

Daf Review – Berachos 37

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Gemara:

- On moist peppercorns, one makes a *Shehakol bracha* and is obligated to observe *orlah* restrictions (as a tree whose wood and fruit taste alike). Dry peppers are a matter of dispute - *R Sheishess* says one would make a *Shehakol bracha*, while *Rava* says it does not get a *bracha* at all (since it is not edible; and, for the same reason, it can be consumed on *Yom Kippur*).
- Dry ginger can be eaten on *Yom Kippur* and does not get a *bracha*, while moist ginger gets a *Ha'adamah bracha* (and would be subject to restrictions if prepared by *Cushim*).
- *Chavitz* (congealed matter, made with flour, honey and oil) prepared in a pot, or honey *daissa* (a similar dish made with pounded wheat) - *R Yehuda* says it gets a *Shehakol bracha* (because the honey is the primary ingredient), while *R Kahana* says it gets a *Mezonos bracha* (as the flour/grain is primary). This latter ruling is similar to the statement of *Rav* and *Shmuel* that anything containing one of the five grains gets a *Mezonos bracha* (even if it is a minority ingredient in a larger mixture). Later on, in a discussion regarding a case of a similar food named *rihata*, *Rava* rules like the view of *R Kahana* regardless of the amount of honey contained therein, on the basis of this ruling of *Rav* and *Shmuel*.
- In the course of disproving a different statement by *Rav* and *Shmuel*, which stated, by implication, that rice and millet do not get a *Mezonos bracha*, the *Gemara* proves that the *Rabanan* hold that rice is a form of grain porridge (whether prepared as a porridge or baked into bread and then dissolved) and does get a *Mezonos bracha* (although, later on, the *Gemara* establishes that it is similar to grain porridge only in the *bracha* preceding its consumption, but that it differs in the concluding *bracha*, since rice gets a *Borei Nefashos*). In the course of this discussion, we are introduced to (a) the ruling of *Rebbi Yochanan ben Nuri* that rice is a full grain and can constitute *chametz* or *matza*, depending how it is prepared; and (b) the rulings of the *Rabanan* that raw wheat or rice get a *Ha'adamah bracha* (as distinct from *Rebbi Yehuda*, who would require a more precise *bracha* of *Borei Minei Zeraim*), while cooked grain bread is treated as bread, unless it is dissolved, in which case it gets a *Mezonos bracha* and an *Al Hamichya* concluding *bracha*.
- We are introduced to the view of *Rabban Gamliel* that anything that is from the Seven Species for which *Eretz Yisrael* is praised or from one of the Five Grains, requires a complete *Birchas Hamazon*, while rice or millet bread would require an *Al Hamichya* concluding *bracha*. The *Rabanan* dispute *Rabban Gamliel* and require *Birchas Hamazon* only for bread, an *Al Hamichya* for anything prepared from one of the Seven Species or Five Grains, and a *Borei Nefashos* following rice or millet.
- *Rav Yosef* rules that *Chavitza* (a cooked dish with pieces of bread in it) gets a *Hamotzei* if the pieces are more than the size of an olive (which he learns from a *Braissa* discussing consumption by the *Kohen* of a *Mincha* offering) or even if the pieces are less than an olive-size, but come from a loaf of bread that is still intact - i.e., where the source bread that is not mixed in the dish is still more than an olive-size; and a *Mezonos* if the bread pieces are less than the size of an olive and the loaf (or *matza*) from which they came is no longer intact. In either instance, its concluding *bracha* is an *Al Hamichya*. The *Gemara* ultimately concludes not like *Rav Yosef* and rules that anything with bread pieces gets a *Hamotzei bracha*, unless the pieces are less than the size of an olive and have lost the appearance of bread.
- In the course of discussion, we are introduced to a ruling consistent with the Academy of *Rabbi Yishmael*, that if one re-combines and eats crumbled bread or *matza* and eats it within the time it takes to eat a half-loaf of bread, it has a *halachik* status as *chametz* or *matza*, as the case may be.

Halacha:

- One should make a *Mezonos* preceding *bracha* on rice and a *Borei Nefashos* concluding *bracha*.
- The *Mishna Berura* (OC 168:10:49) rules (a) bread pieces greater than an olive size retain their status as bread and get a *Hamotzei bracha*, even if they lose their bread appearance; (b) bread pieces less than an olive size, even if they retain their bread appearance, get a *Mezonos bracha*; (c) if you recombine bread crumbs using some kind of agent (but do not cook it) and it looks like bread, it gets a *Hamotzei bracha*; (d) if you recombine bread pieces greater than an olive size using some kind of agent (but do not cook it) it gets a *Hamotzei bracha*, even if it does not look like bread; (e) if you recombine bread crumbs using some kind of agent (but do not cook it), and it does not have a bread-like appearance, it gets a *Mezonos bracha*; (f) plain bread crumbs that have not been cooked and no combination agent has been used, get a *Hamotzei bracha*.

Inspiration:

- We see from the story that of *Rabban Gamliel* and *Rabbi Akiva* that (unless we need to determine how to comport ourselves at a practical level) that we ought not involve ourselves in matters where we do not belong, and surely not in matters that are debated by the "Great Ones."
- From *Rav Yosef's* statement, we see that even if we are like crumbs of inconsequential size, we can make ourselves meaningful and relevant by affiliating ourselves with something larger than ourselves. This is true of *davening* with a *minyan*, or otherwise attaching ourselves to the broader Jewish people.