

THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS



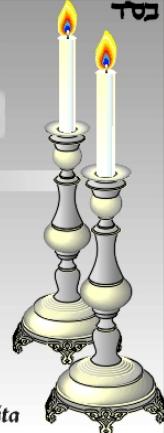
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**RABBI DOVID
OSTROFF shlita**

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Hilchos B'rachos part XXIII

Order of Berachos

Is there any importance in the order one recites Berachos, and if yes, why?

The *Mishna Berachos* 40b cites R' Yehuda saying that for one who has fruits before him, one first recites the *b'racha* on one of the seven species and Chachamim say that one recites the *b'racha* on the fruit one prefers.¹

We therefore see from *Chazal* that there is significance to the order of *Berachos*, and it should not be taken lightly.

The *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* writes² that it is a *מצוה* *מן המובהר*, and the *Mishna Berura* writes³ that it is a *הידורמצוה*. The consensus is that one should recite the *b'racha* on the most important item. The *poskim* then argue as to what is considered the most important item. For example, an item one prefers over others, or one of the seven species. As we will see, the idea is to enhance the *b'racha* to its utmost.

What defines the correct order of Berachos?

There are two categories: different *berachos* and different foods of the same *b'racha*.

Different Berachos

Two or more items of different *berachos*, one recites the more important *b'racha*, regardless of the type of food. The order of *Berachos* is:

1) Mezonos, 2) Gefen, 3) Eitz, 4) Adamah, 5) Shehakol. (In *Lashon Hakodesh* the acronym is *מצוות, גפן, עץ, אדמה, מגע אשך* – *shehakol* – *magu a'shech*).

However, between *eitz* and *ha'adamah*, things are not that simple. Variables will dramatically change the order, as follows.

- 1) Generally preferred⁴
- 2) Seven species⁵

For example, one has an olive and a carrot. If one likes carrots more than olives, one would recite *ha'adamah* over the carrot and then *ha'eitz* for the olive. If no preference, one would recite *ha'eitz*, both because the olive is of the seven species and because when no preference, *ha'eitz* precedes *ha'adamah*.

L'ma'ase: cookies, lokshen and cake precede everything else, because one recites *mezonos* over them.

~ *A piece of cake precedes a glass of Coke, even though one tends to always prefer Coke to anything else.*

~ *An apple precedes candy, even if one always prefers candy, because an apple is *ha'eitz* and candy is *shehakol*.*

¹ There are two explanations to this statement, we will see *be''H* later.

² *Siman 168:1* with regards to reciting a *b'racha* over a whole loaf or half a loaf.

³ *Siman 168:1*.

⁴ *M''B siman 211:9.*

⁵ *M''B siman 211:18.*

~ *A melon and grapes and one prefers melon, one will recite ha'adamah on the melon and then ha'eitz on the grapes.*

Must one finish eating the first item and only then recite the b'racha on the second item?

One need not finish eating the first item, as the order of the *berachos* only deals with the reciting of the *b'racha* and not with the entire eating.

What if a more important item is on the table but I do not want to eat it?

One need not recite a *b'racha* on the more important item just for the sake of the *b'racha*, as the order of *berachos* deals with the items one wishes to eat and not with items available.

Similar Berachos

When one wishes to eat several fruits and vegetables and they share the same *b'racha*, one must recite the *b'racha* over the most important item, as in the following list:

- 1) Seven species, 2) Whole, 3) Preferred.⁶
- 2) Within the seven species, one recites the *b'racha* on the one closer to the *tzitzit*, of *arzon*, *arzon zit tamr*. A date precedes a grape because a date is 2nd from the second *arzon* and a grape is 3rd from the first *arzon*.

~ *A date and an apple – the date.*

~ *A whole apple precedes half a pear, even though the pear is preferred.* If however one slices the apple before the *b'racha* is recited, it loses its precedence.

~ *Carrots and watermelon, the b'racha is recited on the preferred item (watermelon, to most people).* As stated, one need not eat the entire watermelon and only then eat the carrot.

⁶ Based on *siman* 211:1 and *M" B* 13.

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If you would like to send a question to Rav Ostroff, you can write to him at shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com.

Note: The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive *p'sak*.

It is enough to have one bite of watermelon and then one may eat the carrot.

~ *Rice and dates, one recites mezonos on the rice and then ha'eitz on the dates.*⁷

~ *Puffed wheat and figs, first recite ha'adamah on the puffed wheat and then ha'eitz on the figs.*⁸ The *Mishna Berura* writes that wheat precedes species mentioned later in the *possuk*.

If you recited a *b'racha* on a secondary item instead of the main one, the *b'racha* is valid.⁹

Vort on the Parsha

Rav Y. Borodiansky, the Mashgiach in Kol Torah, related the following: He once went to visit the famed Mashgiach of Ponevez, Rav Yechezkel Levinstein זצ"ל, and he heard from within the apartment chairs being moved. Alarmed lest the Mashgiach had fallen over chairs and hurt himself, he opened the door, and to his immense surprise he saw that the Mashgiach had arranged two rows of chairs and was walking between them. Seeing the surprise on his face, the Mashgiach explained that he was imagining קרייתם סוף. So that we should understand, the Mashgiach was a pillar of *emunah* and had toiled on that *middah* his entire life. And yet he saw fit to entrench *emunah* more and more.

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לזכר נשמת חנה בת ברוך

⁷ See 1, זצ"ת הברכה פ"ג הע' 1, a *machlokes* in this matter.

⁸ *M" B siman* 211:18. See also *M" B* 27. The *Vilna Gaon* disagrees and when the *Berachos* are dissimilar, there is no precedence.

⁹ *M" B siman* 211:32-33.