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Baking Thick Bread

The braisa cites Bais Shamai saying that one may not bake thick bread on Pesach, while Bais Hillel permits it.

Rav Huna says that thick bread is defined as a tefach thick, as we find the show bread in the Bais Hamikdash, which was a tefach thick and was still *matzah*.

Rav Yosef challenges this source, as the process of baking *matzah* is not as meticulous in avoiding leavening as the process of baking the show bread:

1. The show bread was baked by kohanim, who were very quick.
2. The show bread was worked much harder than regular bread.
3. The wood used to bake the show bread was especially dry.
4. The oven used to bake the show bread was very hot.
5. The oven used to bake the show bread was metal, as opposed to a regular earthenware one.

Rav Yirmiyah bar Abba says that he asked his teacher, Rav, in private (or he quoted Rav saying that he asked his teacher, Rabbi, in private) about this braisa, and he explained that the thick bread in this braisa simply means a lot of bread. It is called “thick” either because the kneading is done with thick dough to make a lot of bread, or the author of the braisa lived in a place where “thick” bread meant “a lot of” bread.

The Gemora challenges this, as the issue of baking a lot of bread would be doing too much work on Yom Tov, which would apply equally to any Yom Tov, and not just Pesach.

The Gemora answers that it does apply equally to any Yom Tov, but the braisa was already discussing Pesach, and therefore mentioned Pesach.

The Gemora supports this from a braisa which cites the dispute, referring to baking thick bread on Yom Tov, indicating that the issue is work on Yom Tov, and not *matzah* baking. (36b3 – 37a2)

Designs On Matzah

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that one may fulfill his obligation of *matzah* made from fine or coarse flour, and with *matzah* with designs etched into it, even though the Sages said that one should not make designs on *matzah*.

Rabbi Yehudah says that Baitus ben Zunin asked the Sages why one may not etch designs on *matzah*, and they said that it was out of concern that one would spend too much time making the design, letting the *matzah* rise. When he suggested that one could make a mold which would implement the design in one short action, the Sages replied that to prohibit any designs, they had to prohibit all, with no exception for Baitus’s.

Rabbi Elazar bar Tzadok says that one time he followed his father to Rabban Gamliel’s house, and they brought him designed matzos on Pesach. When he asked his father how they made designs, as the Sages prohibited it, he answered that the prohibition was not on homemade matzos, but only on bakers’, as they are particular about the design’s appearance.



Some say that he said that they only prohibited bakers', but not homemade ones, as bakers have molds which make the designs quickly.

Rabbi Yosi says that one may make designs on thin matzos, but not on thick ones, as they rise more quickly. (37a2)

Challah

The Gemora cites a Mishna which says that spongy pastries, dough fried in honey, thin cakes, a masras loaf, and bread made from a mixture of terumah and chullin are not obligated in *challah*.

The Gemora asks what a masras loaf is, and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says it is a homemade loaf, which isn't made like regular bread. (37a3)

Baking In A Pot

The Gemora cites a dispute about the list of pastries listed in the Mishna. Rish Lakish says that they are all baked in a pot, while Rabbi Yochanan says they are baked in the sun, but anything baked in a pot is proper bread.

The Gemora challenges Rish Lakish from a braisa which says that if one made spongy pastry, honey fried pastry, or thin cakes in a pot, they are obligated, but if he made them in the sun, they are exempt.

Ulla says that Rish Lakish can deflect this by saying that the braisa is a case where he heated up the pot first, making it like an oven.

The Gemora challenges this, as the braisa could have then concluded that if one placed the dough in the pot before heating it up, it is exempt.

The Gemora answers that the braisa's conclusion should be amended to say that if one placed the dough before heating the pot, *it is as if* he heated it in the sun, and therefore it is exempt.

The Gemora challenges Rish Lakish from a braisa which says that one may fulfill his obligation of *matzah* with Hina *matzah* and *matzah* made in a pot.

The Gemora also deflects this by saying that it refers to a pot which was heated before the dough was placed on it.

Rav Yehudah cites Shmuel saying that Hina *matzah* means any *matzah* which is baked enough that has no doughy strings attached when one breaks it apart. Rava says that such *matzah* is also valid for the *todah* breads.

The Gemora asks: Is this not obvious, as the verse refers to both *matzah* and the *todah* breads as *lechem* – bread, indicating that they have the same rules?

The Gemora explains that since the verse requires one to give a full loaf to the kohen, and not a piece, we may have thought this would exclude such a *matzah*, as it is tantamount to being broken, and therefore Rava had to teach that it is valid.

The Gemora challenges Rabbi Yochanan from a Mishna. The braisa says that if one performed me'isa on dough, Bais Shamai says that one is exempt from *challah*, while Bais Hillel says one is obligated. If one performed chalita on it, Bais Shamai says one is obligated, while Bais Hillel says one is exempt. The braisa explains that me'isa is putting flour into boiling water, while chalita is putting boiling water on flour. Rabbi Yishmael the son of Rabbi Yosi cites his father saying that one is exempt for both, but some say that he said he is obligated for both. The Sages say that for both, one is exempt if he baked it in a pot, but obligated if he baked it in an oven.

Rav Yehudah cites Shmuel saying that me'isa and chalita are equivalent, and the first section of the Mishna is actually two different authors, citing the dispute of Bais Shamai and Bais Hillel differently.

The Gemora challenges Rabbi Yochanan from the Sages, who exempt one who baked in a pot, and Rabbi Yochanan answers that it is actually a dispute of Tannaim. To support

this, he cites a braisa which states that one is exempt from *challah* if he boiled flour in water, while Rabbi Yehuda says that bread is defined as something one bakes in an oven.

Rabbi Yochanan explains that these seemingly identical positions must be disputing a case where one only baked the bread in a pot, and not an oven, indicating that the first opinion says that bread made in a pot is obligated.

The Gemora deflects this, saying that they both agree that bread baked in a pot is exempt, but their dispute is about one who subsequently baked this bread in an oven. The first opinion says this makes it bread which is obligated, while Rabbi Yehuda says that unless it was originally baked in an oven, it isn't bread.

Rava explains that the source for Rabbi Yehuda is the verse which refers to ten women baking their bread in one oven, implying that only oven baked bread is bread.

Rabbah and Rav Yosef were sitting behind Rabbi Zaira, who was sitting in front of Ulla. Rabbah asked Rabbi Zaira to ask Ulla whether one is obligated in *challah* if one stuck dough inside a pot, and then heated it outside. Rabbi Zaira said there was nothing to ask, since Ulla would say that this is considered something made in a pot, which is exempt.

Rav Yosef then asked him to ask Ulla about one who stuck dough inside, and then applied a fire inside. Rabbi Zaira said there was nothing to ask, since Ulla would say that most poor people bake their bread this way, and it is therefore obligated. (37a3 – 37b3)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Thick Bread

The Gemora discusses the braisa which cites a dispute about baking thick bread on Pesach. Rav Huna says that this braisa refers to how thick matzos can be without raising a concern of it rising, and says that thick *matzah* is a tefach, just like the showbreads. Rav Yosef challenges this comparison, and

therefore says the braisa refers to baking a lot of bread on Yom Tov. The Shulchan Aruch (160:5) rules that one may not bake a tefach thick *matzah*, due to Rav Yosef's challenge of the comparison to the show breads. The Ritva and Rabbenu Chananel go further and state that any thick *matzah*, even less than a tefach, should not be baked, due to potential chametz concerns. The Mishna Berura (17) rules that one shouldn't bake thick *matzohs*, even thinner than a tefach, but if one did bake them, they are permitted if they are thinner than a tefach.

Cooked Dough

The Gemora cites a dispute between Raish Lakish and Rabbi Yochanan about dough that one prepared in a pot. Raish Lakish says it isn't proper bread, while Rabbi Yochanan says it is. Although Rabbeinu Chananel rules like Raish Lakish, other Rishonim (Rambam, She'altos, Tosfos) rule like Rabbi Yochanan.

Tosfos (37b dechulai alma) say that if the dough isn't baked in the pot, but cooked in a liquid, even Rabbi Yochanan agrees that it isn't bread, and therefore is exempt from *challah*, and is not hamotzi.

Tosfos cites Rabbeinu Tam who says that if the dough is a thick consistency, like bread, it is obligated in *challah*, since that obligation starts at the point of kneading, and remains even if one cooks it.

He also says that one would say hamotzi on it, and proves it from the following:

1. Since it is obligated in *challah*, it is considered bread for the purposes of hamotzi.
2. The Mishna in menachos says that the kohen eating the mincha says hamotzi, and this presumably includes cooked mincha offerings.

Rabbeinu Tam says that something very thin, like pasta, is definitely mezonos, as it has no form of bread.

Other Rishonim (Rambam, Rabbeinu Shimshon, Ramban) say that even though such dough is obligated in *challah*, it is not *hamotzi*, as the two are independent.

The Shulchan Aruch (168:13) cites both opinions and rules that one who is careful should eat these foods only in a meal of bread.

Hot Matzah

Our *Gemora* discusses how *matzos* have to be baked. The Igros Moshe (Orach Chaim 1:153) was asked about someone who indeed baked *matzos* by heating up metal plates and putting the *matzah* on these plates over a fire. He replied that if the person heated up the plates to the point where they would burn straw that touched it, this is acceptable. Otherwise, he says, we suspect that the dough could become *chametz*. [This is why ovens in a *matzah* bakery are exceptionally hot!] Additionally, he says, there should be walls and a roof immediately over the *matzah*. Even if the *matzah* is not in an oven with a fire, it should be in a contained area in order that the top part should not be exposed to the regular temperature and become *chametz*. If these two conditions are met, he says, the *matzah* can be eaten on *Pesach*.

DAILY MASHAL

Matzah Weighing an Ounce

Ephraim and Shlomo were two friends who resolved to look out for each other for the duration of the war. They knew that by sticking together and looking out for each other they would greatly increase their chances of survival. Despite the horror and surreal quality of the camps, the inmates were very aware of the Jewish calendar. Ephraim and Shlomo knew that *Pesach* would arrive in around two weeks and they wanted to do whatever they could to fulfill the mitzvos of *Pesach*. They wanted to find a way to secretly make *Matzah* and decided that they would pool their wits and resources to do whatever they could to make it. Together they saved some of their meager rations and were able to barter them

for a small amount of wheat. Surreptitiously, they were able to grind the wheat into flour. At great personal risk they were able to build a tiny oven, and on Erev *Pesach* using a cigarette, they were able to light the oven for a few moments, without being noticed. Together, they proudly produced one small *Matzah* weighing little more than an ounce.

After surveying their work, they had the following dilemma. Ephraim told Shlomo, "There is only one *Kezayis* here. I guess we should split the *Matzah*. Even though each of us will get less than the required *Shiur*, at least we tried our best to do the mitzvah, and we will get a small taste of *Matzah*". Shlomo countered with the following suggestion. "Ephraim, the mitzvah is not to eat a small amount. The mitzvah is to eat a *Kezayis*. Why don't we draw lots to determine who gets to eat the whole *Matzah*. If you win, you should eat the whole *Matzah* and the whole *Kezayis*. In that case I will get my mitzvah of *Matzah* by giving my *Matzah* to you". Ephraim said, "Let's not do that, you should have a little bit of the *Matzah*, you worked so hard to make it". Shlomo responded, "If we have already come this far and risked so much, we might as well do the mitzvah right. The mitzvah is to eat a *Kezayis*. If you draw the lot, you can do the mitzvah properly and I can do the mitzvah by supporting you".