Cooking vs. Warming (Part 2)

14th of Cheshvan, 5771

Last Friday I explained that in Shabbat we are forbidden to cook food . However, if the food is already cooked we are allowed to warm that food. There are a few conditions to allow warming food.

1. The source of heat. It cannot be a ‘live’ fire.You could use an electric heat like a Shabbat plate, activated before Shabbat or on Shabbat by an automatic timer. (See the link for last week’s HOTD).

Today I will explain a second element: the type of the food.

Our Rabbis distinguished between solid foods (rice, bread, chicken, etc.) and liquid foods (water, soup, milk). They explain that since solid foods undergo the process of ‘cooking’ only one time , once a solid food is cooked, heat will not ‘cook’ it again, it will only warm it. (en bishul achar bishul beyabesh. Think about a hard-boiled egg…). ‘Cooked/boiled’ liquids, however, once cold, they will ‘boil’ once again in contact with heat: every time you reheat water, it boils again.

In principle then, if you have a bowl of rice in your refrigerator, cooked from before Shabbat, you are allowed to warm that rice in a Shabbat Plate, but you cannot take a soup, even though that soup was completely cooked before Shabbat, and place it on a Shabbat Plate, because it will ‘boil’ again.

Next week B’H I will clarify two points:

1. The status of ‘stew’, an intermediate category between solid and liquid and
2. What happens when the Shabbat Plate won’t reach a temperature that will ‘cook’

the foods.

IN THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT I MUST ASK THE READER TO CONSIDER WHAT HE/SHE READS TODAY EXCLUSIVELY AS EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL, WHICH SHOULD NOT BE APPLIED UNTIL HE/SHE KNOWS ALL RELEVANT DETAILS, WHICH OBVIOUSLY CANNOT BE COVERED IN THESE FEW WORDS.
B'H I WILL EXPLAIN THE OTHER RULES OF 'COOKING VS. WARMING' IN THE COMING FRIDAYS.

Shabbat Shalom!
Candle Lighting in New York: 5:47.

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