

דרך קצרה

Brief summaries of cRc Kashrus Policies

LESS THAN A KEZAYIS OF CHAMETZ

The *Gemara* says that – as with many food-related *issurim* – *bal yeira'eh* requires a *kezayis* of *chametz*. [There are many opinions whether חצי שיעור אסור מן התורה applies to *bal yeira'eh*; that issue is beyond the scope of this work]. There are two ways in which pieces of *chametz* can “join together” (צירוף) so that even though each is smaller than a *kezayis*, one is obligated to destroy it since the combination of these pieces equals to a *kezayis*. Of those two, the one that is relevant to use is that all pieces which are in a single utensil are *mitztaref* to the *shiur* of a *kezayis*.

There is a general principle that if a Jew violated *bal yeira'eh mid'oraisah*, the food in question is forbidden to everyone as *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*. This means that if a given bottle contains 5 *kezaysim* of liquid medicine and the medicine contains 20% sorbitol that is *chametz*, if a Jew owned that medicine over *Pesach*, it would be forbidden as *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*. If the same had been 100 chewable/edible pills (instead of a liquid), then the *chametz* sorbitol would be divided into 100 parts which are each less than a *kezayis*. But since the pills are all in one container, the *chametz* within them will be *mitztaref*; the person will violate *bal yeira'eh mid'oraisah*, and the pills will be forbidden after *Pesach* as well.

One exception where *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* applies even if there was no *d'oraisah* violation of *bal yeira'eh* is where there is so little *chametz* in a mixture that it would be *batel b'shishim*, but the *chametz* was *ma'amid* the mixture. The prohibition of *bal yeira'eh* is only *mid'rabannan* in that situation (since the entire principle of *ma'amid* is Rabbinic in nature), but nonetheless if a Jew owned this mixture over *Pesach*, it would be forbidden as *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*.

An example where all of these points come together would be if a barley beta amylase was used to convert non-*chametz* starch (e.g., corn) into “sugar” so that it could be fermented into alcohol. This role – changing bland starch into sweet sugar – qualifies as a *ma'amid*, and therefore it is forbidden for a Jew to retain ownership of the alcohol over *Pesach*. But if he did own it over *Pesach*, the status after *Pesach* will depend on whether there is a *kezayis* of total *chametz* in the container. There is so little amylase in alcohol that any individual bottle is unlikely to have a *kezayis* of amylase in it, but if a Jewish-owned company had a tank full of this alcohol then the *kezayis* of *chametz* amylase would be enough to render it forbidden.

מראה מקומות

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