



Understanding *Hatmana*

The fourth (and brief) chapter of *Shabbat* discusses the prohibition of *hatmana* – loosely translated as insulation. While the *Mishnayot* discussed insulating materials covered by the prohibition, timing and retrieval of the insulated objects, we shall try and probe the parameters of the prohibition.

First we must however ask why *hatmana* is prohibited. The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 34b) provides two reasons for the two prohibited scenarios: any insulation during *Shabbat* and insulating with substances that can increase heat. In the former case, the concern is that one might heat the food thereby transgressing the prohibition of cooking. In the latter case, insulating before *Shabbat* using a substance that increases heat is prohibited, as there was a concern that one could cover the food in hot coals or ash and then might stoke them on *Shabbat* thereby violating the prohibition of kindling a flame and cooking.

The *Tosfot Yom Tov* notes that this appears to be a *gezeira* on a *gezeira*, which is not usually allowed. One *gezeira* is in case hot coals are used. The next is that if they are used, one might stoke them. He answers that the issue of a double *gezeira* is only when they are each made a different times. If however they are made at the same time, it is possible that the *Chachamim* saw the need for both understanding that the first *gezeira* could not stand without the second.

Let us now understand what qualifies as *hatmana*.¹ The first point to note is that the *Rema* (OC 253:1) explains that if the insulation is open at the top it is not considered *hatmana*. How open is a subject for further discussion.

The next qualifier is that *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* in the *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 51a) explains that it is not prohibited to wrap the food with a material that does not increase heat on *Shabbat* if it has been transferred to a *kli* other than the one it was heated in, i.e. it is in *kli sheni*. In other words the prohibition of insulating on *Shabbat* with a material that does not increase heat only applies to a *kli rishon* – a utensil that was placed on the fire (see *Shulchan Aruch* 257:5).

Another exception found in the *Shulchan Aruch* (257:2) is that if one covers a pot simply to protect the food, for example its lid, then even though it assists in preserving the heat, such an action is permitted on *Shabbat*.

Finally, the *Shulchan Aruch* (257:8) also teaches that the prohibition of *hatmana* is only when the material is in direct contact with the pot (or food). The example the *mechaber* provides to illustrate a permissible scenario is if one placed a wider plate on top of a pot and then draped clothing over the pot. Since the clothing that hangs over the plate does not touch the pot, it is not considered *hatmana*.

An interesting case that touches on a number of these points relates to whether one can place water from an urn in a thermos flask on *Shabbat*. The *Piskei Teshuvot* (257:2) brings a number of opinions regarding this case. The first opinion is that it is permitted. Firstly, the thermos would be considered a *kli sheni* (the second point listed above). Secondly, citing the *Chazon Ish*, he explains that it is possible that a thermos is not considered *hatmana* at all. *Hatmana* is where one takes, for example, materials and wraps it around a *kli* that contains food. This case however is similar to pour food into a *kli* that already is surrounded by the insulating material.

The *Piskei Teshuvot* however brings other opinions that rule stringently requiring one to pour the water into an intermediate *kli* prior to pouring the water into the thermos. He adds that there are others that suggest that if one did not fill the thermos to the top then they can combine the leniency that the *hatmana* is only when the insulating material is direct contact on all sides with the food and thereby permit the use of the thermos.

As is the disclaimer with all *Mishnah Yomit* article, one should not derive any practical conclusions from the content provided, but instead seek rabbinic council.

Yisrael Yitzchak Bankier

¹ These four qualifiers were gleaned from The 39 Melachos, Rabbi Dovid Ribiat.

Revision Questions

שבת ב' ז' ו' א'

- Which three things must a person check have been completed prior to *Shabbat*? (ב' ז')
- Which three things does the *Mishnah* list as being prohibited during *bein ha'shmashot* and which three things are permissible? (ב' ז')
- Under what conditions can one leave food on the stove as *Shabbat* comes in? (ג' א')
- With respect to the previous question, *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* argue on two points – what are they? (ג' א')
- What is a *tanur* and what is a *kofach* and how do they differ with respect to the previously described case? (ג' ב')
- Explain the debate regarding whether one can cook an egg in a utensil that has been left in the sun. (ג' ג')
- What was the innovation implemented by the people of *Teveria* and what was the *Chachamim's* reaction? (ג' ד')
- Can one put cold water into a container that has recently been emptied of its boiling hot water? (ג' ה')
- When can one place a plate under the *Shabbat* candles to catch the oil? (ג' ו')
- What must one be careful about when placing a plate under a candle to catch the sparks? (ג' ו')
- The first *Mishnah* in the fourth *perek* lists things with which one is not allowed to insulate hot food on *erev Shabbat*. What is the reason why these things are excluded? (ד' א')
- One is allowed to insulate their hot food with wool shearing, yet they are *muktza*. How does one retrieve their food if he insulated it in wool shearings? (ד' ב')
- One can only insulate his food before *Shabbat*. If it was insulated before *Shabbat* and one uncovered it during *Shabbat*, can he re-insulate the pot? (ד' ב')
- The first *Mishnah* in the fifth *perek* list things which an animal is allowed to wear on *Shabbat*. Why is this list important? (ה' א')
- When can a donkey go out wearing a saddle? (ה' ב')
- The *Mishnah* states that a camel cannot go out *akud* or *ragul*. What does this mean and why not? (ה' ג')
- Why can a donkey not go out wearing a bell even if it is plugged? (ה' ד')
- In what manner did “*Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya's* cow” go out on *Shabbat* which was not to liking of the *Chachamim*? (ה' ד')
- The first *Mishnah* of the sixth *perek* list things which women cannot wear in the public domain on *Shabbat*. What is the reason why women cannot wear these things? (ו' א')

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Shabbat 6:2-3	Shabbat 6:4-5	Shabbat 6:6-7	Shabbat 6:8-9	Shabbat 6:10-7:1	Shabbat 7:2-3	Shabbat 7:4-8:1

