



Parshas Behar-Bechukosai 5769

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Hilchos B'rachos Part XXXII

Birkas Shehechyanu

Shehechyanu for Fruit

Because of the joy one has upon seeing or eating new seasonal fruit, *Chazal* instituted that *shehechyanu* should be recited when this occurs.¹ Although some authorities hold that one should recite the blessing when seeing the new fruit, custom is that one recites it when eating the new fruit for the first time in the season.²

What if one forgets to recite the *b'racha* the first time?

Indeed it should be recited together with the *b'racha* on the fruit, i.e. before eating, but if one is still busy eating one may still recite *shehechyanu*. If, for example, one is about to consume three apricots for the first time in the season, one should recite *shehechyanu* prior to eating. If one forgot, one may recite as long as one is still eating the apricots. This is because one has *simcha* at that initial eating. If one forgets, then the next time around one may not recite *shehechyanu*.³

What does one recite first, the *b'racha* on the fruit or *shehechyanu*?

The *P'ri Megadim* and *Oruch Hashulchan*⁴ prefer that one first recites *shehechyanu* and then the *b'racha* on the fruit. This is to avoid making a *hefsek* (break) between the *b'racha* on the fruit and the eating. The *Mishna Berura*⁵ also prefers this position.

The *Be'er Heitev*⁶ and others say that one first recites the *b'racha* on the fruit and then *shehechyanu*, and indeed many have that custom.

If several new fruit are on the table, does one recite a separate *b'racha* for each one?

So as not to recite an unnecessary *b'racha*, one should only recite one *b'racha* on all the fruit, even if one is not eating all of them at that sitting. This is also based on the opinions who say that one recites *shehechyanu* upon seeing the fruit, so since one is reciting *shehechyanu* when eating one or more of the fruit on the table, one should have in mind that the *b'racha* applies to all the fruit.⁷

What qualifies as seasonal fruit?

Fruits that appear once or twice a year.⁸ One will recite *shehechyanu* when eating new fruit from both seasons, because after all the fruit is seasonal. Fruit that is in stores all year round will not merit *shehechyanu*.

¹ M"B *siman* 225:10.

² *Siman* 225:3.

³ See הוצאת הברכה פי"ח.

⁴ *Siman* 225:5, adding that this is his custom.

⁵ M"B *siman* 225:11.

⁶ *Siman* 225:6.

⁷ אג"מ ח"א סי' פז based on הוצאת הברכה פי"ח.

⁸ *Siman* 225:6 and *Rama*.

Seasonal fruit kept in storage all year round will not merit *shehechyanu*, unless the new fruit is different in taste or appearance. Fresh oranges are usually much tastier than oranges kept in cold storage.

Likewise, peaches and apricots etc. are seasonal even though one can obtain those canned fruit all year round.

If one frequents a place where there is fruit one has never tasted, does one recite shehechyanu?

It seems not, because the *b'racha* was not instituted for personal reasons, rather upon seeing or consuming seasonal fruits, i.e. fruits that do not appear all year round and one has *simcha* when seeing or eating them.⁹

Does one recite shehechyanu on p'ri ha'adamah?

Seasonal vegetables merit *shehechyanu*, however many *poskim* write that one will not recite *shehechyanu* on vegetables that are not "important" and do not bring *simcha*.¹⁰

One will recite *shehechyanu* on watermelons, melons, bananas etc. even though the *b'racha* for them is *ha'adamah*, provided that they are seasonal in one's location.

Does one recite shehechyanu on different types of citrus fruit?

Boruch Hashem we are blessed with many types of citrus fruits and many want to know whether each one is different with regards to *shehechyanu*. Since each one has a distinct taste, the rule is that one recites a *shehechyanu* on each type, but as stated, when possible, one consolidates several types with one *shehechyanu* when they are together.

Consequently, grapefruit, orange, tangerine, pomelo, kumquat etc. all merit

shehechyanu when seasonal and the stipulations are met.¹¹

What about different types of apples?

The same issue applies to apples and the many types of mandarins. One does not recite a *shehechyanu* for each type, because the difference is not that discernible and one has less *simcha* from the appearance of a different type.¹²

Does one recite shehechyanu on unripe fruit?

Shehechyanu is not recited unless the fruit is fully ripe. One must therefore take caution at the beginning of a new season and make sure that the fruit is fully edible and ripe before reciting *shehechyanu*.¹³

Vort on the Parsha

אם בחוקתי תלכו – A 'maskil' once said to the *Chofetz Chaim*, instead of writing books of ethics and fear of heaven, if you would write books that would benefit mankind you would be so much more famous.

The Chofetz Chaim replied with a parable. Someone carrying a heavy load was stopped by a wagon driver, who offered the bearer to load his wagon. The bearer thanked the driver but stated that their destinations are different.

So too, replied the Chofetz Chaim, my ethic books lead to the diametrically opposite direction you want me to take, so no, I cannot write such books.

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לזכר נשמת חנה בת ברוך

⁹ וזאת הברכה פי"ה

¹⁰ See וזאת הברכה פי"ה

¹¹ See וזאת הברכה פי"ה

¹² Ibid.

¹³ See *M"B* 225:12.

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