

25 Elul 5772
Sept. 12, 2012



Brachos Daf 42

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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Kisnin-Bread

[Please see below – by the “Halachah from the Daf” discussion – regarding the three opinions as to the exact definition of “pas haba’ah b’kisnin.”] Rav Huna once ate thirteen rolls (of *kisnin-bread*; something baked which is eaten as a snack) of which there were three to a *kav* (and since each *kav* is 24 eggs, every roll would be 8 eggs; it would emerge, if taken literally, that he ate a volume of 104 eggs) without reciting a blessing (of *Birchas Hamazon*) after them. [Since it is eaten as a snack, they ruled that *Hamotzi* (before eating) and *Birchas Hamazon* (afterwards) should not be recited; rather, a *mezonos* and *Borei nefashos* should be said.]

Rav Nachman said to him: This situation is what you call ‘satisfying hunger’ (and therefore, the lenient ruling of *kisnin-bread* should not apply here) rather, since people eat that amount as a meal, *Birchas Hamazon* must be recited!

Rav Yehudah was organizing the marriage for his son to the daughter of Rav Yehudah bar Chaviva. They brought before them *kisnin-bread*. Rav Yehudah (the *Amora*) came in and heard them saying the blessing of *Ha-Motzi*. He said to them: What is this “*tzitzit*” sound that I hear (which is the last letters of the word ‘*Ha-motzi*’)? Perhaps you are saying the blessing of ‘*Ha-motzi lechem min ha’aretz*’ -- ‘the One Who brings forth bread from the ground’? They replied: We are, since it has been taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Mona said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah (the *Tanna*): Regarding bread which comes with *kisnin*, the blessing of *Ha-motzi* is recited over it. And Shmuel said that the *halachah* is as stated by Rabbi Mona. Rav Yehudah said to them: [You are reporting inaccurately!] It has been stated that the *halachah* is not as stated by Rabbi Mona. They said to him: Is it not the master himself who has said in the name of Shmuel that *lachmaniya*s (which are a type of *kisnin-bread*) may be used for an *eruv* (which

allows the carrying in a courtyard; this requires ordinary bread) and the blessing recited over them is ‘*Ha-motzi*’? He replied: Shmuel was referring to a different case, namely, where they were established as the basis of his meal, but if they are not the basis of the meal (but rather, they are eaten as a snack), this does not apply. (42a)

Concluding a Meal

Rav Pappa once visited the house of Rav Huna the son of Rav Nassan. After they had finished the meal, other foods were brought before them, and Rav Pappa took some and began to eat. They said to him: Doesn’t the master hold that after the meal is finished, it is forbidden to eat (until the *Grace after Meals* had first been recited, and afterwards, a fresh blessing needs to be said; this is because he has diverted his attention from eating any further)? He said to them: [You are reporting inaccurately!] It has been stated that if the bread and food has been removed from the table, it is then forbidden to eat.

The *Gemora* relates an incident: Rava and Rabbi Zeira once visited the Exilarch. After they had removed the table from before them, a portion of food was sent to them from the Exilarch. Rava ate, but Rabbi Zeira did not eat. Rabbi Zeira said to Rava: Doesn’t the master hold that if the food has been removed, it is forbidden to eat? He replied: We can rely on the table of the Exilarch (and if he decides to bring out more food, we will definitely partake of it).

Rav said: If one is accustomed to use oil (after a meal they would anoint themselves with oil to remove the odor from the food), it is the oil that holds him back (from being regarded as the conclusion of his meal; he therefore may continue to eat until the oil is brought in).

Rav Ashi said: When we were in Rav Kahana’s school, he said to us: We, for instance, who are accustomed to use oil, it is the oil that



holds us back.

The *Gemora* rules: The *halachah* is not as stated in all those rulings reported above, but rather, as stated by Rabbi Chiya bar Ashi in the name of Rav: Three things should follow immediately one after the other. The slaughtering (of a sacrifice) should follow immediately after the leaning (of the hands on the sacrifice – *semichah*). *Tefillah* (*Shemoneh Esrei*) should follow immediately after *Ge'ulah* (the blessing for Redemption). Grace after Meals (*Birchas Hamazon*) should follow immediately after the washing of the hands (*mayim acharonim* – the final waters; the washing after the meal is concluded).

Abaye said: We too will say (we will add another case of “*immediacies*”): A blessing (to one’s house) follows immediately after (the inviting of) Torah scholars (into one’s house), since it is written: *And Hashem has blessed me on account of you. [Lavan had said that after having Yaakov in his house for many years.]* Alternatively, you can learn it from here: *And Hashem has blessed the Egyptian’s house on account of Yosef.* (42a)

Mishna

A blessing recited over the wine drunk before the meal (where they were accustomed to drink wine together with an appetizer, such as meat or fish) discharges one’s obligation for the wine drunk after the meal (but before *Birchas Hamazon*; it was customary to drink wine together with dessert, such as toasted bread or *kisnin-bread*). A blessing recited over the appetizers eaten before the meal discharges one’s obligation for the dessert eaten after the meal (but before *Birchas Hamazon*; generally, the dessert would require its own blessing – if not for the fact that a blessing was recited on the appetizer before the meal).

A blessing recited over bread discharges one’s obligation for the dessert, but a blessing over the appetizer (even if it is *kisnin-bread*) does not discharge one’s obligation for the bread. *Beis Shammai* say: Neither does it discharge one’s obligation for porridge that he eats (whose blessing is *mezonos*).

If those at the table are sitting (and not reclining), each one recites the blessing for himself. If they are reclining (which is then regarded as a group), one recites the blessing for all of them. [Although the general rule is that one may recite a blessing and another can listen and discharge his obligation as if he recited it himself, the Sages restricted this mechanism with regards to food, unless the people have joined a group.]

If wine is brought to them during the meal, each one of them says the blessing for themselves; if it is brought after the meal, one says it for all of them. And he (the one who said the blessing on the wine) says it on the incense (for once he has started saying the blessings after the meal, he continues to do so) - although the incense is not brought out until after the meal. (42a – 42b)

Drinking Wine by a Meal

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: This (that a blessing said over the wine brought before the meal by the appetizer discharges the obligation for the wine brought after the meal) was taught only with regards to *Shabbos* and the festivals, because then, a man makes wine an established part of his meal (and therefore from the beginning he has an intention to drink later). On other days of the year, however, a blessing is said over each and every cup (that he drinks after the meal; for each time he drinks, it is as if he reconsidered to drink again).

It has also been stated: Rabbah bar Mari said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: This was taught only with regards to *Shabbos* and the festivals, and to the times when a man leaves the bathhouse or after bloodletting, because on such occasions, a man makes wine an established part of his meal. On other days of the year, however, a blessing is said over each and every cup.

Rabbah bar Mari once visited Rava at his house on a weekday. He saw him say a blessing over the wine which was brought out before the meal and then again, he said a blessing over wine that was brought out after the meal. Rabbah bar Mari said to him, “Well done! and so said Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (to do like that).”

Rav Yitzchak bar Yosef once visited Abaye at his house on a festival, and saw him say a blessing over each and every cup (that he drank upon the conclusion of the meal). He said to him: Does the master not hold with the rule laid down by Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (that by a festival, one blessing is sufficient)? He replied: I have just reconsidered (and decided to drink more; that is why he made another blessing).

They inquired: If wine was brought during the course of the meal (but not before), can a blessing recited over it discharge the obligation for the wine brought after the meal as well? Should you cite the ruling (from our Mishna) that ‘A blessing recited over the wine drunk before the meal discharges one’s obligation for the wine drunk after the meal,’ this may be because both of those



wines are being drunk for the sake of drinking; here, however, where one wine (*the one which is brought after the meal*) is for drinking, and the other (*the one which is brought during the meal*) is for steeping (*to make the food wet*), shall I say that this is not the rule (*and a new blessing would be required*), or perhaps, there is no difference?

Rav said that it does exempt his blessing obligation, but Rav Kahana says that it does not. Rav Nachman said that it does exempt his blessing obligation, but Rav Sheishes says that it does not. Rav Huna and Rav Yehudah and all the disciples of Rav held that it does not discharge his obligation.

Rava asked to Rav Nachman from our *Mishna*: If wine is brought to them during the meal, each one of them says the blessing for themselves; if it is brought after the meal, one says it for all of them. [*If the Mishna is referring to one case, it is a proof that the blessing recited over the wine brought during the meal does not exempt one's obligation to recite a blessing over wine brought after the meal!?*]

He replied: The meaning of the *Mishna* is as follows: If no wine was brought in during the course of the meal but only after the meal, one says the blessing on behalf of all of them (*for if there was wine during the meal, no blessing would be required over the wine which is brought afterwards*). (42b)

Beis Shammai's Porridge

The *Mishna* had stated: A blessing recited over bread discharges one's obligation for the dessert, but a blessing over the appetizer (*even if it is kisnin-bread*) does not discharge one's obligation for the bread. Beis Shammai say: Neither does it discharge one's obligation for porridge that he eats (*whose blessing is mezonos*).

They inquired: Does Beis Shammai disagree with regard to the first ruling of the *Mishna* (*that the blessing recited over bread discharges one's obligation for the dessert*) or to the second part (*which states that a blessing over the appetizer (even if it is kisnin-bread) does not discharge one's obligation for the bread*)?

The *Gemora* elaborates: Do we understand that the *Tanna Kamma* (*the first opinion cited in the Mishna*) said that a blessing recited over bread discharges one's obligation for the dessert, and certainly then, it would discharge one's blessing obligation for porridge (*brought during the meal – for that is being eaten for actual sustenance; unlike dessert, which is only eaten as a sweet*),

and Beis Shammai comes to disagree and say that not only does the blessing over bread not suffice for the desserts, but it does not exempt his blessing obligation even for the porridge? Or perhaps Beis Shammai argues on the second ruling, for the *Mishna* stated that a blessing over the appetizer does not discharge one's obligation for the bread. This would imply that it does not exempt his blessing obligation for bread, but it does exempt his obligation for porridge, and Beis Shammai comes to disagree and say that it does not exempt his obligation even for porridge?

The *Gemora* leaves this question unresolved. (42b)

HALACHAH FROM THE DAF

Cake for Dessert

by: Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

The basic rule is that a "dessert-type food" requires a separate blessing when eaten at the end of the meal, applies to cake as well. It should follow that cake eaten at the end of the meal as a dessert requires a mezonos.

In actual practice, however, this is not the case. In order to explain why not, we must present some background information concerning pas haba'ah b'kisnin, commonly known as cake, and what its proper blessing is.

One thing is clear: Normally, people are koveia seudah ("base" their meal) on pas, bread. The proper blessing over pas is, therefore, ha-motzi. The proper blessing over pas haba'ah b'kisnin, which has bread-like properties but yet is not bread, is mezonos, since people are not usually koveia seudah on it. But how exactly is pas different from pas haba'ah b'kisnin? What distinguishes the two foods: is it the ingredients or is it the texture?

There are three opinions among the Rishonim as to the definition of pas haba'ah b'kisnin and the main characteristic that distinguishes it from pas:

1. Some hold that pas haba'ah b'kisnin is what most people today call cake. Cake batter consists of many ingredients beyond flour and water; it contains significant amounts of sugar, cocoa, chocolate, oil, honey, etc. According to this view, the blessing over pretzels or fruit-filled pies would be ha-motzi, since their basic ingredients are flour and water, just like bread.



2. Others hold that pas haba'ah b'kisin is a hard, crunchy substance such as a pretzel or a cracker. According to this view, the blessing over most cakes and pies would be ha-motzi.

3. Others hold that pas haba'ah b'kisin is a fruit- or nut- filled pie. According to this view, the blessing over most cakes and pretzels and crackers would be ha-motzi.

What is the practical halachah?

As a rule, whenever doubts arise concerning the proper blessing to recite, we follow the basic principle of safeik berachos l'hakail, i.e., we tend to rule leniently. Accordingly, whenever any one of these foods is eaten [not during the meal] the blessing is mezonos, since requiring one to wash and recite Birkas ha-Mazon over them would be a stringency.

But when these foods are eaten as a dessert during the meal, the halachah should be the reverse. Since there is a doubt as to whether these foods are classified as pas, bread, or pas haba'ah b'kisin, we ought to be lenient and not require a mezonos to be recited, since they may very well be bread, and a ha-motzi was already recited at the beginning of the meal.

In practice, however, various poskim have issued numerous, somewhat contradictory, rulings. This issue is so confusing that some God-fearing people do not eat cake for dessert at all; rather, they recite Birkas ha- Mazon and eat the dessert cake afterwards. Another solution suggested by some poskim is to have express intent while reciting ha-motzi at the beginning of the meal to include any cake eaten for dessert.

But if neither option is practical, there are various opinions among contemporary poskim about how one should conduct himself:

1. Mishnah Berurah states that only fruit-filled pies are considered "real" pas haba'ah b'kisin, and a mezonos is recited over them when served for dessert. Most other cakes are too similar to bread and are covered by the original ha-motzi blessing.

2. Harav M. Feinstein ruled that as long as flour and water are not the majority ingredients, which holds true for most cakes today, a mezonos is recited over them when served as dessert.

One should follow his custom or the opinion of his rabbi. One who has no custom should not recite a mezonos unless the cake is clearly a pas haba'ah b'kisin.

A notable exception to all of the above is when cake is eaten when one is still hungry, i.e., the main course was not filling and the dessert is being eaten to satisfy one's hunger. In that case, clearly, no blessing is recited on the cake since it now becomes an essential part of the meal covered by the original ha-motzi blessing.

Another point to remember is that our discussion applies to cake only. Waffles, pancakes, kugels and all other mezonos items which do not have bread-like properties are considered mezonos items according to all views and would require a separate blessing when eaten for dessert and not for satiation.