Preparing a runny mixture in an unusual manner

Preparing a runny mixture in an unusual manner is permitted even according to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi

As stated above, the Gemara permits preparing the runny mixture of *shatit* even according to the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, as long as one adds the ingredients in a different order than usual. Consequently, since one usually adds the *shatit* to the vinegar, on Shabbat one would pour the vinegar into the *shatit*. This ruling is recorded in the ***Shulḥan Arukh*** (321:14):

> Concerning grain that has not reached one-third of its growth that was roasted and then ground into a coarse flour, so that it is like sand, which is called *shatita*, it is permitted to mix it with vinegar or something like it a lot at one time, provided it is soft. But if it is hard it is prohibited, because it looks like Kneading. [And even if it is soft] one must change [from the normal procedure]. How so? One places the *shatita* and afterward places the vinegar.

Thus, it is permitted to create **a runny mixture** on Shabbat if one **changes the order in which the ingredients are placed**. If

one generally places the powder first and then adds the liquid, one should pour the liquid first on Shabbat, and vice versa in the opposite case.[7]

The dispute among the halakhic authorities when there is no regular order

What happens when there is no regular order in which the ingredients are placed? The ***Taz*** (321:11) implies that in this case one may not combine the ingredients at all, as whatever order one places the ingredients will be considered the normal procedure:

> Here, where it is permitted in the case of a runny mixture, it is when one prepares it in an unusual manner, e.g., on a weekday it is common to place the vinegar first and on Shabbat one places the flour first, such that the departure from the regular practice is clear to all. But in the case of matza meal, there is no known manner of what one places first on weekdays so as to know what

7. The *Shulḥan Arukh* cited above implies that *shatit* is similar to coarse sand, which does not bond into a uniform compound, such that even if one were to prepare a dough-like mixture in the usual manner, it would merely "look like Kneading" but would not actually violate the prohibited labor of Kneading by Torah law (based on the **Rambam** 21:33). Consequently, there are grounds to say that the leniency allowing one to prepare a runny mixture if one changes the order of adding the ingredients is limited to ingredients that do not bond into a uniform mixture, due to the fact that the prohibition by Torah law is not applicable in such cases (see also above, note 3, and ***Menuḥat Ahava*** 2:9:10, and compare to what is explained below with regard to preparing a dough-like mixture in an unusual manner). By contrast, the ***Terumat HaDeshen*** (53) clearly implies that this leniency applies to any runny mixture, even if one would violate a prohibition by Torah law by kneading those same ingredients into a dough-like mixture. Other authorities also hold that the leniency applies to all types of runny mixtures. The reasoning for this is that creating a runny mixture is prohibited by rabbinic law, and therefore doing so in an unusual manner is entirely permitted. Additionally, the difference between ingredients that bond into a uniform compound and those that do not is not so relevant when it comes to a runny mixture, which does not form a solid unified mass in any event. Furthermore, that distinction is stated specifically in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda, whereas the leniency of preparing a runny mixture when adding the ingredients in a different order is stated even in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi.

> is considered a departure from the usual manner, and therefore it is prohibited on Shabbat in all manners.

By contrast, the ***Terumat HaDeshen*** (53) writes that the departure from the usual method of preparation mentioned in the Gemara, namely, that one places the dry ingredient and then the liquid, is effective even in a case where there is no usual order in which the ingredients are placed:

> Although on weekdays there is no set practice as to which of them one places first, it is sufficient to place the ingredients in an unusual manner as described by the Gemara.

The halakhic conclusion

ON A PRACTICAL LEVEL, the ***Mishna Berura*** (321:57) appears to prefer the opinion of the ***Terumat HaDeshen***, that when there is no normal order in which one places the ingredients, one should first place the dry ingredient and then add the liquid. The ***Ḥazon Ish*** (58:5 s.v. *uldaat*; 58:6 s.v. *ve'im*) rules that in such a case, placing the ingredients in a different order than usual is not relevant, but it is permitted to prepare the mixture if one mixes the ingredients in an unusual fashion, such as by distinct horizontal and vertical motions.[8]

Pouring the water into the powder at once

The ***Ḥazon Ish*** (58:8 s.v. *ha*) notes that if one pours the water into the dry ingredient, one should be sure to pour all the water at once, because if one pours it in stages, this will initially produce a dough-like mixture until the rest of the water is poured in.

One departure from the normal procedure or two?

When one changes the normal order of placing the ingredients,

8. The *Ḥazon Ish* explains that the *halakha* is that one should be stringent in accordance with the opinion of **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi**, and according to his opinion it is possible that one must combine the ingredients in an unusual fashion, whereas mixing in an unusual fashion would not be sufficient. Nonetheless, in the case of a runny mixture, where the prohibition of Kneading applies only by rabbinic law, when it is unclear how to change the order in which one places the ingredients, one may rely on the authorities who rule in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda, and it is sufficient to mix the ingredients in an unusual fashion.

does the **actual mixing** have to be performed in an unusual fashion as well, such as by mixing the ingredients in separate horizontal and vertical motions, or is it permitted to stir the ingredients in the normal fashion?

The halakhic authorities disagreed about this issue:

Terumat HaDeshen: In addition to the order of the ingredients, one must change the method of mixing

OPINION 1: One must add the ingredients in an unusual order and also perform the actual mixing in an unusual manner. This is the opinion of the ***Terumat HaDeshen*** (53):

> It appears that a permitted method can be found that accords with all opinions . . . such as if one forms a runny mixture . . . one is required, according to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, to change the order in which one adds the ingredients, such as by first placing the dry ingredient in a utensil and then adding the liquid . . . And it additionally appears that even with a runny mixture one must then mix it (by shaking) the utensil itself or with one's finger, because according to the opinion that adding water is not considered Kneading, placing the food first is not a significant departure from the normal manner, as there is no labor performed until it is mixed, and we require a variation in the mixing.

According to this opinion, it is permitted to create a mixture only when three conditions are met. First, the compound must be **a runny mixture**. Additionally, two changes to the normal process of kneading are required:

1. **A change in the order of the ingredients**. This is necessary in order to allow the ingredients to be combined according to **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi**, who holds that one violates the prohibition of Kneading simply by adding water to the dry ingredient.
2. **A change in the manner of mixing**, such as mixing with one's finger or with horizontal and vertical motions. This is necessary in order to permit the mixing according to **Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda**, who holds that adding the water is not part of the prohibited labor of Kneading, and therefore changing the order in which one adds the ingredients is inconsequential.

This appears to be the opinion of the **Rema** (321:16) as well:

> If one places the food first and then the vinegar or the wine **and mixes them with a finger**, it is permitted, as this is a variation from the general procedure, like with regard to *shatita* above, and the common practice is to permit (creating a mixture) in an unusual manner.

The **Rema** is referring to **a runny mixture** (as he writes "like with regard to *shatita* above"), and nonetheless it appears that he requires one to add the ingredients in an unusual order and also to mix them with a finger, which is an unusual manner of mixing.[9] This is how the ***Magen Avraham*** (321:24) interprets the Rema, and this also seems to be implied by the ***Mishna Berura*** (321:68)[10] and the ***Ben Ish Ḥai*** (Year 2, *Mishpatim* 18).

Ḥazon Ish: It is sufficient to change the order in which the ingredients are added

OPINION 2: In creating a runny mixture it is sufficient to depart from the normal procedure in one aspect, either in the order in which the ingredients are added or in the method of mixing the ingredients. This appears to be the opinion of the **Rambam** (21:33), who mentions only changing the order in which the ingredients are added. This appears to be the opinion of other *Rishonim* as well (see **Ritva** and **Meiri**, 156a). This is also the straightforward reading of the ***Shulḥan Arukh*** (321:14) cited above, who addresses the case of a runny mixture and mentions only a change in the normal order in

9. Yet, the **Rema** (321:14) does not dispute the ruling of the ***Shulḥan Arukh*** with regard to *shatit*. This may imply that he agrees that it is sufficient to change the normal order in which the ingredients are added, which is different from what he writes here, that it is necessary to change the method of mixing. See ***Shalmei Yehonatan*** (321, 14:41 and 16:53).

10. The ***Mishna Berura*** writes elsewhere (57) that where it is not known what the normal order of adding the ingredients is, **it is proper to be stringent** and to change the method of mixing. This implies that it is necessary to change the method of mixing only in this case, and even then, it is merely a stringency. Yet, from another of his comments (68) it appears that he is always stringent and requires two variations from the normal procedures, at least *lekhatḥila* (*ab initio*)

which the ingredients are added. This is also the ruling of the ***Ḥazon Ish*** (58:5, s.v. *umashma baGemara*; s.v. *ve'im*), who writes that this is implied by the Gemara:

> It is indicated in the Gemara that for a runny mixture it is sufficient if one departs from the normal procedure by placing the flour first, and does not need to change the normal method of mixing. Yet, the *Terumat HaDeshen* writes that one must also change the method of mixing . . . and the *Derisha* already disagreed with him.

The question may be raised: The **Rambam and *Shulḥan Arukh*** rule in accordance with the opinion of **Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda** that one is liable for Kneading due to the mixing of the ingredients but not for merely adding water to the dry ingredients. That being the case, how is it possible that varying the order in which the ingredients are added can permit the mixing of the ingredients? In such a case, isn't the act of Kneading, which includes only the combining of the ingredients, being performed in the usual manner? It would appear that in their opinion, Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda concedes that **the process of Kneading includes pouring the water**, but he holds that one is liable only for performing **the entire process**. Consequently, varying the order in which the ingredients are placed is considered kneading in an unusual manner (see ***Derisha*** 321:4 s.v. *uma shekatav Beit Yosef*).[11]

11. Based on this, it is possible that the dispute about whether two variations from the common procedure are required or whether one variation is sufficient depends upon the question cited earlier (note 2) with regard to the opinion of Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda. According to the ***Terumat HaDeshen*** **and Rema**, Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda holds that Kneading includes only the mixing of the ingredients, whereas merely pouring in the water is not considered part of Kneading. Consequently, varying the manner in which the water is added to the dry ingredients is not sufficient to permit the mixing. By contrast, the ***Shulḥan Arukh*** holds that Kneading includes the entire process, beginning from when the water is poured into the dry ingredients and concluding when they have been fully kneaded into dough, though one is liable only

Accordingly, the opinion of the ***Shulḥan Arukh***, who rules in accordance with **Rabbi Yossi bar Yehuda**, is that it is permitted to form a runny mixture with a single variation from the normal manner, and one can choose whether to vary the order in which the ingredients are added and to stir in the normal fashion, or whether to add the ingredients in the normal order and to vary the method of combining the ingredients. By contrast, **Ashkenazi** authorities, who are stringent and take into account the opinion of **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi**, hold that when forming a runny mixture one must vary the order in which the ingredients are added. After this, there is no need for any further variations to the common procedure. In their opinion, varying the manner in which the ingredients are combined is not sufficient or necessary, and is relevant only in cases where the ingredients were combined before Shabbat (or in cases where it is permitted to form a dough-like mixture, as detailed below).

Summary

IN SUMMARY: **It is permitted to form a runny mixture in an unusual manner.** Many Sephardi authorities are lenient, in accordance with the straightforward reading of the ***Shulḥan Arukh***, and rule that one variation from the normal procedure is sufficient, and one may vary either the order in which the ingredients are added or the method of combining the ingredients. The Ashkenazi authorities disagree about whether varying the order in which the ingredients are added is sufficient or whether one must also vary the method of combining the ingredients (the ***Ben Ish Ḥai*** also rules stringently).

Practical *halakha*

ON A PRACTICAL LEVEL, if it is not particularly difficult, it is preferable to vary **both the order in which the ingredients are added and the method in which they are mixed** (as implied by the ruling of the ***Mishna Berura***), especially since in many instances it is hard to ascertain with absolute certainty that the mixture is considered runny rather than dough-like. When necessary, one may rely on

for completing this process. Consequently, varying the manner in which the ingredients are combined is considered a change in the kneading process even if the mixing is done in the usual manner.

the opinion of the ***Ḥazon Ish*** and vary only the order in which the ingredients are added, provided that there is a particular order in which they are normally added during on weekdays. Additionally, for a mixture that is particularly runny, such that there is no doubt that it is a runny, rather than dough-like, mixture, one may follow the opinion of the *Ḥazon Ish*, as the uncertainty in this case certainly concerns a prohibition by rabbinic law.

Similarly, the **Responsa *Minḥat Yitzḥak*** (1:74) states that since mixing the ingredients in an unusual manner (after varying the order in which they are normally added) is a stringency that is subject to dispute, one does not need to mix the ingredients in a manner that is an extreme variation from the normal method, such as mixing with one's finger, as implied by the **Rema**. Rather, it is sufficient if one mixes the ingredients with **a utensil not generally used for this purpose**, and does so **gently** rather than vigorously. For example, one who generally stirs with a spoon may stir gently with a knife, and one who generally prepares baby cereal in the baby's bottle may do so in a different utensil, varying the order in which the ingredients are added, mix it gently, and then transfer it to the bottle.