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Please do not
read during
Davening or
Krias Hatorah

Pas Habo'oh Bekisnin; Mezonos Rolls; Pizza | Bahaloischa 5783

17

Bread

1. Bread has special importance in that it satisfies the he art; for that reason, Chazal instituted the brochoh rishonoh of "Hamotzi lechem min ho'oretz" for bread (ש"י"ע הרב או"ח קס"ז ס"א). After eating bread, we say Birkas Hamozon, which is a mitzvas asef de'oraisho, as it says, "ואכלת ושבעת וברכת". It is unclear if women's chiyuv is de'oraisho (ש"י"ע סי' קפ"ו ס"א).
2. **Cooked foods.** Cooked foods made from the five grains, water, and other ingredients are Mezonos and Al Hamichyoh. These include hot porridge, noodles, lokshen, couscous, and the like. They are always Mezonos, even when eaten as a meal.

Pas Habo'oh Bekisnin

3. Certain pastries resemble bread somewhat; they are termed by Chazal "pas habo'oh bekisnin" and are Mezonos, not Hamotzi. The reason for this is that people usually eat them as snacks, not as a meal like regular bread (מ"ב סי' קס"ח סק"ג). Additionally, they are meant as desserts or treats (מ"ב שם סקצ"ד).
4. There are three opinions among the rishonim regarding the definition of pas habo'oh bekisnin; they are known as "nilosh" [kneaded], "memulo" [filled], and "porich" [crisp], as will be explained. Practically, we adopt all three opinions and make Mezonos on anything included in any one of these categories (ש"י"ע קס"ח ס"ז).

(1) Nilosh [Kneaded]

5. Pastries made from dough kneaded with fruit juice, sugar, oil, margarine, or the like are Mezonos. The Mechaber holds that as long as the taste of the fruit juice can be detected in a pastry (ש"י"ע שם), it is Mezonos even if it is not the majority.
6. **Majority fruit juice.** The Rama holds that a pastry is only Mezonos if it contains more fruit juice, sugar, oil etc. than water (שם). The Maharsham holds that anything with a majority of fruit juice is Mezonos even if the juice's taste is not easily detectable (דעת תורה ס"ז). The Mishnoh Beruroh concludes that a pastry must have a majority of fruit juice sufficient to give off a strong flavor to be Mezonos (מ"ב סק"ג).
7. **Concentrate.** The fruit juice must be 100% natural; if it is from concentrate, the added water is calculated as water, not fruit juice, in the dough (ש"י"ע שבת הלוי ח"ט סי' מ"ד). However, 100% **apple juice** is considered fruit juice even though it is viewed as mere moisture ["זיעא בעלמא" (ש"י"ע שבת הלוי ח"ח סי' ל"ב)].
8. **Raisin water.** Most places make "Mezonos rolls/bread" with raisin water, which is made by cooking raisins in water with a 5:1 ratio of water to raisins, giving the raisin water the status of wine as is evident from the Mishnoh Beruroh (ש"י"ע ש"י"ע או"ח סי' ר"ב). Since the liquid has the status of wine, it is viewed as fruit juice regarding pas habo'oh bekisnin according to most poskim.
9. Margarine contains about 15% water which is not viewed as part of the sweet ingredients in the dough. However, milk – even 1% fat – does not have added water.
10. **Very sweet challoh.** Based on the above machlokes, Sefardim make Mezonos on sweet challoh baked with a small amount of sugar and fruit juice relative to the water if their taste can be detected, even if it is normal to eat it as a meal (כ"ף החיים קס"ח סני"ח). The minhag of Ashkenazim is to make Hamotzi on this type of bread – even when not eaten as a meal – since the water is the majority (מ"ב סק"ד, ארוחות רבינו ח"א עמ"פ).

(2) Memulo [Filled]

11. A pastry made from regular dough which contains a filling of something sweet, e.g., nuts or almonds, chocolate, sugar, etc., is Mezonos if the flavor of the filling is readily detectable, even if the filling was not mixed into the actual dough. According to the Mechaber, it is enough if the filling's flavor is readily detectable; the Rama holds it must give the pastry very much flavor (מ"ב סק"ג).
12. Some say that only a sweet filling makes a pastry pas habo'oh bekisnin (מג"א סקמ"ד בשם הש"ל"ה); others say that a filling of anything which complements bread, e.g., meat, fish, or cheese (כ"ז סק"ג), also makes a pastry pas habo'oh bekisnin (ע"מ"ב סקצ"ד וביאה"ל שם).
13. **Kokosh cake.** Thus, a kokosh cake with a chocolate or cinnamon and sugar filling of a large enough amount to give it very much flavor is Mezonos even if the dough is just like a bread dough.
14. In some kokosh cakes, the chocolate filling is almost all in the middle; the ends barely have filling and look more like regular bread. Even so, since people do not make a meal from the ends and they are made as a dessert, they are still Mezonos, even when eaten alone (שע"י הברכה פט"ז הע"ב צ"ה).

(3) Porich [Dry and Crisp]

15. A dough made of flour and water that was baked until it became dry and crisp is Mezonos if it is not common to eat a lot of it (ש"י"ע שם).
16. Thus, matzoh crackers, wafers, and pretzels are Mezonos since they are thin and crisp and are usually eaten as snacks.

Eaten as a Meal ["Kevias Seudoh"]

17. Pas habo'oh bekisnin are baked goods that can either be eaten as snacks between meals or as a meal themselves. Therefore, Chazal determined that their brochoh depends on how they are eaten: if they are eaten as a meal, they are Hamotzi; as a snack, Mezonos.
18. Pas habo'oh bekisnin eaten in an amount which people usually eat as a meal has the status of bread regarding its brochoh, even when eaten as a snack between meals. Accordingly, it requires netilas yodayim, Hamotzi, and Bentsching.
19. When eaten in an amount less than is usually eaten as a meal, it is Mezonos and Al Hamichyoh, even if one eats it as a meal and is satiated from that amount (ש"י"ע שם).

Something Never Eaten as a Meal

20. Some say that forms of pas habo'oh bekisnin never eaten as a meal, e.g., pretzels, are always Mezonos, even if one eats them in a large quantity as a meal (הגר"א בספר כתר ראש או"ח פ"א הע"ב מ"ז בשם ספר). However, בית יעקב בשם תלמיד הגר"א ר' סעדיה, מעשה רב מהדור חדשה עמ"ב צ"א, וכך משמע (מלשון ש"י"ע הרב ס"ח).

Mezonos Eaten Along with Other Food

21. The poskim disagree about a case where one ate Mezonos food along with other foods, which together add up to an amount of food which usually satiates people. Do the other foods join together with the pas habo'oh bekisnin to comprise a meal, necessitating Hamotzi and Bentsching? Or, perhaps, is pas habo'oh bekisnin only Hamotzi if one eats a meal's worth of it besides for any other foods?
22. The Mishnoh Beruroh holds even if the pas habo'oh bekisnin itself is not enough, other foods are also counted (מ"ב קס"ח ס"ק כ"ד כדעת). (המו"א, שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ד סי' מ"א). Others hold the pas habo'oh bekisnin alone must have the requisite amount to be considered a meal (תורת חיים קס"ח סק"ט, ש"י"ע הרב ס"ח, שו"ת שבת הלוי ח"ז סי' כ"ה).
23. It could be that mezonos foods only join for the shiur with foods commonly eaten with them, e.g., crackers with herring or liver, but rogelach and meat, for example, would not combine (משמעות מ"ב (סק"ד, הגרש"א, חוט שני ברכות ס"ז).

Shiur for a Meal When Eating Pas Habo'oh Bekisnin Alone

24. Some poskim hold that a meal ["kevias seudoh"] of pas habo'oh bekisnin is defined as an amount which a poor person would eat as a meal, i.e., four beitzoh (כפות תמרים, רע"א הובא במ"ב שם) or 200 cc – roughly the volume of a regular cup (הסטייפלר בשיעורין של תורה) without any airspace (וזאת הברכה פ"ד). In weight, this is somewhere between 200 and 230 grams.
25. Others hold that there is no set amount; it depends on the habits of most people in that country and the type of people one is affiliated with. A meal would be a specific amount of food those people normally eat as a meal (הגר"א הובא במ"ב שם) even if it does not completely satiate them (שער הציון סק"י"ח).
26. Women, children, and the elderly, who usually eat less than the average man, each follow the standard of their category of people (ביאה"ל ד"ה אע"פ, הגרשז"א, ותן ברכה קונט' התשובות עמ' י). However, temporarily sick people who do not have an appetite or people on a diet do not constitute their own categories of people.
27. **Bottom line.** The general position of the poskim follows the second opinion cited above, that it depends on people's habits (מ"ב שם, מנהג). Still, the poskim write that it is proper to take the first opinion into account lechumroh and avoid shailos of Hamotzi and Bentching by refraining from eating four beitzoh of pas habo'oh bekisnin alone (מ"ב שם), or by washing and making Hamotzi on real bread and then eating the pas habo'oh bekisnin.
28. It should be pointed out that if one eats a quantity that people eat as a meal, he should say Hamotzi and bentch, even if he himself does not usually eat such a quantity as a meal, since his habits are disregarded when they are contrary to most people's habits.
29. Some say that an average amount of **kokosh cake** which is not viewed as a meal is up to 230 grams [the volume of about eight beitzoh]; more than 280 grams is certainly an amount eaten as a meal and requires Hamotzi and Bentching. Between the two is unclear; one should avoid eating that amount (וזאת הברכה פ"ד אות ה').
30. Average **rogelach** are 25 grams. Thus, if one eats eight or nine, he enters shailos of four beitzoh.
31. An average **biscuit** is between seven and ten grams. Eating about 20 biscuits enters shailos of meal-status.
32. Between ten and twelve individual **Lachmit crackers** are still less than four beitzoh.

"Mezonos Rolls"

33. Based on all the above, many poskim discuss if and when one may make Mezonos on Mezonos rolls, regardless of their hechsher.
34. There are several considerations: **1.** Even if they were kneaded with a majority of fruit juice, do they taste sweet enough to be Mezonos? This depends on the machlokes between the Maharsham and Mishnoh Beruroh (above, 6). **2.** They are often eaten with other foods, e.g., omelets, tuna salads, egg salads, vegetables etc., and together have a volume of 200 cc. This gets into the above machlokes (21, 22). **3.** In a given place, is it normal to make a meal of them? Even if not, since they look just like bread and are a substitute for it, perhaps they are Hamotzi. **4.** Is raisin water considered wine regarding kneading pas habo'oh bekisnin dough (קונטרס שיעורי הגרמ"ש קל"ן, שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ה סי' ל"ב)?
35. Due to all of this, most Kashrus organizations explicitly write that they are only Mezonos when a volume less than four beitzoh, including food eaten together with them, is eaten as a snack, despite the fact that they have a sticker which says "Mezonos".
36. **Name label.** It should be clear that the word "Mezonos" does not determine a roll's brochoh; it simply shows that it was made from dough kneaded with fruit juice. Just like the words "kokosh cake", the words "Mezonos bread" are just a label which indicates a roll's ingredients but does not determine its brochoh.
37. **Bottom line.** There are poskim one can rely on to make a Mezonos on a Mezonos roll alone without anything else. If it has anything on it, but altogether there are not four beitzoh, the same is true. However, one must wash, say Hamotzi, and bentch on a Mezonos roll eaten as part of a meal along with other foods, as is common at Bar Mitzvah receptions and engagement parties.

38. Often, airplane meals with acceptable hechsherim contain a Mezonos roll. When eaten with other foods, it is considered a meal and is Hamotzi. Some advise to first eat the roll and then wait several minutes before eating the rest of the food without it being part of the same meal.

"Mezonos Bread"

39. In many places in Chutz Lo'oretz, there is something called 'Mezonos bread' which looks just like regular bread and its sweetness can barely be detected. People eat it as regular bread with other food for breakfast; they should make Hamotzi. People are very lax about this and the halochoh needs to be reinforced. See above "Mezonos Rolls" section, all of which pertains here too.
40. **Sandwich.** There are sandwiches for sale that consist of a "Mezonos bread" sandwich cut into two triangles. Despite the label which says "Mezonos", people must know that if they eat it as a meal in an amount normally eaten as a meal, it is Hamotzi.
41. There is a Kashrus organization in England which writes on these sandwiches, "Mezonos when eaten as a snack". They should explain that they mean "when eaten in an amount that local people eat as a snack" as it is irrelevant if the person eating it is eating it as a snack; it depends on the habits of the people of that place and that type of person.

Pizza

42. **Kneaded with water.** There are many shailos in determining the brochoh on pizza. Pizza kneaded with water is Hamotzi, even on one slice, if the local people eat it as an alternative to a meal, as they do in Eretz Yisroel (קס"ח סקצ"ד).
43. In places, such as the United States, where people eat pizza as a snack, one may make Mezonos on one slice (בעל אג"מ הובא בוואת) (הברכה שם).
44. **Kneaded with milk or fruit juice.** Pizza kneaded with milk or fruit juice instead of water is pas habo'oh bekisnin. Thus, it is Mezonos when not eaten as a meal [all pizza with an Eidoh Chareidis hechsher is kneaded with milk or fruit juice].
45. In Eretz Yisroel, one slice is less than the amount considered a meal according to all opinions [since one slice weighs around 120 grams, including toppings]. Two slices, however, is defined as a meal for most people; therefore, even a person who is not satiated from two slices must wash, make Hamotzi, and bentch afterwards (see above, 18).

Planned on Eating a Little, but Ate a Lot and Vice Versa

46. If one planned on eating an amount considered less than a meal, e.g., one slice of pizza, and made Mezonos, but then wants to eat more, it depends: if the amount he wants to eat now itself is the quantity of a meal, e.g., he wants to eat another two slices, he must wash, make Hamotzi, and bentch (מ"ב סק"ז).
47. If the amount still wants to eat is only considered a meal when added to what he already ate, e.g., he wants to eat one more slice, it depends: if his original intent was specifically to eat only one slice, he must make mezonos again. If not, he does not make Mezonos again but must bentch afterwards (שער הציון סק"א).
48. If one originally planned on eating a quantity considered a meal, e.g., two slices, and he washed and said Hamotzi, but after beginning to eat decided to stop after one piece, he may finish the slice, which is covered by the original Hamotzi, and should make Al Hamichyoh afterwards (שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ב סי' נ"ד).
49. If one decided to eat an amount considered a meal and for some reason – accidentally or on purpose – made Mezonos, he must stop eating, wash, make Hamotzi – even if there is not a meal's worth of food remaining – and bentch because he was chayov in Hamotzi from the beginning. If he only remembered after finishing, he should still bentch.
50. If he said Al Hamichyoh accidentally, there is a machlokes among the major poskim whether he was yotzei bedieved. Since there is a machlokes (see Gilyon 123, 27 onwards), he should be meikel and not bentch due to a sofeik brochoh; instead, he should try to find someone to be motzi him in Bentching or wash, eat another kezayis of bread, and bentch to cover what he first ate as well (כ"ה). (החיים סי' קפ"ז סק"א).