**A Summary of the Halakhot of *Berakha Acharona[[1]](#footnote-1)***

**Rav David Brofsky**

Just as one says a blessing before eating and drinking, so too afterwards one must express gratitude to God, through reciting a *berakha acharona*. In order to become obligated to say a *berakha acharona*, one must eat or drink a minimal amount, a *shiur*, within a certain amount of time. What is the *shiur* of food, or drink, one must consume, and within how much time? Furthermore, what is the halakha when one eats different foods, or foods and liquids?

**The *Shi’ur* of Eating for a *Berakha Acharona***

The Talmud (*Sukka* 6a) teaches that “most of its measurements are a *ke-zayit* (the size of an olive).” Indeed, throughout the Talmud, we see that the minimum amount that one must eat in order to fulfill a *mitzva* or for which one is punished is generally a *kezayit*. In this context as well, regarding the *berakha* *acharona*, the Talmud (*Berakhot* 37b) relates:

Moreover, R. Hiyya b. Abba said: I have seen R. Yochanan eat salted olives and say a blessing both before and after… R. Yirmiya asked R. Zeira: How could R. Yochanan make a blessing over a salted olive? Since the stone had been removed, it was less than the minimum size! He replied: Do you think the size we require is that of a large olive? We require only that of a medium sized olive, and that was there, for the one they set before R. Yochanan was a large one, so that even when its stone had been removed, it was still of the requisite size. For so we have learnt: The olive spoken of means neither a small nor a large one, but a medium one.

The Rif (*Berakhot* 27a) derives from this passage that while one must say a blessing before eating even the smallest amount, as it is prohibited to benefit from this world without a blessing (*Berakhot* 35a), one only says a *berakha* *acharona* after eating the equivalent of a *ke-zayit*, the size of an olive. Tosafot (38a *s.v. batzar*), the Rosh (*Berakot* 6:16), and other *Rishonim* arrive at the same conclusion.

Why is a *berakha acharona* only said after eating a *kezayit* of food, unlike a *berakha rishona*, which is said before tasting even the smallest amount?

Rashi (39a, *s.v. batzar*) explains that the obligation to say *Birkat Ha-Mazon*, the model for every *berakha acharona*, is derived from the verse (*Devarim* 8:10), “And you shall *eat*, and be satisfied, and bless the Lord your God.” The minimum amount that is considered to be an act of “eating” is a *ke-zayit*. Thus, only eating a *ke-zayit* is considered to be an act of “eating” that warrants a *berakha acharona*. Alternatively, we might suggest that the Rabbis established that one must say a *berakha acharona* after deriving benefit from a “significant” quantity of food (and not just any benefit). Generally, a *ke-zayit* is viewed as a significant amount. Therefore, one who eats (and derives benefit from) a *ke-zayit* of food must say a *berakha acharona*.

There may be halakhic ramifications to this question.

***Birya* – A Complete and Natural Whole Unit of Food**

The Yerushalmi (*Berakhot* 6:1) implies that one must say a *berakha* *acharona* even after eating a “*birya*,” something in its whole, natural form, such as a grape or a pomegranate seed.

Tosafot (ibid.) understand that the Yerushalmi argues with the Talmud Bavli – which, as we saw above, teaches that one says a *berakha acharona* after eating a *ke-zayit* – and the halakha is in accordance with the Bavli. This is the view of the Rif (ibid.) and the Rambam (*Hilkhot Berkahot* 3:12) as well. Other Rishonim (R. Yosef cited by Tosafot above; Rosh ibid.; Rashba 39a; Rabbeinu Yona 27b, et. al.) raise the possibility that the Yerushalmi does not argue with the Bavli; the passage from the Bavli refers to an olive that is not whole. The Rosh even recommends that one refrain from eating a *birya* that is less than a *ke-zayit* due to this debate.

Seemingly, we might suggest that according to Rashi, one should certainly not say a blessing after eating a *birya* smaller than a *kezayit*, as eating less than a *ke-zayit* is not considered to be an act of “eating.” However, if a *berakha* *acharona* is said after benefiting from a “significant” portion of food, then one could argue that although a *birya* lacks size, it has “importance” (as is seen in numerous other *halakhot*; see *Makot* 13a, *Chullin* 100b and 119b), and it is therefore worthy of a *berakha* *acharona*.

The Shulchan Arukh (210:1) rules that one should only say a *berakha* *acharona* after eating a *ke-zayit* of food. He cites the debate above and writes “some express doubt whether one says a blessing after [eating] over something which is a *birya*, such as a single grape or pomegranate seed, even though it is smaller than a *ke-zayit*; therefore, one should be careful not to eat a *birya* which is less than a *ke-zayit*.” If one bites into the *birya* and does need eat it in one bite or one does not eat its pit (such as the pit of a date, an olive, or a cherry), it is not considered to be a *birya* (see Mishna Berura 210:7).

**The *Shi’ur* for *Borei Nefashot***

Interestingly, the *Rishonim* question whether the *shiur* of *ke-zayit* is relevant only to the blessing of *Al Ha-Michya* (and *Birkat Ha-Mazon*), or to *Borei* *Nefashot* as well. Tosafot (ibid.; see also Rosh ibid.) records:

The Ri says: Regarding *Borei Nefashot*, since it is not “an important blessing” (*lav berakha chashuva hi*), even [upon eating] less than the measurement [of a *ke-zayit*], one says *Borei Nefashot*. It seems that since *Borei Nefashot* corresponds to the blessing of *Al Ha-Gefen*, just like the *Al Ha-Gefen* requires a *shi’ur*, so too [*Borei Nefashot*] needs a *shi’ur*.

The Rambam (ibid.) and Rid (ibid.) clearly disagrees and maintain that even the blessing of *Borei Nefashot* is only said after eating (or drinking) a *shiur*.

Here, we may suggest a fundamental difference between *Al Ha-Michya* and *Borei Nefashot*. As Rashi (above) explains, the blessing of *Al Ha-Michya* may depend upon an act of “eating,” which by definition entails eating a *ke-zayit*. However, *Borei Nefashot* doesn’t relate to a specific food, as we can see from the text of the blessing:

Blessed are You … Creator of numerous living beings and their needs, for all the things You have created with which to sustain the soul of every living being. Blessed is He who is the Life of the worlds.

Therefore, we may understand that the blessing of *Borei Nefashot* relates to deriving benefit from food or drink, and there therefore may be no need for a specific amount. The halakha is not in accordance with this view.

**The *Shi’ur Ke-Zayit* and a *Berakha Rishona***

In this context, it is worth noting that almost all *Rishonim* assume that one says a blessing before eating even the smallest amount of food (or drink) so as not to “benefit from this world without a blessing” (*Berakhot* 35a). Some, however, note that the Talmud (*Berakhot* 35a) suggests that the obligation to say a *berakha rishona* may be derived from a *kal ve-chomer* from *Brikat Ha-Mazon*: “One says a blessing when he is satiated; all the more so when he is hungry!” Why, then, were the rabbis stricter regarding a *berakha rishona* than a *berakha acharona*?

The Kesef Mishna (*Hilkhot* *Berakhot* 6:13) explains:

It seems to me that they said that one should say a blessing on a small amount lest he change his mind and eat a *shi’ur* [i.e., a *kezayit*], in which case he needed to have said a blessing beforehand, and now he is unable to fix the matter.

This interpretation implies that theoretically, one should only say a blessing over eating a *ke-zayit*, an “act” of eating, but for technical reasons, the rabbis said one should say a blessing even when eating less.

Interestingly, the Kolbo (24) cites a view that maintains that whenever one eats less than a *ke-zayit*, one should say *She-Hakol*. He further cites R. Achai Gaon (the author of the *She’iltot*) as opining that one who eats less than a *ke-zayit* should not say any blessing.

These intriguing positions, which are not accepted *le-halakha*, seem to maintain that less than a *ke-zayit* is not considered an “act” of eating and one should therefore either say the generic *She-Hakol* blessing, which covers all benefit from eating (as we discussed [previously](http://www.vbm-torah.org/archive/blessings/33berakhot.htm)),  or not at all.

Similarly, the Talmidei Rabbeinu Yona (*Berakhot* 27b, s.v. *ani*) suggest that before eating less than a *ke-zayit* of *mezonot*, one says *She-Hakol*. Although one may view an amount of food smaller than the size of an olive as insignificant and not worthy of a separate blessing praising the specific food, one still may not benefit from this world without first reciting a blessing, and at least the blessing of *She-Hakol* should be recited. Again, the halakha is not in accordance with this view.

**The Size of a *Ke-Zayit[[2]](#footnote-2)***

**In Relation to an Egg**

How does one measure the *shiur* of a *ke-zayit*?

Some *Rishonim* maintain that one must determine the size of a *ke-zayit* based upon its relation to the size of a *ke-beitza*. They arrive at this conclusion based upon an apparent contradiction between Talmudic passages. On the one hand, the Talmud (*Yoma* 80a) states that the Sages measured that the esophagus cannot hold more than the size of an egg. On the other hand, the Talmud elsewhere (*Keritut* 14a) teaches that the Rabbis have calculated that the gullet cannot hold more than two olive-sizes at a time. These passages seem to indicate that a *ke-zayit* is half the size of a *ke-beitza*.

            Based on these passages, a number of Ashkenazic *Rishonim*, including the Ri (Tosafot, *Eiruvin* 80b, s.v. *agav*), the Ra’avia (525), the Terumat Ha-Deshen (139), and the Maharil (Seder Ha-Haggada 31) assert that a *ke-zayit* is the size of half of an egg (*ke-beitza*).

            It is important to note in this context that an olive (generally 3-6 cc) is nowhere near the size of a half of an egg (generally 50-60 cc). It appears that the *Rishonim* from North Western Europe (i.e. Ashkenaz) never actually saw an olive, which only grows in the Mediterranean region! Indeed, R. Eliezer b. Yoel Ha-Levi (Germany, c.1140-c.1225), known as the Ra’avia, writes:

And wherever a *ke-zayit* is required, the food should be measured generously, since we are not familiar with the measurement of an olive, and so that the blessing should not be in vain. (Ra’avia, *Berakhot* 107)

Therefore, it is not surprising that Ashkenazic *Rishonim* based their calculation of the *ke-zayit* upon its relation to the egg, as described by the Talmud.

            Other passages, however, point to a different size of a *ke-zayit*. Regarding the laws of *eiruv chatzeirot*, the Talmud rules (*Eiruvin* 80b) that the amount of food for two meals (*shtei se’udot*) is equivalent to the amount of 18 *grogerot* (dried figs). Elsewhere, regarding the laws of *eiruvei techumin*, the *gemara* (*Eiruvin* 82b) cites different opinions regarding the amount of food considered to be sufficient for *shtei se’udot*. According to R. Yochanan ben Beroka, two meals consist of a quantity equivalent to the size of six eggs, while according to R. Shimon, it is slightly less – five and a third eggs. Accordingly, according to R. Yochanan ben Beroka, a *grogeret* is about a third of the size of an egg (6/18, or 1/3), while according to R. Shimon, a *grogeret* is slightly larger (8/18).

            Based upon these passages, the Rambam (*Hilkhot Eiruvin* 1:9) rules that two meals equals the volume of 18 *grogerot*, which are equivalent to 6 medium sized eggs. Since the *gemara* (*Shabbat* 91a) records that an olive (*ke-zayit*) is smaller than a *grogeret*, a *ke-zayit* must be smaller than a third of a *ke-beitza*.

            The Shulchan Arukh’s opinion is somewhat unclear. In *Hilkhot Eiruvin* (378:3, 409:7), he rules in accordance with the Rambam that 18 *grogerot* are equivalent to 6 eggs, which means that a *ke-zayit* must be smaller than a third of an egg. However, regarding the laws of *matza* (486), he writes: “Regarding the size of a *ke-zayit*, some say (*yesh omrim*) that it is half of an egg.”

            The *Acharonim* note this apparent contradiction, as well as the phrase “some say” in the context of *matza*. Some (see, for example, Mishna Berura 486:1 and R. Chaim Naeh, *Shiurei Torah*, p. 190, n. 24) suggest that the Rambam is strict regarding *mitzvot de-oraita* (Biblical *mitzvot*), such as *matza*, and most probably a *berakha acharona* as well, due to the principle of *safek berakhot le-hakel*. Others (see R. Chaim Benish, “*Shiur* *Ke-Zayit* – *Bi’ur Da’at Rishonim Ve-Acharonim*,” who cites numerous *Acharonim*) suggest that the Shulchan Arukh did not intend to rule against the Rambam and the prevalent custom, but rather merely to cite the only explicit *shiur* that appears in the *Rishonim*.

            If the size of a *ke-zayit* is to be measured in relation to an egg, according to the Ri, as cited in the Shulchan Arukh, then what is the proper measurement of an egg? The *Acharonim* offer a number of approaches. The most prominent is suggested by R. Chaim Naeh.

            In 1943, R. Chaim Naeh (1890–1954), author of the Ketzot He-Shulchan, published “[*Shi’urei Torah*](http://www.hebrewbooks.org/20888),” which defended the measurements used for generations by the community in Jerusalem. He based some of his measurements upon a passage in the Rambam (*Peirush Ha-Mishna, Eduyot* 1:2) in which he reports that the measurement of a *revi’it* of water is equivalent to 27 Arabic coins known as “drahms.” Since a *revi’it* is the equivalent of an egg and a half (including its shell), an egg’s volume in displaced water is 18 drahm. R. Chaim Naeh measured a drahm, which was used as a coin in the Arab world for hundreds of years, and reported that each drahm was 3.205 gram. Thus, 18 drahm are 57.6 gram, and the volume of an egg with its shell is approximately 57.6 cc.

            R. Chaim Naeh further estimates that according to Tosafot, who maintain that a *ke-zayit* is a half of a *ke-beitza*, half of a *ke-beitza* without its shell (54.7 cc) is 27 cc. According to the Rambam, a *ke-zayit* is a third of an egg, with or without its shell, 19.2 cc or 17.3 cc accordingly.

Interestingly, recent research has determined that the drahm used by the Rambam was actually smaller than the one measured by R. Chaim Naeh, 2.83 gram (see Yaakov Gershon Weiss, [*Sefer Midot U-Mishkalot Shel Torah*](http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/vl/tohen.asp?id=143), [p. 89](http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/vl/midot/midot05.pdf)). Accordingly, R. Chaim Pinchas Benish (*Midot Ve-Shiurei Torah*, pp. 69, 71) claims that the volume of an egg according to the Rambam is actually 50 cc., and the measurements of a *ke-zayit* are less than 17 cc (Rambam) and 25 cc (Tosafot). He records that both R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and R. Ovadia Yosef accepted this revised *shiur*.

**Have Eggs Doubled in Size?**

Interestingly, R. Yechezkel Landau (1713 –1793), author of the Noda Be-Yehuda, questioned the commonly accepted size of an egg. Based upon another method of measuring that appears in the Talmud (*Pesachim* 109a-b), R. Landau discovered a discrepancy between the measurements based on volume and the measurements based on dimensions. (This discrepancy was actually noted earlier by the Tashbetz 3:33 and others.) He writes (Tzalch, *Pesachim* 116b):

For in truth it is clear in the Shulchan Arukh (486) that the size of a *ke-zayit* is half the size of an egg. However, it is clear to me by way of measurement that with the eggs that we have in our day, a whole egg of our day is only half the size of an egg that was used for the Torah quantities…  And against our will we see that things have changed in our time; either thumbs have grown, and they are bigger than the thumbs of the days of the *Tanna’im*, or the eggs have shrunk and in our day they are smaller than the eggs of the era of the *Tanna’im*. And it is known that the generations progressively decline, and it is therefore impossible that our thumbs should be larger than the thumbs in the day of the Sages of the Mishna.

R. Landau maintains that one must attribute this discrepancy to thumbs becoming larger over time or to eggs becoming smaller than they once were. He concludes that today’s eggs are smaller than in the past:

It is therefore necessarily the case that the eggs of our day are smaller… and since it has become clear that our eggs are smaller by half, therefore the size of a *ke-zayit*, which is [originally] half an egg, is as the size of a whole egg of today. And thus I evaluate the eating of *matza* and *maror*…

R. Eliezer Fleckless (1754 – 1826), a student of the Noda Be-Yehuda and author of the Teshuva Me-Ahava, reports that when he suggested that his teacher arrived at this conclusion because he himself was an especially tall person, R. Landau “shook his head and was quiet.” Some (see Yehuda Ya’aleh YD 205) suggest that this indicates that the Noda Be-Yehuda actually changed his mind!

In 1947, R. Avraham Yeshayahu Karelitz (1878–1953), known as the Chazon Ish, published a response to R. Chaim Naeh’s *Shiurei Ha-Torah* in which he defended the position of the Noda Be-Yehuda. In his [Kuntras Ha-Shiurim](http://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=14336&st=&pgnum=117&hilite=) (OC 39), he concludes that since the volume of a *ke-beitza* is 100 cc, according to Tosafot, a *ke-zayit* is 47.5 cc (1/2 of an egg without its shell) and according to the Rambam, it is 33 ml (1/3 of an egg with its shell).

The *Acharonim* and recent scholars have raised many objections to the view of the Noda Be-Yehuda and the Chazon Ish.

Some *Acharonim* raise textual objections to the notion that the size of the *ke-zayit* and *ke-beitza* are double the currents sizes. For example, the Mishna Berura (Bi’ur Halakha 271, s.v. *revi’it*) notes that based on the *gemara* (*Yoma* 80a), a person’s two cheeks (*melo lugmav*) can hold a *revi’it*, approximately the volume of 1.5 eggs. According to the Noda Be-Yehuda, a person’s mouth should be able to hold the equivalent of three eggs (150 cc), which seems virtually impossible.

Others object on different grounds. R. Natan Slifkin, in an [essay](http://www.zootorah.com/RationalistJudaism/TheEvolutionOfTtheOlive.pdf) supporting the minimalist view of the *ke-zayit*, summarizes much of the scientific and archeological evidence. For example, he cites Professor Yehuda Feliks (*Kelai Zera’im Ve-Harkavah*, p. 184 n. 5.), who relates that the eggs that were preserved whole in the volcanic destruction of Pompeii two thousand years ago were “around the size of the small Arab eggs of our time,” which he defines as 41.4cc. Furthermore, he notes that olive pits found in archeological digs from the time of the Mishna are no larger than olives found today (see Mordechai Kislev, “[*Kezayit – Peri Ha-Zayit Ke-Midat Nefach*](http://www.zomet.org.il/?CategoryID=290&ArticleID=386),” *Techumin* 10, pp. 427-437).

            Although halakhic charts often cite the stringent opinion of the Chazon Ish and list a *ke-zayit* as either 33 cc or almost 50 cc, as they appear in his *Kuntrus Shiurim* (OC 39:17), some sources indicate that the Chazon Ish himself believed that these measurements are *chumrot* (stringencies) and are not halakhically required. R. Hadar Yehuda Margolin, in one of his many enlightening articles on this topic (“*Berur Shitat Ha-Chazon Ish Be-Shi’ur Kezayit*,” *Moriya* 107), insists that the Chazon Ish – based on his own letters (*Iggerot* 194) and testimony from his nephew, R. Chaim Kanievsky – maintained that *me-ikkar ha-din*, we do not assume that the size of an olive has changed, and one may assume that a third of an egg (17 cc) is sufficient for *matza* and for a *berakha acharona*.

Some suggest following the stringent view of the Noda Be-Yehuda (and Chazon Ish) when fulfilling the Biblical *mitzva* of *matza* (see Mishna Berura 486:1), and possibly even *Kiddush* (which is based on the Biblical obligation of “*zakhor*”). However, most *Acharonim* reject this opinion, and the common practice in Europe before WWII was certainly not to follow this view (see, for example, Mishneh Halakhot 8:194).

***Ke-Zayit* is the Size of an Olive**

The second approach to assessing the size of a *ke-zayit* maintains that there is no inherent relationship between the size of an olive and an egg. Indeed, even the Rambam cited above never mentions the size of a *ke-zayit*; he merely implies that a *ke-zayit* is smaller than a fig, which is a third of the size of an egg. Many early authorities maintained that a *ke-zayit* was in fact a *ke-zayit*, i.e. the size of an olive.

Some cite proofs from the Talmud that seem to reject the larger amounts suggested by R. Chaim Naeh, and certainly those of the Chazon Ish.

For example, the *gemara* (*Menachot* 26a; see Rambam, Hilkhot Ma’aseh Ha-Korbanot 13:14) implies that a *kohen* must be able to fit the volume of two olives into his hand (*ein kometz pachot mi-sheni zeitim*). It is impossible to fit within the cavity of three fingers and the palm (*kemitza*) even two thirds of an egg, let alone an entire one.

Similarly, as mentioned above, the Talmud (*Keritut* 14a) asserts that the esophagus can hold the volume of two eggs. Here too, it seems unlikely that one can swallow a half and egg, or even a third of an egg, at once.

In addition, the *gemara* (*Berakhot* 37a) describes a case in which there are *perurim* (crumbs) the size of a *ke-zayit*. If a *ke-zayit* were the size of a third or half of an egg, they would certainly not be called crumbs!

Finally, the *gemara* (*Makot* 16b) describes a situation in which one eats 2-3 large ants or 10 small ants that equal the size of a *ke-zayit*. It seems unlikely that the Talmud refers to ants so large that only 2-4 would equal the size of a third or half of an egg.

Aside from the proofs from the Talmud and the implicit agreement of most *Rishonim* that a *ke-zayit* is smaller than a fig, numerous *Geonim* and *Rishonim* also explicitly support the claim that a *ke-zayit* is not measured in relation to an egg and is indeed the size of an olive.

For example, R. Sherira Gaon (c.900-c.1000), in a recently discovered responsum (cited in Sefer Ha-Eshkol, vol. II, *Hilkhot Challa* 13, p. 52), insists that the measurements of eggs and olives are not based upon the weight of coins, but rather upon the size of the egg and olive itself:

You asked me to explain if there is a weight given for the fig, olive, date and other measurements in the weight of Arabic coins, and you explained that R. Hilai Gaon clarified that the weight of an egg is 16 2/3 silver pieces. [You wondered,] if the others do not have an ascribed weight, why is the egg given one? It is known that these other measurements are not given any equivalent weight in silver, not in the Mishnah nor the Talmud. If [the Sages] had wished to give a measurement in terms of the weight in dinarim, they would have done so originally. Rather, they give the measurements in terms of grains and fruit, which are always available, and one is not to say that they have changed…

We practice according to the Mishna: Everything goes according to the observer… And likewise with regard to the olive and date, it is explained in this Mishna that it is not referring to a large one or a small one, but rather an average one – and it is also according to the view of the observer.

Similarly, Rav Hai Gaon (939-1038), writes:

And therefore the Torah gave measurements in terms of eggs and fruits … because eggs and fruit are found in every place. For it is known and revealed before the One Who spoke and brought the universe into existence that Israel is destined to be scattered amongst the nations, and that the weights and measures that were in the days of Moses and that which were added to in the Land of Israel would not be preserved, and that the measurements change in different times and places… Therefore, the Sages related the quantities to fruit and eggs, which always exist and never change. They made the quantity of an egg depend upon the view of the observer. (Ibid., pp. 56-57)

The Rashba (*Mishmeret Ha-Bayit*, p. 96) and the Ritva (Shabbat 76b, printed at the back of the Mosad HaRav Kook edition) also explicitly speak of a *ke-zayit* much smaller than a third of an egg.

In addition, numerous *Acharonim* also reportedly maintain that a *ke-zayit* is indeed the size of an olive, including R. Chaim Volozhin (*Sha’arei* *Rachamim* 51, *Minhagei Ha-Grach*) and R. Avraham Bornstein (the Avnei Nezer, cited in *Midot Ve-Shiurei Torah*, p. 510).

Which olives are we to measure against? The Mishna (*Keilim* 17:8) teaches: “The *ke-zayit* of which they spoke is neither a large one nor a small one, but rather a medium-sized one, which is the *egori*.” Prof. Mordechai E. Kislev (“*Peri Ha-Zayit Ke-Midat Nefach*”) describes three olives common to the land of Israel: the Shami (a large olive, approximately 12-13 cc), the Melisi (a small olive, 0.5-1cc), and the Suri or Nabali olives, which range from 2.5- 6 cc). The average olive found in Israeli measures between 3–4 cc. R. Chaim Benish (“*Shiur* *Ke-Zayit* – *Bi’ur Da’at Rishonim Ve-Acharonim*”) suggests that one should be stringent and assume that a *ke-zayit* is no smaller than the larger olives found in Israel, which measure close to 7.5 cc.

***Shiur Ke-Zayit*- Summary and Conclusion**

Most authorities adopt the view of R. Chaim Naeh and assume that a *ke-zayit* is approximately 27 cc (half of a *ke-beitza*). The more accurate calculation of the Egyptian drahm leads to a slightly smaller amount. Many halakhic compendiums write that one should measure a portion of food against a standard match box, approximately 25-30 cc (5X3.5X1.5); a plastic bottle-cap is approximately 10 cc. Some (including R. Kanievsky, as cited above) assume that one can rely upon the Rambam’s view and say a *berakha acharona* after eating at least a third of a *ke-beitza*, at least 17 cc.. Others follow the tradition of R. Chaim Volozhin and others and say a *berakha akharona* after eating an amount equivalent to the volume of an olive, around 3–4 cc.

**Volume or Weight**

The Talmud in numerous places implies that the volume (*nefach*), and not the weight (*mishkal*), is the determining factor in measuring *shiurim*. For example, the *gemara* (*Pesachim* 109a-b) defines the liquid measure of a *revi’it*, which is equivalent to an egg and a half, as 2 fingerbreadths X 2 fingerbreadths X 2.7 fingerbreadths. Similarly, the *mishna* (*Uktzin* 2:8), which we will return to shortly, teaches: “An airy loaf is evaluated as it is. If there is a hollow inside, it is compressed.” Finally, the Tosefta (*Nazir* 4:1) describes how one places a *ke-zayit aguri* in wine and drinks the displaced wine, clearly indicating that a *ke-zayit* is measured by volume and not weight (see Rashi, *Chullin* 108b, s.v. *chalav*).

The *Geonim* also clearly believed that a *ke-zayit* was measured by volume. They write (Teshuvot Ha-Geonim, Harkavy 268):

And if you were to suggest [that they be measured by] weight, the Rabbis did not specify weight and *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu* did not exact with us in weight; [rather,] every person who estimates according to his evaluation has fulfilled his obligation

The *Geonim* note that it is virtually impossible for every person to know the measurement of every food. Rather, a person is to estimate according to size.

The Rambam (Commentary to the Mishna, *Challah* 2:6; *Hilkhot Chametz U-Matza* 5:12) also clearly rejects measuring *shiurim* by weight. The Maggid Mishna (ibid.) explains that the weight is not always similar to the volume, and therefore the *shiurim* clearly refer to volume and not weight.

The Shulchan Arukh (456:1) cites the Tur, who describes determining the *shiur* of *challa* thought the displacement of water. Furthermore, the Rema (486:1) implies regarding the *shiur* of *maror* that one estimates the proper *shiur* based upon volume.

Interestingly, R. Yaakov Chaim Sofer (1870–1939), in his Kaf Ha-Chaim (*Orach Chayim* 168:45-46), asserts that “it is unlikely that it is dependent upon the evaluation of each person, as he sees it.” After citing a number of Sephardic authorities, he concludes: “It is not the common custom among halakhic authorities to estimate all measurements, such as a *ke-zayit* of *matza* on Pesach, and a *ke-zayit* of *maror*, and a *ke-zayit* for the measurement of a *berakha acharona* … by weight… and this should not be changed.” Numerous Sephardic authorities rule that a *ke-zayit* is measured by weight, such as the equivalent of 27 grams, although they assume that weight is only used as a means of properly determining the volume equivalent of a *ke-zayit*, as weight and volume are generally similar. Other Sephardic authorities (Ohr Le-Tzion, vol. 2 ch. 14, n. 17; Yalkut Shemesh 137; see also Machzikei Berakha 486:2) disagree and insist that one measure the size of a *ke-zayit* based upon *nefach*.

Assuming that one measures a *ke-zayit* according to a food’s volume, does it matter if a food is light or dense?  Does one include air pockets in the measurement of a *ke-zayit*?

As mentioned above, the *mishna* (*Uktzin* 2:8) teaches: “An airy loaf is evaluated as it is. If there is a hollow inside, it is compressed.” This *mishna* implies that while the food should be compressed if there is an air pocket,, generally speaking, we do not take the density of a food into consideration.

Most *Acharonim* assume that if a food is naturally light or fluffy (bread, popcorn, etc.), one still measures by its volume (see Mishna Berura 186:3). R. Ben Zion Abba Shaul, in his Ohr Le-Tzion (ibid.), rules that airy or fluffy foods should always be condensed.

What if a food absorbed water after it was prepared, and then expanded? Does it matter if the food was originally that large and subsequently shrunk (i.e. raisins) and became enlarged again or if it was always small and simply expanded?

The Rambam (*Hilkhot Ma’akhalot Asurot* 14:5) writes:

When an olive-sized portion of forbidden fat, a *nevela, piggul, notar*, or the like was left in the sun and was reduced in volume, one who eats it is not liable.

The Rambam clearly believes that a *ke-zayit* is determined by its current size. However, he adds:

If afterwards one left it in the rain and it expanded, one is liable for either *karet* or lashes. If originally it was smaller than an olive-sized portion and then expanded to the size of an olive, it is forbidden to partake of it, but one is not liable for lashes for it.

Here, he indicates that if a food returns to its original size (i.e. such as raisins soaked in water), then we follow the current volume. If, however, the food absorbed water and grew to a larger, unnatural volume, we follow the original size.

Indeed, this appears to be the ruling of R. Yishmael ben Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Kohen (Italy, d. 1811) in his Zera Ha-Emet (29). Similarly, the Mishna Berura (210:1) rules:

If there is an airy loaf that expanded until the air pocket are no longer noticeable, one who eats a *ke-zayit* of it does not say a *berakha acharona*, because in truth, he did not eat a *ke-zayit*. Similarly, if there was a *ke-zayit* and it depressed and became smaller, one does not say a *berakha* [*acharona*] over it unless it becomes bigger again.

The Mishna Berura refers here to bread that after baking expanded even more. Elsewhere (486:3 and Sha’ar Ha-Tziun 7), he rules that regarding *matza*, if its air pockets are not noticeable, there is no need to compress them.

**Volume or Weight - Summary**

The *mishna*, *Rishonim*, and most *Acharonim* clearly rule that one should estimate the size of a *ke-zayit* based upon volume (*nefach*). Volume includes natural pockets of air, which are not noticeable. If they are noticeable, the food should be condensed in order to determine its volume. Some Sephardic authorities maintain that one should measure according to weight, as it is often difficult to assess the size of a piece of food.

R. Eliezer Melamed writes in his Peninei Halakha (*Berakhot*, pg. 217):

Every person should learn to evaluate the volume of foods in relation to half an egg… And we already learned that a person does not have to be overly concerned, as the Rabbis assigned each person the authority to estimate the measurement itself, despite the probability that a person may err a bit above or below.

Although we noted above that many assume that the measurement is less than a third of an egg and others even measure against an olive itself (4 -6 cc), his sentiment is still worth considering.

**Shiur of Time for a *Berakha Acharona* - *Kedei Akhilat Peras***

The Talmud teaches in numerous contexts that in order to violate certain prohibitions or in order to fulfill certain *mitzvot* that require “*akhila*” (eating), one must eat a specific amount (*shi’ur*), most often a *ke-zayit* (the size of an olive), in a certain amount of time. This amount of time is generally referred to “*kedei akhilat peras*,” the amount of time it takes to eat half a loaf of bread. This amount of time is relevant in the context of eating prohibited foods (see *Keritut* 12b), as well as when fulfilling *mitzvot*, such as *matza* (*Berakhot* 37b) and *marror* (*Pesachim* 114b). This amount of time is also relevant in the context of eating of Yom Kippur as well (see Tosefta, *Yoma* 4:3), although the *shi’ur* of eating on Yom Kippur is a *ka-kotevet* (the size of a date).

Interestingly, the *Acharonim* (see, for example, Magen Avraham 210:1, Panim Me’irot 2:27) question whether this *shi’ur* should apply to *Birkat Ha-Mazon*. Some suggest that since *Birkat Ha-Mazon* is dependent upon “satisfaction” (*sevi’a*), as the verse states, “When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you” (*Devarim* 8:10), and not “eating,” even one who eats the minimum amount over a longer period than *kedei akhilat peras* should be required to say *Birkat Ha-Mazon*. This is not the accepted view.

The *Acharonim* (Magen Avraham, ibid.) assume that in order to be obligated to say a *berakha acharona*, one must eat a *ke-zayit* of food within *kedei akhilat peras*. How much time is “the time it takes to eat a half a loaf of bread”?

The *Rishonim*, based upon a different opinions among the *Tanna’im* (see *Eiruvin* 82b), debate the size of a *peras*. In various contexts, the Rambam (*Hilkhot Eiruvin* 1:9; *Shevitat He-Asor* 2:4; *Ma’akhalot Asurot* 14:8, etc.) rules that a loaf is the size of six eggs; thus, half a loaf, a *peras*, is the size of 3 eggs (3 *ke-beitzim*). One must therefore eat a *ke-zayit* in the time period it takes to eat 3 *ke-beitzim*. Rashi (*Pesachim* 44a) disagrees and rules that a loaf is the equivalent of 8 eggs, and a *peras* is therefore the size of 4 eggs (4 *ke-beitzim*). Accordingly, one has somewhat longer to eat the *ke-zayit* – the time it takes to eat 4 *ke-beitzim*.

The Shulchan Arukh (OC 378:3, 612:4) cites both views. Some (Shulchan Arukh Ha-Rav 612:4, cited by Mishna Berura 412:8) suggest adopting the more stringent approach regarding laws of Biblical origin. Similarly, due to the principle of *safek berakhot le-hakel*, one should adopt the shorter measurement regarding *berakha acharona* and only recite the blessing if he completed the *ke-zayit* in the shorter amount of time.

The *Acharonim* offer different estimates for the time it takes to consume a *peras*. The Chatam Sofer (6:16), for example, suggests that this may be as long as nine minutes. The Sedei Chemed (Asifat Dinim, *Akhila* 3) cites opinions that maintain that *kedei akhilat peras* is eight minutes. The Bikurei Ya’akov (639:13) writes that *kedei akhilat peras* is an eighth of an hour, or 7 ½ minutes. Arukh Ha-Shulchan (202:8) estimates this time to be between three to four minutes. The Kaf Ha-Chaim (210:8) rules that *kedei akhilat peras* is 4 minutes. (Interestingly, the Minchat Chinukh [313:5] objects to determining set measurements of time, as each food must be estimated separately.)

Regarding eating *matza*,R. Ovadia Yosef (*Yechave Da’at*) rules that one should preferably follow the view of four minutes. R. Moshe Feinstein (*Iggerot Moshe*, OC 4:41) accepts the views of the Marcheshet (1:14:8), who estimates *kedei akhilat peras* to be about three minutes.

Given that most *Posekim* accept a smaller measurement of a *ke-zayit*, ranging from 3-4 cc – 17 cc, it is generally not difficult to consume a *ke-zayit* of food within a few minutes, and to thus become obligated in a *berakha acharona*.

Of course, while reliance on the longer measure is a leniency regarding *berakha acharona*, regarding eating on Yom Kippur, it is relied on as a stringency. A *choleh* (sick person) is often instructed to eat or drink small amounts, known as “*shi’urim*,” in the course of a *kedei akhilat peras*. Many will insist that a *choleh* should wait up to nine minutes between *shi’urim*, in accordance with the Chatam Sofer cited above. Others adopt more lenient opinions, and one who must eat should thus consult with a halakhic authority before Yom Kippur.

**The *Shiur* of Liquids for a *Berakha Acharona***

The discussion above revolved around the amount of food over which one says a *berakha acharona*. What about liquids? How much must one drink in order to become obligated to a say a *berakha acharona*, and in how much time?

  The *Rishonim* debate whether the *shi’ur* for liquids is the same as the *shi’ur* for food, i.e. a *ke-zayit*. Tosafot (*Berakhot* 39a and *Yoma* 79a) suggest that the *shi’ur* may be the same as for food, a *ke-zayit*. The Rambam (*Hilkhot Berakhot* 1:2) rules that one only says a *Borei Nefashot* after drinking a *revi’it*, which is the amount of liquid displaced by one and a half eggs. The Rosh (*Berakhot* 6:24), and subsequently the Shulchan Arukh (210:1), cites both views, and rules that one should preferably drink less than a *ke-zayit* or more than a *revi’it* in order to avoid a situation of doubt. It is customary to say a *berakha acharona* only after drinking a *revi’it* of liquid.

As we discussed previously, the *Acharonim* discuss the size of an egg, and accordingly, the volume of a *revi’it* (1.5 eggs). R. Chaim Naeh ruled that a *revi’it* is 86 cc (“*kos*” in *gematria*). Although the Noda Be-Yehuda, and subsequently the Chazon Ish, maintain that our eggs are smaller than the eggs of the ancient world, and a *revi’it* therefore should be measured as 150 cc (“*kos hagun*” in *gematria*), the accepted practice is in accordance with R. Chaim Naeh. [Some](http://www.hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=49152&st=&pgnum=1&hilite=) suggest, based upon recent discoveries, that the size of a *revi’it* is actually 75 cc.

Within how much time must one drink a *revi’it* of liquid in order to become obligated to say a *berakha acharona*?

The Rambam writes concerning prohibited foods (*Hilkhot Shevitat He-Asor* 2:4; *Hilkhot Ma’akhalot Asurot* 14:9; *Hilkhot Terumot* 10:3) that regarding liquids, the *shi’ur* for being considered an act of drinking is “*kedei sheti’at revi’it*,” the amount it time in which one ordinarily drinks a *revi’it* of liquid. The Ra’avad (*Hilkhot Terumot*, ibid.) disagrees and rules that the *shi’ur* of *kedei achilat peras* applies to liquids as well. The Shulchan Arukh (212:10) rules in accordance with the Rambam. The Vilna Gaon rules in accordance with the Ra’avad.

The Magen Avraham (210:1) assumes that this debate applies to a *berakha acharona* as well. The Sha’ar Ha-Tziyun (210:11) explains that “*kedei sheti’at revi’it*” refers to “the manner in which people drink … in two sips.” R. Moshe Feinstein (Hagadat Kol Dodi, 3) adds that even one who drinks a *revi’it* in many sips, as long as he does not interrupt. Therefore, some *Posekim* note that one generally should not say a blessing after eating a bowl of soup, as a *revi’it* is not consumed within a few sips. Interestingly, other *Acharonim* suggest that even the Rambam would adopt the longer *shi’ur* regarding a *berakha acharona*, as the *berakha acharona* relates not just to the act of eating, but the *hana’ah* (benefit) as well.

Should we distinguish between different types of liquids, which are consumed in different ways? For example, some *Acharonin* (see Taz 210:1 and 190:1) suggest that after drinking even a small amount of alcohol (scotch, vodka, etc.), one should say a *berakha acharona*. They explain that the *shi’ur* of *revi’it* should not apply to drinks that one ordinarily drinks in small amounts. Similarly, some *Acharonim* (see Maharsham 1:175) permit one to say the daytime Kiddush on less than a *revi’it* of liquor for this reason. The *Acharonim* (see, for example, Magen Avraham 194:4, Mishna Berura 190:14) reject this rationale and insist that one only says a *berakha acharona* after drinking a *revi’it*, regardless of the type of liquid.

Similarly, some suggest that the rules regarding hot beverages, such as tea and coffee, should be different. Some (see, for example, *Ginat Veradim*, OC 1:17) maintain that since it is customary to drink them slower, and this is the “*derekh hana’ato*”, even one who drank a *revi’it* of tea in more than *kedei sheti’at revi’it* should say the *berakha acharona*. Others suggest the opposite – liquids that one generally drinks slowly are completely exempt from a *berakha acharona* (see Sha’arei Teshuva 204:12; see also *Birkei Yosef* 204:6 and *Yabi’a Omer* 5:18:5), as this is not the normal manner of drinking.

R. Ovadia Yosef (*Yabi’a Omer*, OC 5:18) analyzes this issue in great depth and concludes that the custom if Sephardim is not to say a *berakha acharona* after drinking hot beverages unless one drinks a *revi’it* after it has cooled off (see below). On the other hand, R. Dovid Z. Hoffman, in his *Melamed Le-Ho’il* (OC 1:25), relates that his custom, as well as the custom of the Sho’el U-Meshiv and the Minchat Chinukh, was to say a blessing after drinking hot beverages. Similarly, the Maharam Shik (OC 85) records that this is his custom as well. The *Shemirat Shabbat Ke-Hilkhata* (vol. 2, ch. 44, n. 96) relates that this was also the practice of many great rabbis, including R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach.

Interestingly, R. Yedael Meltzer (Sefer Etz Ha-Chaim pg. 399, cited by R. Efraim Greenblatt in his [Rivevot Efraim OC 5:166](http://www.hebrewbooks.org/pagefeed/hebrewbooks_org_1086_156.pdf)) relates that his grandfather,  [R. Isser Zalman Meltzer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isser_Zalman_Meltzer) (1870 – 1953), the author of the Even Ha-Ezel, was accustomed not to say a *berakha acharona* after drinking coffee, in accordance with the ruling of the Mishna Berura (see below). However, once R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach visited R. Meltzer, and noticed that he said the *berakha acharona* after drinking coffee. R. Auerbach, who was familiar with R. Meltzer’s practice, questioned the change in his custom. R. Meltzer responded that a few days earlier, [R. Yitzchak Ze’ev Soloveitchik](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yitzchok_Zev_Soloveitchik) (1886 - 1959) had visited, and he noticed that he said a berakha acharona after drinking coffee, and explained that this was in accordance with the practice of his father, R. Chaim Soloveitchik. R. Meltzer, himself a student of R. Soloveitchik in the Volozhin yeshiva, decided to change his practice. In turn, R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, impressed that R. Meltzer, even in his later years, would change his practice, also changed his custom, and began to say a *beracha acharona* after drinking coffee. R. Moshe Shternbuch (b. 1926), in his Teshuvot Ve-Hanhagot (2:135) also records that his teacher, R. Yitzchak Ze’ev Soloveitchik, would say a *berakha acharona* after drinking tea within the time of *kedei akhilat peras*.

The Mishna Berura (210:1) suggests that one should leave a *revi’it* of coffee or tea until it cools off and then drink a *revi’it*, in order to become obligated in the *berakaha acharona* according to (almost) all opinions.

**Definition of Foods and Liquids**

There are some foods whose status is in doubt, and it is therefore unclear whether they should be treated as solids or liquids with regard to a *berakha acharona*.

For example, should we view ice-cream as a solid, in which case one says a *berakha acharona* after eating a *ke-zayit* within the time of *kedei akhilat peras*? Or is it a liquid? In that case, it would be unlikely that one would be obligated to recite a *bracha achrona*, as it is uncommon toeat a *revi’it* of ice-cream within the time it generally takes to drink a *revi’it*. In addition, as we learned previously, the blessing *Borei Peri Ha-Gefen* (when one drinks wine as well) exempts other beverages. Must one say a blessing before eating ice-cream after saying *Kiddush* (and drinking wine) on Shabbat morning?

The Shulchan Arukh (208:6) rules that a “*daysa*” (soft, grain-based cereal) that is fluid enough to be drunk is viewed as a liquid; if it is thick enough to be chewed, it is treated as a solid. Similarly, the Shulchan Arukh Ha-Rav (*Seder Birkat Ha-Nehenin* 8:8) writes: “Food which has melted to the extent that it is fit for drinking is not longer considered to be food. So too a liquid which solidifies and can be eaten is no longer considered to be a liquid.” (See also *Ve-Zot Ha-Berakha*, pg. 44 and pg. 100).

Based on this distinction, ice-cream, jelly, pudding, and soft cheeses (cottage cheese) would certainly be viewed as solids. More viscous dairy products would be viewed as liquids. R. Ovadia Yosef (Yabi’a Omer OC 8:25) disagrees and maintains that these foods should be viewed as liquids, regarding the laws of *berakhot*.

***Tziruf* – A *Berakha Acharona* after Eating Different Foods**

Different foods upon which the same *berakha rishona* is recited combine to the *shi’ur* of a *ke-zayit*. Therefore, if one eats half of a *ke-zayit* of an apple, and another half of a *ke-zayit* of an orange, one says *Borei Nefashot* afterwards. Similarly, if one eats half a *ke-zayit* of a fruit of the seven species and another half of a *ke-zayit* of another fruit of vegetable, one says *Borei Nefashot* (Mishna Berura 210:1). Liquids and solids do not combine to reach a *shi’ur*.

We learned in previous *shiurim* that when eating two foods, one says the blessing over the *ikkar* (the more important, primary food), which exempts the *tafel* (the secondary food). Similarly, a *berakha acharona* is said only over the primary food, assuming that one ate a *ke-zayit* (Shulchan Arukh 210:1; see Mishna Berura 210:1 as well).

The *Acharonim* discuss how to view a cake, the majority of the ingredients of which are usually egg, oil, and sugar, and not flour. Must one say a *berakha acharona* after eating a *ke-zayit* of cake or after eating a *ke-zayit* of flour?

The Magen Avraham (208:15; see also Derisha 208:1) maintains that one who eats a *ke-zayit* of cake or cookies, even if he does not eat a *ke-zayit* of flour, says the blessing of *Al Ha-Michya*. This seems to be the opinion of most *Rishonim* (see, for example, Rif, *Berakhot* 37b; Rambam, *Hilkhot* *Berakhot* 3:11-12; Rosh, *Berakhot* 6:7, et al.), who do not mention that one must eat a *ke-zayit* of flour. The Chayei Adam (50:21) records that this is the popular custom. The Mishna Berura 208:48) cites this as well, although he concludes that preferably one should only say a *berakha acharona* after estimating that he ate a *ke-zayit* of flour.

R. Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe, OC 1:71; see also Minchat Yitzchak 9:15 and Teshuvot Ve-Hanhagot 2:132) disagrees and expresses his amazement at the custom cited by the Mishna Berura. He insists that one should only say the *Al Ha-Michya* after eating an amount of cake which contains a *ke-zayit* of flour. Although, as mentioned, the custom seems to be in accordance with the first view, many suggest being stringent and eating a *ke-zayit* of flour. While hard, yeast cakes are generally mostly flour, in some softer cakes, flour may only be a ¼ or even less of the ingredients. As we mentioned previously, many maintain that a *ke-zayit* is indeed the size of an actual olive (i.e. 3-4 cc), in which case it would not be difficult to consume this quantity of flour, even according to the stricter opinion.

One must say a separate blessing on fruit, cheese, and other fillings, and they do not combine with the flour to equal a *ke-zayit*. Therefore, at times one may eat a very small piece of cake with a *ke-zayit* of filling and say only a *Borei Nefashot*.

***Borei Nefashot***

The blessing of *Borei Nefashot* is said after drinking (except wine) and eating rice, meat, fruits (not of the seven species), and vegetables.

Most *Acharonim* (see, for example, Shulchan Arukh 202:11 and Mishna Berura 202:55) maintain that unlike the *berakha rishona* of *She-Hakol*, *Borei Nefashot* is not a “general” blessing and cannot be said after eating foods which require a different blessing, such as *Birkat Ha-Mazon* or *Me’ein Shalosh* (*Al Ha-Michya, Peirot*,and *Gefen*). Some (see Kaf Ha-Chaim 202:79) maintain that *be-di’avad*, one who says *Borei Nefashot* after even a food that requires the *Berakha Me’ien Shalosh* fulfills his obligation. Furthermore, R. Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe, OC 1:74) suggests that if one does not have a *siddur* and does not know the *Berakha Me’ein Shalosh* by heart, he should say *Borei Nefashot* instead.

R. Ovadia Yosef (Yechaveh Da’at 2:22) disagrees and insists that *Borei Nefashot* is not a general blessing that exempts from other blessings, even in extenuating circumstances. Indeed, he takes this opportunity to implore us to know blessings by heart so that one does not find himself unable to say a blessing because he does not have a *siddur*.

***Al Ha-Michya* and *Al Ha-Gefen***

If one ate a *ke-zayit* of *mezonot* but is unsure whether he drank a *revi’it* of wine or if he ate a *ke-zayit* of fruit from the seven species, since he is already obligated to say *Al Ha-Michya*, he should mention wine (*Al Ha-Gefen*) or the fruits (*Al Ha-Peirot*) as well (Taz 208:19).

Furthermore, if one ate a *ke-zayit* of fruits from the seven species and a *ke-zayit* of other fruits, the blessing of “*Al Ha-Peirot*” suffices, as he mentions “fruits” in the blessing. If, however, he ate vegetables, he must say a *Borei Nefashot* as well (Shulchan Arukh 208:13). The Mishna Berura (208:64) notes that some *Acharonim* disagree and maintain that the blessing of *Al Ha-Peirot* covers the vegetables as well. Therefore, he suggests that one say the *Borei Nefashot* first, lest the blessing of *Al Ha-Peirot* cover both the fruit and the vegetables.

The Sha’arei Teshuva (208:9) cites *Acharonim* who maintain that although one should preferably say *Borei Nefashot* after eating rice, if one said *Al Ha-Michya*, or if one ate other cookies or crackers with the rice and said *Al Ha-Michya*, the rice is exempted. Some *Acharonim* (Kaf Ha-Chaim 208:41; Ben Ish Chai, *Pinchas* 18) maintain that even *le-khatchila*, one should say only one blessing. This is also the view of R. Ovadia Yosef (Yalkut Yosef 208:12). Others (see Shevet Ha-Levi 9:65) insist that the even the opinions cited by the Sha’arei Teshuva are somewhat novel, and surely *le-khatchila* one should say both blessings.

Just as the blessing *Borei Peri Ha-Gefen* exempts other drinks, the blessing of *Al Ha-Gefen* exempts not only the wine, but other beverages as well (Shulchan Arukh 208:15).

**Waiting Before the *Berakha Acharona***

The *mishna* (*Berakhot* 51b) teaches that one may say the *berakha acharona* “until the food in his stomach has been digested.” The Talmud (ibid. 53b) explains that this is “as long as he is not hungry.” The Mishna Berura (184:20) records that some *Acharonim* estimate this to be about 72 minutes after one finishes eating. Seemingly, this should depend on the specific food and person. If one feels satiated even after 72 minutes have passed, one may still say the blessing. The *Acharonim* write that when in doubt, a person, it is proper to eat another *ke-zayit* of food in order to be obligated to say the *berakha acharona*.

1. This collection of *shiurim* written for Yeshiva Har Etzion’s Virtual Beit Midrash (VBM) on the topic of *Berakha Acharona*, has not been fully reviewed and edited. If you have any comments, or corrections, please contact me at brofsky@gmail.com. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In recent years, of number of articles have been written on this topic. These articles were invaluable in producing this summary. See, for example: Beinish, Chaim, “*Shiur Ke-Zayit: Midot Ve-Shiurei Torah*” (Bnei Berak, 1990); Benish, Chaim, “*Shiur Ke-zayit – Bi’ur Da’at Rishonim Ve-Acharonim*,” in *Kovetz Beit Aharon Ve-Yisrael* 2; Greenfield, Avraham, “*Ha-Kesher Bein Shiurei Ke-zayit Ve-Ke-Beitza*,” *Techumin* 14 (1994); Kislev, Mordechai, “[*Ke-zayit – Peri Ha-Zayit Ke-Midat Nefach*](http://www.zomet.org.il/?CategoryID=290&ArticleID=386),” *Techumin* 10 (1989); Margolin, Hadar Yehuda, “*Beirur Shitat Ha-Chazon Ish Be-Shiur Ke-zayit*,” *Moriya* 107 (1993); Margolin, Hadar Yehuda, [*Kuntras Shiur Ha-Kezyit*](http://www.dafyomi.co.il/lectures/reviis/kuntras-kzayis.pdf) (taken from *Hidurei Ha-Midot*); Navon, Hayim, *“*[*Kama Zeitim Yesh Be-Ke-zayit*](http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/toshba/halacha/kama-2.htm),” *Alon Shevut Bogrim* 18 (2003); Slifkin, Natan, “[The Evolution of the Olive](http://www.zootorah.com/RationalistJudaism/TheEvolutionOfTtheOlive.pdf)” (2010). See also Mandelbaum, Alexander, *Ve-Zot Ha-Berakha* (1992); Melamed, Eliezer, *Peninei Halakha – Berakhot* (2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)