**YESHIVAT HAR ETZION**

**ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)**

**THE LAWS OF THE BERAKHOT**

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**Shiur #31:   
The Blessing before Fruits and Vegetables (3)**

**Cooked Vegetables, Soups, and Juices**

**Cooked Fruits and Vegetables**

The Talmud (*Berakhot* 38b) discusses the blessing that one recites over cooked vegetables:

R. Nachman expounded in the name of our teacher. And who is this? Shmuel: Over boiled vegetables, the blessing to be said is *Borei Peri Ha-Adama*. But our colleagues who came down from the Land of Israel – and who are these? Ulla in the name of R. Yochanan – say: Over boiled vegetables the blessing to be said is *She-Hakol*.

Most *Rishonim* conclude, based upon the continuation of the passage, that the proper blessing to be recited over cooked fruits and vegetables in *Borei Peri Ha-Adama*. However, they divide cooked fruits and vegetables into three categories:

1) A fruit or vegetable that is not eaten raw, but is eaten when cooked. On such a food, when eaten raw, one says *She-Hakol*, and when eaten cooked one says *Borei Peri* *Ha-Adama*.

2) A fruit or vegetable that is eaten raw, but is generally not eaten cooked. On such a food, when raw, one recites *Borei Peri Ha-Adama*, and when cooked one says *She-Hakol*.

3) A fruit or vegetable that is eaten both when raw and cooked. On such a food, one always says *Borei Peri Ha-Adama*.

The Shulchan Arukh (205:1; 202:12) cites the three categories formulated above. Accordingly, one always recites *Borei Peri Ha-Etz* before eating apples, which are eaten raw or cooked. However, before eating raw quinces and chestnuts, which are only eaten cooked, one says *She-Hakol*. Similarly, before eating cooked walnuts, almonds, dates, and figs, which are generally eaten raw, one says *She-Hakol*.

Furthermore, one does not recite a blessing before eating foods that are not generally eaten alone, but are rather mixed with other foods, such as garlic, ginger, pepper, and other spices (202:16).

The application of these principles is, of course, subject to change. For example, the Mishna Berura (205:5) writes that one says *Borei Ha-Adama* before eating cooked or pickled cabbage, but not before eating raw cabbage. Similarly, the Mishna Berura (205:18) discusses whether one says *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* before eating raw carrots. Nowadays, however, cabbage and carrots are certainly eaten raw as well as cooked, and one therefore always recites the blessing *Borei Peri Ha-Adama*.

Nowadays, onions are not generally eaten raw and on their own, and therefore the proper blessing is *She-Hakol*. However, when cooked or fried, one says *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* on onions*.*

If one incorrectly said *She-Hakol* before eating any of these fruits or vegetables, one has fulfilled his obligation, as *She-Hakol* is a more general blessing. Similarly, if one said *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* or *Borei Peri Ha-Etz* when the proper blessing was actually *She-Hakol*, one has similarly fulfilled his obligation, as the blessing still accurately describes the fruit’s origin (Shulchan Arukh 206:1 and Mishna Berura 206:3).

Interestingly, some question whether parsley should be used for *Karpas* at the Pesach *seder* due to the question of the proper blessing to recite. In countries in which parsley is not eaten raw, but rather cooked, it would be improper to recite *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* before eating parsley for the *Karpas*.

**Fruit and Vegetable Juice**

The *gemara* (Berakhot 38a) teaches that one says the blessing *She-Hakol* before consuming “honey of the date-palm” because “it is merely moisture [of the tree].” Similarly, the Shulchan Arukh (202:8) rules that one says *She-Hakol* before drinking fruit or vegetable juice, except for the liquid extracts from olives and grapes.

However, the *gemara* (Berakhot 39a) also rules that “beet-water is on the same footing as beet, and turnip-water on the same footing as turnips, and the water of all vegetables on the same footing as the vegetables themselves.” In other words, just as one says *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* and *Borei Peri Ha-Etz* before eating boiled fruits and vegetables, one similarly says these same blessings before drinking broth that they were cooked in.

The *Rishonim* note that these sources seem to contradict each other. How is it that before drinking a fruit’s natural juice, one says *She-Hakol*, but before eating the liquid in which it was cooked – that is, soup – one says *Borei Peri* *Ha-Adama*?! The *Rishonim* disagree as to the determining factor regarding the blessing. There are many opinions in the *Rishonim* regarding this matter, but we will present two of them.

Some focus on the custom, the manner in which the liquid is commonly derived. The Rashba (*Berakhot* 39a, s.v. *devash*) explains that since vegetables are generally cooked, their broth receives the same blessing as the vegetables. Fruits, however, are generally eaten raw, and their juices are therefore considered to be a separate food, upon which one recites *She-Hakol*.

Others, however, distinguish between soups and juices and maintain that the difference lies in the taste. The Rosh (6:18) suggests that when vegetables are boiled in water, the water is improved by the taste of the vegetables, and *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* should therefore be recited.

The *Rishonim* also disagree as to whether one only recites *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* over the soup if the vegetables were cooked in order to be eaten (Rosh, Responsa 4:15), if they were cooked for the soup (Rambam, *Hilkhot Berakhot* 8:4), or both. Some even suggest that one recites *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* before soup that is normally eaten with bread, as it is then viewed as a food. If, however, it is consumed as a drink, one says *She-Hakol* (Talmidei Rabbeinu Yona, *Berakhot* 27b).

The Shulchan Arukh (105:2-3) writes:

Upon [drinking] water in which vegetables are cooked, one says the blessing which is recited over the vegetables themselves, even though they contain only the taste of the vegetable. And this is only the case when one cooks [the vegetables] without meat; but if they were cooked with meat, one says *She-Hakol*.

If he squeezes them, he says over the juices *She-Hakol*.

Elsewhere, the Shulchan Arukh rules (202:10):

[When] fruits are soaked or cooked in water, even thought the water has the taste of the fruit, he only recites *She-Hakol*. The Rosh writes that it is possible that if the water assumes the taste of the fruit, he says *Borei Peri Ha-Etz.*

Although the Shulchan Arukh appears to rule in accordance with the Rosh, the *Acharonim* suggest that one should only recite *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* over soup if it was cooked with the intention of eating both the vegetables and the broth.

Furthermore, the Mishna Berura (205:12) adds that one says *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* over the broth only if the vegetables are cooked alone, without anything else to enhance the flavor. Therefore, if one makes adds soup mix or other spices to a vegetable soup or if the soup is cooked with meat, one should not say *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* on the broth.

What emerges is that in most cases, one should only say *She-Hakol* before eating soup. However, if one eats the vegetables in the soup, one should recite the blessing over the vegetables and exempt the soup, as the soup is considered to be *tafel*, secondary, to the vegetables. If the vegetables are not *tafel* to the soup, such as vegetables in a chicken soup, one should say the blessing over the vegetables (*Borei Peri Ha-Adama*), and then afterwards a blessing (*She-Hakol*) over the soup.

When a vegetable is the main part of a soup, such as a potato, lentil, bean or pear soup, one should say *Borei Peri Ha-Adama*.

Although one might suggest that one should say *Borei Peri Ha-Adama* before drinking coffee and tea, whose taste comes from cooking coffee beans and tea leaves, since the cooking is not done for the coffee beans and tea leaves, but rather for the water, the proper blessing is *She-Hakol*. Similarly, one says *She-Hakol* before drinking beer, which is made from malted grains, as they are cooked with the intention to drink the liquid.

Regarding fruit soups, as we saw above, some *Rishonim* (Rashba) maintain that since fruits are normally planted in order to produce juice and not soup, the proper blessing over their soup should be *She-Hakol*. Others (Rosh) maintain that since the fruits are cooked with water, the proper blessing would be *Borei Peri Ha-Etz*. The Shulchan Arukh (202:10-11) cites both views and concludes that one should say *She-Hakol*, in deference to both opinions. Of course, if one eats both the fruit and the soup, the blessing of *Borei Peri Ha-Etz* should be said over the fruit, and the soup is considered to be *tafel* to the soup.

Next week we will conclude our discussion of the blessings recited over fruits and vegetables.