

Lechem Mishneh With Mezonos? An Uncommon Kiddush Question

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Several weeks ago, at a local shul Kiddush, this author noticed that Rav Efraim Landy, Rav of Aderes Eliyahu in Givat Zev, passed over a piece of cake to specifically make Mezonos on two Rugelach. He remarked that his choice was a matter of preference – not of taste, but rather halachic preference. Noting my confusion – as I was unaware of any halachic optimality inherent in Rugelach as opposed to cake – he referenced a somewhat obscure ruling of the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's... But to properly understand the context, a bit of background is in order.

This week's Parashah, Vayakhel, teaches us the importance of Shemiras Shabbos, that it even takes precedence to the building of the Mishkan.[i] With that in mind, let's revisit a twist on an important part of Shabbos, the Shabbos day Kiddush. As discussed in previous articles over the years,[ii] we know that Kiddush must be performed B'makom Seudah, in the same place as (meaning as part of) a meal. In other words, in order to fulfill the Kiddush obligation, it must serve as the preamble to an actual Seudah.[iii] The Rashbam explains that this halacha is gleaned from the pasuk in Yeshaya, 'V'karasa L'Shabbos Oneg, and you will proclaim Shabbos as a delight for you,' meaning in the same place where you proclaim Shabbos (making Kiddush), there must also be the delight (referring to celebrating the Shabbos Seudah).[iv]

What is a Seudah?

Although there is some debate as to how 'Seudah' is defined, with the Vilna Gaon famously maintaining that Kiddush may only be performed with a full bread Seudah – meaning exclusively when washing for Hamotzi, nonetheless, the common minhag is to follow the Magen Avraham's psak, that for this halacha, eating Mezonos is sufficient to be considered a Seudah for Kiddush purposes.[v] In fact, this approach of the Magen Avraham's was accepted and considered 'Minhag Yisrael' by all sectors of world Jewry, certainly for Shabbos day Kiddush.[vi] That is why by almost any Kiddush in almost any shul anywhere in the world it is de rigeur to have a Kiddush with minei Mezonos as the Seudah.

Mezonos Lechem Mishneh

Yet, there is an interesting related debated halacha, whose existence many are entirely unaware of (including this author, up until several weeks ago). As pointed out to this author by Rav Efraim Landy, in the final line of his passage regarding the halachos of Lechem Mishneh at the Shabbos Seudos, Rav Shlomo Gantzfried, the renowned Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, advanced a novel approach. He wrote that even when making Kiddush with Mezonos, one should nonetheless make sure to take 'Shtayim Shleimos' as Lechem Mishneh, with some editions adding in parenthesis, 'kein ra'isi linhog eitzel Gadol Echad' (emulating a certain Gadol whom he saw doing so).

Meaning, even when making Kiddush with Mezonos, the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch rules that one should ensure that he has Lechem Mishnah of his Mezonos. As an example, he is teaching us that if about to be munching on Rugelach, then the Kiddush should be made with two whole Rugelach. The Kaf Hachaim actually cites this ruling with no dissenting opinion.[vii]

Staunch Opposition

On the other hand, several Poskim of the late 1800s and early 1900s opposed this chiddush, with several, including the Ba'er Yaakov, stating simply that as Kiddush on Mezonos is not the Ikar Seudah (main Shabbos meal), Lechem Mishneh simply cannot be mandated for it. Moreover, it is pointed out that this is not the common minhag, and he has not seen “mann d'chash l'zeh,” anyone actively doing so.[viii]

Others, including the Maharsham and Katzeh Hamatteh, raise a pointed two-fold objection to this hanhagah.[ix] First, they cite that the Tosefes Shabbos and Machatzis Hashekel maintain that one may fulfill his Lechem Mishneh obligation with a Mezonos Challah (“chalaso shel Pas Habaah B'Kisnin”),[x] yet, they define this as meaning that if one only has one regular Challah, he may then use a Mezonos Challah in conjunction with it as part of his Seudah, to combine to be considered Lechem Mishneh together.[xi] This implies that one cannot use two Mezonos items to be considered Lechem Mishneh.

Shabbos is Koveya

Moreover, as briefly cited by the Shaarei Teshuva, there is another relevant rationale advanced by several Poskim that may impact this discussion. Rav Avraham Azulai (great-grandfather of the Chida), citing a “Ksav Yad Kadmon z”l” [a manuscript from an early source; likely the Mahara”ch Ohr Zarua (Rav Chaim, son of the famed Ohr Zarua, Rav Yitzchak of Vienna, from the early 1300s), as this ruling is found almost word-for-word in his responsa], [xii] opines that the same way Shabbos creates a ‘keviyus’ for Maaser[xiii] [meaning although one is normally allowed to eat untithed food derech arai (in a temporary manner), on Shabbos one may not, as Shabbos itself lends a certain inherent importance, and only ‘Maasered’ (tithed) food may be eaten on Shabbos], perhaps the same applies to eating Pas Habaah B'Kisnin.[xiv]

In other words, although normally Pas Habaah B'Kisnin's brachah is Mezonos unless one eats copious quantities of it and is Koveya a Seudah with it - when its brachah becomes Hamotzi,[xv] perhaps the same idea is applied here – that if one eats such Mezonos on Shabbos, it automatically becomes Hamotzi, due to Shabbos' inherent importance. In other words, Shabbos creates a keviyus (sense of permanence), which instantly turns these Mezonos items into Hamotzi, even if only partaking of small amounts.

Not a Daas Yachid, there are other Poskim who support this idea, at least in theory, including the Mahari Chagiz (author of the Halachos Ketanos) and the Minchas Chinuch (regarding the brachah on Matza on Pesach, that the Mitzva creates ‘keva’), as well as several Rishonim who

may infer this way, including sefer Tanya Rabbasi and Shiblei Haleket citing Rabbeinu Avigdor Kohen-Tzedek, and the Ria"z (Rav Yeshaya Ha'acharon of Italy), all of whom maintain that "Afilu Seudas Arai Seudas keva Hi Nechsheves B'Shabbos," even a casual meal (temporary) is considered a formal (permanent) Seudah on Shabbos.[xvi]

[However, it is important to note that this is not the halacha pesuka, as many Acharonim are quick to point out that although Shabbos creates Keviyus, it still does not automatically create a 'Shiur Keviyus' – the amount of food which would still be halachically necessary for a Mezonos Pas Habaah B'Kisnin item to become Hamotzi. These Poskim include the Ginas Vradim, the Maamar Mordechai (regarding Sukkah, that Sukkos mandates a keviyus that Pas Haba'ah B'Kisnin should be eaten in Sukkah, but not that it upgrades its brachah to Hamotzi), Rav Meir Arik, Rav Yitzchak Isaac Chaver (who also utilizes this distinction to argue against the Magen Avraham's allowance of making Kiddush with Mezonos), the Chida (who concludes that the Ginas Vradim is correct, "V'chein Ama Davar"), and the Shaarei Teshuva himself, who concludes like the Chida.][xvii]

The Maharsham and Katzeh Hamatteh use both of these arguments (albeit briefly) to argue on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch. They maintain that combining both ideas, if one would use two Mezonos items (i.e., two Rugelach) as Lechem Mishneh to make Kiddush, one may be mandated to first do Netillas Yadayim and make Hamotzi, as it would now be deemed an actual formal Seudas Keva.

They therefore assert that it would be preferable not to make Kiddush with two Mezonos items as Lechem Mishneh, not to enter this halachic question and potential obligation of washing and Bentsching.[xviii] Indeed, the Katzeh Hamatteh asserts rather strongly not to follow the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's shittah, writing "lo nahagu kein, u'minhag Yisrael Torah Hu," that the minhag is not to do so, concluding "b'vadai ain lehamtzi chadashos bazeh, lefi aniyus daati,v'do"k, that we should not come up with novel obligations."

Contemporary Conclusions?

Contemporary Poskim are divided as to the correct approach in this situation, whether Lechem Mishneh with Mezonos should be, shouldn't be, or may be done. The Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasah actually cites all three options without a clear cut conclusion.[xix]

Rav Mordechai Eliyahu writes simply that "ain nohagim likach shnei ugos baboker," that the minhag is not to do so. Likewise, although in one teshuvah Rav Moshe Sternbuch posits a sevara as to the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's rationale (that Lechem Mishneh signifies and showcases Kavod HaShabbos),[xx] adding that he was likely referring specifically to cake, as it is a 'safek Pas' (see Orach Chaim 168:7), nonetheless, in a later teshuvah, he questions the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's ruling altogether, referring to it as a "chiddush," "v'lo matzaasi kidvarav b'Poskim," and concluding "shelo nahagu kein." Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky holds similarly, writing succinctly that it is a "chiddush gadol, v'ain nohagin kein," that is a novel concept, and the minhag is not to do so.[xxi]

Indeed, not being makpid on this seems to be the common minhag, as even the idea of Lechem Mishneh with Mezonos is glaringly absent from the vast majority of halachic literature.[xxii]

The She'arim Metzuyanim B'Halacha writes that Rav Eliezer Silver (Rav of Cincinnati, and head of the Agudas HaRabbonim of United States and Canada) cited several of the afore-mentioned sevaros and Poskim, including the Minchas Chinuch and Maharsham, and pointed out that therefore if one would be makpid to make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos, he may be required to wash and make Hamotzi, implying that it would be better not to, and thus avoiding entering into the sheilah in the first place.[xxiii]

The Minchas Yitzchak also strongly questions the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's ruling, presuming it is based on the Machlokes Rishonim whether or not Seudah Shlishis mandates bread, or suffices with Mezonos (discussed later in the article). He refers to being makpid with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos as a "Chumrah al gabei Chumrah," compounded stringency. He concludes that a Baal Nefesh may be machmir b'tzinah, stringent in his own home, but one may not do it publicly, as then it would be considered 'yuhara' (haughtiness) and may cause machlokes.[xxiv]

Two Rugelach Are Better Than One...

On the other hand, come what may, it is known that there were Poskim who were indeed makpid for the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's psak, of specifically using Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos at Kiddush, including the Minchas Elazar of Munkacs, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, his brother, Rav Avraham Dov Auerbach, Rav of Teverya, Rav Yisrael Yaakov Fischer, as well as the Yerushalmi Gaon, Rav Zundel Kroizer.[xxv]

The Klausenberger Rebbe was also makpid for the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's shittah, and even wrote an extensive teshuvah defending his opinion from his detractors. He maintains that M'Deoraysa, Pas Haba'ah B'Kisnin has a din of actual Pas, however, M'Derabbanan, 'Lechem' refers to actual bread that one must make Hamotzi and Birkas Hamazon on. Hence, for Lechem Mishneh, he avers that it is worthwhile to be makpid lechumrah on the Din Torah, and make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos.

He also argues on the Maharsham's assessment, stating that Rabbeinu Avigdor, the Shibolei Haleket, Agur, and other Poskim who maintain that Shabbos's inherent holiness makes a keviyus that can potentially turn Pas Haba'ah B'Kisnin from Mezonos into Hamotzi, was only stated regarding Seudas Erev or Seudas Boker, meaning the main Shabbos Seudos - "V'lo Seudas Arai," – not an informal one, citing precedent from many Poskim, including the Vilna Gaon and Chasam Sofer.

Ergo, the Klausenberger Rebbe asserts, 'kol shekein,' certainly regarding Kiddush on Mezonos on Shabbos – which is only eaten in order to be considered Kiddush B'Makom Seudah – as anyway, later on a full Shabbos Seudah is eaten, which would prove that this was not intended

to be the full Seudas Boker, “peshita,” it is clear, that there is no chashash (prospect) that this informal achillas arai would require Netillas Yadayim and Birkas Hamazon.[xxvi]

In conclusion, with no clear-cut contemporary consensus, one should certainly ask his rabbinic authority for guidance, as to whether he can and / or should make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos. Who would have thought that a few Rugelach can be the basis of an obscure halachic debate? Either way, we at least have gained a new appreciation for the seemingly simple Shabbos Day Kiddush.

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Written L'Refuah Sheleimah for R' Avrohom Yaakov Abbish ben Chana Rivka and Rav Yair Nissan ben Sarah and L'Iluy Nishmas the Rosh Yeshiva Rav Nosson Nota ben Avraham Yitzchak (Schiller)

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1 See Rashi (Shemos Ch. 35:2), citing the Mechilta.

2 ‘Common Kiddush Questions’ and ‘More Common Kiddush Questions: Kiddush B’makom Seudah.’

3 Gemara Pesachim (101a). See Rif (Pesachim 20a), Rosh (ad loc. Ch. 10:5), Tosafos (ad loc. 100b s.v. yedei Kiddush), Rambam (Hilchos Shabbos, Ch. 29:8 and 10), and Tur and Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 273: 1).

4 Rashbam (ad loc. s.v. af) citing Yeshaya (Ch. 58: 13).

5 Maaseh Rav (122; also cited in Biur Halacha (275:5 s.v. kasvu), and Magen Avraham (Orach Chaim 273:11).

6 See Shu"t Ginat Veradim (Orach Chaim 3:12), Birkei Yosef (Orach Chaim 273:2 and 6), Be'er Heitiv (ad loc. 7), Shaarei Teshuva (ad loc. 7), Shulchan Aruch Harav (ad loc. 7; interestingly, in the next siman 274:5, he writes that even so, one must have another Seudah on bread, as the Mezonos at a Kiddush does not constitute a meal to fulfill one of his three Shabbos Seudah obligations), Pri Megadim (ad loc. Eishel Avraham 11), Chayei Adam (vol. 2, 6:22), Matteh Efraim (597: 2), Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (77: 14), Ben Ish Chai (Year 2, Parashas Bereishis 7), Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 273:8), Mishnah Berurah (ad loc. 25), and Kaf Hachaim (ad loc. 41). Many contemporary poskim as well, including Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (see Halichos Shlomo on Moadim vol. 1, Ch. 1: footnote 72 and Va'aleihu Lo Yibol vol. 1, pg. 141), Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (Kovetz Teshuvos vol. 1:24 s.v. umei), the Minchas Yitzchak (Shu"t vol. 3:13, 7), Rav Yisrael Yaakov Fischer (Halichos Even Yisrael, Shabbos vol. 1, Ch. 14:9 and 25:3), and Rav Moshe Feinstein (Shu"t Igros Moshe, Orach Chaim vol. 4:63, 7 and 8; see also Shu"t Vedibarta Bam vol. 1:72; quoting Rav Dovid Feinstein), rule that the ikar halacha follows the ruling of the Magen Avraham that one may lechatchillah make Kiddush with Minei Mezonos.

7 Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (77: end 17), also cited in Kaf Hachaim (O.C. 273:14).

8 Ba'er Yaakov (Kroizer; 273:10).

9 Hagahos Maharsham on the Orchos Chaim (Spinka; 289:5 s.v. harav), Daas Torah (O.C. 168:6 s.v. v'hinei and 289:1 s.v. v'ayin), Katzei HaMatteh (on the Matteh Efraim 625:79 [81 in the new editions]).

10 The Tosefes Shabbos (274:1) and Machatzis Hashekel (ad loc. 1 s.v. mashmaos) also cite the Magen Avraham in O.C. 280:1 as proof that even if not technically Hamotzi, Pas Habaah B'kisin should nonetheless be able to be used as joining for Lechem Mishneh.

11 In this manner of explanation, they avoid a seeming machlokes between the Taz (O.C. 168:7) and Magen Avraham (ad loc. 13), also briefly cited by the Shaarei Teshuva (O.C. 274: end 1), as to the din of utilizing Mezonos Challah. As an aside, Rav Chaim Na'eh (Ketzos Hashulchan 82, Badei Hashulchan 5) and the Kaf Hachaim (O.C. 274:6) also cite this lemaaseh, that it certainly is preferable combining a Mezonos Challah with a Hamotzi Challah for Lechem Mishneh than making Hamotzi at a Shabbos Seudah with only one Challah. On a more contemporary note, both Rav Yisrael Yaakov Fischer (Halichos Even Yisrael, Shabbos vol. 1, Ch. 15:19, pg. 241) and Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky (Kovetz Halachos, Shabbos vol. 1, Ch. 14, footnote 21) practically rule this way as well, that if necessary, one may and should join a Mezonos item for Lechem Mishneh, if there is no other Hamotzi option available.

12 Shaarei Teshuva (O.C. 168:9), Hagahos Mahar" a Azulai on the Levush (O.C. 186:6), Shu"t Mahara"ch Ohr Zarua (71).

13 See Yerushalmi (Maasros Ch. 4:1)

14 See Gemara Brachos (41b-42a). The exact translation and meaning of the term is debated by the Rishonim – but it usually defines cake, cookies, and other baked items that are not usually eaten as a full meal and hence, normally Mezonos. The Shulchan Aruch famously paskens that the halacha follows all three shittos in the Rishonim. See Tur, Shulchan Aruch and main commentaries (including Biur Halacha) to Orach Chaim (168:6-7).

15 See Tur and Shulchan Aruch and main commentaries to Orach Chaim (168:6-7). The basic shiur used by most authorities is that when eating four k'beitzim of Mezonos in one sitting, one has now Koveya Seudah on it and it becomes Hamotzi.

16 Mahari Chagiz (Eitz Chaim on Maasros Ch. 4:1), Minchas Chinuch (Parashas Bo, Mitzva 10: s.v. v'hanireh), Tanya Rabbasi (84), Shiblei Haleket (end 344); citing Rabbeinu Avigdor Kohen-Tzedek (later published in Peirushim U'Psakim L'Rabbeinu Avigdor pg. 94), and Ria"z (cited in Shiltei Giborim, Pesachim 20a:1 in the Rif's pagination).

17 Ginas Vradim (O.C. Klal 3, 11), Maamar Mordechai (O.C. 639:3), Rav Meir Arik's Minchas Pitim (O.C. 168:6), Rav Yitzchak Isaac Chaver's Shu"t Binyan Olam (O.C. 8), and the Chida's Birkei Yosef (O.C. 168:5) and Shu"t Yosef Ometz (end 48).

18 On the other hand, Rav Yisrael Veltz (Welcz) Dayan of Budapest (Chok L'Yisrael on Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbos, footnote 79) cites the Maharsham's arguing on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch and assertion that one should specifically not make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos as then he may have to halachically wash and bentch, as a potential solution on Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbos to enable an easier way to have split Seudos on this Shabbos morning before Sof Zman Achillas Chometz (which many Poskim maintain is the preferred option). He maintains that if one would make Kiddush with Lechem Mishneh of Mezonos (i.e. two Rugelach) along with some Maachalei Chalav, it would technically fully count as one of the Shabbos Seudos, even though it only constituted a small Kiddush, thus easier enabling another Seudah before Sof Zman Achillas Chometz. However, it must be noted that this is a novel idea, as this author has not seen a single other Posek advise this, and especially as the Maharsham only stated this complicated combination rationale theoretically, and exclusively to argue on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch's premise; not that people should act upon it practically.

19 Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasah (vol. 2, Ch. 55:4).

10 As implied in the passuk (Parashas Beshalach Ch. 16:29) "Ra'u Ki Hashem nassan lachem HaShabbos al kein Hu nosein lachem Bayom hashishi lechem yomayim."

21 Rav Mordechai Eliyahu's Darchei Halacha glosses on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (77:20), Shu"t Teshuvos V'Hanhagos (vol. 1:263, pg. 183, right-hand column, and vol. 2:159), and Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky's Kovetz Halachos (Shabbos vol. 1, Ch. 14:13).

22 See Piskei Teshuvos (274:8) who strongly makes this point (although several of his mareh mekomos are inaccurate).

23 She'arim Metzuyananim B'Halacha (77:20 and 21).

24 Shu"t Minchas Yitzchak (vol. 3:13).

25 Minchas Elazar of Munkacs (cited in Beis Yisrael Hashalem, vol. 8 - on the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, 77:17; Taussig), Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (as cited by his talmid, Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl, Rav of the Old City of Yerushalayim, in his B'Yitzchak Yikarei glosses on the Mishnah Berurah, 273:28; thanks are due to R' Yosef Tradburks for pointing out this important Mareh Makom; as well as in Kovetz Kol Torah (vol. 40, pg. 16 s.v. v'im, Piskei Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach), Rav Avraham Dov Auerbach (heard from Rav Efraim Landy), Rav Yisrael Yaakov Fischer (Halichos Even Yisrael, Shabbos vol. 1, Ch. 25:6), and Rav Zundel Kroizer (heard from R' Dovy Leibowitz; however, see Rav Kroizer's Ohr Hachama on the Mishnah Berurah, end 274, s.v. u'va'emes, where he writes that even if one would be koveya his Shabbos Seudah with Pas Haba'ah B'Kisnin, it may not necessarily help for Lechem Mishneh).

26 Shu"t Divrei Yatziv (O.C. vol. 1:127), quoting Rabbeinu Avigdor, the Shiblei Haleket (ibid.) and Agur (217). He cites precedence from the Chasam Sofer, as cited in the hakdamah of Lekutei Chaver Ben Chaim (vol. 3, pg. 3a) and Shu"t Zichron Yehuda (O.C. 82), and other Poskim, including the Chayei Adam (vol. 1, Klal 54, Nishmas Adam 1) and Mishnah Berurah (168: end 24 and Shaar Hatziyun ad loc. 19) citing the Vilna Gaon and others who argue on the Beis Yosef (O.C. 168: end 6) who disagreed with Shiblei Leket writing that this should apply regarding Seudos Arai as well.

Disclaimer: This is not a comprehensive guide, rather a brief summary to raise awareness of the issues. In any real case one should ask a competent Halachic authority.

L'iluy Nishmas the Rosh HaYeshiva - Rav Chonoh Menachem Mendel ben R' Yechezkel Shraga, Rav Yaakov Yeshaya ben R' Boruch Yehuda.