

Class 32 – Which Brocha Achrona to Say:

In the last class, we began learning the rules of *bracha achrona*, the blessing said after consuming various foods and drinks. We established that to be obligated in a *bracha achrona*, you need to have consumed enough volume within a proper period of time. Let's do a quick review:

	How much quantity:	In how much time:
SOLID FOODS	<i>kezayit</i> - one fluid ounce / 30 cc	<i>kiday achilat pras</i> - within 3-4 minutes
LIQUIDS	<i>revi'it</i> - 4.5 fluid ounces / 133 cc	<i>kiday shetiyat revi'it</i> - 2 gulps, or continuous drinking of 30 seconds

Once it's clear that you have satisfied this requirement, you now need to work out which particular *bracha achrona* to say.

There are three possibilities:

- **(1) Grace After Meals (Birkat Hamazon)** - said after eating a meal that included bread, or a meal-sized portion of other grain foods. This will be the topic of class #34.
- **(2) The Three-Faceted Blessing** - said after eating mezonot foods, wine, and certain fruits. Discussed immediately below.
- **(3) Borei Nefashot** - the "miscellaneous" after-bracha that covers drinks, vegetables, meat, and more. Discussed in the second half of this class.

The Three-Faceted Blessing

The Three-Faceted Blessing (*Bracha M'ain Shalosh*) -- so called because it resembles the first three blessings of Birkat Hamazon -- is said if you ate a minimum quantity of either:

- mezonot foods -- e.g. one of the five grains (wheat, barley, spelt, oats, rye -- but **not** rice), whether baked, fried or cooked (but not whole roasted kernels)
- wine or grape juice
- the "five fruits" -- olives, dates, grapes, figs or pomegranate (fresh or dry)

However, the text of the bracha varies slightly depending on which of these food types you have consumed. Colloquially, the *bracha achrona* for each type is referred to by how the text starts:

FOOD TYPE	NAME OF BRACHA
mezonot foods	<i>Al Ha'michya</i>
wine or grape juice	<i>Al Ha'gefen</i>
the "five fruits"	<i>Al Ha'aitz</i>

For wine and fruits, the closing words of the Three-Faceted Blessing differ depending on whether the produce grew in Israel or in the Diaspora, due to the extra holiness of the Land of Israel which affects even the produce.

The Three-Faceted Blessing has an extra phrase inserted for Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh and holidays. If you forgot to add this line, post facto the bracha is still valid.

In Combination

Let's say you've consumed a sufficient quantity of more than one of these products. For example, you had a large plate of pasta with some tasty white wine (within the required time frame). Rather than making two separate after-brachot, you should say **one** Three-Faceted Blessing, **combining** the opening and concluding texts of both *Al Ha'michya* and *Al Ha'gefen*.

In this example, the beginning of your *bracha achrona* would sound like this:

Baruch Ata Adonoy, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, al ha'michya v'al ha'kal'kala, al hageffen v'al pri hageffen...

And the end of your *bracha achrona* will sound like this:

...v'nodeh l'cha al ha'aretz v'al hamichya, v'al pri hagaffen. Baruch Ata Adonoy, al ha'aretz v'al hamichya, v'al pri hagaffen.

When combining these into one blessing, the various phrases are said in this order of priority:

- *Al Ha'michya*
- *Al Ha'gefen*
- *Al Ha'aitz*

What about where you needed to say more than one part -- e.g. you ate pasta and drank wine -- but in saying the *bracha achrona* you mistakenly said only the words for *Al Ha'michya*. In such a case, you need to say another full bracha of *Al Ha'gefen*. Even if you realized your mistake in the middle of the first bracha, you should not try to correct yourself, but rather complete the bracha and then say the full second bracha.

What if you are in a situation of doubt -- i.e. whether you ate a *kezayit*, or ate within 3-4 minutes, or are unsure whether you already said the Three-Faceted Blessing? In such a case, you do **not** say the Three-Faceted Blessing. However, it is best to get out of the doubtful situation by using one of the methods described in class #31:

- eat more food to become obligated in a *bracha achrona*, or
- have someone else say the *bracha achrona* while having you in mind

Borei Nefashot

The after-bracha for **all other foods** is *Borei Nefashot*. This covers, for example:

- vegetables, meat, fish, dairy products
- fruits (other than olives, dates, etc. which are of the seven species and require the Three-Faceted Blessing)
- drinks (other than wine and grape juice which require the Three-Faceted Blessing)
- rice which is an exception: although its bracha rishona is *Mezonot*, its *bracha achrona* is *Borei Nefashot*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה	Bâruch Atâ Adonoy,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,	Eloheinu Melech hâ'olâm,
בוֹרֵא נַפְשוֹת רַבּוֹת וְחֶסְרוֹנָן	boray n'fâshot rabot 'ches'ronân,
עַל כֹּל מַה שֶּׁבְרָאתָ	al kol mah sheh'bârâtâ
לְהַחַיּוֹת בָּהֶם נַפְשׁ כָּל חַי.	l'ha'chayot bâ'hem nefesh kol chai.
בְּרוּךְ חַי הָעוֹלָמִים.	Bâruch chay hâ'olâmim.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe,
Who creates numerous living things with their deficiencies;
for all that You have created with which to maintain the
life of every being. Blessed is He, the life of the worlds.

The meaning of the blessing *Borei Nefashot* is that God gives life to all creatures, and fulfills our basic nourishment needs like bread and water. Beyond this, we thank God for giving us the "luxury package": To supply the body's need for nourishment, God could have created tasteless vitamin pills, or have put all the vitamins into something bland like oatmeal.

Instead, with great kindness, God created oranges and bananas so that we get our vitamin C and potassium in the most pleasurable form possible.

Food with Different After-Brachot

Oftentimes, the *bracha achrona* on one food will obviate the need to say a *bracha achrona* on other foods. Here are some general guidelines:

- Recall that we learned in class #8 that saying *Borei Pri Ha'gafen* on wine will generally cover other drinks whose bracha is normally Shehakol. Similarly, if you drank enough wine to obligate the saying of *Al Ha'gafen*, then you **do not** say a *bracha achrona* on any other drink (e.g. lemonade) that would normally warrant its own *Borei Nefashot*.
- The bracha of *Al Ha'gafen* also covers any **grapes** that you ate, post-facto.
- Similarly, if you ate enough of the "five fruits" to obligate the saying of *Al Ha'aitz*, then you **do not** say a *bracha achrona* on any other fruit that would normally warrant its own *Borei Nefashot*.

Jody attended a lecture where they set out a tray of fruit -- dates and orange slices. Jody ate wholesomely. For a bracha achrona, she said Al Ha'aitz on the dates, which also covered the orange slices.

This assumes that Jody ate a *kezayit* of dates independently. If not, and the *kezayit* is only reached with the help of the orange slices, then she should say only *Borei Nefashot* (and not *Al Ha'aitz*).

It is important to note that *Al Ha'aitz* only covers other fruits (i.e. whose bracha *rishona* is *Ha'aitz*), but **not** foods whose bracha *rishona* is *Ha'adama*.

At the next lecture in the series, Jody was happy to see that the fruit trays -- in addition to the dates and orange slices -- also included pineapple chunks. Jody ate lots of everything. For a bracha achrona, she said Al Ha'aitz on the dates, which also covered the orange slices. She also said Borei Nefashot -- because the pineapple, whose bracha rishona is Ha'adama, is not covered by the bracha achrona on the dates.