

Half Baked

April 18, 2024

Q I frequently find small folds and creases in Pesach matzos. May these be eaten?



A The Rama (O.C. 461:5) forbids eating matzah *kfulah* (folded matzah) on Pesach, because the full intensity of the oven's heat doesn't penetrate the fold, so the dough may rise before the baking is done. An incomplete fold—where the edges of the fold don't touch—is not a problem, because everything is exposed to the full heat (Mishnah Brurah *ibid.* 25).

The *kfulah* issue applies even where the matzah is so thin that even when doubled over it is only as thick as a standard matzah, because the space inside a fold is more resistant to heat penetration than the center of a thicker dough (Aruch Hashulchan *ibid.* 11).

When a *kfulah* is found, *kedei netilah* (the fold plus about an inch around it) must be removed, because the taste of chametz spreads (Rama *ibid.*); the rest of the matzah is permitted. In the uncommon case that the matzah was baked on Pesach itself, the entire matzah must be discarded (Mishnah Brurah *ibid.* 24). If the folded area is very small—less than 1/60 of a square inch—only the fold itself need be removed (Knei Vosem 1:23).

Sometimes the two halves of the fold are fused together, and the *poskim* discuss whether that's a *kfulah* or it is deemed as one thick piece of dough and permitted. In practice one should be stringent, unless there is another lenient factor to combine (Biur Halacha *ibid.* s.v. *Zu*). If the folding occurred during the rolling process and the fold is subsequently flattened by the rolling pin, it is considered thick dough and permitted (Sheivet Halevi 8:116).

A matzah *kfulah* doesn't require burning, because it is only a stringency to consider it chametz. But it is commendable to burn it (Shulchan Aruch Harav *ibid.* 21). A *kfulah* may be eaten after Pesach, because it is not considered chametz *she'avar alav haPesach* (Mishnah Brurah *ibid.* 32).