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Consuming Cake During a Bread Meal – Part I

In the previous shiur we commenced discussing partaking of cake during a meal and whether it requires a **borer minni mazonot**. To appreciate the deliberation we must understand the concept of **פת הבהה בכיסני**.

פת הבהה בכיסני literally means pocket shaped bread. We recite the *b'racha boreh minei mezonos* on cake, cookies and biscuits as opposed to *hamotzi*, even though these items are grain based.

The reason *mezonos* is recited is because *Chazal* did not require washing hands and *hamotzi* for items not normally eaten as a meal.¹

What defines cake and cookies?

We find three opinions in *halacha*:

Kneaded²

The Mechaber (Sephardim): dough kneaded with fruit juice, sugar, oil and other substances, which produce a noticeable taste in the final product.

The Rama (Ashkenazim): dough kneaded with more fruit juice, oil, sugar etc. than water.

Since bread is not usually made this way, this product is called **פת הבהה בכיסני** and its *b'racha* is *mezonos*.

Filling³

A pastry baked with a filling comprised of honey or sugar, nuts or flavor.⁴ Certain criteria must be met such as: the filling can be tasted in the dough,⁵ and the filling was baked with the dough and not merely added later.⁶

This is true even if the dough is comprised of only water and flour.⁷

Crusty⁸

Dough baked into a crusty substance such as crackers, baigelach and cookies (biscuits) are not bread and the required *b'racha* is **borer minni mazonot**. It is for this reason that Sephardim recite *mezonos* over matzo eaten during the year. On Pesach Sephardim do recite *hamotzi* on matzo.

Do these three opinions disagree with each other?

¹ See MB siman 168:23, שער הברכה זו הערכה צב.

² Rambam.

³ R' Chananel, Oruch, Tur and Rashba.

⁴ Siman 168:7.

⁵ MB siman 168:28.

⁶ MB siman 168:27, מו שער הברכה זו.

⁷ MB ibid.

⁸ Oruch citing Rav Hai.

The *Shulchan Aruch* writes ⁹ that the *halacha* is in accordance with all three opinions, which means that one recites a *mezonos* for each category. [Indeed we cannot say that all three opinions agree with each other, but we do not have evidence of any disagreement. The result is that one recites a *mezonos* for these categories]. ¹⁰

When do we recite a mezonos? During or at the end of a meal?

If cake or cookies are eaten to satiate, i.e. one is still relatively hungry and cake etc. is eaten in lieu of bread or other “meal” foods, one does not recite a *mezonos* on cake. ¹¹ This, in most part, is true when eating doughnuts or סופגניות at the conclusion of a meal.

If cake or cookies are consumed as dainties or dessert one recites a *mezonos*, on condition that they are פת הבהה בכיסנין according to all opinions. ¹²

Although we recite *mezonos* over items that belong to **each one** of the above categories, nevertheless, according to several *poskim*, it is due to doubt whether the opinions argue, and if they do, it means that according to one opinion a particular item will require a *mezonos* and according to another opinion it will be *hamotzi*. So although we recite *mezonos* on all categories, when one recited *hamotzi* at the onset of the meal, it will include all items, unless a particular item satisfies all definitions, in which case everyone will definitely agree that the *b'racha* is *mezonos*.

Crackers – crackers satisfy the definition of פת הבהה בכיסנין according to one opinion, not according to the other two, consequently one normally recites a *mezonos*,

⁹ *Siman* 168:7.

¹⁰ *Mamar Mardchi* cited in *Bi'ur Halacha* *siman* 168:7 ה"ה *ההכלכה*.

¹¹ Based on *MB* *siman* 168:41.

¹² An opinion reiterated by many *poskim*, see *Bi'ur Halacha* *siman* 168:8. ג"ה טעונים.

but when consumed during or at the end of a meal, one will not recite a *mezonos*.

Sponge cake – sponge cake satisfies the condition of being tasty and sweet but not the other two opinions, because it does not contain a filling, nor is it crusty. Consequently one normally recites a *mezonos*, but when consumed during or at the end of a meal, one will not recite a *mezonos*.

Apple cake – apple cake might contain a filling but it is not crusty. Sometimes the dough will be very sweet, but it still lacks one of the opinions. ¹³

Apple pie – apple **pie** fulfills all three conditions; it has a crust, it contains apples and the dough is sweet. So when eaten as dessert one recites *mezonos*.

Vort on the Parsha

The *passuk* says, ויהל נח איש האדמה ויטע כרם, which literally means that Noach **first** planted a vineyard, but *Rashi* says that it means mundane as opposed to holiness. R' Itzaleh of Volozin explained this with a parable. A father said to his son before going out into the world, I bless you that the first thing you turn to will have tremendous success. If the son is ירא שמים, he has fear of heaven, he will turn to something spiritual such as learning Torah. If he is not he will turn to mundane matters.

Hashem had just blessed Noach, as it says ויברך אלקים את נח, and he ‘wasted’ it on a mundane matter, the vineyard.

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לזכר נשמת חנה בת ברוך

¹³ It appears from the *Bi'ur Halacha* that one may recite *mezonos* on cakes with fillings, and Rav Sternbuch indeed says that one makes a *mezonos* on apple cake.