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ותלמודם
"חוקי היום"
לעשות רצונך
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Things That Cause One to Forget – 1

Korach (ע"ג) / Shelach (Chu"l) 5783

299

Some Rules about Things That Cause One to Forget Source

1. We find Chazal discuss several things that cause one to forget his learning ["קשה לשכחה"]; we will go through some relevant halachos on this topic. The Gemara (הוריות יג:) says: *Five things cause the forgetting of learning: Eating from something a mouse or cat ate from; eating an animal's heart; regularly eating olives* ["הרגיל הרגיל"]; *drinking water left over from washing; and washing one foot on top of the other. Some add placing clothes under the head.*

Not Proper Conduct or an Issur?

2. The poskim discuss whether it is an issur to do the things that cause forgetting or whether it is just proper conduct to avoid them.

3. **Issur.** Many poskim hold that one who is not careful about the things that cause forgetting violates the law in the Torah of "שמור לך ושומר" ["שמור לך ושומר"]. This falls under Chazal's statement that "Whoever forgets one thing that he learned is 'liable for his life' ["חייב בנפשו]". (פלא) יועץ, חסד לאלפים או"ח קנ"ז סק"ו, יפה ללב ח"ג קונ"א יו"ד סי' קט"ז סק"ו, ערוה"ש הובא מסורת משה ח"ב ענינים שונים הע' י עמ"ש, שו"ת התעוררות תשובה סי' (שס"ז, בשם החזו"א תשוה"נ ח"א סוף סי' ג, מו"ר בשבט הקהתי ח"א סי' ב' 4. **Not proper conduct.** However, most poskim hold it is just improper conduct, not an issur (ח"ב דברי מלכיאל ח"ב) טהרם מים מערכת ש' אות י"ד, שו"ת דברי מלכיאל ח"ב) סי' ד"ה גם (סי' נ"ג, הגר"מ פיינשטיין מסורת משה שם, משנה הלכות ח"ג סי' ס"א ד"ה גם, as while these things weaken the memory, they do not automatically cause one to forget. Also, when one eats these things, his intention is merely for his personal enjoyment (ספר זכרון ריש ח"ב).

Just for a Ben Torah or Also an Am Ha'aretz?

5. **Ben Torah.** Some poskim hold only a ben Torah who learns and is engrossed in Torah needs to be careful about things that cause forgetting; but they do not apply to an am ha'aretz who does not learn or know the Torah (ליקוטי מהר"ח סדר) יגל יעקב ח"א או"ח סי' ס"ג, ליקוטי מהר"ח סדר) (תפילת רנב"ה ח"א דף ק"ו ע"ב).

6. Many poskim agree while there is no issur involved and it is merely a matter of proper conduct (above, 4), a ben Torah should certainly be careful about these things l'chatchilah (ח"ב).

Males or Females

7. **Males.** Many poskim hold only males need to be careful about things that cause forgetting, as only they have a mitzvah to learn Torah (בית לחם יהודה סי' ע"ב סק"ג, חזו"א סי' ע"ב ח"א סק"ב, חו"ד שם סק"ב, הגריש"א בס' מנשים באהל יו"ד סי' כ"א, הגר"נ קרליץ, הגר"ח קנייבסקי ספ' זכרון (ח"ב ד"ה ומ"מ, מו"ר בשו"ת שבט הקהתי ח"א סי' ב' 8. **Also females.** However, some poskim say females also need to be careful since they also need to remember the halachos relevant to them (משנת יוסף ח"ו סי' ג אות ב, הליכות ביתה סי' כח ס"ט הע' יד) 9. **Pregnant woman.** Most poskim agree a pregnant woman should be careful since it can affect the fetus, which could be a boy (בית לחם יהודה סי' ע"ב סק"ג, דרכ"ת סי' ע"ב סק"ה, הגר"ח קנייבסקי ס' הזכרון, שבט (הקהתי ח"א סי' ב' ד"ה אך 10. **Nursing a son.** Similarly, out of concern for her son's Torah, a woman who is nursing a son should be careful about the things that cause forgetting (ספר זכירה, הגר"ח קנייבסקי שם).

Gedolim or Also Children?

11. **Gedolim.** Some poskim hold only people above bar/bas mitzvah who actually learn Torah need to be careful about the things that cause forgetting (הגר"ח פלאג"י עיני כל חי הוריות יג:, ויצבר יוסף מ"ב אות א).

12. **Also children.** However, most poskim hold children also need to be careful. Although they do not yet learn Torah, these things can cause a child to have a forgetful nature, which can hurt him when he learns Torah later (הגר"ח קנייבסקי, ספר זכרון, הקטן והלכותיו שאלה ל"ד, פסק"ת סי' (ק"ע אות ח"י, וכל הפוסקים שמקפידים על מעוברת ומינקת לעיל אות ט' ו').

Eating Olives

"הרגיל בזיתים"

13. The Gemara (הוריות י"ג ע"ב) lists "הרגיל בזיתים" among the things that cause one to forget his learning; this is quoted in the words of several poskim (ארוחת חיים הל' ת"ת אות כ"ה, של"ה שבועות פ' נר מצוה אות ק"ה, רע"א) (אוי"ח סי' ב', ערוה"ש או"ח סי' ב' ס"ה, סי' ק"ע סט"ו natural cause (רבינו בחיי בראשית ל"ד, א) others say it is supernatural (חסד לאלפים או"ח סי' קנ"ז סק"ו, הגרש"א, הליכות שלמה תפלה פ"ב הע' ק"ג). 14. **Hint in a posuk.** In the posuk "כי ישל זיתך" (מו), the word "ישל" stands for "ישכח לימודך". This is a hint to Chazal's statement that one who regularly eats olives forgets his learning (הגר"ח קנייבסקי, טעמא דקרא שם). 15. **Heteirim.** Although the Gemara (הוריות) implies one should not regularly eat olives, it is clear Tannaim ate olives (יבמות דף ט"ו ע"ב), implying there are mutar ways to eat olives. Also, the Chovos HaLevavos (שער הפרישות פ"ה) writes one should refrain from eating foods which require great efforts to prepare, and instead, one should suffice with side dishes that don't take any effort to prepare, such as olives, cheese, figs, grapes, etc. Thus, we will now cite some mutar ways to eat olives mentioned by the poskim.

Definition of "הרגיל"

16. For many of these things, the Gemara says "האוכל," whereas for olives, the Gemara says "הרגיל." The poskim infer from this that it is only eating olives regularly that causes forgetting. The poskim argue about the definition of "רגיל."

17. **Daily.** Some poskim understand רגיל to mean every day (שיח יצחק) (בירורי המידות מהר"ל ליקוטים עמ"י ע"ה) or at every meal (הוריות שם). Accordingly, if one would only eat olives every other meal or day, there would be no concern (בצל החכמה הוריות שם).

18. **Eating a little.** Some hold it is only a problem to eat a lot of olives, filling the stomach with them. Accordingly, eating them on occasion or even every day would not cause forgetting if one just eats a few of them within a meal, as people often do (זכר) (מ"ם חיים או"ח סי' ק"צ, זכר) (עשה פ"ו סעי' קכ"ד).

19. **Weekly.** Some say once a week is not called רגיל (אבן ישראל) (מועדים ח"ב פנ"א הע' י"א).

20. **Every 30 days.** Others hold once in 30 days is called רגיל, so one may eat them if more than 30 days have passed since the last time (הגר"ח קנייבסקי, ספר זכרון ח"ב אות י"א ד"ה והנה) (שאלת רב ח"א פכ"א אות ד) (שאלת רב ח"א פכ"א אות ד).

Green Olives or Black Olives?

21. **Specifically black.** Some write that specifically black olives, not green olives, cause forgetting (הגר"ח פאלאג"י, אברהם אזכור ע"ז אות ל"ו) (הגר"ח קנייבסקי, ספר זכרון ח"ב אות י"א ד"ה והנה) (פרי חיים סי' כ"ד).

22. **Also green.** However, by not explicitly differentiating, all the poskim show they hold green olives also cause forgetting (פרי חיים סי' כ"ד).

Eating Olives with Special Kavanos

23. Many poskim hold eating olives only causes forgetting when the eater is an am ha'aretz. However, if one eats with a known, mystical kavanah, his memory is actually increased, as he "is rectifying" ["מתקין"] (בני יששכר כסלו) (טבת מאמר ד' הלל והודאה אות ט"ו בשם האריז"ל, הגר"ח קנייבסקי ס' זכרון).

24. **The kavanah.** The kavanah to have when eating olives is to concentrate on the Name “אל אלקים מצפ”ץ” which is the same gematria as זי”ת. This comes from the posuk “אל אלקים ה' הוא היודע” (יהושע כ”ב, כ”ב) as is known (סי' נגיד ומצוה דף י”ח ע”ב, הוזכר בכף החיים סי' קנ”ז אות כ”ז).

Pickled, Salted, Cooked

25. Some poskim hold it is only raw olives that one should avoid because they will cause him to forget his learning, but if they are pickled or salted, there is no concern. We find that Tannaim ate olives (יבמות דף ט”ו ע”ב), and what they ate was salted (דף י”ג ע”ב, מו”ק סוף סי’ ק”ע, זבחי צדק סי’ ק”ג, פתחי עולם סי’ ב’ אות א’).
 26. However, many poskim are also machmir on salted or pickled olives (מאירי הוריות שם, חז”א ארחות רבינו ח”ג עמל קד אות כא, הגר”ח קניבסקי).

Adding Olive Oil

27. **Olive oil.** The Gemara says (הוריות דף י”ג ע”ב): *R’ Yochanan said, “Just as the olive causes one to forget seventy years of learning, olive oil restores seventy years of learning.”*
 28. Based on this, many poskim write that to nullify the forgetting caused by eating olives, one should add some olive oil – even one drop – to the olives (הגרשו”א, הליכות שלמה תפילה פ”ב הע”ק י”ג). Then, the oil fixes any harm caused by the olives. This was the minhag in Yerushalayim (דברי ישראל ח”ב ה’ג’ לספר שמירת הנפש אות ש”מ עמ’ ע”א), שלמת חיים סי’ תתס”ו, משנה הלכות ימי שמנה סי’ נ”ט, אדמו”ר מתולדות אהרן זצ”ל הובא בס’ זכור לאברהם ח”א סי’ ח”י אות נ’, הגריש”א מפי האיש עמל רמ”ב, הגר”ש (וואזנר שערי הוראה ח”ד עמל י”ז אות ה’; שו”ת וישב משה ח”א סי’ ע”ג).
 29. However, many poskim do not agree with this heter. They hold even when one adds olive oil, olives still cause forgetting (ארחות רבינו (הגר”ח קניבסקי ספר זכרון ח”ג עמל ק”ד אות כ”א).

In Honor of Shabbos

30. Some say when one eats olives for Shabbos, there is no concern it will cause forgetting. Thus, at the actual Shabbos seudah, eating olives will not hurt, as we say in the zemiros, “יום שבתון אין לשכוח”... (גליון דברי ש”ח ויקהל תשע”ח עמל 2) is quoted as saying that since Shabbos is a day of remembrance, as the posuk says “זכור את יום השבת לקדשו” olives do not cause forgetting on Shabbos (ס’ ד’ אמות של רבי עמל 80, גליון עומק הפשט 154).
 31. **Olive dip.** Thus, those who enjoy eating olives or olive dip with their challah on Shabbos have basis to rely on.

Not Eating Challah Ends

No Source

32. Many people are careful not to eat the hard challah ends; they say it causes forgetting. However, all the poskim attest that there is no source for this custom (הגר”ח). (קניבסקי שאלת רב ח”ב פט”ו אות ט”ו). Thus, strictly speaking, one does not need to be careful about it.
 33. **מעשה רב.** I remember that when we were bochurim in yeshiva, some bochurim would eat Shabbos seudos at Rav Chaim Kanievsky’s house. A friend told me that after Rav Chaim said Hamotzi, he cut off the two ends of the challah, left them on the tray, then continued cutting the challah and distributing it to everyone. This bochur was surprised, as he knew Rav Chaim was not makpid at all on challah ends (see 32). So he asked Rav Chaim for an explanation. Rav Chaim answered that in the halachos of cutting the challah, there is a preference to eat from the first piece of challah that is cut (ע”רמ”א סי’). (קס”ו סי’א ומג”א סק”ו). Since there were several people at the table, he cut both ends off so that the whole middle section would be considered the first piece. Then, he continued cutting and distributing from that first piece. We see from here that not every story with a gadol means what a person thinks it does. This bochur just about decided Rav Chaim retracted something he clearly wrote... (See below, 40 and on, regarding establishing a retraction based on a story with a gadol...)]
 34. **Reason to be careful.** However, there are poskim who hold even though there is no source, one should be careful about things people are generally careful about (ירושלמי תרומות פ”ח ה”ג); about anything that is treated as a sakanah (ספר חסידים סי’ רס”א); or about anything with a tradition from old men and women of our nation (שו”ת הרשב”א סי’ ט’). If so, here too, one should be careful in accordance with the widespread custom not to eat the challah ends (שו”ת מנחת יצחק ח”ט סי’ ה’ אות ז’).

Reason for the Minhag

35. **לבטל החיצונים.** Although there is no source for this custom, some give a reason: to nullify negative spiritual forces [חיצונים]. The yetzer hara has control over “firsts” – that is why we are commanded to bring the first fruits to the Beis HaMikdash. That is also why it says by the Meraglim – “הוימים ימי ביכורי ענבים” – to show that the yetzer hara has control over firsts. The Meraglim ate the first fruits, and they ended up sinning (טעמי מנהגים אות קע”ו והג’).

For the Many Questioners – Bracha on Dessert

In Issue 298 about the halachos of making a bracha on dessert, we wrote a halacha without adding the reason or source, and many people thought it might be a mistake. Thus, we are coming here to clear up any confusion.

Memula, but Not Baked Together

36. For the pas haba’ah b’kisinin criterion of memula [filled with something sweet], we gave some examples in which the filling is only added after baking but is not present during the baking, e.g., ice cream in a rolled wafer, an ice cream sandwich (ibid., 26), layer cake with cream (28), and cremeschnitte (30). We wrote that this also falls under the category of memula.
 37. Many people pointed out that the Shulchan Aruch and Mishnah Berurah imply that to be considered memula, the filling must have been baked with the dough, not added later (שו”ע סי’ קס”ח סי’). People also questioned the logic: if one would take bread and spread chocolate spread or jam on it, would the bracha be Mezonos because it became memula after it was baked?
 38. **Originally baked planning to fill it.** However, several poskim hold if there is a type of baked good that, from the outset, is only baked to be filled afterward; is not eaten by itself even after it is baked; and is made to be filled from the beginning; it is included in the criterion of memula. It would not be eaten on its own before being filled, and one would certainly not eat it as a meal in any way before it is filled (הגר”ח קרליץ הובא בספר מראה דבר סי’ ו’ אות ב’, שו”ת אור לציון ח”ב פ”ב אות י’). This rationale makes sense.
 39. Regarding cremeschnitte, no one eats baked puff pastry alone; from the outset, it is baked to be filled. Similarly, the rolled wafers are never eaten alone; they are baked with intent to fill them. The type of cookies or rolled waffle in ice cream filled treats are also baked from the outset to be filled with ice cream. Layer cake is baked from the outset to be filled with layers of frosting. All of these meet the criterion of memula, as we wrote. If one or both of the other criteria are also met, one should say Mezonos when eating these for dessert at the end of a meal, as we explained in the last issue.

Ha’eitz on Compote

40. We also mentioned (Issue 298, par. 9) the Mishnah Berurah’s psak that when one eats a compote with identifiable pieces of fruit for dessert at the end of a meal, he should say Ha’eitz. Many people asked about the report that the Chofetz Chaim retracted this psak and did not make a bracha on compote at the end of his life – why did we omit this?
 41. **Chofetz Chaim’s minhag at the end of his life.** While it is true it says in the sefer קייט הובא בתשובות והנהגות ח”א סי’ קע”ז) הצדיק רבי שלמה (עמל קייט הובא בתשובות והנהגות ח”א סי’ קע”ז) that the Chofetz Chaim did not make a bracha on compote at the end of his life, it is likely that, as elderly people often do, the Chofetz Chaim ate compote as a main component of his meal, not as a dessert, and that is why he did not make a bracha. One cannot derive from this that no bracha should be made on compote for dessert, which goes against an explicit ruling in the Mishnah Berurah. The Chofetz Chaim’s grandson [Rav Mendel Zaks’s son] indeed attested that the reason the Chofetz Chaim did not make a bracha was because it was a part of his main meal (ארחות רבינו ח”א עמל פ”א). Rav Chaim Kanievsky also writes that the Chofetz Chaim did not retract his psak (ס’ט).
 42. **Dessert wasn’t part of a restaurant meal.** Some explain that when the Chofetz Chaim wrote the Mishnah Berurah, a regular meal in a restaurant did not include dessert. Once that changed and a regular meal began to also include dessert, the Chofetz Chaim refrained from making a bracha on compote (מ”ב מהדורת דרשו) בהוספות בשם הגר”ח גורביץ בשם סבו).
 43. However, it would seem difficult to establish a retraction based on this reasoning. What does it matter whether dessert is included in a regular restaurant meal? That only determines whether or not a diner needs to pay separately for dessert. One certainly does not make a bracha on a drink during a meal even though drinks are at an additional cost. Rather, what determines the halachah is whether the person is eating it as a dessert and not part of the meal and then a bracha made, or whether it is for satiation.

גליון זה יוצא לרגל השמחה השרויה בבית ידידנו
 הרה”ג ר’ יצחק זאב צני פריעד שליט”א
 מחשובי לומדי ירושלים, בנישואי בנו
 הבחור החשוב ישראל פריעד נ”ו מכבדי ישיבת בריסק
 עב”ג בת הרה”ח ר’ יהואל גראסקאפה מחשובי תושבי לונדון
 ברכת מזל טוב לסב התתן הרה”ח ר’ יעקב פריעד שליט”א
 ולהרה”ח ר’ מאיר פפנהיים שליט”א – אנמווערפן
 שמחת האויפרוף יתקיים שבת פ’ קרח [א”י] קידושא רבא
 באולם שע”י בנות הרסה רח’ ירמיהו 17 ירושלים