

לוקוטי ופסקי הלכות "חוקי חיים"

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לעשות רצונך
בלבב שלם



שע"י "חדר הוראה" שכונת מנחת יצחק פעיה"ק ירושלם תובב"א - בראשות הרב חיים אהרן בלייער שליט"א

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Hafrashas Challah [2]

Parshas Shelach 5784

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Hafrashas Challah

Chiyuv and Mitzva of Hafrashas Challah

1. We are commanded in this week's parsha to do hafrashas challah, as the posuk says (שלה ט"ו, כ), "ראשית עריסתכם חלה תרימו תרומה, (שלה ט"ו, כ), "כתרומת גורן כן תרימו אותה, מראשית עריסותיכם תתנו לה: תרומה לדורותיכם."
2. **Time of the Beis HaMikdash.** In the time of the Beis HaMikdash, when dough could be tahor and we had Kohanim who were tahor, the mitzva was to give the separated challah to the Kohen to be eaten in tahara.
3. **Today.** Today, however, that we unfortunately do not have a Beis HaMikdash, our dough is tamei since we are tamei meis and do not have a para aduma to become tahor, and Kohanim are also tamei. Thus, we do not give it to a Kohen. We separate challah and then destroy it so that it does not get eaten. It should be burned (רמ"א י"ד סי' שכ"ב ס"ה), but if it cannot be burned, it is wrapped in a bag and placed in the garbage (ש"ת עמק התשובה ח"א (סי' קנ"ג, תשובות והנהגות ח"א סי' עת"ד).
4. **D'oraisa or d'rabanan?** In the times of the Beis HaMikdash, the chiyuv hafrashas challah in Eretz Yisroel was d'oraisa, and in Chutz L'Aretz it was only d'rabanan. Today, that we do not have the Beis HaMikdash, most poskim say even in Eretz Yisroel the chiyuv hafrashas challah is only d'rabanan (ש"ת סי' שכ"ב ס"ב וג'). Still, we apply some chumros of challah d'oraisa in Eretz Yisroel even today (ש"ת סי' שכ"ג ס"א).

Common Shailos Today

5. We previously wrote about some common halachos of hafrashas challah (Issue 67), e.g., the reasons the mitzva was given to women specifically (ibid., par. 1-4); the amount of dough that requires hafrashas challah (8 and on); types of dough that do not join for the minimum shiur (16); types of dough that do join (19); dough made to be divided (24); how to do the hafrasha (36 and on); burning the challah (43); what to do if one forgot to separate challah (49); hafrashas challah that got mixed up with other dough (52); and more.
6. Since many hafrashas challah shailos still arise in the Jewish kitchen and there is a general lack of knowledge, we saw a need to revisit some of the main halachos, giving additional clarification on some of the halachic details, in order to prevent common, widespread mistakes.
7. Also, there has been a trend in the world as of late to eat healthier foods. People are increasingly using flours made from various grains and baked products that are easier on the digestive system, e.g., rye, spelt, and oats, which contain less gluten, or products which are completely gluten free. Similarly, there is a renewal in usage of natural sourdough. People bake breads without any ingredients other than water, flour, and salt, and they avoid using artificial yeast [we will discuss this in the following issue, בעזרהש"ת]. Thus, we must go through the most common halachos affected by these changes.

Types of Grain Requiring Hafrashas Challah

Five Grains

8. Anything made from the Five Grains – wheat, barley, spelt, oats, and rye – and baked in an oven requires hafrashas challah if it contains the minimum amount of flour requiring hafrashas challah. Bread made from other flours, e.g., rice, corn, potato, flaxseed, or the like, does not require hafrashas challah.
9. **Bread.** The chiyuv hafrashas challah is for breads, Shabbos challah, and the like, whose bracha is Hamotzi.
10. **Any baked good.** Similarly, any baked goods, cakes, or cookies whose bracha is Mezonos require hafrashas challah if they contain the minimum amount of flour requiring hafrashas challah. Some examples: kokosh cake, rugelach, chocolate chip cookies, and the like. [Unlike what some women mistakenly think, that there is only a chiyuv hafrashas challah on bread that is called "challah"...]
11. **Sponge cake, "lekach."** Sponge cake also requires hafrashas challah if it contains the minimum amount of flour; only people usually do not bake enough to require hafrashas challah, as the ingredients other than flour do not count toward the minimum amount (ש"ת מנחת יצחק ח"ה סי' ק"ט).
12. However, when baking a large enough quantity of sponge cake to require hafrashas challah, e.g., for an organization, simcha, or event, challah must be separated. But the loose batter that sponge cake is made from is not considered a dough that requires hafrasha; the chiyuv only comes after it is baked, so one is only obligated to separate challah after the baking (ש"ת סי' שכ"ט ס"ב, מנחת שלמה סי' ס"ה בהערה). Thus, one may taste the loose batter before it is baked without separating challah, as its chiyuv hafrashas challah did not yet take effect.

Raw Cookie Dough

13. **Not planning on baking.** Some people like eating raw cookie dough; there is a machlokes whether one may do so before challah is separated, and it depends on the case. Most poskim hold that if the dough was made from the start to be eaten raw and one is not planning on baking it at all, it does not require hafrasha (רמב"ם פ"ו חלה ה"ב, ש"ת סי' שכ"ט ס"ו, גלינות חזו"א על חי מרן) (הגר"ח הלוי הל' חז"מ פ"ו ה"ה ד"ה והנה מדברי).
14. **Planning on baking.** If the dough was made to be baked, it requires hafrasha, and in Eretz Yisroel, one may not eat from the dough before challah is separated.

Minimum Amount of Flour Requiring Hafrasha

43 Beitzim

15. The Mishna states (הלה פ"ב מ"ו) that dough requires hafrashas challah if it was made from at least 1.25 kav of flour, or 43 beitzim [the gematria of "חלה" (ע"ב)]. This applies to all of the Five Grains equally.

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Combining Doughs

16. **Volume.** The above measurement is of volume, not weight (רמב"ם). The minimum volume to make a bracha on the hafrasha is the same for all types of flour. It comes out to 2,488 cc (הגר"ח נאה) or 4,320 cc (החזון איש). However, since different flours have different densities, a different weight of each type of flour will be needed to reach the same volume.
17. **Individual weight.** Since it is hard for each person to assess and measure volume in his house, others have measured the volume of 43 beitzim of different types of flours and written their measurements in terms of the weight of each flour that requires hafrashas challah. Since the poskim differ as to how exactly to measure, it comes out that there is a minimum amount to separate with a bracha, and a minimum amount to separate without a bracha. It is also subject to the general machlokes between Rav Chaim No'eh and the Chazon Ish about all Torah shiurim whether or not the shiurim have shrunk (see Issue 67, p. 8 and on).

Wheat Flour

18. **Minimum amount.** The minimum amount of wheat flour requiring hafrashas challah is 1.2 kg l'chumra. There is no chiyuv hafrashas challah whatsoever for dough with less flour than this
19. **With a bracha.** The minimum amount to do hafrasha with a bracha according to Rav Chaim No'eh is 1.67 kg; this is the minhag in Yerushalayim (מ"ר הגר"י בלויא בלקט העומר פ"ה ס"ב, הגרש"א, הגר"ש"א, מ"ר הגר"י בלויא בלקט העומר פ"ה ס"ב, (מ"ר בעל שבת הקהתי). This is the amount of wheat flour held in a container with a volume of 2,488 cc (above, 16).
20. According to the Chazon Ish, 2.25 kg is the minimum amount of flour that requires hafrasha with a bracha. However, less than this certainly still requires hafrasha without a bracha, as mentioned.

Whole Wheat Flour

21. **Minimum amount.** Whole wheat flour has a greater volume per unit of weight. Thus, it is advisable to be machmir to do hafrasha without a bracha on dough that has 1.150 kg or more of flour (מדריך כשרות עדה"ח תשפ"ד ח"ב עמ' 28).
22. **With a bracha.** There are flour manufacturers today that separate the bran from the wheat kernel and then recombine it for whole wheat flour. The halacha is that the bran is not counted as part of the minimum amount of flour (ש"ע ס"י שכ"ד ס"ג). Thus, some poskim hold one must add 15% to the amount of whole wheat to make a bracha (מדריך כשרות שם). But others hold there is no need to add, as the manufacturer was always planning to recombine the bran (מ"ר בעל שבת הקהתי). However, not all companies do this; it is at least a safeik. Thus, it is advisable to add until there is at least the minimum amount of Rav Chaim No'eh's measurement if one wants to make the bracha. This comes out to 1.932 kg. However, when using the Chazon Ish's measurement, there is reliable basis to make a bracha without adding 15%.

Other Types of Flour

23. Since many people nowadays use other types of flour for health reasons, we need to list the quantities of other types of flour which require hafrashas challah with less weight than wheat flour. What emerges based on measurements is that other types of flour have different percentages relative to wheat. They are approximately as follows:
24. Barley flour – 15% less; spelt flour – 2% less; oat flour – 28% less; rye flour – 16.5% less (לפי הספר משפטי ארץ חלה פ"ב ס"א). [See chart for the quantities of each flour in kilograms and in pounds.]

Flour	Hafrasha with bracha [Chazon Ish]		Hafrasha with bracha [R' Ch. No'eh]		Hafrasha without bracha [l'chumra]	
	lb	kg	lb	kg	lb	kg
Wheat	5	2.250	3.7	1.670	2.65	1.200
Barley	4.6	2.084	3.13	1.419	2.3	1.050
Spelt	4.86	2.205	3.62	1.640	2.6	1.175
Rye	4.48	2.031	3.07	1.391	2.3	1.040
Oats	3.4	1.805	2.64	1.197	1.96	0.890

25. It should be noted that there are often flours that are not entirely one grain. E.g., one can buy a bag of 70% or 80% spelt flour, meaning only 70% or 80% is spelt and the rest is regular wheat. The same is true for other grains. Thus, one must pay attention and measure based on a relative calculation of the two types of grain. One should at least be machmir and add to the quantity before making a bracha.

Doughs which Do Not Combine

26. **Regular flour, whole wheat.** If one kneaded two doughs from two types of flour, each less than the minimum amount, but she is careful that they do not get mixed together, as she specifically made two separate doughs [it wasn't because she just didn't have enough of one type of flour] – e.g., one dough is regular wheat and the other is whole wheat – they do not combine for the shiur even if they are close to each other or are joined through נשיכה (see 32 below) or a single basket (ש"ע שכ"ו ס"א). Thus, if each is less than 1.2 kg, hafrasha is not done. If each is less than 2.25 kg, hafrasha is done from each one separately without a bracha. If each one is more than 2.25 kg, hafrasha is done from each one, but with one bracha if the hafrashos will be done at the same time.
27. **Wheat flour, spelt flour.** Similarly, if one dough is from wheat flour and the other is from spelt flour, and it is specifically meant to remain that way, e.g., there is someone who only eats spelt, the doughs do not join for the minimum shiur for hafrashas challah. When each one has the minimum shiur, hafrasha must be done from each dough, as described above.
28. **Kokosh cake, challos.** The same is true when one makes kokosh cake and challos from two separate doughs. Even if the doughs have similar recipes, if they are slightly different, e.g., the kokosh cake dough is sweeter, and care is taken that the two doughs are not mixed up so that the kokosh cake dough is used for the kokosh cake (ש"ע ס"י ט"ט ובהערה), the halacha is the same as above: they do not combine for the shiur (ש"ע ס"י ט"ט ובהערה).
29. **Half for challos, half for kokosh cake.** However, if one made a large enough dough to do hafrashas challah, and she is using half for challos and the other half will have chocolate filling, sugar, and the like added, but the doughs are exactly the same, she should separate challah from the dough. This is because it became chayav in hafrashas challah when it was originally one big dough.
30. **Chocolate and cinnamon babka.** If the doughs are exactly the same, just with different fillings, e.g., she puts cocoa in one and cinnamon in the other, they combine for the shiur (ש"ע ס"י ט"ט ובהערה).
31. **Streusel crumble on a kokosh cake.** "Streusel," a crumb topping made from flour, margarine, and sugar, is commonly added to a kokosh cake for decoration or extra flavor. Since it is made from flour, the flour combines with the flour in the kokosh cake. Although it was not kneaded together with the kokosh cake dough originally, it combines for the amount of flour since it is baked together with the kokosh cake. Thus, if there was originally not enough flour in the kokosh cake, but then with the added crumble topping it has enough flour for hafrashas challah, the cake must have hafrashas challah done after it is baked.

Doughs which Combine

32. **נשיכה.** If there are two identical doughs – both without the minimum shiur or one with the shiur and one without – and one does not care if they get mixed together, they can be connected through נשיכה. This is when the two doughs touch to the point that they stick together a bit, such that if they would be separated, each dough would remove some of the other dough. If this is done, one can do hafrasha from one of them (ש"ע שכ"ו ס"א, ובט"ז שם סק"א). However, merely touching them together does not combine them for the shiur to require hafrashas challah.
33. Most poskim hold נשיכה only works in the dough stage. Thus, hafrasha would be done with a bracha, as mentioned. If the נשיכה is done during the baking process, some require hafrashas challah; it is proper to do hafrasha without a bracha (חלה כהלכתה ס"י ח' אות ה'). If the נשיכה is somehow done after baking, most poskim hold there is no need for hafrasha at all.
34. **Combining in a basket.** Two doughs can be combined in a basket. They are placed into a basket or some other dish with an interior (ש"ע בנקה"כ) such that they do not completely protrude from the dish (רמ"א). L'chatchila they should be touching (ש"ע ס"א). However, if they are placed on a dish without an interior or straight onto a table, counter, or shelf, they do not combine.
35. They can be combined in a basket while they are in the dough stage or after baking (פתחו"ל כלל י' ס"א), even a long time after they are baked (אור"ח ח"א ס"י רכ"ו, מנ"ח מצוה שפ"ה), and hafrasha is done with a bracha (ש"ע רב פעלים ח"ד ס"י ל"ו).
36. **With a cloth.** Covering the loaves with a cloth is considered like putting them in a dish and combines them. I.e., a cloth is spread beneath them and the same cloth covers them on top (ש"ע סק"ה). Some say it does not need to be the same cloth. According to this, they can also be covered with a dish (ביאה"ל) (ס"י תנ"ז ס"א) or another cloth.