



Parshas Mishpotim 5769

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*Due to the fact that HaGaon Rav Sternbuch shlita is sitting shiva for his wife a"b, he was not able to review these halachos.*

## Hilchos B'rachos part XXV

### Main and secondary – עיקר וטפל, Part II

#### A mixture of two or more items.

The laws of *ikar* and *tafel* also apply to a mixture comprised of various items, where one will often only recite a single *b'racha*. Examples of various mixtures: rice and chicken, fruit salad, cholent, apple pie, vegetable salad, salad with croutons, chicken soup with vegetables and many more.

*In such cases, is one required to recite two berachos or is one sufficient? What factors determine the correct b'racha?*

Two factors determine the correct *b'racha*. The first is to determine which item is the main ingredient. The second, when there is no main ingredient, which is the dominant item.

**Importance:** When there are two ingredients or more in a mixture and one of them is more “important” than the other, one only recites a *b'racha* on the main ingredient.<sup>1</sup>

*How does one determine importance?*

#### One item enhances the other.<sup>2</sup>

Raisins mixed into rice, pomegranate mixed into lettuce salad, almonds in cabbage salad. In all these cases the “important” item is the rice, the lettuce, the cabbage, and the *tafel* item enhances the main item. One recites a single *b'racha* over the important item and it will include the *tafel* item.

The same applies to cake where fruit is placed on the cake, or cake crumbs sprinkled on ice cream. One recites a single *b'racha* over the main item, and it includes the *tafel*.

*What if the main item is less in quantity?*

The *poskim* write that even in this case one recites a single *b'racha* over the main item.<sup>3</sup> This might be practical with meat balls or gefilte fish packed with ground *matza* or breadcrumbs. Even though breadcrumbs are important and they might be dominant, nevertheless, the main item is the meat or fish and a *shebakol* will include everything.<sup>4</sup>

#### The majority

When two or more items are in a mixture and are equally important, one recites the *b'racha* on the majority.<sup>5</sup> The *Mishna Berura* presents a case where for Purim people would cook sesame seeds in honey and then mix it with broken nuts. He

<sup>1</sup> *Siman* 212:1 and *M"B* 1.

<sup>2</sup> Based on *M"B* 212:1 who says that one food is *מכשיר ומתקן* the other food.

<sup>3</sup> שיערי הברכה פט"ו הערה י"ט.

<sup>4</sup> See *M"B siman* 212:1.

<sup>5</sup> *M"B siman* 212:1.

rules that if the sesame is the majority, one would recite *ha'adamah* only. No *b'racha* is to be recited over the nuts.

#### How would this affect a fruit salad?

A fruit salad is a typical example of a mixture comprised of different items, where most often all items are equally important, with no particular preference. According to the *Mishna Berura* above, one would recite a single *b'racha*, over the dominant item.

The *Chayei Adam* however says <sup>6</sup> that one only follows this rule when the smaller items are not noticeable and separated. When one can discern the pieces and they are separated one from another, one recites a *b'racha* for each item.

The *Mishna Berura* rules that ספק ברכות להקל and one only recites a single *b'racha*. <sup>7</sup> The *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* rules <sup>8</sup> that one recites a single *b'racha* when cooked together, but if merely mixed together one recites two *berachos*.

#### How small must the pieces be to be considered a mixture?

It seems that the defining factor is if both items are usually scooped together into a spoon. If they are small enough that they are usually scooped up at the same time, it is a mixture. <sup>9</sup> If one needs to scoop them separately into a spoon they are not a mixture, and will require more than one *b'racha* according to all opinions.

#### What if there is no majority of a single fruit, only a majority b'racha?

For example, the *boreh p'ri ha'eitz* includes apples, pears and oranges, which total 30 pieces (10 apiece), and *boreh p'ri*

*ha'adamah* includes banana and pineapple, which total 24 pieces (12 apiece). In total there is more *ha'eitz*, but each type is less than the *ha'adamah*, which *b'racha* is recited?

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל ruled <sup>10</sup> that the *ha'eitz* species unite and form a coalition, which in total outnumber the *ha'adamah*. The *b'racha* is *ha'eitz*.

#### What if I cannot discern what the majority is?

Many solutions are suggested, see footnote. <sup>11</sup> The most obvious is to add one of the species to make it a majority. Another option is to recite *berachos* on items that are not in the mixture, but this is a *bidur* and not always feasible.

Another is to recite two *berachos* on both species, subsequent to removing them from the mixture. Normally, to remove the *tafel* and recite a *b'racha* is prohibited, but in this case, because there is doubt, one may remove both items and recite *berachos* on both.

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#### Vort on the Parsha

עזב תעזוב עמו – The Saba of Slabodka met a newlywed and asked him whether he helped his wife on Erev Shabbos. The avreich replied, of course, we find that the Amora'im helped at home on Erev Shabbos!!

The Saba smiled and said, *tzadik's*, is that the only reason, and what about that she has a lot of work to do on erev Shabbos, what's with your *bein adam lachaveiro* – what's with aiding and easing another person's burden...

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<sup>6</sup> See *Bi'ur Halacha siman 212:1* ד"ה אם העיקר מעורב.

<sup>7</sup> See *וזאת הברכה פ"א* where he cites many contemporary *poskim* who rule like the *M"B*.

<sup>8</sup> *Siman 204:17*.

<sup>9</sup> See *Oruch HaShulchan siman 212:2* and *וזאת הברכה פ"א בשם הגרשז"א*.

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<sup>10</sup> Personal testimony.

<sup>11</sup> עיין ס' שערי ברכה פט"ו הערה כ'.

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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.