

# THE MITZVAH OF SEPARATING CHALLAH PART 2

*by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt*

## Challah separation: dough type

Challah is separated from dough made out of flour derived from the five species of grain: wheat, barley, spelt, rye and oats. Rice, corn, soy flour and potato starch are exempt.

When flour is mixed with any amount of water, or with olive<sup>[1]</sup> oil, wine, grape juice, milk or bee's honey<sup>[2]</sup>, requires challah separation with a blessing. Flour mixed with fruit juice or with eggs only, requires hafrashas challah without a blessing.<sup>[3]</sup>

Challah is separated not only when baking bread but when baking other items as well. The following rules apply:

1. Thick dough from which cake or cookies will be baked requires challah separation, with a blessing, in the same way that bread dough requires challah separation, as detailed in last week's article. [Other ingredients do not count towards the minimum amount of flour.]
2. Thick dough which will be fried or cooked requires hafrashas challah without a blessing<sup>[4]</sup>.
3. A liquid batter which will be fried or cooked is exempt from challah. If it will be baked, it requires hafrashas challah with a blessing<sup>[5]</sup>.

## Disposing of the challah

4. The designated piece should be burned until it is no longer edible. The ashes may then be discarded. Flushing the designated piece of challah down a toilet or tossing it in a river is not the same as burning it and should be avoided<sup>[6]</sup>. Under extenuating circumstances, when the challah cannot be burned, some poskim permit carefully wrapping the challah in a bag and throwing it in the garbage<sup>[7]</sup>. [In such a case, less than a k'zayis should be separated.] It is prohibited to feed it to one's pet or to derive any benefit from it<sup>[8]</sup>.
5. The piece of challah that was separated is forbidden to be eaten. In effect, it is a non-kosher food. Care should be taken that it does not touch the rest of the baked goods, either in or out of the oven. [For this reason it is not recommended to remove the designated piece of challah with a fork or a knife. Since dough tends to stick, some crumbs may remain on the utensil and possibly render it - or other dishes washed along with it - non-kosher when washed with hot water later on.]
6. If the challah is burned inside the oven [in which other items are being baked] it should be left tightly wrapped in silver foil so that steam from the non-kosher challah does not penetrate the oven walls. B'diavad, however, if it was not wrapped, the oven does not become non-kosher and does not need

to undergo a koshering process[9]. If, however, the challah comes into physical contact with the other baked goods while they are in the oven, the baked goods may become non-kosher[10]. A rabbi must be consulted.

Challah separation: special situations

Question: While sitting at the Shabbos table, a woman realizes that she forgot to separate challah from her challah loaves. What should she do?

Discussion: It is prohibited to separate challah on Shabbos or Yom Tov[11] unless the dough was made on Yom Tov[12]. Accordingly, there is nothing that can be done[13] and the challah loaves may not be eaten[14]. [If she realizes her oversight during bein ha-shemashos, and neither she nor the shul where her husband is davening has recited kabbalas Shabbos, she may still separate challah (even if she has already lit Shabbos candles), as long as the family has no other challah loaves for Shabbos[15]. ]

If this oversight occurred outside of Eretz Yisrael[16], however, the challah loaves could be eaten so long as the lady intends to separate challah after Shabbos from whatever will remain of the challah loaves she had baked. She must follow this procedure[17]:

- 1.She must make sure that a small piece [e.g., one slice] remains from the loaves she had baked;
- 2.She must separate, with a blessing[18], a piece from that remaining slice after Shabbos or Yom Tov is over[19]. That piece is then burned like any other separated challah.

Question: What can be done if after being separated the designated piece of challah - regardless of whether a blessing was recited or not - gets mixed in with the rest of the dough?

Discussion: If the designated piece of challah is mixed in with dough which is 101 times greater in volume than the designated piece, then the entire dough may be baked and eaten[20].

If the dough is not 101 times bigger than the designated piece, the dough may still be eaten - but only after the challah piece, which is forbidden to eat, is "removed" from the dough. This is done by halachically annulling the piece of challah so that the dough no longer contains the forbidden challah piece. The woman [or her husband[21]] recites the following in the presence of a beis din of any three adult males[22]: "I regret that I designated that piece of dough as challah, and had I known that I would regret it, I would not have designated it for challah." [23] The beis din can then repeal her designation as they do with any other vow[24]. Another piece of dough, with another blessing[25], is then separated for challah.

The same procedure would apply if the woman realized after baking her challah loaves that she mistakenly baked the designated piece of challah with them, or if somehow the designated piece of dough got mixed up with any other food.

Outside of Eretz Yisrael this procedure may be followed on Shabbos or Yom Tov as well, when

necessary[26].

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1. Mishnah Berurah 158:15.
2. Pischei Teshuvah, Y.D. 329:2; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 35:7; Aruch ha-Shulchan 329:3; Derech Emunah, Bikkurim 6, Tziyun ha-Halachah 182. For a dissenting opinion, see Oholei Yeshurun, pg. 58.
3. Shach, Y.D. 329:9. In practice, however, dough of 10 cups of flour or more should not be prepared unless it contains either water, wine, olive oil, milk or bee's honey.
4. Shach, Y.D. 329:4.
5. Y.D. 329:2.
6. Chochmas Adam (Sha'arei Tzedek 14:34).
7. Chazon Ish (Demai 15:1); Teshuvos Rav Yonason Shteif 276; Minchas Yitzchak 4:13 and 4:102; Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 42, note 53.
8. Rama, Y.D. 322:5. A kohen, however, may derive benefit from it while burning it; Rama, Y.D. 331:19.
9. Since dough, generally, is not liquid and hardly emits steam. Even if it will, it is negligible.
10. See Leket ha-Omer 14, note 3. When the hot, burned piece of challah is removed from the oven, it should definitely not be removed with a utensil.
11. Mishnah Berurah 339:26. B'diavad, if she mistakenly separated challah on Shabbos or Yom Tov, the food may be eaten. If, however, she was aware that it was forbidden to do so and she did so anyway, the food is forbidden to be eaten; Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 339:26.
12. If the dough was prepared on Yom Tov, challah is separated with a blessing but the dough is not burned until after Yom Tov is over. Once the piece is set aside, it may no longer be moved, since it is muktzeh; Mishnah Berurah 506:29.
13. If this occurred on the first night of Pesach or Succos when it is a Biblical obligation to eat a k'zayis of matzah or bread, a solution can be found. A rabbi must be consulted.
14. A possible solution is to prepare on Yom Tov another batch of dough and then separate challah from the new dough for both. See Rama, O.C. 506:3 and Mishnah Berurah for the details.
15. Mishnah Berurah 261:4 and 261:28. Outside of Eretz Yisrael, though, this should not be done, since in the Diaspora it is permitted to separate challah after Shabbos, as detailed in the next paragraph.
16. If the item was baked in Eretz Yisrael but is now outside of it, e.g., matzos, a rabbi should be consulted; see Cheishev ha-Eifod 2:43.
17. Rama, O.C. 506:3.

18. Beis Meir, O.C. 457:7; Aruch ha-Shulchan, Y.D. 323:9. Rav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 42, note 57) disagrees and rules that no blessing is recited over this type of separation.
19. Rama, Y.D. 323:1. If she forgot to separate challah from more than one dough, she must follow the same procedure with each dough.
20. Rama, Y.D. 323:1.
21. Aruch ha-Shulchan 323:14.
22. While her husband may not be one of the three, her children, her father, and other relatives may; Y.D. 334:57.
23. This action does not render the original blessing made on this hafrashas challah as a berachah l'vatalah; Chasam Sofer, Y.D. 320 and 353.
24. Rama, Y.D. 323:1. While Taz 323:2 disagrees with this procedure, most poskim concur with the Rama's ruling; see Chochmas Adam (Sha'arei Tzedek 14:6); Pischei Teshuvah 323:3; Aruch ha-Shulchan 323:14.
25. Derech Emunah, Terumos 4:184.
26. Sha'arei Teshuvah, O.C. 341:1. See Shevus Yaakov 3:27.

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