YESHIVAT HAR ETZION

ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**LAWS OF SHABBAT: COOKING**

By Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon

The htm version of this shiur for easy printing is available at:

<http://vbm-torah.org/archive/cookshabbat/06cookshabbat.htm>

**Shiur #06: Cooking in a Tertiary Vessel**

**Is one allowed to place a teabag in a *keli* *shelishi*?**

**May one make instant foods on Shabbat?**

As we have seen, the Ashkenazic custom is to be concerned about cooking in a *keli sheini* (secondary vessel) and not to put any food into it, since one should be concerned about the issue of *kallei* *bishul* (food items that are easily cooked)*,* which may end up getting cooked even in a *keli sheini*. Should one be concerned about *bishul* in a *keli shelishi* (tertiary vessel) as well? Is it allowed, for example, to prepare tea, using a teabag, in a *keli* *shelishi*?

**Peri Megadim**

According to the Peri Megadim (*Eshel Avraham* 318:35), this is permissible:

On Shabbat, [even] according to the view in paragraph 5 [of *Shulchan Arukh* OC 318], that it is forbidden to put bread in a *keli sheini*, concerning tea in a *keli shelishi* and the like… one should be lenient.

**Rav Feinstein**

The words of the Peri Megadim are cited by the Mishna Berura (318:47) as conclusive. This is also what Rav Moshe Feinstein (*Iggerot Moshe*, part 4, *bishul*, 15) writes:

Now the tea leaves are not cooked while they are being processed, but rather dehydrated, so may one prepare tea in a *keli shelishi* on Shabbat?

Answer: In my humble opinion, it is not feasible to say that there are things that may be cooked in a *keli shelishi*, because we have found only regarding a *keli sheini* that it can cook some things, and naturally we have no choice but to forbid everything; however, we have not found that this is true of a *keli shelishi*.

What is written in the Arukh Ha-shulchan…, that we may see with our own eyes that tea cooks in a *keli shelishi*, is not understandable. What we see with our own eyes is that the waters grow red, but this is not an issue of *bishul*, for even [a teabag in] cold water will turn [the water] red as time passes, all the more so warm water that is not *yad soledet bo* (scalding), and this is not an issue of *bishul*.

Take hold of yourself, because what our eyes see is not significant. After all, we see that concerning salt, it makes no difference [and we can taste its effect] whether we put it in lukewarm water or in water that is *yad soledet bo*. Nevertheless, the law follows Rav Nachman (42b), and even a *keli rishon* does not cook salt…

So it is with tea leaves: the fact that the water is colored with a bit of heat is not an issue of *bishul*. In fact, it may belong in the category of those things that are difficult to cook [the opposite of *kallei bishul*]! Therefore, we should say nothing of our own accord, but rather rely on tradition, and naturally it is like all other things: in a *keli sheini*, it is doubtful [so we forbid cooking in it], but in a *keli shelishi*, one should allow it.

Rav Feinstein writes that the idea of foods being easily cooked is raised only in the context of a *keli sheini*, and because of this we are customarily stringent, avoiding putting any uncooked food in it, out of concern that this food may be one of the *kallei* *bishul*. In terms of a *keli* *shelishi*, on the other hand, **we have never found anywhere that there is a concern of *bishul***, and there is no evidence that any food can be cooked inside it.

Granted, the Arukh Ha-shulchan (318:28) claims that tea certainly gets cooked even in a *keli shelishi*, because we see with our own eyes that the water becomes red (therefore, in his view, there is a biblical prohibition to put tea leaves even in a *keli shelishi*); however, Rav Feinstein determines that we should not rely on our eyes in this area. In his view, what we may observe, namely the darkening of the water in a *keli shelishi* as the tea leaves steep, is not a proof that the tea is being cooked, because even if we put tea in cold water, the water will eventually turn red. Thus, the color change is not an indication of *bishul*.

Indeed, he continues, this is true of salt as well: even though we sense the taste of salt when we dissolve it in a *keli rishon*, in any case, the letter of the law allows one to add salt to a *keli rishon* (we will discuss this in a later *shiur*). In other words, our perception that the tea is being cooked is not factually correct.

Therefore, we must determine when *bishul* takes place based solely on the words of the Talmud, not our senses, and in the Gemara it does not say anywhere food cooks in a *keli* *shelishi*.

**Chazon Ish**

However, the Chazon Ish (52:19) asks a very strong question against those who are lenient regarding cooking in a *keli shelishi*:

When it comes to a *keli shelishi*, in a situation in which using a *keli sheini* is prohibited, e.g., for bread or onions according to the stringent *Acharonim*, the Mishna Berura writes that the Peri Megadim inclines to be lenient. Yet we have found no source to differentiate between a *keli sheini* and a *keli shelishi*, and anything that will be cooked in a *keli sheini* will be cooked in a *keli shelishi*, and it depends only on the temperature, whether it is *yad soledet bo* or not…

Nevertheless, since it is merely a stringent view, [people] may follow their custom; after all, for the most part, a *keli shelishi* is not *yad soledet bo*, and therefore they were lenient about this.

According to the Chazon Ish, **there is no reason to differentiate between a *keli sheini* and a *keli shelishi***:if there are foods that will become cooked in a *keli sheini*, they will presumably become cooked also in a *keli shelishi* that is *yad soledet bo*. In a previous *shiur* we mentioned that Tosafot explain that a *keli sheini* is special on account of its cold walls. Naturally, if we are stringent regardless in the case of a *keli sheini*, since we follow the temperature of the water and not the walls, there is no further reason to differentiate between a *keli sheini*, *keli shelishi* or even if we were to continue on to a *keli revi’i* (quaternary vessels), and only the temperature counts – if it is at the level of *yad soledet bo*, there is an issue of *bishul*.

**Limitations of Stringency**

However, the Chazon Ish concludes by saying that even though there is no reason to differentiate between a *keli* *sheini* and a *keli* *shelishi*, since *kallei* *bishul* may not be put in a *keli* *sheini*, and including everything in *kallei* *bishul* follows a stringent view, there is some logic in the common practice, because **there is no such stringent custom for a *keli* *shelishi*.** However, the foods that are definitely known as *kallei* *bishul* may not be put even in a *keli* *shelishi*, since these may not be put in a *keli* *sheini* by the letter of the law, not a stringent view, and as regards actual *bishul*, there is no reason to differentiate between *keli* *sheini* and *keli* *shelishi*.

**Lenient View**

The question of the Chazon Ish appears strong, but it appears that there is good logic to defend the lenient view. In a previous *shiur*, we saw the view of Rashi (39a, s.v. *De-sharei*) explaining the view allowing cooking in the sun: “this is not the way of cooking.” Indeed, since **we are not accustomed to cook in the sun** (based on the different explanations we have cited there) there is no prohibition of *bishul* in the sun.

For our issue, it may be that the focus of the distinction between *keli* *sheini* and *keli* *shelishi* is the **common custom.** Most foods we cook in a *keli* *rishon*; some foods, such as tea, coffee, baby formula, etc., are commonly cooked in a *keli* *sheini*; while in a *keli* *shelishi*, one is not accustomed to cook at all. Naturally, we may say that even if on a practical level the foods that would cook in a *keli* *sheini* would also cook in a *keli* *shelishi*, there is no prohibition to cook them in a *keli* *shelishi*, because this is not *derekh* *bishul*, and it does not fall within the boundaries of the *melakha*.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Some Are Stringent and Some Are Lenient**

In practice, there are those who are stringent and do not prepare tea **even in a *keli shelishi***, and many are also stringent about other food items that appear to be easily cookable. This is the ruling found in *Shemirat Shabbat Ke-hilkhata* (1:57): One may not put a **raw egg, tea leaves** or **salted fish** in a *keli shelishi* as long as the water is *yad soledet bo*.

On the other hand, there is a good basis for the view of those who are lenient, following Rav Feinstein, maintaining that there is no prohibition of *bishul* in a *keli shelishi* at all, as appears to be the simple meaning of the words of the Mishna Berura.[[2]](#footnote-2) In any case, one who is stringent will prepare **tea essence** before Shabbat; this will allow one to prepare tea even in a *keli* *sheini*, even if the essence is cold, as will be explained in a later *shiur*.

**Preparing Instant Food**

As we have said, according to the lenient view, one is allowed to put anything in a *keli* *shelishi*. According to this, one may prepare instant soup or instant food on Shabbat in a *keli* *shelishi*. When we are talking about instant food, one may combine this with the fact that generally these portions are almost cooked (perhaps, in actual fact, already fully cooked) with the view of the many *Rishonim* who believe that there is no prohibition of *bishul* after the food has already been cooked to the measure of ben Derusai (as we discussed in our first *shiur*). Indeed, it is not desirable that preparing instant food become a habit, as this feels like *bishul*; nevertheless, when there is a need, one may be lenient about this.

We should note that preparing instant food sometimes involves a problem of the prohibition of *lash* (kneading), as we shall see in a future *shiur*.

Translated by Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon

We may not prepare tea from a bag in a *keli* *shelishi*, but rather one should prepare the essence before Shabbat.

In a *keli* *shelishi*, one may prepare tea from a bag, as well as instant food.

**Mishna Berura, Rav Feinstein:** This is **permissible,** for we have not found that one can cook in a *keli shelishi* (perhaps a *keli* *shelishi* is utterly excluded from the prohibition of *bishul*, since one is not accustomed to cook with it).

**Chazon Ish:** There is no logic to distinguish between a *keli* *sheini* and a *keli shelishi* (both of them have cold walls), and therefore ***kallei* *bishul*** cook in a *keli* *shelishi*. However, the custom to be stringent about other foods (which do not appear to be *kallei* *bishul*) applies only to a *keli* *sheini*, not to a *keli* *shelishi*.

ר"ן ורמב"ם: אין חוששים,

ו**מותר לשים הכל בכלי שני.**

**יראים:**

חוששים, ו**אסור לשים שום דבר בכלי שני**

**ערוה"ש ועוד:**

חוששים רק בדבר **שנראה בחוש שמתבשל בקלות**

מעיקר הדין היה מקום להקל יותר, **אבל אשכנזים נוהגים לחשוש ולא לשים שום דבר בכלי שני (משנה ברורה; חזון איש; שמירת שבת כהלכתה)**

**לכו"ע מותר לשים בכלי שני:**

**מים, שמן, ותבלינים** (והגרשז"א אוסר בתבלינים כיום, כיון שהם דקים)

**May one cook in a *keli* *shelishi*?**

ר"ן ורמב"ם: אין חוששים,

ו**מותר לשים הכל בכלי שני.**

**יראים:**

חוששים, ו**אסור לשים שום דבר בכלי שני**

**ערוה"ש ועוד:**

חוששים רק בדבר **שנראה בחוש שמתבשל בקלות**

מעיקר הדין היה מקום להקל יותר, **אבל אשכנזים נוהגים לחשוש ולא לשים שום דבר בכלי שני (משנה ברורה; חזון איש; שמירת שבת כהלכתה)**

**לכו"ע מותר לשים בכלי שני:**

**מים, שמן, ותבלינים** (והגרשז"א אוסר בתבלינים כיום, כיון שהם דקים)

1. According to this view, since **there are food items** that one is accustomed to cook in a ***keli sheini***, a *keli sheini* would be considered a heat source for the issue of the prohibition of *bishul*, and one should not put in it any food that could conceivably become cooked, even if one does not normally cook **this food** in a *keli sheini*. (One should not be lenient except as regards things that practically cannot be cooked in it, e.g., water, oil and spices, as we have noted above.) Only a *keli shelishi*, in which we are unaccustomed to cook **any food**, is totally excluded from the prohibition of *bishul*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. We should add that regular tea is normally roasted, so that there is more of a reason to be lenient about putting it in a *keli* *shelishi*, as one may enlist the view of those who believe that cooking after baking is irrelevant (there will be a future *shiur* on the topic of *ein bishul achar afiya* – whether cooking a food previously baked constitutes *bishul*). On the other hand, herbal tea is actually dried in the sun, and therefore to be lenient about preparing it in a *keli* *shelishi*, one must rely on the view of Rav Feinstein. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)