

## **Could You Pass the Conversion Test - Section #1 - Weekday Living:**

### **Section #1 - Weekday Living - Class #12 Brachos (Blessings) - Part 5 - Grain Products**

#### **GRAIN PRODUCTS:**

##### **Non – Hamotzee Bread:**

1. Although Hamotzee is said on any piece of bread no matter what the size, this is only true when the bread remains in its **original form**. Sometimes, altering the state of bread can reduce its special, elevated status, causing the bracha to "downgrade" from Hamotzee to Mezonos.
2. When bread is 1) broken into pieces smaller than a *kezayis* (which is approximately 30 cc or one liquid ounce), and 2) mixed with other ingredients, if the pieces are no longer recognizable as bread; generally, the bread loses its taste from being immersed in the other ingredients, and the bracha becomes Mezonos.
3. This is true even if the small pieces of "bread" are subsequently joined together and made into one food that is larger than a *kezayis*. For example: turkey stuffing, which is made from bread that is broken up, mixed with other ingredients, and then baked
4. If pieces of bread smaller than a *kezayis* are **cooked** (or deep-fried, which is the equivalent of cooking), the result is no longer considered bread and the bracha will be Mezonos. **This is true even if the cooked pieces of bread are still recognizable as bread.** Even if the broken pieces of bread are **joined back together** and amount to a *kezayis*, the bracha is still Mezonos. For example: Matzah balls (kneidelach) are made by rolling matzah meal into balls and then cooking them. The bracha is Mezonos.
5. In both of the above cases where altering bread changes its bracha to Mezonos, ***the new product is not even considered Pat Haba B'Kisnin.*** Therefore, even when eaten in large quantities or as a meal, the bracha is still Mezonos, and never Hamotzee.
6. Cooking bread or changing its appearance by mixing it with other ingredients only affects its bracha when the pieces are ***smaller than a kezayis***. Pieces of bread that are **larger** than a *kezayis* are still considered bread **even after** being cooked or altered. Their bracha remains Hamotzee. French Toast would require the Hamotzee blessing.
7. It is only **cooking** a bread that changes its status, but not **baking**. If bread or matzah is ground up into small pieces, made into dough and **baked**, it gets the regular rules of food made from flour: Therefore, If it is made into a bread, the bracha is Hamotzee. If it is made into a cake -- i.e. the ingredients other than water are of greater volume than the water being added, resulting in a sweet dough -- the bracha is Mezonos. For Example: bread kugel: after the bread is soaked in water and broken into pieces, various ingredients like eggs and sugar are added. Thus, it resembles more of a cake, and the bracha is Mezonos.

##### **Frying:**

8. **Deep-frying.** When a food is completely immersed in oil, it is considered as being "cooked," and the bracha is Mezonos. Classic examples are donuts and egg rolls. In this case, even if you'd eat a meals' worth (*Kiday Seudah*), the bracha would still be Mezonos, as with all cooked grain foods (like pasta).
9. **Light frying:** Food that is prepared in a frying pan with a minimal amount of oil (just enough to prevent burning), it is considered "baked," and the bracha is Hamotzee. A good example is French toast: If it is made with large pieces, the bracha is Hamotzee; if it is made with pieces smaller than a *kezayis*, the bracha is Mezonos, due to the added sugar, oil and eggs.
10. **In-between case:** When enough oil is used to affect the taste or color of the food, but not enough to deep-fry, it is unclear if such a procedure is considered cooking or baking. Therefore, when pieces of bread **smaller** than a *kezayit* are fried, it is unclear whether their bracha remains Hamotzee or if it becomes Mezonot. It is therefore recommended to eat such foods only in the course of a bread meal, since Hamotzee on actual bread certainly covers the fried bread-pieces.

### Other Foods at a Bread Meal:

1. When other foods are eaten in the same meal as bread, there is generally only **one** bracha recited: Hamotzee. The bracha on bread "covers" the other foods eaten in that meal.
2. For bread to cover the other foods, the bread must be consumed in what is a Halachik "act of eating." ***This is defined as consuming at least a kezayis of bread, within four minutes or less.*** (a *kezayis* is about the size of half a middle piece of rye bread -- 30 cc or one liquid ounce.) It is preferable to eat this amount of bread at the beginning of the meal.
3. In the event that you eat less than a *kezayis* of bread, your Hamotzee over the bread does **not** cover any other foods that you wish to now eat. The best way to handle this is to first say the relevant brachot on the **other foods**, and then say Hamotzee on your "less-than-kezayis" amount of bread.
4. However, desserts and sweets -- which are eaten simply for their good taste, not for nourishment and satiation -- are **not** covered by Hamotzee. These foods require a **separate bracha even** when eaten in the course of a meal. For example: if you eat a candy between the entree and the main course, you should say Shehakol.
5. Generally speaking, whenever you eat cake during a meal for satiation or as a dessert or for a good taste, no bracha is required. ***It is recommended, however, that when saying Hamotzee on the bread in the beginning of the meal to have in mind to cover the cake as well.***
6. The only time you make Mezonos during a meal is when the following 3 conditions are met:
  - If a baked grain food fulfills all three characteristics of *Pas Haba B'Kisnin* -- i.e. it is sweet dough, filled, and thin/crispy. For example: wafers, cherry pie whose crust is very thin and flaky, blintzes made of a very thin dough wrapping
  - It is eaten for dessert
  - You are not hungry; i.e. you are not eating the food to satiate as well.

### Eating Fruit During a Meal:

1. If you are eating fruit as the **only** main course (e.g. fruit platter), the accepted practice is **not** to say a separate bracha on the fruit. However, when starting to eat the fruit, it is recommended to eat some fruit and bread **together** in the same bite.
2. When fruit is prepared as a dish, and eaten as a course within the meal, no separate bracha is made on the fruit. For example: fruit soup and Waldorf salad.
3. If fruit is eaten at the beginning of the meal as an appetizer (e.g. halved grapefruit or fruit cocktail), technically no bracha is necessary. However, it is advisable to say a bracha on a small piece of the fruit **before** saying Hamotzee.
4. When fruit is eaten as a dessert for its good and refreshing taste, a separate bracha must be made on the fruit -- **regardless** of whether it is eaten in the beginning, middle, or end of the meal. In this case, you should specifically eat the first bite **without** bread, and say a bracha on the fruit.
5. If you want to eat a food that requires a separate bracha when eaten **during** a bread meal (e.g. a fruit) you are permitted to say a Ha'aitz on a fruit **before** the meal. If you have the "during-meal fruit" in mind when saying the bracha now, you won't need to say a bracha on that fruit during the meal.

### Drinks During a Meal:

1. Beverages served during a meal to quench your thirst or to stimulate your appetite are covered by the Hamotzee on the bread. This covers the majority of drinks during a meal.
2. Drinking a beverage solely in order to aid digestion is **not** regarded as eating for satiation, is considered unrelated to the meal, and a bracha is required.
3. Wine that is drunk even as part of the meal, is not covered by Hamotzee said on the bread.
4. If you say Ha'gafen on a glass of wine **before** the meal begins (i.e. before saying Hamotzee), any wine you drink **during** the meal is also covered by that initial bracha. This is only true, however, if at the time when you said Ha'gafen you intended to drink wine during the meal.
5. If you are drinking at least two ounces of wine during or before a bread meal, then Shehakol is not required on any subsequent drinks during the meal -- even if the drink would have required a bracha -- since they were covered by the bracha Ha'gafen.
6. If you drink a customary "L'Chaim" on a beverage between the fish and meat course, you would have to make a Shehakol on that drink only if you did not make a Hagofen on wine before or during the meal.