



Parshas Yisro 5769

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Hilchos B'rachos part XXIV

עיקר וטפל – Main and secondary

When one wishes to consume two food items, where one item compliments the other - such as a cracker spread with cream cheese, or mustard garnishing meat, it is required to recite the *b'racha* on the *ikar* and not on the *tafel*.¹

What happens to the tafel? Does it not require a b'racha?

We seem to find a *machlokes haposkim* on this matter.

The *Chazon Ish* learns² that the *tafel* requires a *b'racha* but it is included in the *b'racha* of the *ikar*. His proof is from *Tosefos* (*B'rachos* 44a) who writes that if the *tafel* was brought in after one recited the *b'racha* over the *ikar* and one did not have the *tafel* in mind, the *tafel* requires a *b'racha*.

The *Iggros Moshe*³ learns that the *tafel* does not require a *b'racha* because of its nature as *tafel*. His proof is from a case where one eats very salty fish and to dilute the salty effect one consumes bread. *Halacha* is that one recites *בורא נפשות* on the fish and one does not recite *Birkas Hamazon*.⁴ Rav Moshe states that since *בורא נפשות* can never replace *Birkas Hamazon*, it must be that

halachically it is as if one did not consume bread, it being a *tafel*.

Do you have more examples of ikar and tafel?

Gefilte fish with a carrot on top – the fish is the *ikar* and the carrot *tafel*. One recites *shehakol* on the fish and does not recite a *b'racha* on the carrot.

Latkes with apple sauce – the latkes are the *ikar* (*ha'adamah*) and the apple sauce enhances the latkes.

Lokshen kugel with a pickle – the pickle is consumed with the sweet kugel to dampen the sweet taste. The pickle does not require a *b'racha*.

What if the tafel is eaten before the ikar, does it require a b'racha?

If one consumes the *tafel* before the *ikar* one is required to recite a *b'racha* on the *tafel*, because one may not benefit from this world without first reciting a *b'racha*.⁵ However, the *Rama* writes that one does not recite the usual *b'racha* for that food item, because it is only *tafel*, rather one would recite *shehakol*.

Is the Rama accepted by all?

The *halacha* that one must recite a *b'racha* over the *tafel* when eaten before the *ikar*, is universal. The *Magen Avraham* however, disagrees with the *Rama* as to

¹ *Siman* 212:1.

² *Orach Chaim* 27:9.

³ *Orach Chaim* Vol. IV 42 and vol. I 74.

⁴ *Siman* 212:1.

⁵ *Rama siman* 212:1 and M"B 9.

which *b'racha* is recited on the *tafel*.⁶ He learns that one only recites *shehakol* on the *tafel*, when the *ikar* is *shehakol*, but when the *ikar* has another *b'racha*, the *tafel's* *b'racha* is its regular *b'racha*.

Coupled with that, and with the fact that several *Acharonim* learn that the *b'racha* on the *tafel* is always the regular *b'racha*, the *Mishna Berura* writes that it is correct to avoid eating the *tafel* before the *ikar*.

~ One wants to imbibe a shot of Scotch. So as not to drink on an empty stomach, one first eats an apple. The *Rama* and *Magen Avraham* rule that one recites a *shehakol* on the apple. So according to *halacha* one may do so and recite a *shehakol* on the apple, but according to the *Mishna Berura's* recommendation not to consume the *tafel* before the *ikar*, it is better to avoid such a scenario.

~ One wants to imbibe wine, but here too one wants to eat a carrot before the wine. The *Rama* rules that the *b'racha* recited on the carrot is *shehakol*. The *M" A* rules *ha'adamah*, as do several *Acharonim*. Here too halachically the *b'racha* on the carrot is *shehakol*, but it is not recommended to do so. One should recite *הגפן* on the wine, take a sip, and then eat the carrot or cracker without a *b'racha*, so as not to drink on an empty stomach.

I like herring but I do not want to eat it by itself, so I eat it together with a cracker, do I recite one b'racha or two?

Two items eaten together, and one of the items is eaten to enhance the other item, one only recites the *b'racha* on the *ikar*.

Therefore, as stated before, one does not recite a *b'racha* on cream cheese or peanut butter spread on bread or crackers. This also applies to herring eaten with a

cracker.⁷ If however, one wants to eat the herring at least as much as the cracker, one would recite a *b'racha* on the cracker and on the herring.⁸

What b'racha is recited over salads decorated with nuts or pomegranates?

One recites *ha'adamah* only when eating cabbage salad that is sprinkled with peeled almonds; lettuce salad interspersed with pomegranate; chicken cooked with pineapple or apricots, because in all these cases the main feature is the salad and the *tafel* enhances the salad (or chicken).

Vort on the Parsha

Yisro told Moshe Rabeinu to take in more *dayanim*, because he will buckle under the strain of judging on his own. This appears to be a normal suggestion anyone could make, so why did *Chazal* praise Yisro so much on this account?

Rav Pinkus זצ"ל writes that Yisro told Moshe and Am Yisroel that many Jews can become great, in their own rights and each according to his level. There can be *שרי שרי מאות* etc. who are capable of leading and judging, because every Jew can reach high and come to his role of *Avodas Hashem*.

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לזכר נשמת חנה בת ברוך

⁶ See *M" B siman* 212:10.

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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.

⁷ *M" B* siman 212:6. He writes that usually the *mezonos* is the main item, even though one wants to eat the *tafel*.

⁸ וזאת הברכה פי"א ב'.