

דרך קצרה

Brief summaries of cRc Kashrus Policies

KASHERING WITH STEAM

In the previous installment we saw that as relates to *kashering*, not all forms of hot water are the same. Rather, water from חמי טבריה are not capable of extracting *ta'am* which was absorbed through hot water created by fire. In a somewhat similar manner, *Iggeros Moshe* rules that *ta'am* absorbed from hot food or via hot water cannot be *kashered* with hot steam. He argues that even if steam is hotter than boiling water and logically might appear to be more powerful, that does not prove that it can extract *ta'am* the same way that water can. *Iggeros Moshe* is not comparing it to חמי טבריה, but in some sense steam is given a similar status: it is different than boiling water [like חמי טבריה is] and therefore cannot be used to *kasher* from *b'lios* that happened through hot water or food, but [similar to חמי טבריה] can be used to *kasher* if the original *b'liyah* was through steam.

At the same time, *Iggeros Moshe* says that steam can be used as a way of bringing hot water to the surface to be *kashered*. Namely, when steam comes into contact with a cold surface it will condense into liquid water. If that is done in a way that results in boiling water being on all parts of the item which is to be *kashered*, that accomplishes *hag'alah*. In this case, *kashering* is not being performed with steam, but rather steam is a tool through which to get boiling water onto the utensil and the *hag'alah* occurs with the hot water.

Some applications of these principles are:

- Microwave ovens (DK 65) absorb *ta'am* through steam/זיעה rising up from food, and therefore can be *kashered* with steam from a bowl of water boiled in the microwave.
- Countertops absorb *ta'am* from hot food and liquids that are placed (or spill) onto them. Accordingly, they cannot be *kashered* with steam. One exception is if a steamer is designed to create boiling water on the counter instead of just steam. For details, see DK 74.
- Sometimes it is not possible to fill a tank with water and bring that water to a boil or to spray boiling water onto the interior surfaces, and the only choice is to *kasher* with steam. Here again, since the *b'liyah* occurred through hot food, *hag'alah* cannot be performed with steam, unless it is done in a way that causes *roschin* condensation on all interior surfaces.

In practice, this means that the tank should be at ambient temperature so that steam pumped into it will condense when it hits the "cold" surfaces [this will not work as well with an insulated tank]. Steam should be added until the condensation draining out of the bottom is at *roschin* temperatures, and there is such a steady flow of condensate that we



can assume that all interior surfaces are covered with water. **Caution: This procedure can cause the tank to collapse** and should only be done by someone with experience; see DK 4.

CRC POLICIES

171. If a utensil absorbed *ta'am* from hot food or via hot water, can it be *kashered* with...

a. Steam?

No

b. Steam that condenses into water that is *roschin*?

Yes

172. If a utensil absorbed *ta'am* via steam or *zei'ah* rising from a food, can it be *kashered* with...

a. Steam?

Yes

b. Water that is *roschin*?

Yes

מראה מקומות

שולחן ערוך סימן תנ"ב סעיף ה'
אגרות משה יו"ד חלק א' סימן ס'