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PARSHA ENCOUNTERS

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Parshas Ki Setzei ✍️ Rabbi Aaron Rokach

Investing in Futures

This week's *parsha* discusses the laws of *ben sorer u'moreh*, a rebellious son. A *ben sorer u'moreh* is a young man who devours meat and wine bought with money stolen from his parents. When a young man commits these acts in a way that satisfies the many technical requirements discussed in the *gemara* he is punished with death by stoning. (*Sanhedrin* Chap. 8). The *gemara* offers the following explanation for what would seem to be an exceedingly harsh punishment: It is apparent to us from the *ben sorer u'moreh's* behavior that he is destined for a life of crime. Once he has exhausted his parents' money he will turn to highway robbery in order to fund his gluttonous habits. Inevitably, the *ben sorer u'moreh* will resort to murder in order to steal the money that he needs. Therefore, it is better to punish the *ben sorer u'moreh* in advance to prevent him from actually committing these countless murders. (*Sanhedrin* 72A).

The idea of imposing punishment for future sins poses a fundamental difficulty. When *Avrohom Avinu's* son *Yishmael* was in the desert dying of thirst, *Hashem* judged him and determined him to be worthy of a miraculous salvation. Despite the fact that *Yishmael* was destined to become very wicked in the future he was judged "*ba'asher hu sham*", in his current state, and was saved from death based on his present merits. (*Vayera* 21:17). From this incident, the *gemara* derives the important concept of *ba'asher hu sham*, that *Hashem's* judgment of people is based on one's current state rather than *Hashem's* knowledge of what one is destined to do in the future. (*Rosh Hashana* 17B). The punishment of a *ben sorer u'moreh* for his future sins seems to run in direct conflict with the concept of *ba'asher hu sham*.

In *Mishnas Rav Aaron*, *Rav Aaron Kotler zt"l* explains that a *ben sorer u'moreh* is not simply punished in advance for sins he is destined to commit in the future. Rather, a *ben sorer u'moreh* is punished for choosing a lifestyle that will inevitably lead him to future deterioration. Thus, a *ben sorer u'moreh* is in fact judged *ba'asher hu sham* and is punished for placing himself on

the path to a life of sin.

This explanation also helps clarify another interesting question regarding the laws of *ben sorer u'moreh*. We know that the punishment for murder is ordinarily death by the sword. This is considered to be a less severe punishment than the death by stoning that is specified for a *ben sorer u'moreh*. Why would a *ben sorer u'moreh*, who is destined to become a murderer, be punished more severely than a murderer who has already killed?

Based on the above explanation, *Rav Kotler* answers this question as well. Murderers are judged under the conventional rules which treat each act of murder individually. Thus, even a murderer who has killed many times is sentenced only to the relatively less severe punishment of death by the sword, reflecting the severity of a single act of murder. The punishment of a *ben sorer u'moreh* on the other hand, is a unique type of punishment based on the terrible potential of the path he has chosen. The degenerate lifestyle of a *ben sorer u'moreh* will inevitably lead him to repeatedly murder in order to satisfy his gluttonous habits. Therefore, the *ben sorer u'moreh's* punishment of death by stoning reflects the compounded severity of multiple murders.

As we know, "*mida tova meruba*", *Hashem's* attribute of reward is always more powerful than the attribute of punishment. If a *ben sorer u'moreh* is punished for placing himself on the path to future deterioration, choosing a lifestyle that will lead to future improvement in *Torah* and *Mitzvos* will certainly serve as a powerful source of merit. Also, this merit should reflect the compounded benefit of all the future good that will eventually result. This *Elul*, may our efforts to choose a path that will lead us to improvement in *Torah* and *Mitzvos* serve as a powerful merit for us for the coming year.

Rabbi Rokach learns daily at the kollel.

HALACHA ENCOUNTERS

Ovens Part 2

Rabbi Yisroel Langer

Last week we discussed some of the issues pertaining to the use of an oven for *milichik* and *fleishiks*. This week we shall discuss how one can do so in a permitted fashion.

How could one use his oven, *l'chatchilah*, for both meat and dairy?

Method #1: First, one must determine if the oven is more frequently used for meat or for dairy. Assuming the more frequent use is for meat, all meat can be baked without a cover. If one wants to bake something dairy (that can give off steam, such as a batter or a wet lasagna), it should be baked with a tight cover. The rack that the dairy pan is placed upon should be free of any meat particles or residue. Some suggest placing a piece of aluminum foil under the dairy pan to ensure that it doesn't come in contact with meat particles or residue. One must be careful not to remove the cover of the dairy food to check on it while it is still in the oven. (According to the *Badei Hashulchan siman 92 biurim "L'chatchilah..."* p 214, *l'chatchilah*, one should wait 24 hours between baking the meat and the dairy. However, most *poskim* do not require one to wait. See *Megillas Sefer* who proves that the *Mishna Berurah* holds that it is not necessary to wait 24 hours.)

Dry foods, such as *challah*, that one intends to keep *parve* (to use for French toast, grilled cheese, etc.), may be baked immediately after meat provided that the oven is clean from any meat particles or grease (to avoid any *reicha* issues). The reason for this is that the *challah* does not give off any *zeiah*. However, one should not place the *challah* directly onto the rack so as not to absorb any meat taste from it. Some suggest placing two *keilim* (example: a piece of aluminum foil underneath the pan) in case there is some meat residue still on the rack.

Method #2: The above method is not always practical. At times, one cannot cover the wet dairy food, such as in the case of pizza. Another method is to *kasher* the oven with *libun* between meat and dairy uses. There are two forms of *libun*: 1) *Libun kal*- Heating up the oven until it is hot enough to burn a piece of straw. 2) *Libun chamur*- A stronger form of *libun* in which one must heat up the metal until it becomes red hot. In order to *kasher* a *kli* from meat to dairy (or vice versa) *libun kal* is sufficient. The *poskim* say that to heat the oven to its highest temperature for 45-60 minutes accomplishes *libun kal*. Some, however, object to relying on *libun kal* in our ovens since our ovens are enamel coated, which some hold cannot be *kashered*. Another objection is that the heating element is in a different chamber (See *Pri Migadim* in O.C. A.A. 451:44). However, the *minhag* is to be lenient and rely on *libun kal* in our ovens. To perform *libun kal*, one should clean the oven thoroughly with an oven cleaner, removing any meat particles and

grease. Then, the oven should be turned on to the highest temperature for approximately one hour. Some *poskim* (*Sidur Pesach Khilchaso* ch. 5 note 12) hold that one is required to wait 24 hours after the last use before *kashering* with *libun kal*. Other *poskim* maintain this is not necessary (Harav Dovid Zucker *shlita*, *Megillas Sefer* O.C. 21:4). If one has a self-cleaning oven, it would be preferable to run the self-clean cycle for the purpose of *kashering*. Many *poskim* (including *Hagaon* R' Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* quoted in *Hilchos Pesach* by Harav S. Eider) hold that self-cleaning has the status of *libun chamur*. One benefit is that this would solve the enamel issue. Also, with some self-cleaning ovens, the self-cleaning heating element is not in a different chamber and would eliminate the other objection to *kashering* our ovens (Laws of Kashrus by Harav Binyamin Forst *shlita* p. 231).

Miscellaneous

- *Lechatchilah*, one should not bake *kosher* and non-*kosher* or meat and dairy food, simultaneously in an oven, even if both foods are covered (*Rema* 92:8). In cases of necessity, such as on an airplane or in a hospital, it is permitted (assuming the *kosher* food is double wrapped).
- When one does "*hafrashas challah*" (separating *challah*) from his dough, it is prohibited to eat the *hafrasha*. The *minhag* is not to burn the *hafrasha* at the same time as baking the bread. Instead, the *hafrasha* should be placed on a piece of aluminum foil and burned alone either on a stove-top grate or in the oven on broil (Harav Dovid Zucker *shlita*). (When burning the *hafrasha*, no more than one ounce (size of a shot glass) should be separated. Aside from the prohibition of *ba'al tashchis* (wasting), as a practical matter, the larger it is the more difficult it will be to burn.)
- One should be careful not to place dairy pots on the stove near the oven vent when meat food (containing liquid) is baking inside the oven. The steam from the meat can come in contact with the dairy pot, rendering it *treif*.
- **Microwave ovens:** The *zeiah* issue in a microwave is more serious. If one uses the same microwave for both meat and dairy, it is recommended that all foods, even *parve*, be covered. Tiny holes may be punctured along the sides of the cover. Aside from cleaning out any particles and residue of the other type between uses, one should also have separate trays or plates for meat and dairy. It is questionable whether *kashering* a microwave is effective. One should consult his *rav* for practical guidance.

Rabbi Langer learns full-time at the kollel.