

דרך קצרה

Brief summaries of cRc Kashrus Policies

PEGIMAH

Generally, a utensil must be *aino ben yomo* before *hag'alah*. However, in some situations, a company is desperate to *kasher* and cannot "afford" to have the equipment sit idle for 24 hours, and the *Mashgiach* will approve the use of "pegimah" (*fouling*) as a substitute for *aino ben yomo*. This installment will describe how that is accomplished.

The concept of *pegimah* begins with a halacha in *Yoreh Deah* that if one washes *milchig* and *fleishig* dishes simultaneously in a dishpan, the dishes remain kosher if there is soap in the wash water. Any *ta'am* of meat or milk which passes through the wash water will become *pagum* (a.k.a. *nosein ta'am lifgam*), and not be able to negatively affect the other dishes. As relates to our topic the thinking is similar. If the *ta'am* absorbed in the utensil interacts with soapy water, it will be unable to affect the status of the *hag'alah* water. The need for *aino ben yomo* is to prevent the *hag'alah* water from becoming non-kosher (and then spreading that status back to the utensil), and the *pogem* is filling that same role.

Until approximately 100 years ago, it was assumed that the way to accomplish *pegimah* was to bring the utensil into contact with soapy water that is *yad soledes bo* [165-175° F in this case]. The utensil would absorb the soapy water, rendering any non-kosher *ta'am* as *pagum*, at which point the utensil could be

kashered even though 24 hours had not passed since the non-kosher use.

However, *Chazon Ish* raised a question on this practice: We are *machmir* to say that at *yad soledes bo*, *ta'am* can be absorbed into a utensil, but in the above scenario we are being lenient to say that *ta'am* was absorbed at *yad soledes bo* (thereby ruining the taste of the previously absorbed *ta'am*). How can we be sure that the bitter taste was absorbed into the *kli*? Maybe none of the soapy water was absorbed and the original absorbed *ta'am* is still fresh and pleasant tasting?

Accordingly, *Chazon Ish* says that the only way *pegimah* can prepare for *kashering* is if the *davar hapogem* is heated in the pot (or utensil) at *kashering* temperatures. [*L'chatchilah* at *roschin*, or minimally at above the temperature which the non-kosher food reached]. At those temperatures we are sure that the absorbed *ta'am* comes out of the pot-walls. Once that happens, we are in exactly the situation as the dishes washed in soapy water: there is non-kosher *ta'am* floating around in the water, and if it is reabsorbed into the pot-walls it will be absorbed together with the bitter taste and be *pagum*. Thus, to use *pegimah* to avoid waiting 24 hours before *hag'alah*, the soapy water must be at *kashering* temperatures.

Chazon Ish's logic is compelling and has generally been accepted.



We will see in a future installment that *l'chatchilah* one should not *kasher* with liquids other than water (שער משקים). Accordingly, the general practice is that after *pegimah* is performed with soapy water, the utensil is *kashered* with plain water at *roschin* temperatures.

To qualify as a *davar hapogem*, the liquid's taste must be foul enough to impart a negative taste into *ta'am* that it becomes absorbed into but does not have to be repulsive. The example we have been using – soapy water – qualifies as a *davar hapogem*, as does water mixed with caustic, acid, and many industrial surfactants. [For more examples see *Imrei Dovid, Bitul and B'lios*, Chapter 4]. In this context, Rav Schachter said that if a liquid has a pleasant taste but has a noxious odor, that also qualifies as "*pagum*". Additionally, Rav Belsky said if the liquid is poisonous or would make someone sick, it qualifies as "*pagum*" even if its taste is pleasant.

CRC POLICIES

163. Under what circumstances may "*pegimah*" substitute for an item remaining idle for 24 hours before *kashering*?

שעת הדחק גדול and there is really no option of waiting for the equipment to be *aino ben yomo*

164. What temperature is required for *pegimah*?

It should be לכתחלה רותחין, and if that is not possible then it suffices if it is hotter than the food was during production (כבולעו כך פולטו)

165. If one is *pogem* a utensil, is there a need to subsequently perform *hag'alah* with plain water?

Yes, if the *davar hapogem* is considered שאר משקים

166. Is a liquid suitable as a *davar hapogem* if it has a pleasant taste but...

a. ...has a foul odor?

Yes

b. ...is poisonous?

Yes

c. ...would make someone sick if they consumed it?

Yes

מראה מקומות

שולחן ערוך סימן תנ"ב סעיף ב'
שולחן ערוך יו"ד סימן צ"ה סעיף ד'
חזון איש יו"ד סימן כ"ג ס"ק א'