

Seder Zeraim | Masechet Berachot 37- 43 | Shabbat Parashat Yitro | 14-20 Shevat (Feb. 9-15)



## **Daf 37: – בְּרַכַּת חֲמִשָּׁת מִיֵּי דָגָן: DAF 37: BLESSINGS OVER FIVE TYPES OF GRAINS**

There are five recognized types of grain: a) wheat, b) barley, c) spelt, d) rye, e) oats.



The *beracha* (blessing) “*Boreh minei mezonot*” (Who created various types of satiating foods) is recited before eating food that contains grain. The after-blessing for such foods is “*Al HaMichya*” (“On the sustenance”). This is the practice when the ‘grain’ is meant to satisfy the hunger of the person eating the food.

However, if grain was mixed into foods in order to bind them together (with the grain functioning as glue so that the foods do not fall apart), then no *beracha* is recited over the grain, but rather, over the primary component of that food alone. For example, over hamburger patties into which flour was mixed so that they would not fall apart, the *beracha* “*She’hakol ne’hi’yeh bid’varo*” (at Whose word everything came into existence) is recited.

## **Daf 38: – בְּרַכַּה עַל אֶכָּל מִרְסָּק: DAF 38: BLESSING OVER MASHED FOOD**

If food is mashed its status and its associated blessing are downgraded. For example, “*She’hakol ne’hi’yeh bid’varo*” is recited over applesauce, even though before it was mashed it would have been proper to recite “*Boreh pri ha’etz*” over the apples from which the sauce was made.

Food is considered “mashed” when it is so fully transformed that one can no longer discern its original form, it is considered mashed and afforded downgraded status.

Date honey is of lesser importance (as it is not the essence of the fruit) and therefore, “*She’hakol ne’hi’yeh bid’varo*” is recited over it, as is the case with other fruits that have been mashed. However, mashed dates still retain their form, and, therefore, the *beracha* over them remains “*Boreh pri ha’etz*.”



**Cooked Vegetables:** If an individual wants to eat raw, uncooked vegetables that people are accustomed to eating only after they have been cooked — e.g. a raw potato — “*She’hakol ne’hi’yeh bid’varo*” should be recited, since people do not customarily eat potatoes in that manner.



### FROM THE TALMUD

SEDER ZERAIM  
MASECHET BERACHOT  
DAF 43

מן התלמוד:

סדר זרעים, מסכת ברכות דף מ"ג:  
”ואמר רב זוטרא בר טוביה אמר  
רב: עתידים בחורי ישראל שיתנו ריח  
טוב כלבנון, שנאמר ילכו יונקותיו ויהי  
כזית הודו וריח לו כלבנון.”

### Translation

עתידים... Atidim ..... Destined  
ריח... Rey'ach ... Fragrance

### Explanation

Rav derived from *Hosea* 14:7 that in future times the young men of Israel are destined to emit a scent as pleasant as the smell of the trees of Lebanon.



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## Daf 39: עַל אֵיזָה לָחֶם לְבָרֵךְ – OVER WHICH BREADS TO BLESS



**A complete loaf of bread and an incomplete loaf of bread:** While waiting and ready to eat, if there were two bread loaves available on the table — a whole loaf and a sliced loaf — the blessing is to be recited over the whole loaf, because it is of greater prestige. The ruling regarding all foods calls for blessing the whole, uncut food item, when there is one.

**Wheat bread and barley bread:** If one sits in front of two loaves of bread, e.g., one made from wheat and the other made from barley, it is the wheat loaf that should be blessed. Why? Because wheat precedes barley in the list of the *shiv'at ha'minim* (the seven species of the *Eretz Yisrael*) and is therefore of higher status. As it is written in *Parashat Eikev*: “A land of wheat and barley,” — wheat comes before barley.

## Daf 40: הָאֲכָלָת בְּעַל חַיִּים – FEEDING ANIMALS



**Feeding of *ba'alei chayim* (animals):** Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav that one who has animals in their possession is prohibited to eat before giving food to those animals. Rav derived this interpretation from the verse in *K'riyat Shema* — “*V'na'ta'ti e'sev ba'sadeh l've'hem'techa, v'achalta v'sa'va'ta*” (And you shall give the grass

of the field to your animals, and eat and be satisfied). Note: The feeding of the animals is cited first (“*V'na'ta'ti e'sev ba'sadeh l've'hem'techa*”) and only after that is “*V'achalta, v'sa'va'ta*” (and you shall eat and be satisfied), where food for a person is mentioned. Therefore, the first obligation of an animal owner is to provide food for the animals in their care, and only afterward to eat themselves.



**Dipping of a piece of “*HaMotzi*” bread in salt:** The first piece of bread a person eats after reciting the *HaMotzi* blessing is to be dipped in salt, in order to make tasty the bread of blessing.

**A blessing recited in error:** One who made a mistake and blessed “*Boreh pri ha'etz*” (Creator of the fruit of the tree) over a fruit that grew in the ground has not fulfilled their religious obligation. For example, one who blessed “*Boreh pri ha'etz*” over a cucumber has not fulfilled the obligation to properly bless God for the food because cucumbers do not grow on trees.



## Daf 41: שִׁבְעַת הַמִּינִים – THE SEVEN SPECIES

We learn in *Sefer Devarim* 8:8 that *Eretz Yisrael* is blessed with seven praiseworthy species — “*Eretz* (a land of) [1] **WHEAT** (*chee'tah*), [2] **BARLEY** (*se'o'rah*), [3] **GRAPES** (*gefen*), [4] **FIGS** (*t'ay'nah*), [5] **POMEGRANATES** (*rimon*), *eretz* [6] **OLIVES** (*zayit*), and [7] **HONEY** (*devash*) -- the ‘honey’ in the Torah refers to *t'marim*, i.e., honey from dates. The seven species listed above are more important than all other fruits and that even within the seven species there are some fruits that are more significant than the rest. [Continued on page 3].

## Dvar Torah YITRO

“כַּל-הַדָּבָר הַגָּדֹל  
יִבְיֹאוּ אֵלָיִךְ”

Moshe was aided by advice from his father-in-law Yitro, who encouraged him to create a stratified judicial system, which Moshe would head. However, if we carefully examine the Torah text, we find that there is a slight, yet very significant, change that distinguishes between Yitro's original advice and its actual implementation by Moshe.

Yitro suggested Moshe remain at the top of the legal pyramid and rule over all of the substantial matters: “All of the major matters, they will bring to you.” Moshe appears to accept Yitro's advice, but changes one word and declares: “The *difficult* matters will be brought to Moshe.”

What is the difference between a “major” matter and a “difficult” one? Unlike foreign legal systems, where the importance of the matter depends on the size of the monetary sum of the claim made, Moshe instituted a different scale of values, and stipulated that even a claim for a small amount would be brought to him — in any case where reaching a solution would prove to be complex and difficult. Moshe enacted this ruling, because the purpose of Jewish law is to bring God's righteousness into the world, whether the amount at stake is a mere penny or a vast sum of gold.







[Continued from page 2] How do we know which type is more important? When reading the verse above slowly, we notice the phrase “a land of” appears twice — “a land of (‘*eret*’) wheat, barley, grapes; figs, pomegranates” and “a land of (‘*eret*’) olives, and honey.” The *Gemara* states that the fruits cited in closest proximity to the word ‘*eret*’ are preferred over fruits that are further from the word “*eret*.” As such, one who wishes to eat a *t’ay’nah* and a *tamar* should recite the blessing over the *tamar* since it is listed second after the second ‘*eret*’ and the *t’ay’nah* is listed fourth after the first ‘*eret*.’

## Daf 42: דְּבָרִים שְׂצָרִיד לַעֲשׂוֹת מִיָּד – THINGS THAT MUST IMMEDIATELY FOLLOW EACH OTHER

Rav Hiyya Bar Ashi taught the following *halachot* in the name of Rav: There are three things that must be done immediately following their preparation, without pause—



- 1) *Techef l's'micha, shechita*: immediately following the owner of the sacrifice laying of his hands on the head of the sacrificial animal, it must be ritually slaughtered without undo pause.
- 2) *Techef l'geulah, tefilla*: immediately following the *Birkat Geulah* [blessing of redemption] recited after the *Shema*, the *Amidah* prayer is commenced without waiting.
- 3) *Techef l'netilat yadayim, beracha*: immediately following “*mayim achronim*” [ritual hand washing after the meal], *Birkat HaMazon* [Grace after Meals] is recited, without stopping to eat or speak between the two.

## Daf 43: בְּרַכַּת הָאֵילָנוֹת – BLESSING ON THE TREES

Rav Yehudah said: “One who goes out to gardens and groves during the month of *Nissan* and sees trees budding and flourishing should recite *Birkat ha'llanot* (blessing of the trees) — “*Baruch Atah HaShem ... shelo chee'ser b'olamo k'loom u'vara vo b'riyot tovot v'ilanot tovim.*” (Blessed are You God ... Who left nothing at all lacking in His world and created good creatures and good trees in it.

***Birkat Ha'rei'ach*** (Blessing of the Scent): When we smell a good and pleasant scent, we should bless God. There are several categories of “good scents.” One who smells fragrant grass should recite: “*Baruch Atah HaShem ... Boreh ees'vei besamim*” (Blessed are You, God, creator of fragrant grass.) One who takes the branch of a tree in his hand to inhale its fragrance should recite: “*Baruch Atah HaShem ... Boreh atzei besamim*” (Blessed are You, God, creator of fragrant trees.) One who takes a pleasantly fragrant fruit in his hand in order to sniff it would recite: “*Baruch Atah HaShem ... Ha'noten rei'ach tov l'peiros*” (Blessed are You, God, Who gives good fragrance to fruits.) Over the good scent of an item that does not grow from the ground, “*Boreh mee'nei besamim*” (“Creator of fragrant things”) is recited.



## QUESTIONS FOR THE WEEK

1. When is *Birkat Ha'llanot* recited and what is the wording of that blessing?
2. If one has both a sliced loaf and a whole loaf of bread in front of them, over which loaf does one recite a blessing first?
3. From what source did *Chazal* learn that a pet owner is not permitted to eat before giving food to his or her pets?

### \*NOTE

ALL ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND IN THIS DAF YOMI PUBLICATION

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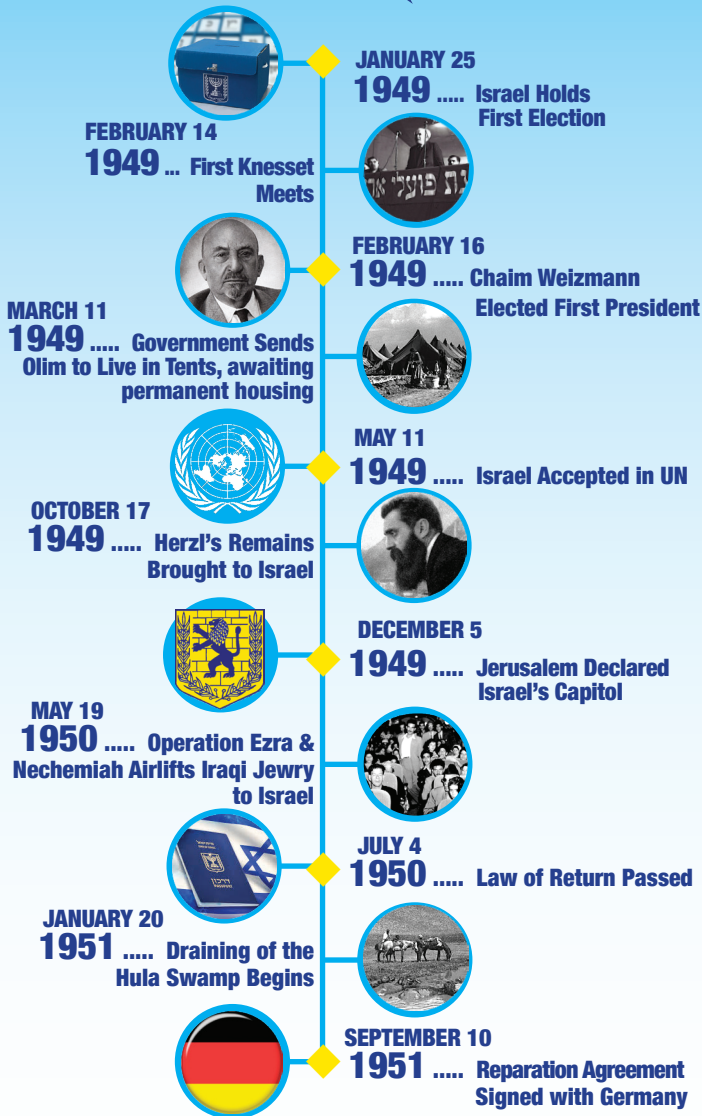
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# HISTORY OF ISRAEL

[THE STATE TAKES ITS FIRST STEPS]



The interim government that ruled during Israel's Independence War was an extension of the Va'ad Leumi (National Committee).

On January 25, 1949, Israel held its first election. The factions aligned with the Labor party won 57 seats; the center-right received 31 seats; and the religious parties earned 16 seats.

The new Knesset met on February 14th, and swiftly passed laws establishing the basis for governing. Chaim Weizmann was elected President, and he then asked David Ben Gurion to form the first government.

The biggest challenge the new government faced was coping with the continuous waves of immigration. Holocaust survivors poured in and the population of the country doubled in the first five years. Providing a roof over the heads of the immigrants was the government's prime obligation. The initial immigrants occupied every empty room in the country. However, soon there were no vacant spaces and temporary tent camps were established.

By 1951, 97,000 people were housed in 51 tent cities. Then, the Jewish Agency established temporary transit camps outside major cities, called Ma'abarot, in which immigrants would spend up to two years, on average, before finding permanent housing. Paying to settle and absorb so many immigrants was a great challenge.

**1950**  
Snow in Tel Aviv (January)

**1950**  
Army Radio Goes Live



**1950**  
1st Maccabiah Games in Israel

**1951**  
National Soccer League Opens

**1951**  
1st Bus to Eilat (9-hr. ride)



**1952**  
Israel participates in Helsinki Olympics

Israel imported many times what it exported. Building houses, as well as creating jobs was very expensive. This period of austerity called the "Tzena," was a time of rationing, when only the bare necessities were available. Israel relied upon several sources of funds during its initial years — donations from world Jewry, US, and other governmental loans. In addition, reparations were paid by Germany to the Israeli government, as well as, directly to survivors.



While the survivors from Europe poured in unhindered, (except later by the USSR), Israel undertook several national missions to bring the Jews of Iraq and Yemen home to Eretz Yisrael.