within a 24 hour

³⁹⁶ שו"ע יו"ד קיז.

³⁹⁷ דרכ"ת קיז:סה.

³⁹⁸ ש"ך יו"ד קיז:ב, ט"ז קיז:א, באר היטב קיז:ב.

³⁹⁹ שו"ע קיז.

⁴⁰⁰ שו"ע שם, וראה ש"ך קיז:יד.

⁴⁰¹ דרכ"ת קיז:סה.

⁴⁰² רמ"א פז:ו.

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period.⁴⁰³ Moreover, if it is probable that non-observant Jews dine there he should not work there as a chef altogether, since he would be aiding and abetting them in transgressing the *mitzvot*.⁴⁰⁴

However, if because of financial distress one finds himself employed in a non-kosher restaurant that, because of its location, has a low probability of non-observant Jews dining there, he must avoid cooking mixtures of meat and milk or cooking in pots that have been used within 24 hours. Nonetheless, he may cook in pots and pans that have not been used for over 24 hours on condition that he does not cook any milk mixed with the meat of goats, sheep or cows. Needless to say, he should take great care not to taste any food of such an establishment and should try to find employment elsewhere as soon as possible.

The reason why he may cook in pots that have not been used within 24 hours is because only food that has been absorbed in the walls of a vessel and are beneficial to the taste of food cooked in it, render the food non-kosher. After a period of 24 hours, the flavor is considered to have been spoiled. Therefore, it will be detrimental to the taste and is ineffectual in causing it to be non-kosher. However, out of concern that a vessel may inadvertently be used to cook food which is *not* harmed by the bad taste or that it will be used *within* 24 hours,⁴⁰⁵ the sages decreed that it be koshered anyways.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰³ ראה פמ"ג הקדמה לבשר בחלב, וראה חכמ"א מו:א, וכן עיין פת"ש פז:ח.

⁴⁰⁴ ראה תוס' לגמ' שבת ג ע"ב.

⁴⁰⁵ גמ' ע"ז עה:ב, ראה ספתי דעה קג:ז, יד יהודה קג:כג.

⁴⁰⁶ הגרע"א יו"ד קג:ה.

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Feeding Animals and Pets

6) Furthermore, a mixture of goat, mutton or beef cooked with milk may not be sold, given away to a non-Jew or fed to animals, even if they are ownerless, such as stray dogs or alley cats.⁴⁰⁷ Rather, it must be destroyed or discarded so that it will not benefit any creature.⁴⁰⁸ It should be buried or flushed down the toilet.⁴⁰⁹ However, it should not be discarded in the garbage and placed on the street for trash pickup, because of animals that scavenge for discarded food.⁴¹⁰ Neither should it be incinerated.⁴¹¹

7) Since, as stated above, it is forbidden to feed animals a mixture of the cooked meat and milk of kosher domesticated animals, such as goats, sheep and cows,⁴¹² therefore, when purchasing pet food it is important to read the ingredients to ascertain that there is no such mixture. However, if the pet food contains a mixture of milk and meat from non-kosher animals, it does not fall under this prohibition and the pet may be fed the food.

⁴⁰⁷ ראה שו"ע יו"ד פז:א עפ"י המשנה סוף תמורה, וראה חכמ"א מ:ב וההקדמה ליד

אפרים.

⁴⁰⁸ או"ה כא:יג.

⁴⁰⁹ ראה או"ה שם.

⁴¹⁰ ראה או"ה שם.

⁴¹¹ פר"ח צד:י, וראה דרכ"ת פז:ט.

⁴¹² חכמ"א מ:סב.

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Breast Milk

8) Even though the prohibition against cooking a mixture of meat and milk does not apply to mother's breast milk, it is forbidden to do so⁴¹³ because, since it looks like regular milk, it could give people the wrong impression.⁴¹⁴ However, if breast milk accidentally falls into a hot pot of meat stewing on the fire, as long as it is unnoticeable,⁴¹⁵ it is considered to be null and void. The stew may be eaten even if the milk is more than one sixtieth of the stew.⁴¹⁶ Similarly, if a baby bottle which has only been used with breast milk was washed together with meat dishes; both the bottle and the dishes remain kosher.

9) However, though breast milk is kosher, nonetheless, an adult⁴¹⁷ or a child who is over 24 months old and has been weaned⁴¹⁸ is forbidden from suckling milk directly from a woman's breasts. This is so even if she squirts it into his mouth⁴¹⁹ without his mouth touching her breast.⁴²⁰ On the other hand, a child who has not been weaned may suckle from his mother's breasts until the completion of his fourth year if he is well or until the completion of his fifth year if he is weak⁴²¹ or sickly.⁴²²

413. שו"ע יו"ד פז:ד. חכמ"א מ:ד.

414. היינו מראית העין.

415. דרכ"ת פז:נא.

416. שו"ע יו"ד פז ופמ"ג שם. וראה דרכ"ת פז:נב.

417. רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות ג:ד, ש"ע יו"ד פא:ז.

418. רמב"ם שם ג:ה, ש"ע יו"ד שם.

419. ש"ע יו"ד שם.

420. ש"ך יו"ד פא:יה.

421. ש"ך יו"ד פא:יט.

422. רמב"ם שם ג:ה, ש"ע יו"ד שם.

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Marait Ayin-Giving Wrong Impression

10) In order to avoid any misunderstandings,⁴²³ a Jew who publicly⁴²⁴ serves⁴²⁵ beef⁴²⁶ or even chicken⁴²⁷ in a milk substitute made of almonds, must put almonds next to the almond milk. In this way people will realize that it is not a mixture of meat and milk. Furthermore, soy-milk should not be consumed during a meat meal unless it is served with its package.⁴²⁸ However, if almonds (or the package) are unavailable, the food may still be consumed.⁴²⁹ Today, non-dairy margarine, creamer, ice-cream and whipped topping are so common that they do not arouse suspicion of being a mixture of meat and milk.⁴³⁰ Therefore, according to many authorities, they need no special sign. However, pareve frankfurters, sausages or mock beef patties etc. eaten together with cheese, could be mistaken for a mixture of meat and milk. They, therefore, should not be eaten publicly in this manner, unless it is announced that they are pareve or they are served together with their package or there is a sign indicating that they are not real meat. Likewise, soup made of coconut milk cooked with meat should not be served publicly unless it is clearly indicated that it is non-dairy.⁴³¹

⁴²³ רמ"א פז:ג.

⁴²⁴ פת"ש יו"ד פז:י.

⁴²⁵ ש"ך פז:ז, ושפתי דעת פז:ז חולק וכותב שדוקא במבשל מניח שקדים.

⁴²⁶ רמ"א יו"ד פז:ג, וראה פר"ח שם.

⁴²⁷ ט"ז פז:ה, ש"ך פז:ו.

⁴²⁸ שו"ת חשב האפוד א:כ.

⁴²⁹ ט"ז יו"ד פז:ד.

⁴³⁰ צי"א ה:יב, משנה הלכות ה:צו, יבי"א ח"ו יו"ד ה, חשב האפוד א:כ.

⁴³¹ שו"ת משנה הלכות ה:צו ושו"ת חשב האפוד א:כ.

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Asking Non-Jew to cook Meat and Milk

11) It is forbidden to give meat and milk to a non-Jew and instruct him to cook them together. This is so even if he cooks them for his own consumption. Moreover, it is even forbidden to give him only meat with the instruction that he should cook it in a dairy pot, even if the pot belongs to the non-Jew. However, if he is simply given meat and happens to choose a dairy pot to cook in, no infraction has been committed.⁴³²

Fish and Meat

12) Due to health considerations,⁴³³ the rabbis forbade the consumption of meat and fish together.⁴³⁴ Furthermore, not only is it forbidden to eat beef, mutton and goat with fish, but poultry, such as chicken and turkey, are also included in the prohibition.⁴³⁵ However, though fish and meat may not be eaten simultaneously, nonetheless, they may be eaten one after the other, even during the same meal.⁴³⁶ This is on condition that one cleanses his mouth first, by either drinking or eating something between the fish and the meat.⁴³⁷

⁴³² ביה"ל או"ח שז בשם פמ"ג, וראה ספר מלכים אומנייך דיני אמירה לנכרי פ"י.

⁴³³ גמ' פסחים ע"ב, שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ב, שו"ע או"ח קעג:ב.

⁴³⁴ שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ב.

⁴³⁵ שבות יעקב ב:קד, פת"ש יו"ד קטז:ב, ערוה"ש י.

⁴³⁶ שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד קטז:ג.

⁴³⁷ שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ג, רמ"א שם, משנ"ב או"ח קעג:ד, כה"ח יו"ד קטז:ל.

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Sephardic custom is also to wash the hands,⁴³⁸ whereas *Ashkenazic* custom is more lenient in this regard.⁴³⁹ However, when drinking after eating fish, one should drink something other than water, since this too is regarded as being detrimental to one's health.⁴⁴⁰

13) Though, in principle, it makes no difference whether the fish is consumed before the meat or vice versa,⁴⁴¹ nevertheless, one should always begin a meal with light food and follow it with heavier food.⁴⁴² Since fish is lighter than meat it is customary to eat fish first, clean one's mouth by eating or drinking something,⁴⁴³ and then eat meat.

14) When serving fish followed by meat at the same meal, it is customary to clear the table of the fish before serving meat.⁴⁴⁴ Furthermore, it is important to change or rewash the dishes and utensils that will be used, before serving the meat so as not to cause cross-contamination.

15) Just as fish and meat should not be eaten together, so they should not be salted,⁴⁴⁵ cooked, baked, roasted or grilled together.⁴⁴⁶ Some people take the extra precaution of setting aside special pots, pans and utensils exclusively for cooking fish.⁴⁴⁷ However, though this is exemplary, nevertheless,

438. שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ג.

439. רמ"א יו"ד קטז:ג.

440. חידושי רעק"א יו"ד קטז:ה.

441. קיצור שו"ע לגב, בא"ח פנחס ח:י.

442. רמב"ם הלכות דעות ד:ז.

443. שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד קטז:ג.

444. שבט הלוי ג, ק"א:ג.

445. שו"ע יו"ד ע:א.

446. רמ"א יו"ד קטז:ב, ש"ך קטז:א, חכמ"א סח:א.

447. טור יו"ד קטז, או"ה טל:כו.

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since fish is pareve, it is permissible to cook fish in a meat pot, as long as it is clean,⁴⁴⁸ even though 24 hours have not passed since meat was cooked in it.⁴⁴⁹ Of course, afterwards, the pot should be cleaned before cooking meat in it again.⁴⁵⁰

16) As stated above, fish and meat should not be baked in an oven simultaneously.⁴⁵¹ This is because of the possibility of dripping or splattering from one food to the other.⁴⁵² However, if the need arises, it is permissible to bake fish and meat together in the same oven, on condition that they are in separate pans and that at least one of the pans is securely sealed with aluminum foil, or the like.⁴⁵³ Also, to avoid spillage, it is preferable that both pans be on the same level rather than one above the other.

17) Though fish and meat should not be baked simultaneously in separate open pans, if it was inadvertently done, both dishes may be eaten, on condition that nothing dripped or splattered from one pan to the other during the course of baking.⁴⁵⁴ Of course, if the pans were situated one above the other or even if they were side by side on the same shelf, but in close proximity to each other, this increases the possibility of their contaminating each other. In the event this happens, inquire of your rabbi for his ruling.

18) It is permissible to bake pareve foods, such as knishes or burekas, in the oven simultaneously with meat and to serve

⁴⁴⁸ ט"ז יו"ד צה:ג.

⁴⁴⁹ חת"ס יו"ד סוף סי' קא.

⁴⁵⁰ ט"ז יו"ד צה:ג.

⁴⁵¹ רמ"א יו"ד קטז:ב, ש"ך יו"ד קטז:א, חכמ"א סח:א.

⁴⁵² ש"ך יו"ד קטז:ג.

⁴⁵³ שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד קטז:ב, וראה ש"ך וט"ז שם.

⁴⁵⁴ ערוה"ש יו"ד קטז:י.

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them with fish. Likewise, it is permissible to bake them simultaneously with fish and to serve them with meat.⁴⁵⁵ However, precautions should be taken to assure that nothing drips or splatters from the meat or fish pan to the other pan. To avoid this, it is advisable to place the knishes or burekas on the upper rack and the fish or meat on the lower rack.

Fish and Milk

19) There is a difference of opinion as to the permissibility of eating fish and milk together. However, this too is not connected to the prohibition of eating meat with milk. *Sephardic* authorities forbid eating fish and milk together for health reasons, citing that it is detrimental to one's health,⁴⁵⁶ similar to the above ruling regarding fish and meat. However, though they forbid eating fish with milk or cheese, they permit eating fish fried in butter.⁴⁵⁷ *Ashkenazic* authorities, on the other hand, permit eating fish and milk together.⁴⁵⁸ This being the case, a cheese pizza baked with a fish topping, or a "Tuna Melt", which is made by baking tuna and cheese together, is forbidden to *Sephardim* and permitted to *Ashkenazim*. However, some *Ashkenazic* communities, especially certain *Chassidic* sects, follow the stricter view. Ask your rabbi for his guidance.

⁴⁵⁵ ט"ז יו"ד קטז:ב, באר היטב שם.

⁴⁵⁶ ב"י יו"ד פז, וראה חדושי הגהות על ב"י אות ד', וכן ראה רבינו בחיי משפטים, וראה בן איש חי בהעלתך טו.

⁴⁵⁷ שו"ת יחז"ד ו:מח, שו"ת רב פעלים ח"ב יו"ד י, שו"ת זבחי צדק ג:קמג, כה"ח יו"ד פז:כד, וראה פמ"ג או"ח קעג א"א:א.

⁴⁵⁸ ט"ז יו"ד פז:ג, ש"ך יו"ד פז:ה, פת"ש יו"ד פז:ט, דרכ"ת פז:מח, וכן ראה רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות ט:ה, שכתב שם דגים וחגבים מותר לאכלן בחלב.

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All authorities are in agreement that fish may be cooked in a dairy pot and that fish and milk may be eaten in close succession to each other even during the same meal.⁴⁵⁹ However, *Sephardim* are required to clean the pot before cooking dairy in it again and to wash their hands and rinse their mouths between eating fish and milk.⁴⁶⁰

Storing Meat and Milk

20) Sealed packages of meat may be placed or stored together with sealed packages of dairy.⁴⁶¹ Nonetheless, before doing so, one should ascertain that they are properly sealed.⁴⁶² If there is one open package, as long as the other packages are sealed, one may be lenient.⁴⁶³

21) On condition that they will be rinsed afterwards, all foods that are customarily peeled or washed before use may be placed or stored together with cold meat or dairy foods.⁴⁶⁴ However, unpackaged meat and dairy products, especially if they are moist or greasy, should not be placed or stored together, even when cold, lest there be a transfer from one to the other.⁴⁶⁵ Furthermore, it is advisable to place solids on a higher shelf than liquids to avoid spillage of one kind onto the other.

459 כה"ח או"ח קע:ג.

460 כה"ח או"ח שם.

461 שו"ע יו"ד צא:א, שו"ע צה:ג.

462 רמ"א יו"ד צה:ג.

463 זבחי צדק יו"ד צה:מה.

464 שו"ע יו"ד צא:ב.

465 שו"ע יו"ד צא:ב.

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Meat and Milk on Same Table

22) As a general rule, it is forbidden to eat meat on a table that has dairy on it or to eat dairy on a table that has meat on it, lest one forget and inadvertently eat from the other kind.⁴⁶⁶

23) If two strangers are sitting at the same table, each one eating his meal separately, it is permissible for one to eat meat while the other eats dairy.⁴⁶⁷ Since they are uncomfortable with each other there is no possibility that they may inadvertently share each others food.⁴⁶⁸ Nonetheless, they should each have separate loaves of bread, salt shakers and pitchers for their beverage.⁴⁶⁹

24) If two friends or relatives are sitting at the same table, one eating a meat meal and the other eating a dairy meal; since they are comfortable with each other, there is the possibility that they may inadvertently share each others food.⁴⁷⁰ Therefore, in addition to not sharing loaves of bread, salt shakers and pitchers, they must also make some kind of separation between them as a reminder not to share their food.⁴⁷¹ This may be in the form of eating on separate meat and dairy tablecloths,⁴⁷² putting an item between them, such

⁴⁶⁶ שו"ע יו"ד פח:א וש"ך שם ב. וראה חכמ"א מ:יא.

⁴⁶⁷ שו"ע יו"ד פח:ב. חכמ"א מ:יא.

⁴⁶⁸ ש"ך יו"ד פח:ג.

⁴⁶⁹ ש"ך יו"ד פח:ה, באר היטב פח:ה.

⁴⁷⁰ ש"ך יו"ד פח:ג.

⁴⁷¹ שו"ע יו"ד פח:ב.

⁴⁷² שו"ע שם.

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as a candelabrum,⁴⁷³ or sitting on opposite sides of a long table so that they are out of reach of each others food.⁴⁷⁴

25) On the other hand, if two people are sitting at the same table and one is eating fish while the other is eating meat, they do not need any separation between them, even if they are friends or relatives.⁴⁷⁵ Nonetheless, it is customary to be strict in this regard by not putting meat and fish on the table simultaneously.⁴⁷⁶ However, in a restaurant or banquet setting, in which meat is served to some and fish is served to others, even though they are sitting at the same table, there is no cause for concern.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷³ רמ"א יו"ד פח:ב.

⁴⁷⁴ פת"ש יו"ד פח:ג. וראה חכמ"א מ:יא.

⁴⁷⁵ שבט הלוי ג קיא:ג.

⁴⁷⁶ שבט הלוי שם.

⁴⁷⁷ שבט הלוי שם.

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Problems and Solutions of Forbidden Mixtures

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Introduction

In this section we will specifically deal with common errors and accidents that may occur in a kosher kitchen and how to correct them. However, because these laws deal with so many possible scenarios, they are extremely varied and complex. They, therefore, are quite beyond the scope of this small book. If the Merciful One, Blessed be He, will grant wisdom, strength and length of days, these issues will, G-d willing, be dealt with in full in a separate book dedicated to this subject alone.

Before proceeding, it should be pointed out that the main intent and purpose of this section, is not to enable the reader to arrive at *Halachic* rulings on his or her own. This may lead to error, G-d forbid. As stated, these *Halachos* are very complex. As a result, the rulings may change according to the details and conditions of each case.

To complicate matters, there may be more than one opinion on any given subject. Some authorities may be stricter and others more lenient. This being the case, it takes the expertise and experience of a seasoned rabbi to know how to apply each law according to the situation. His ruling may, therefore, vary according to the details and circumstances surrounding each case.

Therefore, be aware that the purpose of this chapter is to educate you as to some of the possible scenarios that may occur and the possible solutions to them, so that in the event of a problem, you will be sensitive to it and seek rabbinical counsel. Moreover, if a problem arises, there will be a

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greater understanding of what to ask and how to ask it. However, as stated before, should there be any doubts, it is of the utmost importance to ask a rabbi who is expert in this field.

Some Common Problems

1) If a meat dish was cooking in a meat pot and a dairy spoon was inadvertently used to stir it, or if a dairy dish was cooking in a dairy pot and a meat spoon was used to stir it, the *Halachic* consequence depends on whether or not the spoon was used for cooking within the previous 24 hour period:

A) If the spoon was used for cooking within the previous 24 hour period, two possibilities exist:

a) If the food was sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it, the food and the pot remain kosher. The food may be eaten and the pot need not be koshered before its next use. However, the spoon must be koshered through immersion in boiling water before its next use.⁴⁷⁸

(However, if the spoon was inserted into the food twice, according to *Sephardic* authorities, the food must be 120 times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it.⁴⁷⁹ Nevertheless, more than 120 times is not required, even if the spoon was inserted three or four times.⁴⁸⁰)

⁴⁷⁸ שו"ע צד:ג.

⁴⁷⁹ שו"ע יו"ד צד:ב.

⁴⁸⁰ כה"ח יו"ד קה:כב.

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b) Nonetheless, if the food was not sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it, then the food may not be eaten. Moreover, both the spoon and the pot must be koshered through immersion in boiling water before the next use.⁴⁸¹

B) However, if the spoon had not been used within the previous 24 hour period, the food and the pot remain kosher even if the food was not sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it. Nevertheless, the spoon must still be koshered through immersion in boiling water before its next use.⁴⁸²

2) If a meat or dairy spoon which had been used within the previous 24 hour period was inserted into pareve food that was cooking in a pareve pot that had not been used in the previous 24 hour period the *Halachic* outcome depends on whether or not the food was sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it:

A) If the food was sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it, the food may be eaten together with either dairy or meat food.

B) If the food was less than sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it:

a) According to *Ashkenazic* authorities the food may be eaten only together with food similar to the spoon. If it was a dairy

⁴⁸¹ שר"ע יו"ד צ"ד:ג.

⁴⁸² שר"ע יו"ד צ"ד:ד.

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spoon the food may be eaten with dairy food and if it was a meat spoon it may be eaten with meat food.⁴⁸³

b) According to *Sephardic* authorities the food may be eaten regardless of whether it is eaten together with meat or dairy food.⁴⁸⁴

3) If a meat pot which had been used in the previous 24 hour period had pareve food cooking in it and during the course of cooking, a dairy spoon which had also been used in the previous 24 hour period was inserted into it:

A) If the food was sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it, the food may be consumed during a meat meal only. In addition, neither the spoon nor the pot needs to be rekoshered.

B) If the food was not sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted in it, the food may not be consumed. Furthermore, both the spoon and the pot need to be rekoshered through immersion in boiling water.⁴⁸⁵ This rule applies both to *Ashkenazim* and *Sephardim*.⁴⁸⁶ However, there are Sephardic authorities that are of the opinion that if this was inadvertently done⁴⁸⁷ and the spoon did not touch the pot itself, but rather, only the food,⁴⁸⁸ both the food and the pot remain kosher.⁴⁸⁹

483. שו"ע יו"ד צה:א,ב,ג.

484. שו"ע שם.

485. שו"ע יו"ד צה:ג.

486. מה"ח יו"ד צה:לה.

487. היינו בדיעבד.

488. חכמ"א מח:ו.

489. שו"ע שם, בא"ח קרח:יז, וראה שו"ת יבי"א ח"ד יו"ד ד.

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C) If both the pot and the spoon had not been used within the previous 24 hours, the food is kosher and may be eaten. In addition, the pot and the spoon may be reused and do not need re-koshering.⁴⁹⁰

4) If a pareve dish was cooking in a meat pot which had been used within the previous 24 hour period and a dairy spoon which had not been used within the previous 24 hour period was inadvertently used to stir it, the *Halachic* consequence likewise depends on whether or not the food was sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it:

A) If the food was sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it, the food is kosher and may be eaten. In addition, the pot and the spoon do not need re-koshering.⁴⁹¹

B) If the food was not sixty times greater than the part of the spoon which was inserted into it, the food should only be eaten during a meat meal. Moreover, the spoon must be re-koshered by immersion in boiling water.⁴⁹²

5) If a meat pot was removed from the fire and a dairy spoon was inserted into it before its contents had cooled to less than 113 Fahrenheit/45 Celsius; the above rules still apply. This is likewise the case if a meat spoon was inserted into a dairy pot after it was removed from the fire.

⁴⁹⁰ רמ"א יו"ד צה:ג.

⁴⁹¹ שו"ע יו"ד צד:ה, וראה פמ"ג ורע"א שדווחים את ש"ך שם.

⁴⁹² שו"ע יו"ד צה:א-ב.

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A) However, if the spoon was inserted into the food after it was transferred from the pot to a bowl or a plate, if it still retained a heat of 113 Fahrenheit/45 Celsius, and:

a) The food was sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it. Or

b) The spoon had not been used during the previous 24 hour period

Then, in such a case the food is kosher and may be eaten.⁴⁹³

(As stated above, if the spoon was inserted into the food twice, according to *Sephardic* authorities, the food must be 120 times greater than the part of the spoon which was inserted into it.⁴⁹⁴ Nevertheless, more than 120 times is not required, even if the spoon was inserted three or four times.⁴⁹⁵)

B) However, if the food was not sixty times greater than that part of the spoon which was inserted into it, but the spoon had been used within the previous 24 hour period:

a) According to *Ashkenazic* authorities the food may not be consumed except if there is great need or substantial monetary loss. Furthermore, the spoon should be rekoshered.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹³ שו"ע יו"ד קה:ב, ש"ך שם ה.

⁴⁹⁴ שו"ע יו"ד צד:ב.

⁴⁹⁵ כה"ח יו"ד קה:כב.

⁴⁹⁶ דרכ"ת יו"ד קה:ס, חידושי רע"ק יו"ד קה:ב.

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b) According to *Sephardic* authorities the food may be consumed.⁴⁹⁷

6) Generally, all the rules mentioned above regarding a pot which is still on the fire also apply to a pot which has been removed from the fire, on condition that it still retains a heat of 113 Fahrenheit/45 Celsius.⁴⁹⁸

7) If a dairy dish was inadvertently cooked in a meat pot which had been used within the previous 24 hour period, the *Halachic* consequence depends on whether or not the food is sixty times greater than the pot.

A) If the food was not sixty times greater than the pot, the food must be discarded and the pot must be re-koshered by immersion in boiling water.

B) If the food was sixty times greater than the pot, the food is kosher and may be consumed. However, the pot must be re-koshered by immersion in boiling water. Likewise, even if the pot had not been used within the previous 24 hour period, it should not be used, even to cook a pareve dish, until it is re-koshered by immersion in boiling water.⁴⁹⁹

8) If meat was cooking in a meat pot and a dairy lid was inadvertently placed upon it or if dairy was cooking in a dairy pot and a meat lid was placed upon it:

A) If the lid had not been used within the previous 24 hour period, both the lid and the pot remain kosher. However, if it

⁴⁹⁷ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁴⁹⁸ שו"ע יו"ד צד:ד.

⁴⁹⁹ ש"ך שו"ע יו"ד צג:ג.

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was not removed before the food came to a boil and hot vapors managed to come up from the food to the lid, then it should be re-koshered by immersion in boiling water.⁵⁰⁰

B) If the lid had been used within the previous 24 hour period, if the food came to a boil and hot vapors came up from the pot, the food must be discarded and both the pot and the lid must be re-koshered by immersion in boiling water. However, if the food was sixty times greater than the lid, it is still kosher and may be consumed.⁵⁰¹

9) If a meat dish was cooking in a meat pot or if a dairy dish was cooking in a dairy pot, and a pareve lid was inadvertently placed upon it, and the food came to a boil so that vapors managed to rise from the food to the lid before the lid was removed, the *Halachic* consequence is that the lid takes on the properties of the food cooking in the pot. If the food was dairy the lid becomes a dairy lid and if the food was meat the lid becomes a meat lid. It must be re-koshered by immersion in boiling water before it may be used as a pareve lid once more.⁵⁰²

10) If a clean meat utensil, such as a fork or spoon, was inadvertently used with a cold dairy food or a clean dairy utensil was used with a cold meat food, the food is still kosher and may be consumed. Furthermore, the utensil must merely be cleansed well and it retains its original status. If it was a dairy utensil it remains a dairy utensil and if it was a meat utensil it remains a meat utensil. However, great care

⁵⁰⁰ שו"ע יר"ד צג.

⁵⁰¹ שו"ע שם.

⁵⁰² רמ"א יר"ד צג.

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must be taken *not* to wash it in hot water, especially if it was used with hot food within the previous 24 hour period.⁵⁰³

11) In the event that the meat utensil was not very clean when it was used with dairy, or vice versa, that the dairy utensil was not clean when used with meat, the part of the cold food which came in contact with the utensil should be discarded and the remainder is still kosher and may be consumed. In addition the spoon should be thoroughly cleansed in cold water.⁵⁰⁴

12) If a cold, liquid meat dish, such as beef soup, was stored in a cold dairy container for 24 hours or more or cold milk was stored in a cold meat container for 24 hours or more, both the beef soup and the milk remain kosher and may be consumed.⁵⁰⁵ However, the containers must be re-koshered by immersion in boiling water.⁵⁰⁶

13) If hot milk was poured from a pot that was on the fire into a meat container that had been used within the previous 24 hour period or if hot beef soup was poured from a pot that was on the fire into a dairy container that had been used within the previous 24 hour period, the food is no longer kosher and must be discarded. In addition, the container must be re-koshered (if it is made of kosherable material).⁵⁰⁷

14) If hot water is poured from a non-kosher pot which has been used within the previous 24 hour period into a kosher

⁵⁰³ שו"ע יו"ד צא:א וט"ז שם.

⁵⁰⁴ פת"ש יו"ד צא:א, דרכ"ת יו"ד צו:ד.

⁵⁰⁵ ט"ז יו"ד קה:א, חכמ"א נז:ט.

⁵⁰⁶ שו"ת שבט הקהתי ב:רנג.

⁵⁰⁷ רמ"א יו"ד צה:ג.

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container, the water must be discarded and the container must be re-koshered.⁵⁰⁸

15) If hot water is poured from a clean meat pot that had been used within the previous 24 hour period, into a dairy pot that had been used within the previous 24 hour period, if there is no great monetary loss,⁵⁰⁹ the dairy pot should be re-koshered. However, if either pot had not been used within the previous 24 hour period, the dairy pot need not be koshered.⁵¹⁰ Of course, the same principles hold true if hot water is poured from a dairy pot to a meat pot.

16) If hot water is poured from a meat pot which has not properly been cleaned, into a dairy utensil, or vice versa, the receiving utensil should be koshered.⁵¹¹ Similarly, if hot water is poured from a clean meat pot which had been used within the previous 24 hour period, into a dairy utensil which has not properly been cleaned, the dairy utensil should be re-koshered.⁵¹²

17) Meat and dairy utensils washed together in hot water must be re-koshered. Since it is impossible to kosher china, porcelain or ceramic dishes etc. great caution should be taken to assure that this does not happen.

18) The problems of dairy food cooked in a meat oven, meat food cooked in a dairy oven or dairy and meat foods cooked

⁵⁰⁸ ש"ך יו"ד צה:יה, חכמ"א מח:יג.

⁵⁰⁹ לערוה"ש צה:כב אם יש חסרון כיס אפשר להשתמש בו אחרי עבור כ"ד שעות.

⁵¹⁰ רמ"א יו"ד צה:גת וראה משבצות זהב יו"ד צה:יג. וש"ך צה:ה ופר"ח צה:יז חולקים.

וערוה"ש צה:כב מכריע שטוב להכשיר.

⁵¹¹ תורת חטת מז:יב

⁵¹² רמ"א יו"ד צה:ג. והאו"ה לד:יח כותב שלא צריך הכשר.

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in an oven simultaneously are complex. The *Halachic* outcome often depends on whether the food was solid or liquid, whether there was a transference of aroma or steam from the food to the oven walls or from one food to the other, whether the food was covered or not, whether the two types of food came into direct contact with each other and whether the oven itself had a ventilated or a sealed compartment. Even the size of the oven is a determining factor. The subject is further aggravated by the lack of consensus amongst many of the rabbinic authorities regarding several key issues. Therefore, it is best to avoid doing any of this altogether.⁵¹³

However, though cooking meat and dairy in an oven simultaneously is a practice that should generally be avoided, nonetheless, if it has been done, here are several guidelines to be aware of:

a) If a meat pot and a dairy pot were in an oven simultaneously and one of them was covered by a tight fitting lid or with aluminum foil with no possibility of transference of steam or aroma from one food to the other, both foods may be eaten. However, to avoid spillage, the pots should have been placed in the oven on the same level, rather than one above the other. Of course, if both pots were properly covered the food may be consumed and neither the pots nor the oven need rekoshering.⁵¹⁴

b) If a meat pot and a dairy pot were in an oven and both foods were solid, they may be eaten, and neither the pots nor the oven need to be rekoshered, even if both pots were

⁵¹³ רמ"א יו"ד קח:א.

⁵¹⁴ רמ"א יו"ד קח:א, שפתי דעה יו"ד קח:י.

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uncovered, unless it was observed that steam was rising from the pots.⁵¹⁵

c) However, if both pots were uncovered and one or both contained liquid, we assume that steam arose from the liquid and transferred to the solid. Therefore, the food may not be eaten.⁵¹⁶

d) If bread was baked in an oven simultaneously with meat it generally should not be eaten with dairy. However, if other bread is unavailable and the dairy dish must be eaten with bread, it is permissible to eat it together with the dairy.⁵¹⁷

e) If an open pot of dairy liquid was cooking in a meat oven or an open pot of meat liquid was cooking in a dairy oven we assume that the steam rose to the oven ceiling. Furthermore, it may have condensed on the oven ceiling and fallen back into the pot. According to some opinions⁵¹⁸ the food may not be eaten. Other opinions⁵¹⁹ hold that unless drippings were observed falling into the pot the food may be eaten. Furthermore, depending on the size of the oven and whether it was ventilated, it may need to be rekoshered.⁵²⁰ Inquire of your rabbi.

Now, it must be reemphasized that the above are only general guidelines. As said before, the *Halachic* outcome may change according to several factors, including the size

⁵¹⁵ אג"מ יו"ד א:מ, מנחת יעקב, תורת חטת לה:כא.

⁵¹⁶ רמ"א יו"ד קח:א, ט"ז יו"ד קח:ה.

⁵¹⁷ רמ"א יו"ד קח:א, וראה

⁵¹⁸ דגמ"ר יו"ד צב:ח.

⁵¹⁹ משבצות זהב יו"ד צב:כט, יד יהודה צב:גב.

⁵²⁰ אג"מ יו"ד א:מ, מנחת יצחק ה:כ.

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of the oven and whether or not it is ventilated etc. It would take us far beyond the parameters of this book to do justice to all these important issues. However, by making you aware of them it is hoped that you will contact a *Halachic* expert in the event that they arise. If in His mercy, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will grant wisdom, strength and length of days, this subject will, G-d willing, be addressed thoroughly in a subsequent work.

It should further be pointed out that in addition to the above problems there is also controversy as to whether a single oven may be used for both dairy and meat on a regular basis by koshering it from meat to milk and from milk to meat. Even those authorities who permit it may differ in their approach of what method of koshering to use etc. Ask your rabbi for his opinion.

19) If hot meat fell into a pot of cold milk or if hot milk fell into a pot of cold meat, none of the food may be consumed.⁵²¹ Moreover, the pot must be koshered before further use.

20) However, if there was a quantity of 59 parts more of one food than the other, the flavor of the lesser food is so overpowered by the majority food that it is considered to be null and void. Therefore, if a piece of meat fell into a pot of hot milk and there were 59 parts of milk to one part of meat, the milk remains kosher and may be consumed. However, since the meat is still identifiable as an entity unto itself, separate and apart from the milk, it becomes non-kosher and

⁵²¹ שו"ע יו"ד צ"א:ד.

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may not be consumed.⁵²² Rather, it must be extracted from the milk.

22) On the other hand, if milk falls into a pot of hot beef soup and there are 59 parts soup to one part of milk; since the milk is a liquid it mixes with the soup and loses its identity. The soup may therefore be eaten.⁵²³ However, if a drop of milk falls on a piece of meat protruding from the broth, the meat must be 59 parts to one part of the milk for it to be permissible to eat.⁵²⁴ If it is less than 59 parts of meat to one part milk the entire piece becomes non-kosher.⁵²⁵ This being the case, it must be extracted from the soup and there must be 59 parts of soup relative to the whole piece of meat, rather than just to the drop of milk that fell on it, in order for the soup to remain kosher.⁵²⁶ Nevertheless, if the pot was immediately shaken or covered as soon as the drop of milk fell into it, the whole soup, including the piece of meat,⁵²⁷ is permissible to eat, on condition that its contents are 59 parts relative to one part milk.⁵²⁸

Salting is Equivalent to Cooking

1) As a general rule, it is best to be cautious that meat and dairy do not come in direct contact with each other.

⁵²² שו"ע יו"ד צב:א.

⁵²³ שו"ע יו"ד צב:ב. וראה ט"ז וש"ך שם.

⁵²⁴ שו"ע יו"ד צב:ב.

⁵²⁵ שו"ע שם.

⁵²⁶ שו"ע שם.

⁵²⁷ כה"ח שם:ה.

⁵²⁸ שו"ע שם.

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Nonetheless, if dry meat food came in contact with dry dairy food they may both be eaten (separately, of course) on condition that they were both cold and that no residue was transferred from one to the other.⁵²⁹ However, if one of them was moist,⁵³⁰ they must be rinsed with cold water before being consumed.⁵³¹ If, however, one of them was greasy they should be scrubbed, as well as being rinsed, before being consumed.⁵³²

2) On the other hand, salting is *halachicly* considered to be equivalent to cooking.⁵³³ This being the case, transfer of flavor may occur through heavily salted foods. Therefore, if heavily salted meat and very salty cheese come in contact with each other, there is transference of flavor between them. However, this is only so under the following qualifications:

A1) The definition of “heavily salted” here is that there is so much salt that the food is inedible.⁵³⁴ In other words, normally, the salt would have to be removed for the food to be eaten.⁵³⁵ There are three levels of salting applicable here:

A2) The highest level of salting is the method used for preserving meat. Salt is applied to the meat to the point that it is caked upon it. Though in bygone years this was the chief method of preserving meat, nowadays, we make little use of it because of the advent of refrigeration. Unless the salt is removed by soaking it in water meat preserved in this

⁵²⁹ שו"ע יו"ד צא:א.

⁵³⁰ שו"ך יו"ד צא:א.

⁵³¹ שו"ע יו"ד צא:א וצא:ה.

⁵³² פת"ש יו"ד צא:א.

⁵³³ מליח כרותח, גמ' פסחים עו:א, חולין צז:א.

⁵³⁴ שו"ע יו"ד צא:ה ורמ"א שם.

⁵³⁵ גמ' פסחים עו:א, חולין קיב:א.

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fashion transfers flavor to other foods. Merely rinsing off the salt does not eliminate its ability to transfer flavor.⁵³⁶

A3) A lesser level of salting is that used in order to draw out the blood from the meat so that it may be cooked through boiling etc. This is known as “koshering” the meat. Salt is heavily applied to the meat, but not nearly to the degree that it is when preserving meat. Unless the salt is rinsed off the meat it transfers flavor to other foods. Nonetheless, soaking it is not required as it is when removing salt from preserved meat.⁵³⁷

A4) An even lesser amount of salt is customarily applied in preparation to broiling meat. *Ashkenazic* custom is to regard this level of salting as being capable of transferring flavor too, because we are not proficient in assessing the degree of salt necessary to transfer flavor.⁵³⁸ However, once the meat is rinsed it can no longer transfer flavor, even according to *Ashkenazic* custom. *Ashkenazic* Jews may be lenient with this type of salting only in the case of serious loss.⁵³⁹ However, *Sephardic* custom is lenient, even when the loss is a minor one.⁵⁴⁰ Moreover, if meat is lightly salted, it is regarded as being inconsequential.⁵⁴¹

B) Transference of flavor *only* occurs if the salt is damp or wet. This is the case even if the salt was damp, but dried

⁵³⁶ שו"ע יו"ד צא:ה.

⁵³⁷ שו"ע יו"ד צא:ה.

⁵³⁸ רמ"א יו"ד צא:ה.

⁵³⁹ רמ"א שם.

⁵⁴⁰ כה"ח צא:לה.

⁵⁴¹ כה"ח צא:לו.

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before the two foods touched each other.⁵⁴² Thus, if dry salted meat and cheese come in contact, they only need to be rinsed before consumption.

C) If both salted foods are damp but lean, the transference is not deep and all that is required is that a thin surface layer be removed⁵⁴³ from each food.⁵⁴⁴

D1) If both foods are lean but only one, such as the meat, is damp and heavily salted; a thin surface layer needs to be removed from the unsalted cheese only. This is because flavor was transmitted from the meat to the cheese only, but not vice versa. Nevertheless, the meat should be rinsed before it is eaten.⁵⁴⁵

D2) However, according to some opinions, the salty food also absorbs flavor. Therefore, a thin surface layer should be removed from it too.⁵⁴⁶ Nonetheless, if doing so would incur a loss, the lenient opinion may be followed.⁵⁴⁷

E1) On the other hand, if the salty meat and cheese were also fatty, the flavor transmitted from one to the other permeates them completely and they both become non-kosher. This is likewise the case even if only one of them, such as the meat, was fatty, because the cheese absorbs the grease and then transmits it back to the meat.⁵⁴⁸

542. שו"ע יו"ד צא:ה.

543. כדי קליפה.

544. שו"ע יו"ד צא:ה.

545. שו"ע יו"ד שם.

546. שו"ע יו"ד ע:ג, רמ"א קה:י.

547. רמ"א יו"ד קה:י, ש"ך יו"ד ע:כ, חכמ"א מג:ה.

548. שו"ע יו"ד צא:ו, שו"ע יו"ד ע:ד.

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E2) However, since most meat and dairy etc. contain some degree of oils and fats, it is difficult for us to ascertain which should be considered fatty and which should not. This being the case, in practice, they *should all be treated as fatty foods*.⁵⁴⁹ In the event that the problems of this section arise, seek the guidance of a *Halachic* expert as to how to proceed.

⁵⁴⁹ רמ"א יו"ד קה:ט, וראה כה"ח יו"ד קה:קא.

Going Kosher

Davar Charif
Sharp foods

Going Kosher

Going Kosher

Unique Status of Sharp Foods

Sharp foods have a special status in kosher law unique to them:

a) When they are cut with a meat knife they may not be eaten with dairy (or vice versa), even though both the knife and the food were cold. This is because a sharp food, even when cold, absorbs taste through being cut, even without the medium of heat.⁵⁵⁰

b) Usually, the taste of food absorbed in a vessel is considered to have lost its effect after a period of 24 hours. It therefore loses its original potency to transfer flavor. However, because of their sharpness, the taste transmitted by sharp foods actually enhances the original flavor of the vessel even if it has not been used for over 24 hours. Thus, sharp food “Reawakens” the ability of the vessel to transfer taste, similar to how it was within the 24 hour period.⁵⁵¹

c) Usually, taste absorbed directly from one food to another is considered to be a primary transference of flavor.⁵⁵² However, a taste absorbed from food to a vessel, which is subsequently transferred from the vessel to another food, is considered to be a secondary transference of flavor.⁵⁵³ Now, if the primary flavor was transferred from a *forbidden* food to the vessel, the secondary transference of flavor⁵⁵⁴ from the

⁵⁵⁰ גמ' חולין קיא ע"ב.

⁵⁵¹ דרכ"ת צו:יא, ערוה"ש צו:יב.

⁵⁵² גותן טעם.

⁵⁵³ גותן טעם בר גותן טעם.

⁵⁵⁴ נ"ט בר נ"ט דאיסורא.

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vessel to a subsequent food does not lose its original potency; i.e. it remains non-kosher. In other words, any food subsequently cooked in that vessel also becomes forbidden. However, if the primary flavor was transferred from a *permitted* food to the vessel, the secondary transference of flavor⁵⁵⁵ from the vessel to a subsequent food loses its original potency and no longer has the capability of causing the food to become forbidden. Thus, if hot fish was put into a cold, clean meat vessel, it may still be eaten with dairy⁵⁵⁶ even if the vessel had been used within the past 24 hour period. Similarly, if lettuce was cut with a clean meat knife, it may still be eaten in a feta cheese salad. However, to the contrary, sharp foods actually *enhance* the secondary taste of the vessel, thus giving it the ability to transfer taste on the level of a primary flavor.⁵⁵⁷ Therefore, if an onion or a radish is cut with a clean meat knife, it may not be added to a feta cheese salad. Furthermore, this is the case even if the knife has not been used during the previous 24 hour period, as indicated in section b) above.

Which Foods are considered Sharp?

According to most opinions the following foods are defined as sharp:

Garlic, onions, leeks,⁵⁵⁸ radish roots⁵⁵⁹ (as opposed to their leafy tops⁵⁶⁰), horseradish,⁵⁶¹ ginger,⁵⁶² peppercorn,⁵⁶³ hot

⁵⁵⁵ נ"ט בר נ"ט דהתרא.

⁵⁵⁶ גמ' חולין קיא:ב.

⁵⁵⁷ חכמ"א מט:א.

⁵⁵⁸ שו"ע יו"ד צו:ב.

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chili peppers, raw uncured olives and sharp cured olives,⁵⁶⁴ lemons,⁵⁶⁵ limes, citrons,⁵⁶⁶ sour apples,⁵⁶⁷ sour plums⁵⁶⁸ and salted herring, including any heavily salted fish.⁵⁶⁹ Some opinions include pickled cucumbers, pickled vegetables and sauerkraut. However, though this opinion is widespread, it is not universal.⁵⁷⁰ Inquire of your rabbi for his opinion. Liquids, such as heavily salted brine or strong vinegar⁵⁷¹ and very dry wines⁵⁷² are also regarded as being sharp. According to some opinions whiskey is a sharp liquid.⁵⁷³ However, others differ.⁵⁷⁴ Some are of the opinion that virgin olive oil is a sharp liquid, though this too is disputed.⁵⁷⁵ Inquire of your rabbi.

Avoiding Problems of Cutting Sharp Food

1) Though it is not a *Halachic* requirement, as a general rule, it is advisable to purchase knives and cutting boards that will remain pareve and be used for cutting sharp foods, such as

559 דרכ"ת צו:א

560 רמ"א יו"ד צו:א.

561 רמ"א יו"ד צו:ב.

562 ש"ך יו"ד צו:יז.

563 ש"ך יו"ד צו:יט.

564 משנ"ב תמז:פט.

565 שו"ע יו"ד צו:ד, וראה ש"ך צו:כ.

566 מג"א תמז:לג.

567 ט"ז יו"ד צו:ט.

568 או"ה לה:ידי.

569 ש"ך יו"ד צו:טז.

570 ראה דעת תורה צו:ב, ערוה"ש צו:יג.

571 מג"א תמז:כח.

572 דרכ"ת צו:מב.

573 ט"ז או"ה תמב:ד.

574 דרכ"ת צו:מ.

575 דרכ"ת צו:סה.

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onions, garlic and lemons etc. These knives should be stored apart from the meat and dairy utensils and should be washed separately from them, especially if hot water is being used. In doing so the following problems can be completely eliminated:⁵⁷⁶

Common Problems In Cutting Sharp Food

2) Generally, according to *Ashkenazic* authorities, if a sharp food was cut with a non-kosher knife it should not be consumed unless the food is sixty times greater than that part of the blade which was inserted into it.⁵⁷⁷ According to *Sephardic* authorities if 2cm/0.8 inch of the food is cut off the food on both sides of the cut, the remaining food may be eaten.⁵⁷⁸ However, if it was cut into thin slices or chopped into small pieces none of it may be eaten.⁵⁷⁹

3a) Likewise, according to *Ashkenazic* authorities, if sharp food was cut with a meat knife it should not be cooked or consumed with dairy, even if the knife was not used within the previous 24 hour period.⁵⁸⁰

3b) According to *Sephardic* authorities if the knife was not used within the previous 24 hour period, the food may be

⁵⁷⁶ שו"ת תשובות והנהגות א:תלג.

⁵⁷⁷ ט"ז יו"ד צו:ה.

⁵⁷⁸ שו"ע יו"ד צו:ב, כה"ה יו"ד צו:יא.

⁵⁷⁹ חכמ"א מט:ג.

⁵⁸⁰ רמ"א יו"ד צו:ב.

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consumed, as is, with dairy, on condition that the need is great or that by not doing so great loss would be incurred.⁵⁸¹

3c) If there is not a great need and no great loss would be incurred or the knife had been used within the previous 24 hour period, according to *Sephardic* authorities 2cm/0.8 inch of the food should be cut off on both sides of the cut, and the remainder may be consumed with dairy.⁵⁸² However, as stated above, if it was cut into thin slices or chopped into small pieces none of it may be eaten.⁵⁸³

4) As will be explained in the next chapter, as a general rule, a person should wait six hours after consuming meat before eating dairy.⁵⁸⁴ This being the case, generally, a person who ate meat should not eat a sharp food that has been cut with a dairy knife until six hours have elapsed⁵⁸⁵. However, there are *Halachic* authorities that are lenient in this regard,⁵⁸⁶ especially if the knife had not been used for more than 24 hours.⁵⁸⁷ Inquire of your rabbi for his opinion.

5) On the other hand, a person who ate dairy does not have to wait altogether before eating a sharp food that was cut with a meat knife or cooked in a meat pot. This is because even though sharp food absorbs the meat flavor of the knife or pot, nevertheless, it is not regarded as being actual meat.

581. כה"ח יו"ד צו:י, זבחי צדק ת.

582. שו"ע צו:ב.

583. חכמ"א מט:ג.

584. שו"ע יו"ד פט:א.

585. פמ"ג או"ח תצד א"א ו.

586. דרכ"ת יו"ד פט:מב.

587. יד יהודה ודעת תורה למהרש"ם שם.

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Therefore, we take the lenient view, that it may be eaten immediately after dairy.⁵⁸⁸

6) If sharp food which was cut with a dairy knife was inadvertently added to a meat dish, it is permitted to consume it on condition that the meat dish is sixty times greater than that part of the blade which cut the sharp food. If it is not sixty times greater, the food may not be eaten.⁵⁸⁹ Moreover, the pot containing the food must be rekoshered through immersion in boiling water.⁵⁹⁰

7a) Sharp food which was cut on a dairy cutting board with a pareve knife takes on the status of being dairy and may not be consumed with meat. Likewise, if it is cut on a meat cutting board with a pareve knife it becomes meat and may not be consumed with dairy. This is because when it is cut, it is pushed with pressure against the cutting board. This causes transference of taste from the cutting board to the sharp food.⁵⁹¹

7b) However, merely placing a sharp food on a dairy cutting board without cutting it does not render it dairy. The same principle applies to placing sharp food on a meat cutting board or a non-kosher cutting board.⁵⁹² Nevertheless, if the sharp food is damp or wet, transference of taste occurs, thus causing the food to take on the status of the cutting board or plate it was placed on.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁸ רע"א יו"ד פט, ש"ך פט:יט, שו"ת תשובות והנהגות א:לג.

⁵⁸⁹ שו"ע יו"ד צו:א, ט"ז שם צו:ה.

⁵⁹⁰ ספר הכשרות י:קט.

⁵⁹¹ חכמ"א נו:ב.

⁵⁹² ט"ז יו"ד צו:ג, תורת חטאת יז:ב.

⁵⁹³ דרכ"ת צו:טו, כה"ח צו:יג.

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8) Likewise, for the above reason, if sharp food was cut on a dairy cutting board with a meat knife (or vice versa), it may not be consumed. This is because, due to the pressure, the transference of meat taste from the knife combines with the transference of dairy taste from the cutting board, rendering the food non-kosher.

9) If sharp food was cut with a dairy knife (or vice versa) and was then chopped in a blender or food processor, there are conflicting opinions as to whether the blender or food processor became dairy⁵⁹⁴ or not.⁵⁹⁵ In the event this occurs inquire of a *Halachic* authority for his opinion.

Cooking Sharp Food

10) Except for hot chili peppers most sharp foods, such as onions and garlic, lose their potency once they become fully cooked or fried. Therefore, from that point on they are treated as any other food would be.⁵⁹⁶ However, this only applies if they are chopped with either a dairy or meat knife after being fully cooked in a pareve pan.

11a) On the other hand, if they were cooked or fried in a meat or dairy vessel, they absorbed the meat or dairy flavor and may no longer be eaten with food of the opposite kind. If they are cooked in a meat vessel they may not be eaten with

⁵⁹⁴ חכמ"א מט"י

⁵⁹⁵ דרכ"ת צו:א.

⁵⁹⁶ דרכ"ת צו:מה, פת"ש צו:ד.

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dairy and if they are cooked in a dairy vessel they may not be eaten with meat.⁵⁹⁷

11b) For *Ashkenazim* they may not be eaten even if the pot had not been used within the previous 24 hour period.⁵⁹⁸ However, for *Sephardim*, if more than 24 hours passed from its previous use, it may be eaten with food of the opposite kind, on condition that when the sharp food was originally cooked in the meat or dairy pot it was not done with the intention of eating it with food of the opposite kind. Even according to *Sephardic* custom sharp food should not be cooked in a meat or dairy pot with the intention of eating it with food of the opposite kind, even if the pot has not been used within the previous 24 hour period.⁵⁹⁹

12) If sharp food which was cooked in a meat or dairy pot was inadvertently mixed with food of the opposite type it may not be eaten unless there is sixty times more food compared to the walls of the pot that it was cooked in.⁶⁰⁰ For *Ashkenazim*, this rule applies even if the pot had not been used for over 24 hours. For *Sephardim*, if the pot had not been used for over 24 hours, the food may be eaten.⁶⁰¹

13) Furthermore, onions sautéed in a dairy pan may not be added to a pareve condiment and then served accompanied with meat.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁷ שו"ת מהרש"ם ב:קפח, ספר דבר חריף ב, הערה ע.

⁵⁹⁸ רמ"א יו"ד צה:ב, ש"ך צה:ז.

⁵⁹⁹ שו"ע יו"ד צה:ב.

⁶⁰⁰ רמ"א יו"ד צה:ב, וראה ש"ך שם.

⁶⁰¹ כה"ח יו"ד צו:יא.

⁶⁰² רמ"א יו"ד צו:ב.

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14) If sharp food, such as onion or garlic, was cooking or frying in a pareve vessel and a meat spoon was inadvertently inserted into it before the onions lost their potency:

a) If there were sixty times more onions compared to that part of the spoon which was inserted into them, the food may be eaten with dairy.

b) However, if there were not sixty times more onions compared to that part of the spoon which was inserted into them, the food may not be eaten with dairy. This is the case even if the spoon had not been used for over 24 hours.⁶⁰³

15) If pareve food was cooked in a clean meat pot which had not been used during the previous 24 hour period, and then after being transferred to a pareve vessel, sharp food, such as hot chili pepper, was added and mixed into it, the chili does not affect the status of the food and it may still be served with dairy.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰³ רמ"א יו"ד צו:ב.

⁶⁰⁴ פמ"ג יו"ד צו, מש"ז ט.

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Waiting between Meals

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Two Reasons for Waiting

1) The rabbis give two divergent reasons for the practice of waiting between the consumption of meat and milk:

a) According to some authorities it is because of the possibility that some food may have lodged between the teeth during the course of chewing. After a period of six hours the saliva in the mouth has sufficiently broken down the food, thus eliminating its pleasant taste. Therefore, at this point it is no longer of any *Halachic* consequence.⁶⁰⁵

b) Other authorities are of the opinion that residual grease and fat cling to the throat and palate for the first six hours after consumption and that during this time frame, due to the digestive process, the taste of the food often rises back to the mouth.⁶⁰⁶

However, in practice, the *Halacha* takes both views into account and precautions are taken to avoid issues that arise from both of them.

Varying Traditions

2) Unless a person has a valid tradition based on where his paternal family hails from, such as the original Dutch-Jewish community who by tradition recite the after-blessing after

⁶⁰⁵ רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות ט:כח, וראה טור יו"ד פט.

⁶⁰⁶ רש"י לחולין קה:א, וכן דעת התוס' והרא"ש, וראה טור יו"ד פט.

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eating meat, wait one hour,⁶⁰⁷ clean their mouth and then eat dairy,⁶⁰⁸ or German Jews who wait three hours before eating dairy,⁶⁰⁹ one should follow the accepted tradition kept by the vast majority⁶¹⁰ of Jews to wait six hours⁶¹¹ before consuming dairy products. This is a matter of *Halacha* for *Sephardic* Jews who follow the ruling of Rabbi Yosef Caro, the author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and a matter of custom for *Ashkenazic* Jews who follow the view of Rabbi Moshe Isserles (the *Rema*). Nonetheless, the *Rema* concedes that even for *Ashkenazic* Jews, this is the proper course of conduct.⁶¹² Therefore, any person imbued with the spirit of Torah should adhere to waiting six hours between eating meat and dairy.⁶¹³

3) However, since, for *Ashkenazim*, it is a matter of custom, rather than the base-line *Halacha*, therefore, a person who needs to drink milk often because he suffers from stomach problems,⁶¹⁴ such as ulcers, or a nursing mother,⁶¹⁵ who likewise needs to drink milk often, need not wait the full six hours. They merely need to recite the after-blessing for the meat meal,⁶¹⁶ cleanse their mouth by eating and drinking something⁶¹⁷ and wait one hour. Likewise, according to

⁶⁰⁷ רמ"א יו"ד פט:א, וראה ביאור הגר"א פט:ו.

⁶⁰⁸ באו"ה מ:ד כתב שנהגו העולם שעה אחת אפי' בלא קנוח הפה.

⁶⁰⁹ This custom is also widespread in England, probably because a large percentage of the Jewish community there is of Germanic origin.

⁶¹⁰ ערוה"ש יו"ד פט:ז.

⁶¹¹ שו"ע יו"ד פט:א ודרכ"ת פט:ו.

⁶¹² רמ"א יו"ד פט:א.

⁶¹³ ש"ך יו"ד פט:ח.

⁶¹⁴ חכמ"א מ:יג.

⁶¹⁵ דגמ"ר יו"ד ריד.

⁶¹⁶ חכמ"א מ:יג.

⁶¹⁷ ערוה"ש יו"ד פט:ז.

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many authorities, if at least one hour has passed since a person ate meat and he inadvertently says a blessing over dairy and immediately realizes that six hours have not yet passed, he may, nonetheless, taste a small amount of the milk so that his blessing will not have been said in vain.⁶¹⁸ Some are of the opinion that, in such a case, he need not even wait the one hour period.⁶¹⁹ Furthermore, in the case of an inadvertent blessing or an illness, *Sephardic* Jews may be lenient as well.⁶²⁰

How Long Should a *Baal Teshuvah* Or Convert to Judaism Wait?

4) As stated above, unless a person has a valid tradition to wait less than six hours between meat and milk, he should conduct himself according to the custom of the vast majority of Jews who wait six hours. It follows, that a *Baal Teshuvah*, who has returned to Jewish practice but was not raised in it or a convert who has entered the Jewish fold, should wait six hours between meat and milk. However, a *Baal Teshuvah* who was raised in valid Jewish practice, but strayed from the path and then returned, may resume the custom he was raised with.

5) It goes without saying that a person whose custom is to wait six hours should not reduce it to less time.⁶²¹ However,

⁶¹⁸ שד"ח כרך ה:רצ. וראה שו"ת באר משה ד:כד.

⁶¹⁹ יחו"ד ד:מא.

⁶²⁰ יחו"ד ג:בח.

⁶²¹ חכמ"א מ:יג, ערוה"ש פט:ז.

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a person who was raised with the custom of waiting less than six hours may certainly elect to be more stringent and wait six hours.⁶²² Moreover, this is praiseworthy.⁶²³ Nevertheless, though the custom of waiting twenty-four hours between meat and milk is mentioned in the *Talmud*,⁶²⁴ a person should not take this stricture upon himself. This is regarded as an act of excessive piety that even the most holy people throughout history did not practice.⁶²⁵

Six Hours after Eating Meat Or after Reciting the After-Blessing?

6) Though according to the opinion of some authorities the six hour waiting period should begin once one has recited the after-blessing of the meat meal and must end before the beginning of the dairy meal,⁶²⁶ the opinion of some authorities is that the six hours begin when one completes consuming meat, (even though this may have taken place during the first part of the meat meal), and the waiting period ends when one begins the dairy meal⁶²⁷. Therefore, according to this second opinion, though six hours have passed between eating meat and milk, the time lapse between the two meals may be less than six hours. Consult your rabbi as to how to conduct yourself in this matter.

⁶²² רמ"א יו"ד פט:א.

⁶²³ ש"ך יו"ד פט:ח.

⁶²⁴ גמ' חולין קה:א.

⁶²⁵ שו"ת תורה לשמה ריב.

⁶²⁶ ערוה"ש פט:ד.

⁶²⁷ בדי השלחן יו"ד פט, משנה הלכות ה:כו, דברי חיים קעט, דגמ"ר פט, דרכ"ת ד, כה"ח

ט.

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Doubt if Six Hours Have Elapsed

7) According to some authorities if a person is in doubt as to whether or not six full hours have elapsed since he last ate meat, he must wait until he is certain before consuming dairy.⁶²⁸ However, other authorities are more lenient on this matter and permit eating dairy in this case.⁶²⁹ This is especially true if it is impossible to verify whether a full six hours have elapsed.⁶³⁰ Nevertheless, even according to the first opinion, since the prohibition against eating poultry and dairy is only rabbinical in origin, one may certainly take the lenient position in such a case.

Chewing Meat without Swallowing

8) A person who chews meat but does not swallow it (as was customary in the past, that mothers would chew food for their infants), must wait a full six hours before consuming dairy.⁶³¹ However if he just tasted the food with his tongue or even placed a piece of meat in his mouth without chewing or swallowing and immediately removed it from his mouth, there is no need to wait before consuming dairy. Nevertheless, he must clean and rinse his mouth before doing so.⁶³²

⁶²⁸ יד יהודה ו זר השלחן.

⁶²⁹ דרכ"ת פט:ה, מעדני השלחן פט:ג, שבט הקהתי א:ריח.

⁶³⁰ בדי השלחן פט:ט.

⁶³¹ שו"ע יו"ד פט:א.

⁶³² כה"ח פט:ה, בן איש חי שלה ט.

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Meat Lodged Between Teeth

9) If a person finds meat lodged between his teeth, he should floss them,⁶³³ even though six hours have passed since he last ate meat. He then should clean and rinse his mouth.⁶³⁴ This could be done by eating something,⁶³⁵ such as bread, and rinsing his mouth with something, such as water or wine.⁶³⁶ He may then eat dairy without waiting an additional six hours.⁶³⁷

10) According to one opinion,⁶³⁸ if meat was found between the teeth six hours after consumption and was swallowed after being dislodged, an additional six hours must pass before consuming dairy. However, this is not the prevalent practice because meat that has been lodged between the teeth for six hours is considered to have lost its original status⁶³⁹ (due to the effect of the saliva). Nevertheless, if a person is aware that it is there he should still dislodge it by flossing his teeth before consuming dairy.⁶⁴⁰

633. שו"ע יו"ד פט:א.

634. רמ"א יו"ד פט:א.

635. ש"ך יו"ד פט:ד.

636. שו"ע פט.

637. רמ"א שם.

638. חדושי ההפלא"ה שם.

639. ט"ז יו"ד פט:א.

640. שו"ע שם.

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Pareve Dish Cooked in Meat Pot

11) If a person ate a pareve dish which was cooked in a meat pot or a pareve dish which was cooked in a dairy pot, a food of the opposite type may be eaten immediately afterwards. He may do so even without washing his hands or cleaning and rinsing his mouth in between, even during the course of the same meal.⁶⁴¹

Dentures, False Teeth, Crowns and Orthodontic Braces

12) There is no problem of having to kosher from meat to milk or vice versa in the case of a person who wears dentures, has permanent false teeth or crowns, or who has orthodontic braces on his teeth. This is because food generally is not at 113 Fahrenheit/45 Celsius once it reaches the mouth. Also as a rule, people do not generally eat from a pot that has just been taken off the fire.⁶⁴²

⁶⁴¹ שו"ע יו"ד פט:ג, כה"ח סא.

⁶⁴² מהרש"ם א:קצז, דרכ"ת פט:יא, אג"מ או"ח א:ה, יב"א או"ח ג:כד, יחו"ד א:ח, צי"א ט:כה.

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Preparing for Next Meal Within the Six Hour Period

13) On condition that caution is taken not to taste the food, a person may cook dairy in preparation for the next meal, even though six hours have not passed since having consumed meat. However, if it is a type of food that one customarily tastes during the course of cooking, it is advisable to avoid cooking it until six hours have passed, lest he forgets.⁶⁴³

Waiting between Milk and Meat

1) According to *Ashkenazic* authorities, after eating hard cheese, i.e. cheese that has aged for six or more months,⁶⁴⁴ before eating meat the custom is to wait the same amount of time that one waits between meat and milk.⁶⁴⁵ As stated above, the prevalent custom⁶⁴⁶ is to wait six hours.⁶⁴⁷ This being the case, unless a person is a member of the original Dutch-Jewish community, whose custom is to wait one hour⁶⁴⁸ or the German-Jewish community, whose custom is to wait three hours,⁶⁴⁹ one should wait six hours between eating hard cheese and meat.⁶⁵⁰ This rule applies even if one

⁶⁴³ יד אפרים יו"ד פח:ב.

⁶⁴⁴ ש"ך יו"ד פט:טו.

⁶⁴⁵ רמ"א יו"ד פט:ב.

⁶⁴⁶ ערוה"ש יו"ד פט:ז.

⁶⁴⁷ שו"ע יו"ד פט:א, דרכ"ת פט:ו.

⁶⁴⁸ רמ"א יו"ד פט:א, ביאור הגר"א פט:ו.

⁶⁴⁹ או"ה ל"ט.

⁶⁵⁰ רמ"א יו"ד שם.

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wishes to eat poultry after having eaten hard cheese.⁶⁵¹ However, there are various opinions as to the *Sephardic* custom. These opinions range from not waiting at all,⁶⁵² to waiting one hour,⁶⁵³ to waiting one hour per one month of the aging process.⁶⁵⁴ Inquire of your rabbi as to how to conduct yourself.

2) Today most cheeses are not aged for a full six months, even those which were traditionally aged in bygone years. Because of this there is controversy as to how long to wait before eating meat after consuming them. Some say to wait the full six hours.⁶⁵⁵ However, others say that nowadays it is only necessary to wait six hours for truly aged cheeses, such as Swiss cheese or Parmesan cheese.⁶⁵⁶ Inquire of your rabbi as to how to conduct yourself.

3) A person may eat meat immediately after consuming cream cheese, sour cream or yogurt etc., on condition that he washes his hands and cleans and rinses his mouth.⁶⁵⁷ This is done by eating a pareve solid food, such as bread or biscuits and by rinsing the mouth with something, such as water or wine.⁶⁵⁸ After drinking milk all that is necessary is merely to wash one's mouth or drink a different liquid, such as water or wine.⁶⁵⁹ Nevertheless, it has become a widespread Jewish custom (**for at least the last five to six hundred years**) to

651. רמ"א שם. וראה אג"מ יו"ד ב:כו, ושבת הלוי ד:לה.

652. שו"ת יבי"א ח"ו יו"ד ז.

653. דעת הגר"ב צ"א אבא שאול זצ"ל.

654. בן איש חי שלה טו.

655. שבת הלוי ב:לה.

656. דעת הגר"מ שטרן מדעבריציין זצ"ל.

657. שו"ע יו"ד פט:ב.

658. שו"ע שם.

659. דרכ"ת יו"ד פט:לא.

Going Kosher

go beyond the letter of the law and wait thirty minutes before consuming meat,⁶⁶⁰ even after drinking milk.⁶⁶¹ When doing so, it still is necessary to wash the hands and clean and rinse the mouth. However, if one waits a full hour he may consume meat without cleaning and rinsing his mouth except if he is aware that food is definitely lodged between his teeth.⁶⁶² Therefore, if one wishes to avoid the above problems, he should accustom himself to wait a full hour before consuming meat. Many are accustomed to doing so.

⁶⁶⁰ ש"ך יו"ד פט: טז, וראה ב"י או"ח סי' קעג.

⁶⁶¹ תשובות והנהגות ב:שצ, משנה הלכות ו:קלה.

⁶⁶² כן משמע על פי דברי ש"ך יו"ד פט:ז, ואם הוא הדין מבשר לחלב עאכו"כ שכן הוא הדין מחלב לבשר, בפרט כאשר מדובר כאן בחלב שאינו גבינה קשה. ואולי אפשר לומר שעל כן פשט המנהג שרבים נוהגים להחמיר על עצמם ולהמתין שעה שלמה בין אכילת חלב לבשר.

Going Kosher

Kosher Bread

Going Kosher

Going Kosher

Pat Yisroel-Jewish Bread

1) Generally, it is very important to eat bread that has been baked by a Jew in a kosher home or in a kosher supervised bakery.⁶⁶³ This is especially true in the United States of America where many non-Jewish bakeries customarily include dairy products, such as whey, in their breads. In addition, some bakeries grease their pans with animal fats, such as beef tallow or pig lard. However, even if these ingredients are absent, the sages forbade⁶⁶⁴ the consumption of non-Jewish bread, especially homemade bread.⁶⁶⁵ Due to its importance,⁶⁶⁶ they were concerned that breaking bread with non-Jews could lead to over-familiarization eventuating in assimilation and intermarriage,⁶⁶⁷ G-d forbid. Nevertheless, the ban is across the board,⁶⁶⁸ and even includes bread baked by a non-Jew who is not an idolater⁶⁶⁹ or is childless.⁶⁷⁰

2) Only breads made from the following grains are included in the prohibition: wheat, barley, spelt, oats and rye.⁶⁷¹ However, rice bread, millet bread or soy bread do not need to be baked by a Jew, since they are not considered to be important foods which would be served by royalty,⁶⁷² as will

663. שו"ע יו"ד קיב:א.

664. גמ' שבת יז:ב, רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות יז:ט, שו"ע יו"ד קיב:א, חכמ"א סה:א.

665. שו"ע יו"ד קיב:ב.

666. ט"ז יו"ד קיב:ב.

667. גמ' ע"ז שם, שו"ע שם, חכמ"א שם.

668. ט"ז יו"ד קיב:א.

669. כה"ח יו"ד קיב:ד, רב פעלים ח"ג יו"ד-י, יחוד' ה:גד.

670. רמ"א יו"ד קיב:א, כה"ח יו"ד קיב:ט, וראה ש"ך וט"ז שם.

671. שו"ע יו"ד קיב:א.

672. רמ"א וט"ז שם.

Going Kosher

be explained later. Of course, they still must be under supervision to assure that all the ingredients are kosher.

3) Nonetheless, bread is only forbidden by this ban if the entire baking process was performed by a non-Jew. However, if a Jew participated during the baking process, such as by igniting the oven fire, inserting the dough into the oven or increasing the oven heat by adding a little fuel or even by blowing on the coals,⁶⁷³ the bread may be consumed by a Jew.⁶⁷⁴ Furthermore, as long as it is still in the oven and may still be improved by further baking, even if the crust has already browned somewhat, nevertheless, if a Jew increases the heat, the bread may still be consumed by a Jew.⁶⁷⁵ However, once it is removed from the oven it can no longer be corrected by returning it to the oven, even if doing so would improve it.⁶⁷⁶ However, if there is great need, this too is permitted.⁶⁷⁷

Pat Palter - Non-Jewish Bakery Bread

4) However, because this ban was never universally accepted⁶⁷⁸ or because bread is the “staff of life” and is, therefore, a necessary staple,⁶⁷⁹ many authorities permitted the consumption of non-Jewish bakery bread. According to

⁶⁷³ רמ"א יו"ד קיב:ט.

⁶⁷⁴ שו"ע יו"ד קיב:ט

⁶⁷⁵ שו"ע יו"ד קיב: יב.

⁶⁷⁶ כה"ח יו"ד קיב:יב.

⁶⁷⁷ חכמ"א סה:ח.

⁶⁷⁸ ט"ז יו"ד קיב:ד.

⁶⁷⁹ ש"ך יו"ד קיב:ו.

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Sephardic authorities the leniency only applies out of necessity, when there are no Jewish bakeries⁶⁸⁰ or when the non-Jewish bakery either has better bread or a different selection of breads than are available at the Jewish bakery.⁶⁸¹ According to *Ashkenazic* authorities, even if they are available at the Jewish bakery, if one wishes to be lenient, he may do so and buy bread from a non-Jewish bakery.⁶⁸² However, there are *Ashkenazic* opinions that take the stricter view, similar to the *Sephardic* one⁶⁸³.

Of course, the above leniency is *only* with the precondition that all the ingredients are kosher etc. Therefore, even according to this leniency, kosher supervision of the ingredients is still required. Moreover, the leniency also applies to all baked goods, such as cakes, muffins and cookies.⁶⁸⁴ Fried goods, such as doughnuts, however, are not included and require that a Jew, at least, ignite the fire.⁶⁸⁵ However, all opinions are in agreement that the leniency only applies to bakery bread and goods and that it is forbidden to eat homemade non-Jewish bread or cakes, lest it lead to assimilation and intermarriage.⁶⁸⁶

5) During the “Ten days of repentance”, i.e. from *Rosh Hashanah* through *Yom Kippur*, one should not rely on this leniency. Instead, special care should be taken not to eat

680. שו"ע יו"ד קיב:ב.

681. שו"ע יו"ד קיב:ה.

682. רמ"א יו"ד קיב:ב, ביאור הגר"א יו"ד קיב:ז.

683. ש"ך יו"ד קיב:ט כתב מיהו נראה דיש ליזהר אף כל ימות השנה שלא ליקח פת של עובד כוכבים מן הפלטר היכא דיש פלטר ישראל אם לא שהפת עובד כוכבים יפה יותר דאז שרי, וראה באר היטב יו"ד קיב:ה.

684. רמ"א יו"ד קיב:ו.

685. יחוד ה:נג.

686. שו"ע יו"ד שם.

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bread and other baked goods from a non-Jewish bakery. They should either be baked at home or purchased from a Jewish bakery.⁶⁸⁷ However, if it is impossible to bake at home and there is no Jewish bakery, an arrangement should be made with the non-Jewish baker that a Jew should do some small act of participation in the baking process,⁶⁸⁸ such as igniting the oven fire, inserting the dough into the oven, increasing the oven heat or even blowing on the coals.⁶⁸⁹

6) If bread was baked by a non-Jewish maid and the Jewish members of the household failed to participate in the baking process in any of the ways mentioned above, even though all the ingredients belonged to the Jew, it falls into the category of *bishul akum*-“food cooked by a non-Jew”, as will be explained later, and none of the leniencies associated with non-Jewish bread may be applied to it. It may not be eaten by a Jew.⁶⁹⁰

Dairy bread and Meat bread

1) Since bread is a staple⁶⁹¹ which is eaten with meat as well as dairy meals,⁶⁹² the rabbis forbade kneading dough together with milk or butter⁶⁹³ and baking dairy bread.⁶⁹⁴ It

⁶⁸⁷ שו"ע או"ח תרגא, ש"ך יו"ד קיב:ט, וראה משנ"ב או"ח תרג.

⁶⁸⁸ שו"ע יו"ד קיב:ט.

⁶⁸⁹ רמ"א יו"ד קיב:ט.

⁶⁹⁰ חכמ"א סה:ו.

⁶⁹¹ שפתי דעה יו"ד צז:א.

⁶⁹² דגמ"ר ליו"ד צז:א.

⁶⁹³ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות ט:כב.

⁶⁹⁴ שו"ע יו"ד צז:א.

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is, likewise, forbidden to knead animal fats together with dough and bake meat bread.⁶⁹⁵ Rather, bread should be baked pareve, thus avoiding confusion and the inadvertent eating of milk and meat together.⁶⁹⁶ This rule is especially true in regard to bakery breads which are sold to the public.⁶⁹⁷ However, it is permissible to bake dairy bread at home on condition that it is shaped in an irregular fashion⁶⁹⁸ to identify it as dairy bread.⁶⁹⁹ In addition, according to *Sephardic* custom, homemade dairy bread may be baked in small portions to be consumed during an immediate dairy meal, on condition that none is left over for a subsequent meal.⁷⁰⁰ *Ashkenazic* custom is more lenient and permits the consumption of such bread during that whole day.⁷⁰¹

2) Since it is customary to eat a dairy meal on the first day of the *Shavuot* holiday, many are accustomed to bake dairy bread on *Shavuot* for that meal.⁷⁰² However, one may not bake for both days of the holiday.⁷⁰³ Likewise, since the *Shabbat* meal on Friday evening is traditionally a meat meal, it is permissible to bake meat bread to be consumed during that meal.⁷⁰⁴

⁶⁹⁵ ערוה"ש יו"ד צז:ג, שפתי דעה יו"ד צז:א.

⁶⁹⁶ שו"ע שם.

⁶⁹⁷ פת"ש יו"ד צז:ג.

⁶⁹⁸ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות ט:כב.

⁶⁹⁹ שו"ע יו"ד צז:א.

⁷⁰⁰ שו"ע יו"ד צז:א, פמ"ג יו"ד צז:א.

⁷⁰¹ שפתי דעה יו"ד צז:א, וראה ערוה"ש יו"ד צז:ד..

⁷⁰² רמ"א יו"ד צז:א.

⁷⁰³ דרכ"ת יו"ד צז:לג.

⁷⁰⁴ רמ"א יו"ד צז:א.

Going Kosher

Going Kosher

Separating *Challah*

Going Kosher

Going Kosher

Laws of *Challah*

1) Traditionally, special loaves of bread are baked before the onset of the Sabbath in order to honor that holy day.⁷⁰⁵ Since the *mitzvah* (commandment) of *challah* is performed on the dough of these loaves, the loaves themselves have come to be known as *challah*. However, the *challah* is actually the small piece of dough which is separated from the main body of the dough as a gift-offering to G-d.⁷⁰⁶ In commanding this *mitzvah*, the Torah states,⁷⁰⁷ “Speak to the children of Israel and say unto them, ‘When you enter the land to which I am bringing you, when you eat of the bread of the land, you shall set apart a gift-offering to *HaShem*. From the first of your kneadings you shall set aside a *challah* as a gift-offering; just as you set aside a gift-offering from the threshing floor, so shall you set this aside. From the first of your kneadings you shall give to *HaShem* a gift-offering, for all your generations.’”

2) From the Torah, the *mitzvah* of *challah* only applies to dough kneaded within the land of Israel during a time when the vast majority of Jews reside there. This being the case, in our times, the *mitzvah* of *challah* is only rabbinical in origin, even within the land of Israel.⁷⁰⁸

3) The rabbis further ordained that even outside the land of Israel, *challah* should be separated from the dough and that it too should be done with the recital of the appropriate

⁷⁰⁵ רמ"א או"ה רמב.

⁷⁰⁶ שו"ע יו"ד שכב:א.

⁷⁰⁷ Numbers 15:18

⁷⁰⁸ שו"ע יו"ד שכב:ב, וראה ש"ך יו"ד שכב:ד.

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blessing,⁷⁰⁹ so that the *mitzvah* of *challah* should not be forgotten by the Jewish people.⁷¹⁰

4) The *Talmud*⁷¹¹ relates that when G-d created Adam, He formed him from the dust of the earth, similar to a person separating *challah* from the dough. Thus mankind is compared to *challah*. Since, by eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and enticing her husband to do so, Eve brought about a downfall for all mankind,⁷¹² therefore, women have a special affinity to this *mitzvah*, because it is specifically the *mitzvah* of *challah* which rectifies this.⁷¹³

5) It is customary for women to bake bread in honor of the Sabbath on the day before the Sabbath.⁷¹⁴ This is especially pertinent because the sin of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil occurred on Friday. If, due to time constraints, it is impossible to bake on Friday during the day, she may still keep the custom by baking on Thursday evening. This is because according to Torah⁷¹⁵, each day begins on the evening before. This being the case, Friday, which is the sixth day of the week, actually begins on Thursday evening.

6) The *mitzvah* of *challah* only pertains to the five following grains: Wheat, barley, spelt, oats and rye.⁷¹⁶ A person who

⁷⁰⁹ רמב"ם בכורים ו:ז.

⁷¹⁰ שו"ע יו"ד שכב:ג.

⁷¹¹ ירושלמי שבת ב:ו.

⁷¹² Genesis 3:6

⁷¹³ ירושלמי שם.

⁷¹⁴ רמ"א או"ח רמב.

⁷¹⁵ Genesis 1:5

⁷¹⁶ שו"ע יו"ד שכד:א.

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bakes rice bread, millet bread or soy bread need not separate *challah*.

7) If the amount of dough is less than approximately 2.31 lbs/1.05 kilograms,⁷¹⁷ *challah* need not be separated. If it is from 2.31 lbs/1.05 kilograms to 3.64 lbs/1.65 kilograms, *challah* should be separated without a blessing. If it is 3.65 lbs/1.66 kilograms⁷¹⁸ or more, *challah* should be separated with the appropriate blessing. These figures are approximations and there are varying opinions in regard to the exact amount required. Inquire of your rabbi for his opinion.

Blessing for *Challah*

8) The prevalent *Ashkenazic* custom is to recite the following blessing when separating *challah*:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להפריש חלה.

Blessed are you *HaShem*, our G-d, King of the universe, who sanctified us through His commandments and commanded us to separate *challah*.⁷¹⁹

The prevalent *Sephardic* custom is to recite the following blessing:

⁷¹⁷ ספר ארץ ישראל, ערך חלה ב.

⁷¹⁸ שיעורי תורה ג:ג.

⁷¹⁹ רמ"א יו"ד שכח:א.

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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להפריש תרומה.

Blessed are you *HaShem*, our G-d, King of the universe, who sanctified us through His commandments and commanded us to separate a gift-offering.⁷²⁰

However, some communities have the custom of reciting the following blessing:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להפריש חלה תרומה.

Blessed are you *HaShem*, our G-d, King of the universe, who sanctified us through His commandments and commanded us to separate *challah* as a gift-offering.⁷²¹

Check with your rabbi for the appropriate blessing.

9) Even though the Torah does not require any particular amount of *challah* to be separated from the dough, so that even the size of a barley grain is sufficient,⁷²² nonetheless, today, the custom is to separate no less than the size of an olive.⁷²³ However, if one dedicates the entire mass of dough and declares it to be *challah*, he has not performed the *mitzvah*. Rather, there must always be some dough left over.⁷²⁴

⁷²⁰ שו"ע יו"ד שכח:א.

⁷²¹ ש"ך יו"ד שכח:א.

⁷²² שו"ע יו"ד שכח:א, רמ"א יו"ד שכח:ה.

⁷²³ רמ"א יו"ד שם.

⁷²⁴ שו"ע יו"ד שכח:א.

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10) *Challah* can be taken once the dough has been kneaded to the degree that it has coagulated into one unified mass.⁷²⁵

11) Though, optimally, *challah* should be separated from dough, nonetheless, if one failed to do so, it may be separated from the baked loaf.⁷²⁶

12) Originally, in bygone times, the *challah* was given to the *Cohanim*-the “Priestly Caste”, as a gift-offering to G-d.⁷²⁷ However, in our times, the custom is to burn it.⁷²⁸ Since it is separated for G-d, it may not be eaten.⁷²⁹

13) Even though the *challah* is a gift-offering to G-d which was given to the *Cohanim*, nevertheless, *Cohanim* too must separate *challah* from their dough. However, during the times that the *challah* was given to the *Cohanim*, the *Cohen* was not obliged to give it to a different *Cohen*. Rather, he could keep it for himself. As stated above, in our times, the custom is to burn it.⁷³⁰

14) A woman who is *niddah*, i.e. impure due to her menstrual cycle, may still perform the *mitzvah* of separating the *challah*.⁷³¹

15) *Challah* may not be separated on the Sabbath. Moreover, it may not be separated on *Yom Tov*, except from dough that

⁷²⁵ שו"ע יו"ד שכז:ג.

⁷²⁶ שו"ע יו"ד שכז:ה.

⁷²⁷ שו"ע יו"ד שכב:א.

⁷²⁸ רמ"א יו"ד שכב:ה.

⁷²⁹ רמ"א יו"ד שם.

⁷³⁰ שו"ע המקוצר, הלכות חלה-עיני יצחק סי' סו.

⁷³¹ רמב"ם הל' בכורים ה:יב.

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was kneaded during that day of *Yom Tov*⁷³² with the intent of baking it and consuming it that day.

16) Even though *challah* is separated both in the land of Israel and outside of it, nonetheless, there is a greater stringency regarding *challah* separated in the land of Israel compared to *challah* separated outside the land of Israel. In the land of Israel one may not eat of the dough until *challah* has been separated from it.⁷³³ On the other hand, outside of the land of Israel, one may eat of it even though *challah* has not yet been separated from it.⁷³⁴ This being the case, outside the land of Israel, if one forgot to separate *challah* from the dough and *Shabbat* or *Yom Tov* already commenced, she should set aside a slice of bread in order to separate it as *challah* after *Shabbat* or *Yom Tov*, and the remainder of the bread may be eaten. However, in the land of Israel this is not possible. Rather, no one may partake of the bread until *Shabbat* or *Yom Tov* ends and after the *challah* is separated. Moreover, the *challah* is *muktza* and may not be handled for the duration of *Shabbat* or *Yom Tov*.⁷³⁵

⁷³² שו"ע או"ח שלט:ד.

⁷³³ שו"ע יו"ד שכג:א.

⁷³⁴ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁷³⁵ שו"ע או"ח תקו:ג.

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Procedure of Separating *Challah*

- 1) Decide from which part of the dough the *challah* will be taken.
- 2) The blessing should be recited while standing.⁷³⁶ However, if it was recited while sitting, the blessing is still valid.⁷³⁷
- 3) Recite the appropriate blessing.
- 4) Separate the *challah* from the dough.
- 5) Burn the *challah*. This may be done on the stove top or in the oven. It is best not to burn the *challah* in the oven while the bread is baking in it.⁷³⁸ If burning the *challah* is not an option, it should be double-wrapped in paper or aluminum foil and discarded in the trash.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁶ שו"ע הרב מז:ז, נט:ד, קסז:ט, ר:ג, תלב:ו, תעה:ח, תקצב:ז.

⁷³⁷ פת"ש יו"ד שכח:ב.

⁷³⁸ שו"ע יו"ד שכב:ד ורמ"א שם.

⁷³⁹ מנחת יצחק ד:יג.

Going Kosher

Going Kosher

Bishul Yisroel
Food cooked by a Jew

Going Kosher

Going Kosher

Food Cooked by a Non-Jew

1) The rabbis forbade the consumption of food cooked by a non-Jew⁷⁴⁰ for two reasons. According to some authorities it was out of concern that if people would be lax in this regard the ultimate result could lead to non-kosher food being served and eaten,⁷⁴¹ G-d forbid. According to others, it is for the same reason as the prohibition against eating non-Jewish bread, i.e. that over-familiarization with non-Jews would eventuate in assimilation and intermarriage,⁷⁴² G-d forbid.

2) However, the prohibition against eating food cooked by non-Jews is actually stricter than the prohibition against eating non-Jewish bread.⁷⁴³ As stated above, the rabbis permitted the leniency of eating bread and other baked goods from non-Jewish bakeries (as opposed to bread and cakes baked in a private non-Jewish home).⁷⁴⁴ On condition that the ingredients are kosher, *Sephardim* may do so if there is no Jewish bakery available⁷⁴⁵ or if the non-Jewish bakery produces a higher quality or better selection of goods.⁷⁴⁶ *Ashkenazim*, on the other hand, may choose to be lenient even without these preconditions.⁷⁴⁷ In any case, the reason for the leniency is because bread is the “staff of life”⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁰ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:א.

⁷⁴¹ רש"י גמ' ע"ז לח:א.

⁷⁴² תוס' גמ' ע"ז לח:א, ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג:ב.

⁷⁴³ ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג:ב.

⁷⁴⁴ שו"ע קיב:ב ורמ"א שם.

⁷⁴⁵ שו"ע יו"ד קיב:ב.

⁷⁴⁶ שו"ע יו"ד קיב:ה.

⁷⁴⁷ רמ"א יו"ד קיב:ב.

⁷⁴⁸ היינו צורך חיי נפש.

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which people cannot do without.⁷⁴⁹ Since other cooked foods do not meet this criterion it does not apply to them.

3) This prohibition applies not only to food privately cooked in a non-Jewish home but also to food cooked by a non-Jew in a Jewish home,⁷⁵⁰ even by the domestic help, such as a maid.⁷⁵¹ This is the case, even if the equipment and ingredients are the property of the Jew⁷⁵² and he supervises the entire process, making sure that all the ingredients are kosher and that there is no admixture of meat and milk. Furthermore, the prohibition applies whether the food was cooked for private consumption or for sale to the public.⁷⁵³

4) The category of food cooked by a non-Jew includes food that is boiled, fried, baked and roasted.⁷⁵⁴ There is controversy amongst the *Halachic* authorities regarding steamed food.⁷⁵⁵ However, in the case of commercially steamed food (as opposed to food steamed in a private home) there is reason to be lenient.⁷⁵⁶

5) Food that is prepared through smoking, curing, pickling or salting does not fall into the category of food cooked by a non-Jew.⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁴⁹ וכלשון הש"ך ביו"ד קיב:ו, דעל הפת יחיה האדם.

⁷⁵⁰ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:א.

⁷⁵¹ ט"ז קיג:ג, ש"ך יו"ד קיג:ז.

⁷⁵² שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁷⁵³ פמ"ג יו"ד קיג מש"ז ג.

⁷⁵⁴ ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג:כד, דרכ"ת יו"ד קיג:טז.

⁷⁵⁵ דרכ"ת יו"ד קיג:טז, תשובות והנהגות ג:רמז.

⁷⁵⁶ מנחת יצחק ג:כו, שבט הקהתי ה:קלה.

⁷⁵⁷ שו"ע קיג:יג ורמ"א שם.

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Food Cooked by a Jew

6) If a Jew participated in the cooking process, the food does not fall into the category of food cooked by a non-Jew. On the contrary, it is considered to be *Bishul Yisroel*-food cooked by a Jew.⁷⁵⁸ According to *Sephardic* authorities the Jew must participate in the actual cooking of the food itself, such as, at least, placing it in the oven or putting it on the fire etc. Even if the non-Jew already put the food on the fire, nonetheless, if the Jew stirs the food or turns it over, thus aiding in cooking it, this is sufficient.⁷⁵⁹

Ashkenazic authorities are more lenient. According to them, even if the Jew just ignites the flame, this is sufficient and is regarded as *Bishul Yisroel*-food cooked by a Jew.⁷⁶⁰ This is so even if he did not have cooking in mind when he ignited it.⁷⁶¹ Furthermore, the non-Jew may transfer fire from a preexisting flame which was ignited by a Jew. Therefore, if a Jew ignites the pilot light of a gas stove, the non-Jew may turn on the burners under the food, thus transferring a flame from the pilot light to the burner. According to *Ashkenazim* this is regarded as *Bishul Yisroel*-food cooked by a Jew.⁷⁶²

7) With this in mind, when dining in a kosher restaurant in which the kitchen staff is non-Jewish, *Ashkenazim* may rely on the fact that the *mashgiach*-the kosher supervisor, ignited

⁷⁵⁸ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:ו

⁷⁵⁹ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:ו וקיג:ז.

⁷⁶⁰ רמ"א יו"ד קיג:ז.

⁷⁶¹ רמ"א יו"ד שם.

⁷⁶² רמ"א יו"ד קיג שם, וכן נהוג אע"פ שערובה'ש יו"ד קיג:א ודרכ"ת קיג:נא כתבו שזה דוקא רק בשעת הדחק וכאשר העכו"ם מבשל בבית הישראל.

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the pilot lights. However, *Sephardim* should make a point of requesting that the *mashgiach* take some part in the actual cooking of the food itself, such as placing the food in the oven, putting it on the fire, stirring it or turning it over.⁷⁶³ However, some *Sephardic* authorities are of the opinion that in a restaurant or banquet setting *Sephardim* may also be lenient, on condition that the *Mashgiach* ignited the fire under the food.⁷⁶⁴ Inquire of your rabbi.

Food that is Eaten Raw

8) Any foods that are customarily eaten in their raw state by most people,⁷⁶⁵ such as most fruits and some vegetables, do not fall under the prohibition of food cooked by non-Jews.⁷⁶⁶ This is because the cooking process does not make them any more edible than they were prior to being cooked.⁷⁶⁷ Therefore, a cooked fruit cocktail may be consumed even if a Jew did not participate in its preparation. (Many commercially sold fruit cocktails are not kosher because of the problem of ingredients, rather than the problem of non-Jewish cooking.) Likewise, since tomatoes are customarily eaten in their raw state, therefore, tomato sauce or paste may be cooked entirely by non-Jews. The same principle applies to carrots. Of course, kosher supervision is still appropriate to ensure that only kosher ingredients and equipment will be used etc.

⁷⁶³ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:ו וקיג:ז.

⁷⁶⁴ שו"ת מנחת יצחק ז:ב, שו"ת יחז"ד ה:גד.

⁷⁶⁵ ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג.

⁷⁶⁶ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:א.

⁷⁶⁷ ש"ך יו"ד קיג:א.

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9) This condition, i.e. that the food must be customarily eaten raw by most people, is dependent on time and place. In other words, the same food may be commonly eaten raw in one country but not in another or it may be commonly eaten raw during one period of history and not during another. It all depends on the time and locality.⁷⁶⁸ Furthermore, if the majority of people eat the food raw, the food does not require *bishul Yisroel*, even for the minority. Likewise, if the majority of people only eat it cooked, *bishul Yisroel* is required, even for the minority.⁷⁶⁹

10) If the ingredients of a cooked dish are mostly food that is *not* eaten raw and partially food that *is* eaten raw, the dish may not be consumed if it was cooked by a non-Jew.⁷⁷⁰ If its ingredients are mostly food that *is* eaten raw and partially food that is *not* eaten raw, it may be consumed.⁷⁷¹ It may, likewise, be consumed if its ingredients are half and half.⁷⁷²

11) However, according to some opinions, if the contents included any of the five grains (wheat, barley, spelt, oats and rye), since they are important foods and the blessing is recited over them even when they are in the minority, they take precedence over all other ingredients. Therefore, the food may not be consumed if it is cooked by a non-Jew, even if the majority of its contents are eaten raw.⁷⁷³

⁷⁶⁸ חכמ"א סו:ד.

⁷⁶⁹ חכמ"א שם, וראה ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג.

⁷⁷⁰ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:ב.

⁷⁷¹ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁷⁷² ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג:יד.

⁷⁷³ דרכ"ת יו"ד קיג:כ, ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג:יט.

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Food Fit for a Royal Table

12) Just as foods that are eaten raw do not fall into the category of food cooked by a non-Jew, so also, any food that would not be served at a royal table does not fall into this category.⁷⁷⁴ Furthermore, if it generally is something that is not commonly eaten with bread⁷⁷⁵ or is not regarded as a delicacy,⁷⁷⁶ it also does not fall into the category of food cooked by a non-Jew. However, this too, is dependant on time and locality and on how the food is commonly served by most people. This being the case, food fit for a royal table is not a clearly defined category and there are many opinions at variance with each other. It all depends on the time and the locality.

To give just one example; Potatoes were first introduced into Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century. At first, they were considered to be animal fodder, unfit for human consumption.⁷⁷⁷ Later, because they are very nutritious, hardy and easy to grow even under the harshest conditions, they were found to be of vital importance and became a life-saving staple for many people. During this period, potatoes were regarded as the food of the poor; something eaten out of poverty and desperation. Gradually, the consumption of potatoes became more and more accepted and popularized, until finally today, potatoes are also served on the tables of royalty.

⁷⁷⁴ שו"ע יו"ד קיג:א.

⁷⁷⁵ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁷⁷⁶ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁷⁷⁷ ולכן אבי זקני כ"ק אדמו"ר הגאון האלקי מהרמ"ם מרימנוב פסק שברכתו שהכל.

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Therefore, in our time, most opinions agree that potatoes are food fit for a royal table and that we may not eat them if they are cooked by non-Jews. However, because the culinary habits of the masses were in flux and transition during the nineteenth century, we find conflicting opinions in the rabbinic writings of that era regarding potatoes; some stated that they are food fit for a royal table,⁷⁷⁸ while others stated that they are not.⁷⁷⁹ If you have questions about which foods should be regarded as fit for a royal table and which should not, inquire of your rabbi for his opinion

⁷⁷⁸ חכמ"א סו:ד.

⁷⁷⁹ ערוה"ש יו"ד קיג:ית.

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Cholov Yisroel-
Milk Supervised from
the Milking

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What Milk is Kosher?

1) In regard to the subject of kosher milk, the general principle is that whatever issues from the impure is itself impure.⁷⁸⁰ This is to say that only the milk of kosher animals is kosher.⁷⁸¹ Of domesticated animals, this includes the milk of cows, sheep and goats.⁷⁸² Of undomesticated animals, this includes the milk of the addax, antelope, bison, buffalo, deer, gazelle, ibex and reindeer, as well as many other animals too numerous to enumerate here.⁷⁸³

Cholov Akum - Non-Jewish Milk

2) Even though, today, in such countries as the U.S.A., Canada, and the United Kingdom etc., it is not common practice amongst non-Jews to consume anything other than the milk of cows, sheep and goats, nonetheless, in many cultures the consumption of milk from non-kosher animals is common. To give just two examples; in Arab cultures, it is common to consume camel milk and in Mexico it is common to consume donkey milk, which is thought to be highly nutritional and healthy. Out of concern that milk purchased from non-Jews may contain a mixture of non-kosher milk, our holy sages forbade the consumption of any milk product that has not been supervised by a Jew from the time of

⁷⁸⁰ רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות ג:א.

⁷⁸¹ שו"ע יו"ד פא:א.

⁷⁸² רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות א:ח.

⁷⁸³ רמב"ם שם.

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milking.⁷⁸⁴ This is to assure that the milk is wholly the product of kosher animals, such as cows, sheep or goats.

Cholov Yisroel – Supervised Milk

3) Even if there are only cows, sheep and goats on the non-Jewish dairy farm, the milk may not be consumed if it was not supervised from the time of milking. Since non-kosher milk could be brought from elsewhere, supervision still is needed to assure against this.⁷⁸⁵ Furthermore, it makes no difference whether the milk was produced for personal use, to be sold on the open market or specifically for Jewish consumption. Even if the proprietor agrees contractually to provide 100% pure cow milk and there are only kosher animals on his farm, the milking must still be supervised.⁷⁸⁶

4) Moreover, according to some authorities, even in an area where there are no non-kosher animals or where the non-Jews would never milk non-kosher animals because such milk is disgusting to them or where there is no financial gain in committing fraud because the milk of non-kosher animals is more expensive than the milk of kosher animals, nevertheless, the milking must still be supervised. This is because a rabbinical decree that has become universally accepted and firmly established through long-standing practice may not be abrogated by rabbis of later generations, unless they are greater than the rabbis of the previous

⁷⁸⁴ גמ' ע"ז לה:ב, רמב"ם מאכלות אסורות ג:טו, שו"ע יו"ד קטו:א.

⁷⁸⁵ ט"ז יו"ד קטו:ב, דרכ"ת יו"ד קטו:ו, כה"ח יו"ד קטו:טו.

⁷⁸⁶ ט"ז יו"ד קטו:א, ש"ך יו"ד קטו:א.

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generations. This is the case even if the original reason for the decree is no longer applicable.⁷⁸⁷

According to this opinion there are two categories of milk;

a) Milk that was supervised from the time of milking. This is considered to be *cholov Yisroel*-Jewish milk, and may be consumed.

b) Milk that was not supervised from the time of milking. This is considered to be *cholov Akum* – Non-Jewish milk, and may not be consumed.

Cholov Stam – Plain Milk

5) However, there are *Halachic* authorities that state that the decree was only meant to apply to a situation in which there is some reason to suspect the possibility of mixture.⁷⁸⁸ Therefore, in a case where the possibility is practically nonexistent, such as in a country that has strict governmental controls against it, including the threat of heavy fines, law suites, suspension of operations and even closure etc., many modern authorities permit the consumption of unsupervised milk, especially if it is difficult to obtain supervised milk.⁷⁸⁹

Accordingly, in practical terms, there are three categories of milk:

⁷⁸⁷ רמב"ם ממרים ב:ב- ב:ג, ערוה"ש יו"ד קטו:ה, חכמ"א סז:א.

⁷⁸⁸ שו"ת הרדב"ז ד:עה.

⁷⁸⁹ אג"מ יו"ד א:מז-מט, חזו"א יו"ד מא:ד.

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A) *Cholov Yisroel* – Jewish milk. This is milk which was supervised from the time of milking. This milk may be consumed.

B) *Cholov Akum* – non-Jewish milk. This is unsupervised milk which was produced in a country that does not have heavy governmental restrictions and enforcement prohibiting the admixture of milk. This milk may not be consumed.

C) *Cholov Stam* – Plain milk. This is unsupervised milk which was produced in a country that has heavy governmental regulations prohibiting the admixture of milk and which strictly enforces them. This assures the absence of admixture. This milk may be consumed and is treated as if it actually was supervised. According to this opinion, such milk is basically on the same level as supervised *cholov Yisroel* milk.⁷⁹⁰

5) However, though this practice has become widely accepted, it is by no means universal. There are many who only consume *cholov Yisroel* milk products that have been supervised from the actual milking process. However they may do so for diverse reasons:

A1) Because they adhere to the first opinion, stated above, that only supervised milk may be consumed and that all other milk is forbidden, even in a country that has heavy regulations which are strictly enforced.

A2) In addition, because this opinion considers unsupervised milk to be non-kosher even in a country that has heavy regulations, therefore, the consumption of such milk causes

⁷⁹⁰ אג"מ"שם.

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intellectual and emotional insensitivity⁷⁹¹ to spirituality⁷⁹² as does the consumption of any forbidden food.

B) They agree with the second opinion, that milk produced in a country that has strict regulations which are enforced, need not be supervised. However, as a personal stricture, they take it upon themselves to be extra careful to consume only *cholov Yisroel* products. They do this as an additional act of piety of going beyond the letter of the law.

6) The practical outcome of these two approaches is as follows:

a) Those people who consume *cholov Yisroel* as a *Halachic* obligation will consider any pots, utensils or plates that have been used with hot unsupervised milk products to be non-kosher. Therefore, they will not eat from such vessels.

b) However, those people who consume *cholov Yisroel* as a matter of personal piety will consider pots, utensils and plates that have been used with hot unsupervised milk to be kosher. Therefore, they will eat from such vessels.

c) In addition, in the case of a family that goes from eating *cholov stam* to keeping strictly *cholov Yisroel*, rabbis that regard *cholov Yisroel* as a *Halachic* obligation will require

מכלל שטמטום המוח והלב בא מאכילת כל דבר איסור. גמ' שבת קמה:ב – מפני מה עכו"ם מזוהמים מפני שאוכלין שקצים ורמשים, וראה רמ"א יו"ד פא:ז וש"ך וט"ז שם. וקובץ בית הלל שנה א-גליון ב, עמ' מז מבאר הענין בארוכה. ראה אבן עזרא, מלבי"ם ותורה תמימה על ויקרא יא:מג, וגם ראה ספר אילנא דחיי עמ' לג וספר המאמרים תשי"א עמ' 1.

792 אבל לדעה שחלב סתם הוא חלב ישראל לדינא, אין חשש כלל שיטמטם המוח והלב. ראה אג"מ יו"ד א:מו-מז-מח-מט, אג"מ יו"ד ב:לא-לה-מז-מח, אג"מ יו"ד ג:טז, אג"מ יו"ד ד:ה.

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them to re-kosher or replace their dairy utensils, whereas rabbis that allow *cholov stam* will not.

7) An additional outcome of the two approaches is as follows:

a) Since they regard it to be a *Halachic* obligation, the first group will make sure that all the members of their household will also eat only *cholov Yisroel* and will not bring *cholov stam* into their house.

b) Since they regard it as a voluntary act of piety, rather than a *Halachic* obligation, the second group will not impose it upon the other members of their household and will allow *cholov stam* to be brought into the house.

Inquire of your rabbi as to how you should conduct yourself in all the above.

8) It must be pointed out that packaged dairy products which bear a kosher symbol are generally *not cholov Yisroel*-not supervised from the milking (unless indicated by the additional words *cholov Yisroel*-הלב ישראל). These products will usually display the kosher symbol with the letter D next to it.

9) It should also be pointed out that packages that bear a kosher symbol with the letters DE next to it are products that were made with ingredients which are neither milk nor meat. However, they were made on non-*cholov Yisroel* dairy equipment. This being the case, people who consume *cholov Yisroel* as a *Halachic* obligation will consider these products to be non-kosher. On the other hand, people who consume

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cholov stam or who consume *cholov Yisroel* as a matter of personal piety will consider them to be kosher and *pareve* (neither milk nor meat).

10) Though some authorities do not require supervision for plain milk produced in a country that has strict governmental controls against admixture, nonetheless, all are in agreement that the production of processed dairy foods, such as cheeses, sour creams, yogurts, ice-creams etc., need supervision to assure that only kosher equipment and ingredients are used and that no mixture of milk and meat takes place.

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Kosher Wine

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The Prohibition

1) Grape wine is a unique beverage in that it is used for sacramental purposes not only in Judaism but in idolatrous religions as well. For this reason the Torah prohibits the use of any grape wine that has been offered as a sacrament to idolatry.⁷⁹³ Not only drinking this wine, but deriving any benefit from it, such as selling it etc., is also forbidden.⁷⁹⁴

2) This prohibition includes grape juice and raisin wine, as well as regular grape wine.⁷⁹⁵ Accordingly, if the grape juice was squeezed from the grapes by non-Jews, it is forbidden even if it was boiled later. However, if the juice was produced by boiling the grapes, it is not forbidden.⁷⁹⁶

3) The Rabbis extended the prohibition to include any non-Jewish wine, even if it is not clear that it has been offered to a false god.⁷⁹⁷ Furthermore, even Jewish kosher wine which has been handled by a non-Jew is forbidden.⁷⁹⁸

4) The prohibition against non-Jewish wine is, therefore, stricter than the prohibition against eating food cooked by a non-Jew or bread baked by a non-Jew. This is because, not

⁷⁹³ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות יא:א.

⁷⁹⁴ שמות לד:טו, דברים לב:לה.

⁷⁹⁵ שו"ע יו"ד קכג:יז.

⁷⁹⁶ אג"מ יו"ד ב.

⁷⁹⁷ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות יא:ג.

⁷⁹⁸ שו"ע יו"ד קכג:א. וראה רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות יא:ד.

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only can it eventuate in intermarriage⁷⁹⁹, but even more so, it borders on idolatry, G-d forbid.⁸⁰⁰

5) According to some opinions, since today it is uncommon that non-Jews offer wine to their idols, therefore, though it is forbidden to drink it, nonetheless, it is permitted to derive benefit from it, such as selling it etc. However, the accepted ruling is that one should only rely on this leniency in a case of great monetary loss.⁸⁰¹

Boiled Wine

1) Kosher wine that has been boiled no longer falls into the category of wine which is forbidden to be handled by a non-Jew.⁸⁰² This is because it is uncommon to boil wine⁸⁰³ since it depreciates the quality of the wine. In addition it causes evaporation, thus lessening its volume.⁸⁰⁴ Such wine would not be used as a sacrament in idolatrous religions.

2) Even though today boiling wine is no longer uncommon because many kosher wines are produced in this manner, nonetheless, since the sages⁸⁰⁵ permitted it,⁸⁰⁶ it is advisable

⁷⁹⁹ טור בשם הרא"ש יו"ד קכג.

⁸⁰⁰ חכמ"א עה.

⁸⁰¹ רמ"א יו"ד קכג:א, ש"ך יו"ד קכד:א.

⁸⁰² שו"ע יו"ד קכג:ג.

⁸⁰³ ט"ז יו"ד קכג:ג.

⁸⁰⁴ ש"ך יו"ד קכג:ז, חכמ"א עה:י.

⁸⁰⁵ ע"ז כט:ב – ל:א.

⁸⁰⁶ מנחת יצחק ז:סא.

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to use boiled wine in any situation where the possibility of handling by non-Jews may exist.

3) The policy of all kashrus organizations is that any wine or grape juice served by kosher restaurants, caterers or banquet halls, should only be boiled wine. This type of wine is called “מבושל” – “Mevushal”. If wine is Mevushal this word will usually be displayed on the label. Wines that are not Mevushal will either not have any indication on the label at all or the words, “Non-Mevushal” will be displayed.

4) Likewise, in a home, especially one that has non-Jewish domestic help working there, it is advisable to use only Mevushal wine, thus avoiding any problems that may arise from non-Jewish help handling the wine. Remember that this rule also applies to grape juice or raisin wine.

5) Non-Mevushal wine is generally regarded as being of a higher quality than Mevushal wine. If you wish to use it, it is very important to adhere to the following precautions:

a) Be cautious that it will not be handled by the non-Jewish domestic help once it is unsealed and uncorked. (As long as the container is corked and sealed, there is no problem of a non-Jew handling it. However, merely reinserting the cork back into the bottle is not a sufficient seal, especially since the cork is usually only partially reinserted into the bottle and may be readily reopened.)

b) Complete the contents of the entire bottle rather than leave any unused portion which could be handled by the non-Jewish domestic help.

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c) If there are open containers of non-Mevushal wine which one wants to save for later consumption, they may be stored in a locked cabinet or any other secure place that is inaccessible to the non-Jew.

Pasteurized Wine

1) Some *Halachic* authorities are of the opinion that even though pasteurization takes place at a lower temperature than the boiling point, it is sufficient for making kosher wine fit for consumption when handled by a non-Jew.⁸⁰⁷ However, this is not universally accepted and there are opinions that require reaching the boiling point.⁸⁰⁸ Inquire of your rabbi for his opinion.

What Constitutes Handling by a Non-Jew?

1) In order for wine, grape juice or raisin wine to be rendered non-kosher through handling by a non-Jew the following qualifications must be met:

a) It must be an open container of wine. If a non-Jew handles a sealed bottle of wine, he has no effect on its kosher status.⁸⁰⁹ Generally, the bottle should be closed with a double

⁸⁰⁷ אג"מ יו"ד ב:נב, שבט הלוי ב:נא.

⁸⁰⁸ מנחת שלמה א:כה, אור לציון ב:כ, קובץ תשובות עה, תשובות והנהגות ב:תא.

⁸⁰⁹ שו"ע יו"ד קיה.

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seal.⁸¹⁰ However, there are *Halachic* authorities that state that since today non-Jews do not use wine for idolatrous purposes, one seal is sufficient.⁸¹¹ Inquire of your rabbi.

b) As stated above, to be regarded as having been handled by a non-Jew, it must be non-Mevushal wine.

c) The Non-Jew must handle it intentionally and with the knowledge that it is wine. If he handles it unintentionally, such as accidentally knocking into it or without knowing what it is, the wine remains kosher.⁸¹²

d) The non-Jew must “handle” the wine either manually or by means of an instrument, such as a spoon. (What is meant by “handling” here is that the wine must be moved, lifted, shaken or stirred etc. According to *Ashkenazic* authorities, merely touching the wine bottle does not render its contents to be non-kosher.⁸¹³ According to *Sephardic* authorities, if it is merely touched, the wine may not be consumed. However, benefit may be derived from it, such as through selling it etc.⁸¹⁴)

The Blessing for Wine

1) As stated above, grape wine or juice is a unique and special beverage because it is used for sacramental purposes, such as for *Kiddush* and *Havdalah*. This being the case, it

⁸¹⁰ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁸¹¹ ט"ז יו"ד קיח:ד, ערוה"ש קיח:יג.

⁸¹² שו"ע יו"ד קכד:י, ט"ז יו"ד קכד:יט.

⁸¹³ רמ"א יו"ד קכד:יח, וש"ך שם.

⁸¹⁴ שו"ע יו"ד קכד:יא, בן איש חי בלק י.

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also has a special blessing unique to it. The blessing for wine or grape juice is:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Blessed are you *HaShem*, our G-d, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

(However, it should be noted that upon consuming grapes, the blessing בורא פרי העץ – Creator of the fruit of the tree, should be recited, just as it is when consuming any other tree fruit.)

2) Likewise, because of its unique status, a special after-blessing is recited after consuming wine, unless (generally speaking) it was consumed during the course of a meal involving bread. The after blessing for wine or grape juice is:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם על הגפן ועל פרי הגפן ועל תנובת השדה ועל ארץ חמדה טובה ורחבה שרצית והנחלת לאבותינו לאכול מפריה ולשבוע מטובה רחם נא ה' אלקינו על ישראל עמך ועל ירושלם עירך ועל ציון משכן כבודך ועל מזבחך ועל היכלך ובנה ירושלם עיר הקדש במהרה בימינו והעלנו לתוכה ושמחנו בה ונברכך בקדשה ובטהרה כי אתה ה' טוב ומטיב לכל ונודה לך על הארץ ועל פרי הגפן. ברוך אתה ה' על הארץ ועל פרי הגפן.

Blessed are you *HaShem*, our G-d, King of the universe, concerning the vine and the fruit of the vine and the produce of the field and the pleasant and good land that you willingly gave as an inheritance to our forefathers, to eat of its fruits and to be satiated of its goodness. Please *HaShem*, our G-d, speedily have mercy upon your people Israel and upon Jerusalem, your city, and upon Zion, the abode of you glory

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and upon your alter and upon your palace. Speedily, in our days, rebuild the holy city of Jerusalem and bring us into it and cause us to rejoice in it, so that we may bless you in holiness and purity, for you *HaShem* are good and you do goodness to all. We will acknowledge you for the land and for the fruit of the vine. Blessed are you *HaShem*, for the land and for the fruit of the vine.

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Bug and Larva Infestation

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The Prohibition

1) The Torah forbids the consumption of creatures that crawl either on the ground or in the water, including insects, worms and larva etc. It also forbids the consumption of flying insects,⁸¹⁵ except for specific species of locusts which are beyond our ability to identify, since today we have lost reliable tradition in this matter. This being the case, in practice, all bugs and insects are banned from consumption. Great care should, therefore, be taken in avoiding this.

Inspecting for Bugs

2) All vegetables that are prone to bug infestation should be checked before consumption⁸¹⁶ and washed thoroughly to rid them of bugs if they are found to be infested. This includes most leafy vegetables, such as lettuce, parsley, cilantro, basil etc., as well as broccoli, artichoke, asparagus etc. Other fruits and vegetables, which are not regularly prone to infestation, such as carrots, parsnips, turnips, potatoes, apples, oranges etc., need only a cursory check before use. However, if there is reason to believe that they may be infested with bugs or larva, they too need to be checked thoroughly. This is usually indicated by a hole on the outer surface of the fruit where a creature may have burrowed into the fruit. In this case the fruit should be cut open and examined internally.

⁸¹⁵ רמב"ם הל' מאכלות אסורות ב:יא.

⁸¹⁶ שו"ע יו"ד פד:ח. וראה חכמ"א לח:כ שכתב שכדי לנצל מאכילת תולעים ראוי לאדם להסתכל בכל מה שהוא אוכל ועל ידי זה ינצל.

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3) Many dry goods, such as barley, beans, lentils, peas, rice, flour etc. are also subject to bug infestation. One should be alert and diligent when making use of them.

4) With all the above in mind, it is certainly a praiseworthy practice to always be on the alert for bugs whenever handling or eating food. This habit will safeguard a person from consuming bugs or larva inadvertently.⁸¹⁷

5) Even though one is required to do so when necessary, the *Halacha* does not prescribe any specific procedures for the washing and checking of fruits, vegetables or dry goods. Rather, it only specifies that they be free of bugs and larva and that they be thoroughly washed and checked if the need arises. Since there are many such methods and many opinions as to which are the most effective, consult your rabbi about which procedures you should follow.

Recommended Methods for Checking

The following is a list of reliable internet web sites that recommend various methods and procedures for checking and washing fruits and vegetables. Examine them and inquire of your rabbi for his recommendation:

www.oukosher.org

www.ok.org

www.crcweb.org

www.seattlevaad.org

⁸¹⁷ חכמ"א לה:כ.

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www.kosherquest.org

www.cor.ca

www.mk.ca

Going Kosher

Going Kosher

Dangerous Foods or Eating Habits

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The Prohibition

1) The Torah commands us,⁸¹⁸ “Guard your life exceedingly”. Moreover, the rabbis taught us that the *mitzvah* of guarding ourselves against danger is stricter than the prohibitions of the Torah.⁸¹⁹ It is therefore a *Halachic* obligation to safeguard ourselves and remove any danger which may be life-threatening.⁸²⁰ This being the case, it is incumbent upon us to be careful not to eat foods that are harmful to our health,⁸²¹ for doing so is a sin against body and soul.⁸²²

Fish and Meat

2) As mentioned above, due to health considerations⁸²³ meat (including poultry⁸²⁴) and fish should not be consumed together⁸²⁵ because this could lead to skin problems.⁸²⁶ Nevertheless, they may be eaten one after the other,⁸²⁷ provided that one cleanses his mouth by eating or drinking

⁸¹⁸ דברים ד:טו.

⁸¹⁹ חמירא סכנתא מאיסורא, גמ' חולין י, א, וראה שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ה ושו"ע או"ח קעג:ב.

⁸²⁰ שו"ע חו"מ תכז:ח.

⁸²¹ רמ"א יו"ד קטז:ה.

⁸²² ראב"ד שער הקדושה מד.

⁸²³ גמ' פסחים עו:ב, שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ב, שו"ע או"ח קעג:ב.

⁸²⁴ ערוה"ש י, פת"ש יו"ד קטז:ב.

⁸²⁵ שו"ע קטז:ב.

⁸²⁶ היינו צרעת.

⁸²⁷ שו"ע ורמ"א יו"ד קטז:ג.

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something.⁸²⁸ However, for health reasons, one should drink something other than water after eating fish.⁸²⁹

Fish and Milk

3) According to *Sephardic* authorities, fish and dairy should, likewise, not be consumed together.⁸³⁰ However, most *Ashkenazic* authorities differ and permit it.⁸³¹

Disgusting Foods

4) It is forbidden to consume disgusting foods or beverages, such as food that has become soiled with vomit, excrement or malodorous saliva etc.⁸³²

5) Furthermore, one should not eat or drink from disgusting vessels, such as bedpans or glass medical vials used for receiving blood,⁸³³ even if they are thoroughly clean.

6) One should not eat with filthy hands or on dirty plates because it is disgusting to do so.⁸³⁴

828. שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ג, רמ"א שם, משנ"ב או"ח קעג:ד, כה"ח יו"ד קטז:ל.

829. חידושי רעק"א יו"ד קטז:ה.

830. ב"י יו"ד פז, חידושי הגהות על ב"י אות ד', בן איש חי בהעלתך טו.

831. ט"ז יו"ד פז:ג, ש"ך יו"ד פז:ה, פת"ש יו"ד פז:ט, דרכ"ת פז:מת.

832. שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ו.

833. שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ו.

834. שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ו.

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Dangerous Foods and Habits

7) All human sweat, except for facial sweat, is dangerous and should be avoided from consumption.⁸³⁵ A person should, therefore, not carry unwrapped bread loafs under his armpit, as is commonly done in France, as they may likely become contaminated with sweat,⁸³⁶ nor should he touch his armpit⁸³⁷ with his hand. Of course, if this is inadvertently done, he should wash his hands.

8) Care should be taken not to put money, such as coins, in ones' mouth. This is because money passes through many hands⁸³⁸ and sweat⁸³⁹ or dried spit from a contagiously ill person may be on it.⁸⁴⁰

9) Foods or beverages should not be stored under a bed,⁸⁴¹ even when covered.⁸⁴² However, if this was already inadvertently done, they may still be consumed.⁸⁴³

ירושלמי פ"ח דתרומות, שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ד, ראה ש"ך יו"ד קטז:ב ובאר היטב יו"ד קטז:ד, וסימן לדבר שאין זיעת הפנים סכנה הוא בבראשית ג:יט, בזעת אפך תאכל לחם.

⁸³⁶ שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ה.

⁸³⁷ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁸³⁸ שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ה.

⁸³⁹ שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש שם.

⁸⁴⁰ שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁸⁴¹ מפני שרוח רעה שורה עליהם, שו"ע יו"ד שם.

⁸⁴² באר היטב קטז:ה.

⁸⁴³ שבות יעקב ה"ב סי' ק"ה מובא בפת"ש יו"ד קטז:ד, ראה חידושי רעק"א על יו"ד קטז:ה.

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10) One should not insert a sharp object, such as a knife or razor, into a fruit⁸⁴⁴ or vegetable,⁸⁴⁵ lest someone fall or sit⁸⁴⁶ on it and be fatally wounded.⁸⁴⁷

11) One should not drink water from a river at night,⁸⁴⁸ even through a strainer,⁸⁴⁹ because it is too dark to examine it. Moreover, one should not drink by placing his mouth directly to water flowing⁸⁵⁰ from a hose,⁸⁵¹ even during daylight. Since it is impossible to properly examine it, he could come to swallow a leech⁸⁵² or the like. Similarly, when drinking water from a lake or river one should not drink directly with his mouth or by cupping only one hand. Rather, he should cup both hands so that he can properly examine the water.⁸⁵³

12) Before drinking water from a river,⁸⁵⁴ one should pour a small amount of it out of his cup.⁸⁵⁵ Furthermore, it should be poured by him rather than another⁸⁵⁶ and this should be done before reciting the blessing, rather than after it.⁸⁵⁷ There are two reasons for this; firstly, because it is a disgrace to the

844. למשל אתרוג, שו"ע יו"ד קטז:ה.

845. למשל צנון, שו"ע יו"ד שם.

846. שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ח.

847. שו"ע יו"ד שם.

848. רמ"א יו"ד קטז:ה.

849. שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ד.

850. רמ"א יו"ד קטז:ה.

851. שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ד.

852. גמ' ע"ז יב:א. שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש שם.

853. שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש שם.

854. שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ד. וכתב שם לפי שיש מים הרעים ששתו מהם השדים בנהר וזה רפואתם.

855. גמ' חולין קה:ב, וראה כה"ח או"ח קנז:י ודרכ"ת יו"ד קטז:עב.

856. דרכ"ת יו"ד קטז:עב.

857. ספר חסידים קיא.

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sanctity of the blessing to recite a blessing over something and then discard some of it.⁸⁵⁸ Secondly, because by doing so he causes an interruption between reciting the blessing and drinking the water.⁸⁵⁹

13) One should never drink lukewarm water from a metal container,⁸⁶⁰ unless something like spices, tea or mint leaves are added to it.⁸⁶¹ However, if the water is brought to a boil, it is permissible. On the other hand, if the water is in a ceramic or porcelain container, it is permissible to drink it lukewarm, even without spices, tea or mint.⁸⁶²

14) According to some authorities, one should not drink lukewarm water from a metal vessel nor should he drink lukewarm water that was heated in a metal vessel, even if it was transferred to a ceramic, glass or porcelain vessel. However, if the water came to a boil and then cooled to lukewarm, it is permissible to drink it, even if it became lukewarm in the metal vessel and even if he drinks it directly from the metal vessel.⁸⁶³

15) One should not drink water that stood overnight in a metal container, nor should he drink any other liquid that was admixed with water and stood overnight in a metal container.⁸⁶⁴

⁸⁵⁸ ט"ז או"ה רצו:ב.

⁸⁵⁹ מג"א או"ה רצו:ד.

⁸⁶⁰ גמ' חולין פד:ב, גמ' ב"מ כט:ב, וראה כה"ה יו"ד קטז:פז, פר"ה יו"ד קטז:ט, ערוה"ש קטז:יד.

⁸⁶¹ שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ד, כה"ה יו"ד קטז:פז.

⁸⁶² שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ד.

⁸⁶³ כה"ה יו"ד קטז:פז.

⁸⁶⁴ גמ' נדה יז:א, שו"ע הרב שמירת גוף ונפש ז, ערוה"ש יו"ד קטז:כב, כה"ה יו"ד קטז:צב.

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16) Likewise, one should not eat peeled garlic, onion or eggs that have stood overnight,⁸⁶⁵ even if they are sealed. Nevertheless, if the hairy roots or part of the peel (or shell) remain attached, they may be eaten.⁸⁶⁶ Likewise, if they were cut and mixed with other ingredients, such as a salad, pickled vegetables and oil, they may be kept overnight, even if the roots and peels (or shells) are completely absent.⁸⁶⁷

17) Eating and drinking while standing is difficult for the digestion and weakens the body.⁸⁶⁸ Similarly, suddenly standing up immediately after eating and drinking a full meal⁸⁶⁹ is dangerous and may cause fainting or even death if one is in poor physical condition.⁸⁷⁰

18) One should not drink the froth that forms on a beverage (such as beer), as this causes nasal mucus. Neither should one blow away the froth⁸⁷¹ or push it aside.⁸⁷² Furthermore, one should not drink a beverage from a bowl⁸⁷³ nor cover a jar⁸⁷⁴ with a bowl.⁸⁷⁵

19) Throwing breadcrumbs on the floor where they could be trampled upon or suspending bread midair brings about

⁸⁶⁵ מפני שרוח רעה שורה עליהם. גמ' נדה יז:א

⁸⁶⁶ שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ז, כה"ח יו"ד קטז:צב.

⁸⁶⁷ כה"ח יו"ד קטז שם.

⁸⁶⁸ גמ' גיטין ע:א, כה"ח יו"ד קטז:צ.

⁸⁶⁹ כה"ח יו"ד קטז:פט.

⁸⁷⁰ כה"ח יו"ד קטז שם.

⁸⁷¹ קשה לראש.

⁸⁷² קשה לעניות.

⁸⁷³ קשה לכליון עינים.

⁸⁷⁴ קשה לעניות.

⁸⁷⁵ שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ט.

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poverty. However, one may suspend meat or fish since this a standard way of keeping them.⁸⁷⁶

20) Moreover, eggshells should also not be thrown on the floor where they could be trampled upon, because this could lead to skin problems.⁸⁷⁷

21) Meat should not be sliced while being held in the hand as this could lead to injury.⁸⁷⁸

22) Just as it is forbidden to destroy any useful thing needlessly,⁸⁷⁹ so it is forbidden to needlessly destroy or spoil any food or beverage.⁸⁸⁰

23) A person should not engage in conversation while eating, even to speak words of Torah or even to wish a person who sneezed good health, because this could lead to choking on the food.⁸⁸¹ Nonetheless, it is a *mitzvah* to speak words of Torah during a meal.⁸⁸² However, this should be done between courses⁸⁸³ or before reciting grace after meals (*Birchat HaMazon*).⁸⁸⁴ Today, many ignore this *Halacha*⁸⁸⁵ but, as it says in Psalms,⁸⁸⁶ “*HaShem* protects the simple”.⁸⁸⁷

⁸⁷⁶ שו"ע הרב שם.

⁸⁷⁷ היינו צרעת. שו"ע הרב הל' שמירת גוף ונפש ט.

⁸⁷⁸ ברכות ח;ב, שו"ע הרב שמירת גוף ונפש יא.

⁸⁷⁹ דברים כ:יא.

⁸⁸⁰ שו"ע הרב שמירת גוף ונפש יד.

⁸⁸¹ שו"ע או"ח קע:א.

⁸⁸² אבות ג:ג, זהר תרומה קנג:ב, משנ"ב קע:א.

⁸⁸³ משנ"ב או"ח קע:א.

⁸⁸⁴ כאשר כתב משנ"ב שם ודוקא בשעת אכילה גופא.

⁸⁸⁵ שע"ת סק"א.

⁸⁸⁶ תהילים קטז:ו.

⁸⁸⁷ ואעפ"כ הענין מצוי לכן יש להשמר מזה, ובן דודי נפטר מסבא זה.

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24) One is endangering his friend's health⁸⁸⁸ by drinking from a cup and then giving him to drink from it.⁸⁸⁹ Rather, he should clean the rim of the cup that his lips touched before giving it to his friend.⁸⁹⁰ However, if there is cause to suspect that he may be suffering from a contagious illness, his friend should not drink from his cup, even if he cleaned the rim after drinking.⁸⁹¹

25) Before washing *Netillat Yadayim* (נטילת ידיים) in the morning, the hands of a Jew are impure.⁸⁹² Moreover, a person naturally fidgets with his hands⁸⁹³ and may have unconsciously touched unclean parts⁸⁹⁴ of his body.⁸⁹⁵ Therefore, it is very important not to touch any food⁸⁹⁶ or beverage⁸⁹⁷ before *Netillat Yadayim*.⁸⁹⁸ Those who prepare the meals at home should be cautioned to be conscientious in this regard.⁸⁹⁹

26) A person should not eat from a pot that has not been used for thirty days (or more) without washing it before cooking in it,⁹⁰⁰ even though it was washed after the last usage.⁹⁰¹

888. משום מאוס.

889. שו"ע או"ח קע:טז. ראה באר היטב או"ח קע:יד, משנ"ב או"ח קע:לו.

890. שו"ע או"ח קע:כב.

891. משנ"ב או"ח קע:לו, כה"ח יו"ד קטז:צו.

892. גמ' שבת קט:א, זהר וישב קפד:ב.

893. הידים עסקניות הן.

894. לכן מצד נקיון ראוי להקפיד שגם העכו"ם המבשלים בבית או במסעדה ישטפו את

ידיהם.

895. שו"ע הרב מהדורא תניינא או"ח ד:א.

896. רש"י יומא עז:ב.

897. רש"י שבת קט:א.

898. שו"ע הרב מהדורא תניינא או"ח ד:ב.

899. שו"ע הרב מהדורא תניינא שם.

900. להסיר איזה אבק או קורי עכביש שנצטברו עליו במשך הזמן.

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27) Very hot meat which has just been taken off the fire should not be eaten until it cools somewhat.⁹⁰² The same principle applies to any food (such as bread) which is either too hot or too cold.⁹⁰³

28) One should not make a habit of eating the hearts of domesticated animals (such as cows, sheep and goats), undomesticated animals (such as deer, gazelles, and caribou) or even poultry (such as chickens, ducks and turkey), because it affects his memory.⁹⁰⁴

29) Nor should a person make a habit of eating vegetables, or any other food that has fallen from the table to the floor.⁹⁰⁵

30) It is dangerous for a person to see food and lust after it, but not eat it. The remedy for this is to spit out the saliva that forms in his mouth, rather than to swallow it.⁹⁰⁶

31) Partially baked bread should not be eaten because this causes a person to have difficulty concentrating on his studies.⁹⁰⁷

⁹⁰¹ כה"ח יו"ד קטז:קמג.

⁹⁰² כה"ח יו"ד קטז:קמב.

⁹⁰³ כה"ח יו"ד קטז:קמד.

⁹⁰⁴ כה"ח יו"ד קטז:קמו.

⁹⁰⁵ כה"ח יו"ד קטז:קנב.

⁹⁰⁶ כה"ח יו"ד קטז:קנא.

⁹⁰⁷ כה"ח יו"ד קטז:קנב.

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Blessing When Eating

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Categories of Blessings

The requirements for reciting blessings before and after eating are many and complex and it would require a complete book, in and of itself, to do them justice. This being the case, they are quite beyond the parameters of this small book. However, here we will just give general guidelines as to which blessings to say over which foods and, if there are several foods that will be eaten, what order to say them in.

1) Bread is a special food because it satisfies the heart⁹⁰⁸ and is used to constitute a meal. Therefore, it has a special blessing.⁹⁰⁹ The blessing over bread made of wheat, barley, spelt, oats and rye is:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ.

Blessed are you *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe, who brings out bread from the earth.

2) However, non-bread items such as cakes, cookies, biscuits etc., which also are made of wheat, barley, spelt, oats and rye, are usually not used to constitute a meal, as is bread. Therefore, the blessing over them is:⁹¹⁰

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם בורא מיני מזונות.

⁹⁰⁸ תהילים קד:טו, Psalms 104:15

⁹⁰⁹ שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹¹⁰ שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ג.

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Blessed are you *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe, who creates kinds of sustenance.

3) Because wine is a special beverage which gladdens the heart⁹¹¹ and is used in sacramental ceremonies, such as *Kiddush* and *Havdalah*, a special blessing is recited over it as well, different than the blessing over other beverages.⁹¹² The blessing for grape wine, grape juice or raisin wine is:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן.

Blessed are you *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

4) The blessing over tree fruits is:⁹¹³

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ.

Blessed are you *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.

5) The blessing over vegetables or fruits that do not grow on a tree is:⁹¹⁴

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי האדמה.

Blessed are you *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

⁹¹¹ תהילים קד:טו, Psalms 104:15

⁹¹² שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹¹³ שו"ע רב:א, שו"ע הרב רב:א, שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹¹⁴ שו"ע רב:א, שו"ע רב:א, שו"ע הרב רב:א, שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

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Please note that bananas fall into this category, because, though it is tall, a banana plant is not considered to be a true tree. On the other hand, date palms are considered to be trees. Therefore the blessing over dates is, “Who creates the fruit of the tree”.

6) The blessing over anything that does not fall into the above categories, such as meat, fish, milk, eggs, cheese or all beverages other than grape wine, grape juice or raisin juice is:⁹¹⁵

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שהכל נהיה בדברו.

Blessed are you *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe that everything came into being according to His word.

Please note that mushrooms and other fungi, such as truffles etc. fall into this category, because they do not actually grow from the ground, but only attach themselves to it.⁹¹⁶

The Order of the Blessings

If someone has several items in front of him, all of which he *equally* wants to eat, which blessing should he recite first?

⁹¹⁵ שו"ע רד:א, שו"ע הרב רד:א, שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹¹⁶ שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין ז:א.

Going Kosher

1) If one of the items is bread, the blessing should be recited over it.⁹¹⁷ This is because, as stated above, bread satisfies the heart⁹¹⁸ and is used to constitute the meal. Therefore, the blessing over the bread includes all the other items as part and parcel of the meal and, for the most part, no further blessings must be recited.⁹¹⁹

2) The above is generally true for everything except grape wine⁹²⁰ which is a unique beverage, in that it gladdens the heart⁹²¹ and is used for sacramental ceremonies, such as *Kiddush* and *Havdalah*.⁹²² Therefore, if grape wine, grape juice or raisin wine is consumed in the middle of a meal, the blessing for wine is recited even though the blessing for bread has already been said.⁹²³ Likewise, just as the blessing for bread includes all foods and no further blessings must be recited, so also, generally, the blessing for wine includes all beverages and no further blessings must be recited.⁹²⁴

3) If no bread is present, or if bread is present but he does not intend to eat it, the order of the blessings is in accordance to the following principles:

a) Food that is of greater importance take precedence over food of lesser importance.

⁹¹⁷ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:יד.

⁹¹⁸ תהילים קד:טו, שו"ע הרב קסז:א, שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹¹⁹ שו"ע קעז:א.

⁹²⁰ שו"ע הרב, סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹²¹ תהילים קד:טו, שו"ע הרב קסז:א, שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹²² שו"ע רב:א, שו"ע הרב קעד:א, וראה משנ"ב רב:א.

⁹²³ שו"ע קעד:א.

⁹²⁴ שו"ע קעד:ב, שו"ע הרב קעד:ד, שו"ע הרב ברכת הנהנין א:כא, משנ"ב קעד:ג.

Going Kosher

b) When there are foods of equal importance the more specific blessing takes precedence over the more general blessing.

This being the case, the order of the blessings is as follows:

A) The blessing for non-bread items made of wheat, barley, oats spelt and rye is recited first, due to their importance.⁹²⁵ When reciting the blessing “Who creates kinds of sustenance” (בורא מיני מזונות) all other foods that require the same blessing are included. No further blessing is required over them.

B) This is followed by the blessing for wine because it too is special, similar to bread.⁹²⁶ However, when making *Kiddush* on the Sabbath and holidays, the blessing over wine precedes the blessing over bread. As stated above, generally, once the blessing “Who creates the fruit of the vine” (בורא פרי הגפן) has been recited, no further blessings need be recited over any other beverage.

C) Next is the blessing for the fruit of the tree.⁹²⁷ As stated above, once the blessing, “Who creates the fruit of the tree” (בורא פרי העץ) has been recited, no further blessings need be recited over other fruits that require the same blessing.

D) This is followed by the blessing for the fruit of the earth which is more general than the fruit of the tree because it also includes trees.⁹²⁸ As above, similar to the blessing over

⁹²⁵ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:ח.

⁹²⁶ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:יג.

⁹²⁷ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:ז.

⁹²⁸ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין שם.

Going Kosher

tree fruits, once the blessing “Who creates the fruit of the earth” (בורא פרי האדמה) has been recited, no further blessings need be recited over other fruits or vegetables that require the same blessing.

E) The last blessing is, “That everything came into being according to His word”. This is the most general statement of all because it includes everything in it.⁹²⁹ Again, once the blessing “That everything came into being according to his word” (שהכל נהיה בדברו) has been recited, no further blessings need be recited over other foods or beverages that require the same blessing.

4) If a person is in doubt whether an item that he wishes to eat grew from a tree or from the earth, he should recite the blessing for the fruit of the earth because it is more general and includes the fruit of the tree.⁹³⁰ On the other hand, if he is altogether unsure of its origin he should recite the blessing “That everything came into being according to His word” (שהכל נהיה בדברו), which is all inclusive.⁹³¹

5) If one of the special fruits, such as figs or grapes, which the Torah praises the land of Israel for,⁹³² is amongst other fruits, such as apples or oranges, even if they all require the same blessing, the blessing should be recited over that fruit.⁹³³

⁹²⁹ שו"ע רד:א, שו"ע הרב רד:א, שו"ע הרב סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ב.

⁹³⁰ שו"ע הרב, סדר ברכת הנהנין א:ד.

⁹³¹ שו"ע הרב שם.

⁹³² דברים ח:ח, Deuteronomy 8:8

⁹³³ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:ח.

Going Kosher

(The special fruits of the land of Israel are wheat, barley, grapes (including wine) figs, pomegranates, olives and dates. Though they are not specifically mentioned in the Torah, spelt, which is a type of wheat and oats and rye, which are types of barley, are also included.⁹³⁴)

6) Nonetheless, if they require different blessings, such as grapes or figs, which require the blessing “Who creates the fruit of the tree” (בורא פרי העץ) and legumes, which require the blessing “Who creates the fruit of the earth” (בורא פרי האדמה), he may proceed with whichever fruit he wishes.⁹³⁵

7) However, if he is about to eat several of the special fruits mentioned in the Torah, and he favors all of them equally, the fruits mentioned first in the Torah verse that praises the fruits of the land of Israel, take precedence over the fruits mentioned later. The Torah states, “A land of wheat, barley, grape vines, figs and pomegranates: a land of olive oil and date honey.”⁹³⁶ However, if he favors a fruit that is mentioned later in the verse over one mentioned earlier, he may recite the blessing over that one.⁹³⁷

8) Nevertheless, if food made of wheat or barley, which require the blessing “Who creates kinds of sustenance”⁹³⁸ (בורא מיני מזונות), is included in the items to be eaten, it takes precedence, even if he favors the other fruits.⁹³⁹ However, if

⁹³⁴ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:יב.

⁹³⁵ שו"ע הרב ברכת הנהנין שם.

⁹³⁶ דברים ח:ה.

⁹³⁷ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:ט.

⁹³⁸ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:יא.

⁹³⁹ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:י.

Going Kosher

both wheat and barley are included, the wheat takes precedence over the barley.⁹⁴⁰

9) All the above is applicable if a person favors the items **equally**. However, if he favors one food over another, in some cases he may change the order and recite the blessing over the favored food and in other cases he may not. As stated above, the intent here is only to give some general guidelines on the subject of blessings, rather than to go into a fully detailed explanation. This would take us far beyond the scope of this small book and would require a complete book, in and of itself. There are several fine books on this subject available in English and it is highly recommended that you avail yourself of them.

10) It is a Torah *mitzvah* to recite grace after meals after eating a meal that involved the consumption of bread. As stated above, it is specifically bread that constitutes and establishes a meal. The “grace after meals” is called, *Birkat HaMazon* (ברכת המזון) and may be found in most Jewish prayer books.

11) After eating any of the five grains; wheat, barley, oats, spelt and rye or the other fruits which the Torah praises the land of Israel for; i.e. grapes (including grape wine, raisin wine and grape juice), figs, pomegranates, olives and dates, a special blessing is recited. This blessing is called “The blessing that includes three blessings” (ברכת מעין שלש). It too, may be found in most Jewish prayer books.

⁹⁴⁰ שו"ע הרב לוח ברכת הנהנין ג:ט.

Going Kosher

12) A special short blessing is recited after consuming all remaining foods that do not fall into the above two categories, as follows:

Blessed are You *HaShem* our G-d, King of the universe, who creates many souls and what they lack; for everything that You created to enliven the souls of all living beings. Blessed is (the One who is) the life of the worlds.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם בורא נפשות רבות וחסרונן על כל מה שבראת להחיות בהם נפש כל חי. ברוך חי העולמים.

Going Kosher

לעלוי נשמת אבינו מורנו

ר' יהושע בן ר' משה מרקל ע"ה

נין ונכד לצדיקים גאוני עולם
הלא הם

רבינו שלמה בן יצחק זצ"ל-רש"י
הגאון רבינו אברהם זצ"ל-בעל נקודות כסף
הגאון רבינו שמואל יפה זצ"ל-בעל כלי יפה
הגאון רבינו יואל סירקיש זצ"ל-בעל הב"ח
הגאון רבינו דוד הלוי זצ"ל-בעל הט"ז
הגאון רבינו שלמה שפירא זצ"ל-בעל ספר טעמי תורה
הגאון הקדוש רבינו נתן שפירא זצ"ל-בעל ספר אמרי שפר
הגאון האלקי רבינו נתן נטע שפירא זצ"ל-בעל ספר מגלה עמוקות
צדיק יסוד עולם כ"ק אדמו"ר הגאון האלקי מנחם מענדל מרימנוב זצ"ל
הגאון החסיד המקובל רבינו מרדכי ענגילמאיר זצ"ל-בעל ספר עזרת
ישראל
הרב החסיד רבינו שמואל לייב איידעלהייט-שוחט זצ"ל
הרב החסיד רבינו נחמי' מרקל זצ"ל
הרב החסיד רבינו יוסף משה ענגילמאיר זצ"ל

הונצח על ידי בנו ר' עמירם וזוגתו מרת אסתר תחי' מרקל

Going Kosher

In the merit of our father
Of blessed memory

R' Yehoshua Markel

Grandson and great-grandson
Of
Holy and brilliant Tzaddikim

Rabbeinu Shlomo ben Yitzchak-“Rashi”
Rabbeinu Avraham-Author of “Nekudos Kesef”
Rabbeinu Shmuel Yaffeh-Author of “Kli Yaffeh”
The Bach, Rabbeinu Yoel Sirkes-Author of “Bayis Chadash”
The Taz, Rabbeinu Dovid HaLevy-Author of “Turei Zahav”
Rabbeinu Shlomo Shapiro-Author of “Taamei Torah”
Rabbeinu Nathan Shapiro-Author of “Imrei Shefer”
Rabbeinu Nathan Nota Shapiro-Author of “Megaleh Amukos”
The Holy Rebbe, Rabbeinu Menachem Mendel of Rimanov
The Holy Chasid and Kabbalist, Rabbeinu Mordechai
Engelmayer-Author of “Ezras Yisroel”
The Holy Chasid, Rabbi Shmuel Leib Eidelheit
The Holy Chasid, Rabbi Nechemiah Markel
The Holy Chasid, Rabbi Yosef Moshe Engelmayer

Dedicated by his son and daughter-in-law
Rabbi Amiram and Rebbetzin Esther Markel

Going Kosher

לעלוי נשמת
אמינו מורתנו
ה"ה האשה הצדקנית

מרת חי' פייגא בת ר' יעקב ע'ה

פיה פתחה בחכמה ותורת חסד על לשונה
וגדלה צאצאיה במסירות נפש
על דרכי התורה והחסידות

הונצח על ידי חתנה ובתה
ר' עמירם וזוגתו מרת אסתר תחי' מרקל

Going Kosher

In the merit of our mother
Of
Blessed memory

Chaya Feige Klein

She opened her mouth with wisdom
The teachings of kindness were upon her lips
And she raised her children
In the ways of Torah and Chassidus

Dedicated by her son-in-law and daughter
Rabbi Amiram and Rebbetzin Esther Markel

Going Kosher

לעלוי נשמת
אבינו מורנו

ר' ישראל בן ר' נחום קליין ע"ה

היה כעץ שתול על פלגי מים
אשר פריו יתן בעתו
ועלהו לא יבול
וכל אשר יעשה יצליח

הונצח על ידי חותנו ובתו
ר' עמירם וזוגתו מרת אסתר תחי' מרקל

Going Kosher

In the memory of our father
Of
Blessed memory

R' Yisroel Klein

He was like a tree
Planted next to brooks of water
Giving its fruit in its season
His leaf never withered
And he excelled in all that he did

Dedicated by his son-in-law and daughter
Rabbi Amiram and Rebbetzin Esther Markel

Going Kosher

לעלוי נשמת
אמינו מורתינו

מרת חוה בת ר' יוסף ע"ה

חכמות בנתה ביתה
חצבה עמודיה שבעה

הונצח על ידי בנה ר' עמירם
וזוגתו מרת אסתר תחי' מרקל

Going Kosher

In the memory of our mother
Of
Blessed memory

Chava Markel

She built her house with wisdom
Carving out her seven pillars

Dedicated by her son and daughter-in-law
Rabbi Amiram and Rebbetzin Esther Markel