YESHIVAT HAR ETZION

ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)

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**LAWS OF SHABBAT: COOKING**

By Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon

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Dedicated in memory of
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**Shiur #12: Sprinkling Salt on Hot Food, Melting Butter,**

**and Cooking a Baked Item**

Is it permissible to sprinkle salt on a hot potato?

What about melting butter on it?

**SPRINKLING SALT ON HOT FOOD**

**Sprinkling Salt on a Hot Potato**

Can one put **soluble granular substances on a *davar gush*** (substantial item), e.g., sprinkling salt on a hot potato? As we have seen in a previous *shiur*, we are stringent halakhically and we consider a *davar gush* to be a *keli* *rishon* (primary vessel), even if it is sitting in a *keli* *sheini* or *shelishi* (secondary or tertiary vessel). However, when it comes to the soluble granular substances, there is more reason to allow it, because we may add two reasons to be lenient: a) according to most views, one may put soluble granular substances even in a *keli* *rishon*; b) even if we are stringent about a *keli* *rishon*, according to a number of Rishonim and halakhic authorities a *davar gush* is considered to have the status of the *keli* *sheini* in which it sits.

According toRav S.Z. Auerbach (cited in *Shemirat Shabbat Ke-hilkhata* 1:58, n. 173), one is indeed allowed to sprinkle salt on a hot potato; however, he justifies the allowance in another way:

Since the salt does not dissolve — and even what dissolves is not recognized explicitly — we have no reason to be concerned.

In his view, since the salt does not truly dissolve, and instead it is absorbed, and what dissolves is not recognizable, there is no prohibition in sprinkling it on a hot potato. It appears that he means that the reason to be stringent about granular substances, in his view, is that a solid that becomes liquefied is considered (at least rabbinically) to be a liquid. When sprinkling salt on a potato, the salt does not dissolve, and what does dissolve is not recognizable; thus, one need not compare anything to a cooled liquid here, and there is no prohibition of *bishul* at all.

**Conclusion**

In either case, **halakhically one may sprinkle table salt on a seething potato** (found in a *keli* *sheini*). In fact, there is good reason to be lenient about this also concerning **uncooked salt,** because by the letter of the law one may put salt in a *keli rishon*, but it is good to be stringent ab initio not to put it even in a *keli sheini*. Therefore, when it comes to a *davar gush*, concerning which some are lenient in any case, it is certainly allowed halakhically to put on it uncooked salt. (This is what Rav Feinstein writes, OC, Part 4, ch. 74, *Bishul*, 5). However, one who is stringent about this is praiseworthy, as we say of one who is stringent about a *keli* *sheini*.

**MELTING BUTTER**

**Rav Feinstein**

Rav Moshe Feinstein (6) writes:

Is one allowed to put butter on a hot *davar gush* in a *keli* *sheini*?

Answer: In this country, butter is made from milk that has first been boiled via the process of pasteurization. If it was at the level of *yad soledet* (scalding), the butter is made from boiled milk. When it is churned, it becomes a solid, which has no longer any [further prohibition] of *bishul*, as explained by the Magen Avraham (subparagraph 40) for the issue of congealed fat: now that it is solid, it no longer has an issue of *bishul*, and even thought it melts and becomes liquid, we do not care… This is exactly the situation with butter, as it is made in this country.

Though others dispute this, Rav Feinstein believes that **pasteurization** is *bishul*, and thus the principle of *ein bishul* *achar* *bishul* (there is no prohibition to cook a previously cooked food item) applies to butter. It is true that the milk **cools** after pasteurization, and a cooled liquid is **considered uncooked**; however, butter is a solid, which retains its cooked status after cooling — just like congealed fat, which comes from a liquid that has cooled, but *bishul* remains inapplicable to it. We are stringent about fat because of *nolad* (creating a new entity on Shabbat, which is rabbinically forbidden), but there does not seem to be a reason for this for butter, as it is absorbed into the warm food.

**Rav Auerbach**

Rav S. Z. Auerbach (as cited in *Shemirat Shabbat Ke-hilkhata* 1:58, n. 173) takes the opposite view:

One may say that one should be stringent even concerning butter made from pasteurized milk: this is because the boiling takes place while the butter is still milk, and after it has been boiled as milk, it cools fully. Now, it has melted again through the cooking of the butter and become liquid, and we know that *yesh bishul achar bishul* for liquids that cool fully. This is not comparable to the ruling of the Magen Avraham… concerning an *infanda*, for we follow whatever the item is now, and its status is that of a solid… One may say that it is different there because **of its very nature:** after it cools from its cooking, it becomes congealed, and therefore it is considered a solid. This is not true of boiled milk, which cools fully, nullifying its cooking, and only afterwards does one make butter from it. It has not been cooked since it became butter, and even after the butter is cooked, it once again becomes a liquid. However, it is possible that in our case, one should be lenient, as many believe that a *davar gush* does not cook. This requires further analysis.

According to this, whatever *bishul* the butter may have undergone has been nullified, regardless of the fact that the butter is hard. This is not comparable to fat because fat **naturally** congeals, so that we may say that it is inherently a solid; its cooled liquid state is temporary and inconsequential. Butter is the opposite: it is naturally a liquid; only churning makes it solid, and therefore we cannot ignore the fact that it cooled as a liquid, nullifying its *bishul* (see Maor Ha-Shabbat, Vol. III, pp. 228-231).[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Conclusion**

Practically, it appears that one who is lenient to melt butter on a hot potato has upon whom to rely, since even if we consider butter a cooled liquid, there are still two doubts: a) perhaps a *davar gush* does not cook; b) according to many Rishonim, *ein* *bishul* *achar* *bishul* for liquids. Thus, even when the milk cools after the pasteurization, it is still cooked, and similarly the butter made from it. As we saw in *shiur* 10, Rav Feinstein is lenient about putting a cooled liquid on a *davar gush* (e.g., putting ketchup on hot meat), combining these two doubts. Consequently, one may be lenient even about putting butter on a *davar gush*.

Permissible:

1. The salt is absorbed and not noticeable.
2. One may enlist those who are lenient about granular items with those who are lenient about *davar gush*.
3. By the letter of the law, we rule that salt does not cook even in a *keli* *rishon*.

**Rav S.Z. Auerbach** forbids, since the milk cools and its cooking is nullified, and therefore the butter made from it is also considered uncooked.

**Rav Feinstein** allows this, because the butter is made from pasteurized milk and is considered a cooked solid.

**Condiments on a Hot Potato (Plated)**

Butter

Salt

***Bishul* *Achar* *Afiya***

May one put a biscuit in a cup of tea?

Is one allowed to put pieces of matza or soup nuts in soup?

How may one make Turkish coffee on Shabbat?

Is it conceivable that one may be forbidden to warm up cooked meat on Shabbat?

As we have seen, the mishna (145b) sets out the principle of *ein bishul* *achar* *bishul*. According to this, apparently there should not be any problem of putting baked goods even in a *keli* *rishon*, and indeed this is the simple meaning of the words of many Rishonim.

**Yere’im**

However, the Yere’im (ch. 274, 134b) innovates that even though we rule that *ein bishul* *achar* *bishul*, there may be *bishul* after *afiya* (baking) or *tzeliya* (roasting, barbecuing) and vice versa. Each has its identity: *bishul* uses a liquid, *afiya* uses indirect heat; *tzeliya* takes place directly on the fire.

Anything that is fully cooked or baked may be put, in order to heat it, in a *keli rishon* or next to the fire, because once it has been fully cooked, there is no further cooking, because *ein bishul achar bishul*. However, *yesh bishul achar tzeliya* and *tzeliya achar bishul*, as we have seen in *Pesachim*… and just as there is *bishul achar tzeliya* and *afiya*, there is *tzeliya achar bishul*, for it all follows the same logic.

In *Pesachim* (41a), Rabbi Yosi rules that matza at the Seder must not be cooked. The Yere’im understands that the reason is that matza must be defined as “bread of affliction” and “bread” refers to a baked good; once matza has been cooked it is no longer bread, because **the cooking nullifies the baking.** The Yere’im concludes that **cooking a baked good is significant;** thus, doing so on Shabbat would make one liable. One may not put bread in a *keli* *rishon*, or even a *keli* *sheini*, as we shall see.

**Ra’avya**

The Ra’avya (ch. 197, p. 256) rejects this:

This is of no concern, because we find it cited in the sixth chapter of *Berakhot*, and we conclude that Rabbi Yosi says this only of matza, because one must sense the taste of matza, which is deficient [if subsequently cooked].

According to the Ra’avya, one may put a baked item even in a *keli* *rishon*. He uses *Berakhot* 38b to refute the view of the Yere’im; there the Talmud associates this with the requirement of “the taste of matza,” indicating that it is still bread, as cooking does not invalidate its baking, but the mitzva of eating matza requires something else, **and cooked matza has no “taste of matza.”**

**Basis of the Argument**

According to the Ra’avya, the essential prohibition of *bishul* is **making an item edible**: once the item is edible, the prohibition of *bishul* is irrelevant, even if different methods of heating may later introduce different tastes.

The Yere’im argues, for one of two reasons:

1. **Altering the taste of a food significantly** (via the application of heat) **is considered *bishul*.** Therefore, even though the food has already been made edible, there is a prohibition of *bishul.* (The Taz writes something similar, 318:6.)
2. ***Bishul* invalidates the previous *afiya***, so naturally there is a totally new entity created here.

As we have seen in a previous *shiur*, the Yere’im is stringent to say that one should not put anything in a *keli* *sheini*, because we do not know what cooks in it and what doesn’t. Would the Yere’im also forbid putting baked goods in a *keli* *sheini*, since he believes that *yesh bishul* *achar* *afiya*?

**Semag**

The answer to this question depends on different versions of the text. According to **old printings** of the Yere’im (ch. 102), he is stringent about this:

Therefore, once we have explained that some things may end up cooked [when placed] in a *keli sheini*, and *yesh bishul achar afiya* and *tzeliya*, and *yesh tzeliya achar bishul*, one must be careful not to put baked bread on Shabbat **even in a *keli sheini*** that is *yad soledet bo*… If one does so, he has violated Shabbat, and I suspect he may be liable for a sin offering or stoning.

According to this version, baked items are considered uncooked and may not be put in a *keli sheini*.

This is what the Semag (Negative 65, *Ofeh*) and the Tur (ch. 318) cite as the view of the Yere’im, that one should forbid putting bread in a *keli sheini*.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Semak**

However, in *Yere’im Ha-shalem* (134b), the text is different:

Therefore… a person should be careful not to put baked bread on Shabbat **except in a *keli sheini*,** in a place that is *yad soledet bo*…

According to this version, the Yere’im indeed is stringent to forbid putting uncooked foods in a *keli sheini*, and he is also stringent to be concerned about *bishul* *achar* *afiya*, but he **does not combine the two stringencies,** and he does not forbid putting baked foods in a *keli sheini*. This is what the Semak indicates (ch. 281, p. 288), citing the words of the Yere’im and concluding: “And because of this, one should forbid putting bread in a seething *keli rishon*.” In other words, the prohibition applies **only to a *keli rishon*,** not to a *keli sheini*.

**Shulchan Arukh**

The Shulchan Arukh (318:5) writes:

There is one who says that if one cooks that which has been baked or fried, this is considered *bishul*, and it is forbidden to put bread even in a *keli sheini*  that is *yad soledet bo*; **however, there are those who allow it.**

The first view that the Shulchan Arukh cites is the view of the Yere’im as cited by the Semag and the Tur, which forbids putting baked items even **in a *keli* *sheini***. Now, the Shulchan Arukh writes, “And there are those who allow it.” Whose view is the basis for that statement? Is he basing it on the view of the Semak**,** following his understanding of the Yere’im, which allows one to put bread in a ***keli* *sheini*** and forbids only in a ***keli* *rishon***? Alternatively, is he basing it on the view of the Ra’avya, that *bishul* *achar* *afiya* is inconsequential, so that one may put bread **even in a *keli* *rishon***? This is what the authorities argue about:

1. The Rema writes that “those who allow it” do so **for a *keli sheini***, indicating that the Shulchan Arukh refers to the view of the Semak: essentially, *bishul* *achar* *afiya* is a concern; however, we need not be stringent about a *keli sheini*. This is what the Mishna Berura (43), following the view of “those who allow it,” states, and he explains that in this view, there is an essential determination that a *keli sheini* does not cook at all: “This view holds that a *keli sheini* cannot cook anything.”
2. On the other hand, the **Be’er Ha-gola** (who notes the Shulchan Arukh’s sources) points out that “those who allow it” refers to the Mordekhai in the name of the Ra’avya. In other words, he refers to the view that there is no such thing as *bishul* *achar* *afiya*, and one may put bread **even in a *keli rishon*.** This is how the Peri Megadim (*Eshel Avraham*, 19) rules, and this is what Rav Ovadya writes as well (*Yechaveh Daat*, Vol. II, ch. 44).

Which view does the Shulchan Arukh follow?

Rav Ovadya Yosef (loc. cit.) writes that the Shulchan Arukh is based on the Ra’avya, holding that there is no *bishul* *achar* *afiya* at all, even in a *keli* *rishon*. The reason: when the **Shulchan Arukh** cites two views attributed to nameless sages, the halakha follows the latter. Thus, since the **Shulchan Arukh** mentions the first as “one who says” and the second as “those who say” in the plural, the halakha follows the latter view. On the other hand, the Ben Ish Chai (Year 2, *Bo* 6) rules that the Sefardim need ab initio **to be concerned about the former view** and must not put bread even in a *keli sheini*. The same is found in *Or Le-Tziyon* (Vol. II, 30:4).

We may be able to offer proofs in order to decide between the views, but this is not the place to elaborate.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Rema**

The Rema explains that “those who allow it” hold this view only for a *keli sheini*:

There are those who are lenient even for a *keli rishon*. It is our preferable custom to be careful not to put bread even into a *keli sheini*, as long as it is *yad soledet bo*.

In other words, the Rema cites the view of the Ra’avya, who is lenient even about a *keli rishon*, but he concludes and writes that the custom is to be careful ab initio, following the view of the Semag and Tur in Yere’im, not to put bread even in a *keli sheini* as long as it is *yad soledet bo*. The Mishna Berura (42) explains that the prohibition to put food in a *keli sheini* springs from our concern about *kallei* *bishul* (food items that are easily cooked), and according to this view, one should not put anything in a *keli sheini*.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Halakhically, there are those Sefardim who are lenient and allow putting baked foods even in a *keli rishon* (Rav Ovadya Yosef), but there are those who are stringent even as regards a *keli sheini* (Ben Ish Chai, *Or Le-Tziyon*). The Ashkenazim are stringent ab initio not to put baked foods even in a *keli sheini*; however, the custom is to be lenient about a *keli shelishi* (Mishna Berura, 47).[[5]](#footnote-5)

**After the Fact**

Ex post facto, even if one puts something baked in a *keli* *rishon*, one should not forbid the food, for one may rely on the lenient views (Mishna Berura, 46).

**Tea Biscuits**

May one put a **biscuit in a cup of tea** or **pieces of bread in soup**? According to what we have seen, if we are talking about a *keli* *sheini*, the Ashkenazim and some of the Sefardim are stringent, but there are some Sefardim who are lenient. When we are talking about a *keli* *shelishi*, one may be lenient. As we previously saw in our *shiur* on the ladle, if the soup has been put in the bowl **by a ladle,** one may be lenient and say that the bowl is a *keli* *shelishi* for this issue, and it is permissible to put pieces of bread in it.

**Croutons**

As **for soup nuts and croutons**, the Acharonim have a dispute about the status of **frying**, whether frying is considered cooking or roasting (in the first edition of *Shemirat Shabbat Ke-hilkhata* 1:45, the ruling is that frying is like cooking, and the rule of *ein bishul achar bishul* would apply to it; but in the second edition, 1:59, the ruling is that cooking after frying is forbidden). However**, deep-frying** is certainly considered *bishul*, and therefore store-bought soup nuts and croutons, which are deep-fried, are certainly **considered cooked**, and one is allowed to put them even in a *keli* *rishon*.

**Turkish Coffee**

**How may one make coffee on Shabbat?** For this issue, one must distinguish between instant coffee and Turkish coffee. **Turkish coffee is roasted**, and therefore **Ashkenazim** should not prepare Turkish coffee **even in a *keli* *sheini*** because of the concern of *bishul* *achar* *afiya*; one may be lenient in a *keli* *shelishi*, and this is how **stringent Sefardim** must act. However, according to **Rav Ovadya Yosef**, one may prepare Turkish coffee in the regular way, even **by pouring from a *keli* *rishon*** (*Yechaveh Daat*, Vol. II, ch. 44; *Yabbia Omer*, Vol. VIII, OC, ch. 35).

**Instant Coffee and Cocoa**

**Instant coffee**, on the other hand, **goes through a process of cooking**, and therefore one may essentially prepare it even in a *keli rishon*, but it is fitting to be stringent and prepare it in a ***keli sheini*** because of the dissolving of the powder, as we saw in a previous *shiur*. This is also the rule for **hot cocoa**.

Translated by Rav Yoseif Bloch

**Is There a Prohibition of *Bishul* *achar* *Afiya?***

**Yere’im**

**Version of the Semak:** The prohibition is only in a *keli* *rishon*, but one is allowed to put bread in a *keli* *sheini*.

**Version of the Semag and Tur:** The prohibition is also in a *keli* *sheini*, as we are stringent about a *keli sheini* for everything that is not cooked.

This is how the **Rema** rules, who ab initio forbids putting bread even in a *keli* *sheini* (but allows this in a *keli* *shelishi*), this is how the **Ashkenazim** are accustomed to act, and according to the view of the **Ben Ish Chai** and in *Or Le-Tziyon*, the **Sefardim** also must be stringent about this, following the first view in **Shulchan Arukh**.

There is no prohibition of *bishul* *achar* *afiya*, and one is allowed to put a baked item even in a *keli rishon*: food that is ready to eat is considered cooked; changing the taste, even by using heat, is not forbidden.

It is forbidden to cook a baked item: the *bishul* annuls the *afiya*, or a significant change of taste is considered a violation of the prohibition of *bishul*.

According to **Rav Ovadya Yosef**, as the **Shulchan Arukh** rules (this is his understanding of the view of “those who allow,” and the halakha follows them), this is the halakha for **Sefardim:** one is allowed to put bread even in a *keli* *rishon*.

**Ra’avya (**simple understanding of other Rishonim**)**

1. As for **heating frozen soup**, according to Rav S.Z. Auerbach, it is clear that one who freezes soup is not allowed to heat it on the hot plate on Shabbat, even if there is no problem of *nolad* (e.g., for Sefardim or Ashkenazim in a case of need), since the cooking of the soup is annulled when it cools, and the freezing is an artificial tool that does not change the basic status of the soup. In fact, it may be that for this issue **Rav Feinstein** would also agree to be stringent, since the soup is not edible at all in its frozen state, and putting it on the fire depends only on a situation in which it will become liquid, and therefore it makes sense that it should be considered a liquid also at the time when it is put on the fire. This is as opposed to butter and congealed fat, which are fit to eat even in their current state. (This is what is written in Orechot Shabbat 81:50. Indeed, the Tefilla Le-Moshe, Vol. IV, ch. 22, is lenient about this.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. However, the **Tur** himself rejects the words of the **Yere’im** and writes that one should not forbid putting bread into a *keli* *rishon*, and not in a *keli* *sheini*, and in the view of the **Semak** below. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Strengthening the understanding that **Rav Yosef Karo** rules like the **Ra’avya** is what he writes as the **Beit Yosef** (318, s.v. *Ve-hahi De-otveih*), citing the question of the **Ra’avya** on the **Yere’im** and writing that this is a strong challenge. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. As we have mentioned in the chapter on *keli* *sheini* the **Chazon Ish** (52:19) disputes the **Mishna Berura**’s view and believes that, even according to the **Semag**, one need not be stringent about a *keli* *sheini* **by the letter of the law.** However, concerning a baked good, since it has already been baked, one must be concerned that it will cook more easily. Similarly, one must be stringent about things that we observe to be easily cookable (e.g., an egg), but not other things. In fact, **the custom is to be stringent** about everything in a *keli* *sheini*. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As we have mentioned above, the **Chazon Ish** as well believes essentially that there is no distinction between a *keli* *sheini* and a *keli* *shelishi*, but he concedes that we are not accustomed to be stringent for a *keli* *shelishi* except for those items that are clearly known to be *kallei* *bishul*, and therefore one may be lenient about baked goods in a *keli* *shelishi*. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)