

Daf Notes

Insights into the Daily Daf

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Brochos Daf 35

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Highlights

Mishna

All fruits require the *brachah* of *borei peri ha'eitz* except for wine which requires a *borei peri hagafen*. All vegetables require the *brachah* of *borei peri ha'adamah* except bread which requires a *hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz* even though it also originates in the ground.

Explanation: The *Tanna Kamma* says that we make the *brachah* of *ha'eitz* on all tree fruits except squeezed grapes (*wine*). Since wine is considered more important, we make a special *brachah* of *hagafen*. We say the *brachah* of *ha'adamah* for all vegetables except bread, even though it is derived from wheat, which is considered a vegetable. Bread has its own special *brachah* of *hamotzi*, because it is considered a very important food. Rabbi Yehudah argues that every general category of vegetable (*i.e. green leafy vegetables*) needs its own specific *brachah*. The *Tanna Kamma's* understanding is that *brachos* were categorized according to the importance of the food and therefore the more important the food, the more specific the *brachah* is. Rabbi Yehudah maintains that the *Chachamim* set *brachos* according to every type, regardless of their importance. (35a)

The Source for a Brachah Rishonah

The verse which discusses the *halachah* of *neta revai* (*the fruit that grows from a tree in its fourth year; it must be brought to be eaten in Yerushalayim, or it can be redeemed and the money used in Yerushalayim to buy food*) says: *Kodesh hillulim la'Hashem*, that *neta revai* needs two *hillulim* – praises. From here Rabbi Akiva

derives the requirement to say a *brachah* before eating and afterwards.

The *Gemora* counters with the argument that we need this verse to teach us that *neta revai* needs *chillul*, meaning that the *kedushah* needs to be transferred to a coin (*to be brought to Yerushalayim*) in order to eat it. This is one *hillul*. The other *hillul* teaches us that *revai* only applies to the one food upon which we sing to Hashem while being brought in the Beis Hamikdash, which is wine/grapes, according to that opinion. (*kerem revai*).

The *Gemora* notes that this is a matter of dispute amongst the *Tannaim*. Some hold that the *Mishnayos* dealing with *revai* should be read as *neta revai*, meaning all fruit trees. Others hold that it is only *kerem revai* – fruits from a vineyard.

The *Gemora* asks: Where does the opinion which holds *kerem revai* learn the concept of *brachos* from?

The *Gemora* answers that we learn the concept of *kerem revai* from a *gezeirah shavah* (*one of the thirteen principles of Biblical hermeneutics; it links two similar words from dissimilar verses in the Torah*).

If so, the *Gemora* asks, there is one extra *hillul* to teach us the principle of reciting a *brachah* on food; that would teach us that we make a *brachah* after we eat. How would we know that a *brachah* is recited before one eats?

The *Gemora* answers that we learn it from a *kal vachomer* (*literally translated as light and heavy, or lenient and stringent; an a fortiori argument; it is one of the thirteen principles of biblical hermeneutics; it*

employs the following reasoning: if a specific stringency applies in a usually lenient case, it must certainly apply in a more serious case) from *birchas hamazon* (Grace after Meals), that if someone is satiated, he is required to make a *brachah*, so then he must certainly make a *brachah* when he is hungry.

The *Gemora* says that this *kal vachomer* isn't sufficient, since grapes are different than other foods. Grapes are brought on the *Mizbeach*, unlike most other foods and they are part of the *shivus haminim*, the seven special fruits of *Eretz Yisroel* which are brought as *bikkurim* (the first ripe fruits of any of the seven species with which the Torah praises *Eretz Yisroel*, which had to be brought to the *Beis Hamikdash* in *Yerushalayim*).

The *Gemora* concludes: The source for the preceding *brachah* must be a logical idea, that it is forbidden to take pleasure from this world without asking permission first, and the verse of Rabbi Akiva is just a support for the *halachah*. (35a)

Not Reciting a Brachah

Although the requirement to recite a *brachah* was decreed by the Rabbis, not reciting a *brachah* is considered a very serious transgression. Therefore if one doesn't know *hilchos brachos*, he is required to learn them.

The *Gemora* quotes a *braisa* which says that anyone who eats without reciting a *brachah* is considered as if he misappropriated *hekdesh* (used things reserved for the *Beis Hamikdash* for his own purposes). Rava says that if someone doesn't know a *brachah*, he should go to a Torah scholar to learn them.

The *Gemora* continues and quotes two verses that seem to contradict each other: *La'HaShem ha'aretz umlo'o* -- Hashem is the owner of all things in this world, and yet it is written: *V'ha'aretz nasan livnei adam* -- the land is given to human beings. To reconcile this contradiction, Rabbi Levi says that once we recite a *brachah*, we are granted permission to eat the food.

Rabbi Chanina bar Pappa compares the person who eats without reciting a *brachah* to a thief who steals from Hashem and from his nation; since people might follow his example and stop saying *brachos*. A person eating without making a *brachah* first is considered such a serious transgression that the *Gemora* compares him to Yeravom ben Nevat, who also sinned and caused others

to follow his ways. Therefore, not saying a *brachah* is considered stealing from Hashem. (35a – 35b)

To Work or not to Work

The *Gemora* cites a dispute between Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai as to whether people should work and earn a livelihood or only sit and learn Torah all day, and other nations will do their work for them.

The *Gemora* explains: The verse says: *V'asafta Deganecha* -- and you will gather your produce. Rabbi Yishmael understood the verse as referring to everyone; that people must gather their produce and not forsake their livelihood completely to learn Torah. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai understood the verse as referring only to when the Jewish people are not doing the will of Hashem. If it only then that they will be compelled to work the fields; otherwise, they can learn Torah all day and their work will be done by other nations.

Abaye notes that many followed the opinion of Rabbi Yishmael and combined learning Torah with working and were successful, and many followed the opinion of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and were not successful.

Rava told his students that they were not to be in the Study Hall during Nissan when they harvest the fields and during Tishrei when the wine and oil are pressed (for this way, they will be supported for the remainder of the year, thus giving them the opportunity to study Torah). (35b)

Different Generations

The earlier generations were on a much higher level than the later ones.

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The earlier generations were able to set up their days to revolve around learning Torah and they worked sporadically; their Torah remained with them and they were able to earn a livelihood. The later generations did the opposite -- their work was their primary focus and studied Torah sporadically, but were successful in neither of them.

Similarly, Rabbah bar bar Chanah quoted Rabbi Yochanan in the name of Rabbi Yehudah that the earlier generations would go out of their way to obligate themselves in *ma'aser* by bringing their produce through the front door, whereas the later generations try to find

loopholes, such as bringing the produce through the roof, which exempts it from the obligation of separating *ma'aser*. (35b)

Brachah on Wine

Wine has its own specified *brachah* because it is almost as important as bread.

The *Gemora* asks: What sets wine apart from other liquids, specifically oil, that it has its own *brachah*? It cannot be completely based on the fact that the grapes are changed for the better because olive oil has also changed for the better (*and nevertheless, does not have its own special brachah*).

The *Gemora* answers: Not only does wine alleviate hunger, which olive oil does as well, it also satiates a person when drunk in moderate quantities.

The *Gemora* notes: Although the verse in Tehillim says that wine induces happiness, whereas bread is satiating, wine, in fact, has both qualities of satiating and cheering. The only reason we don't say *birchas hamazon* (*Grace after Meals*) on wine is because people do not use wine as a staple of their meal. (35b)

Olive Oil

The *brachah* of *ha'eitz* is recited on olive oil, if it is mixed into something else.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel, and so too said Rabbi Yitzchak in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The *brachah* recited over olive oil is *borei peri ha'eitz*.

The *Gemora* asks: What are the circumstances? Are we to say that it is drunk? If so, it is harmful to him, as it has been taught in the following *braisa*: If one drinks oil of *terumah*, he repays the principal, but does not add a fifth (*for, since this is not considered normal, he is "destroying" it; not eating or drinking it*). If one anoints himself with oil of *terumah*, he repays the principal and also a fifth in addition.

Do we suppose then that he eats it together with bread? In that case, the bread would be the primary ingredient and the oil secondary, and we have learned in a *Mishna*: This is the general rule: If with one primary food, a subordinate food is taken with it, a *brachah* is said over the primary food, and this suffices also for the secondary food!?

Do we suppose then that he drinks it with *anigaron*, for Rabbah bar Shmuel has stated: *Anigaron* is a soup made from cooked beets; *oxygaron* is a soup made from the water of cooked vegetables (*so perhaps he mixed the olive oil into the anigaron*)? If so, the *anigaron* would be the primary food and the oil secondary, and we have learned in a *Mishna*: This is the general rule: If with one primary food, a subordinate food is taken with it, a *brachah* is said over the primary food, and this suffices also for the secondary food!?

Rather, the case must be where a man has a sore throat (*and olive oil soothes the throat*), as it has been taught in the following *braisa*: If one has a sore throat, he should not sooth it directly with oil on *Shabbos* (for sipping the oil and spitting it out is clearly for medicinal purposes which is forbidden to do on *Shabbos*); but rather, he should pour oil into *anigaron* and swallow it.

The *Gemora* asks: If this is the case, is it not obvious that he recites *borei peri ha'eitz*?

The *Gemora* answers: One might have thought that since he intends it as a medicine, he should not say any *brachah* over it. Therefore we are told that since he has some pleasure from it, he is required to say a *brachah*. (35b – 36a)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Reciting Brochos

The *Gemora* says that the reason we make *brachos* is because it is forbidden to benefit from this world without saying a *brachah*.

The Maharsha on Pesachim (102) writes that there is an actual prohibition against eating without a *brachah*.

Reb Akiva Eiger on Brachos (12a) writes that therefore, if there is a doubt whether one made a *brachah* or not, we must rule stringently and require him to say a new *brachah*.

Reb Shlomo Zalman Aurebach (Minchas Shlomo 18) argues and says that there is no prohibition; there is a *mitzvah* to say a *brachah* before we eat just like we have a *mitzvah* to make a *brachah* before a *mitzvah*.

He brings a proof from the *halachos* of *oinen* (*someone who just lost a close relative before the burial*) and *ba'al*

keri, who are allowed to eat even without a *brachah*. If there would be a prohibition, they would be forbidden to eat! An *oinen* is exempt from performing *mitzvos*, but he is not allowed to violate prohibitions! A *brachah* is just to praise Hashem for the food, but there is no true prohibition in omitting it. Once there is an obligation to recite a *brachah*, it is then prohibited to omit it. An *oinen*, who is not obligated to recite the *brachah*, does not have this prohibition.

It is noteworthy that Rabbeinu Yonah seems to say that one who eats without reciting a *brachah* first is actually obligated to bring a *korban me'ilah* (for misappropriating something that belongs to *hekdes*).

Learning in the Workplace

The *Gemora* cites a dispute between Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai as to whether people should work and earn a livelihood or only sit and learn Torah all day, and other nations will do their work for them.

The Nefesh Hachaim (Shaar alef: 8) explains that Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai don't argue about the obligation to learn all day or to work part of the time. Everyone agrees that there is a *mitzvah* to learn all day, but Rabbi Yishmael is of the opinion that there is permission to take time to try to earn a livelihood. However, even while working, one's mind shouldn't be completely occupied by their occupation; his head should be involved in Torah thoughts.

This is also said by Rav Yosef ben Yehudah Ibn Eknin, a disciple of the Rambam, in his commentary on Avos (4:10) called Mishnas Avos: He asserts that even while a person finds himself involved in non-Torah matters, he should think Torah thoughts in the recesses of his mind.

Kollel Iyun HaDaf quotes the Hafla'ah, who asks in his introduction (para. 35; see also his introduction to Sefer ha'Mikneh, para. 32): How will a person ever succeed in business if his mind is always preoccupied with Torah? He answers based upon the verse [Mishlei 3:6]: *Know Hashem while you go about your ways, and He will make your paths straight*. If one thinks thoughts of Torah while he works, Hashem will see to it that his business prospers. Similarly, the verse says: *Happy is the person... who desires Hashem's Torah and ponders His Torah day and night... he will succeed in all that he does* (Tehillim 1:1-3). A person does not need to worry that his concentration on Torah thoughts will cause him to fail in worldly endeavors.

This is also the way the Nefesh Hachaim (in Ru'ach Chaim to Avos 2:2) explains the *Mishna's* statement: Torah is proper when accompanied by worldly activity. Even while one is involved in worldly activity, it is proper for him to think about Torah.

The Nefesh Hachaim further explains that Rabbi Yishmael was talking about the general public, since there must be people working. However, every individual has to judge for himself whether he can be one of the singular people who sacrifice everything to learn all day like Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.

Pleasure Required for a Brachah

There is an argument brought in Eglei Tal in Maleches Tochen as to whether the obligation to recite a *brachah* when deriving pleasure depends on *hana'as haguf*, the body feeling satiated, or on *hana'as hacheich*, pleasure of the mouth when it tastes good. He leans towards the fact that the obligation is on account of feeling satiated.

However, Rashi here, when discussing the *brachah* on drinking olive oil, says that damage caused by olive oil is to the mouth (*it can burn the throat*). It would seem from Rashi that the issue is whether it tasted good or not.

The *halachic* difference between the two ideas would be by chewing gum or feeding tubes. The body does not feel satiated when chewing gum, and the mouth does not taste the food when given intravenously. The only reason the Poskim provide not to make a *brachah* when using a feeding tube is that it is not the normal way of eating. It would seem that they are not concerned with the lack of taste.

We rule like Rabbeinu Chananel that a *brachah* is recited on chewing and spitting out food. Therefore, it seems that we are stringent on both logics.