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The Rise & Fall of Wonder Bread

BY RABBI TZVI ROSEN

STAR-K KASHRUS ADMINISTRATOR
EDITOR, KASHRUS KURRENTS

It has been called the staff of life. “*Lechem*” (bread) makes a quick cameo appearance for posterity when the *Ribbono Shel Olam* charts the course of mankind for time immemorial by punishing Adam HaRishon with the words, “*Bezaiais apecha tochal Lechem*”,¹ “You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow.” Of course, it is obvious to everyone – both young and old – that *lechem* means bread!

It is universally understood that “*lechem*” refers to bread. Later on in *Sefer Bereishis*, Avrohom Avinu provided Haggar and Yishmael with some *lechem* and *mayim* (bread and water) when they were banished from his home. *Mon* was known as the “*lechem haklokeil*”, the bread that was absorbed within the innards of the *Dor Hamidbar*. The *Korbon ha’Omer*, barley sacrifice on the 16th of *Nissan*, permitted the consumption of “*lechem koli v’carmel*” – the new bread and grain products. But why is bread called “*lechem*,” and why is bread produced by the sweat of Adam’s brow?

If we analyze the etymology of the word “*lechem*”, we can gain a greater insight into the very essence of the foundation of the food pyramid. The root letters of “*Lechem*” – *Lamed*, *Ches*, *Mem* – form the basis of another age-old global reality – *Milchama* – conflict at best, or battle at worst. The very essence of bread production, from its very inception to the very first bite, is rooted in the sweat and struggle of “*b’zeis apecha tochal lechem*.”²

Man must first struggle with the earth to ready it for planting – clearing, plowing, seeding, and weeding the land in addition to battling the elements. Once these challenges have been surmounted, the field awaits the “blessings” from the *Ribbono Shel Olam* so that the stalks of grain will grow. Once the stalks are harvested, the next series of struggles need to occur before one may obtain kernels of grain. After harvesting, the grains need to be separated, winnowed, and threshed. Then the grain must be milled into flour. Again, the milling process is a series of physical activities including tempering, breaking, grinding, and sifting the grain in order to separate the flour. Once this has been accomplished, the flour must undergo another series of transformations as it begins the baking process. Flour is mixed with water, which causes chemical changes in the flour. A leavening agent, such as yeast or sour dough, is added to aid the natural enzymes that are released when the flour and water mixture combines to form a dough. Once the dough has risen, it must be flipped, turned, and punched down in order to rise again. It is then ready to be cut, shaped, and finally put into the oven. The result is delicious bread that was literally and figuratively baked with “*zaiais apecha*”, the sweat of the brow.³

What is bread? Bread is defined as a staple made from flour mixed with other dry and liquid ingredients, usually combined with a leavening

1. *Bereishis* 3:19
2. Rav S. R. Hirsch, *Bereishis* 3:19
3. *Malbim*, *Bereishis* 3:19

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Getting Into the Thick of Things- GELATIN



BY RABBI AVROHOM MUSHELL
STAR-K KASHRUS ADMINISTRATOR

Have you ever had a slice of *p’tcha galarita* – that spicy, globby stuff Bubby used to cook up? How did she manage to make it so thick?

Better yet, open a can of *gefилte* fish. Look at the stiff jell that comes as its broth. Why is it that when you cook your own *gefилte* fish, you do not get that solid jelly from your broth?

Did you ever wonder why theirs is so thick and yours is not?

COLLAGEN may be the answer to this thickening question.

Collagen is a fibrous, insoluble protein that makes up a major portion of bone, skin and connective tissue. By cooking animal bones or adding fish bones to the broth of your *gefилte* fish, you will extract some of the collagen from the bones. This gives you the wobbly jelly in *p’tcha* or in the *gefилte* fish that comes in a can.

The most common form in which collagen is marketed is partially hydrolyzed state known commonly as gelatin. The word gelatin comes from the Latin word *gelatus*, meaning stiff or frozen. Gelatin stiffness is measured in units called Bloom. This refers to a measuring device developed by a man named Oscar T. Bloom. High bloom refers to a higher molecular weight of the gelatin, which provides a stiffer consistency. Different applications will require different bloom levels.

With the commercialization of food processing, this versatile ingredient has shown its usefulness in a variety of foods. We may well be aware of its use in

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Getting Into the Thick of Things - GELATIN

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producing jelly-like confections from Jell-O to Gummy Bears. However, the usefulness of gelatin goes beyond that. Gelatin is fat-free, yet it leaves a smooth feeling in your mouth, similar to that of fat. This effect is very useful as an additive to foods that are marketed as low fat. Gelatin also acts as an emulsifier, helping to distribute fat and add stability to confections. This is beneficial in toffees or spreadable frostings, creams, yogurts and ice creams. Adding gelatin can make a candy last longer, since gelatin does not break down as quickly as sugar. This makes the addition of gelatin ideal for throat lozenges. Similarly, hard sugar glazes will stay white and not run when gelatin is added. Gelatin can hold shape when aerated to create light and fluffy marshmallows. In vitamins and medicines, gelatin can be used as a coating to mask a bitter taste or as a capsule to contain the powders. Some use plain gelatin as a protein supplement to their diet. All in all, gelatin is remarkably versatile and ideal for the manufacture of many processed foods and confections. The only question to the kosher consumer is, "Can one use foods containing gelatin?"

The answer, in short, is that it depends upon the source of the gelatin. As previously mentioned, gelatin is made by extracting collagen from the bones and skins of animals, and skins or scales of fish. Most commonly, the gelatin made from animal products is not manufactured from kosher or kosher-slaughtered animals. There are several questions that must be addressed in order to understand the *halachic* status of gelatin. To begin with, the *Torah* prohibits eating the meat of those animals or fish designated as *tamei* (unclean/non-kosher). Examples are pigs, horses, catfish, and shark. Meat of an animal that is *tahor* (clean/kosher) and not properly slaughtered is prohibited by the *Torah* as *nevela*. Do these prohibitions also apply to the bones and skin of the animal? If the prohibitions of *nevela* and *tamei* were to apply to the skins and bones, can this status be altered through the process used in manufacturing gelatin? Lastly, if the animal source for the gelatin is kosher, does it retain the properties inherent to its source? Is such gelatin considered a meat product, rendering it forbidden to be cooked or eaten with dairy products? If the source is fish, can it be used together with meat? The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Yoreh Deah* 116:2) states that one may not eat fish together with meat, as it is considered unhealthy. This is based on the *Gemora*, which teaches that meat which is cooked with fish causes disease. Does gelatin extracted from fish carry this restriction?

In reference to the question as to whether or not the processing alters the status of the meat, we may cite a similar question discussed in *Yoreh Deah* (87:10). It used to be the common practice to make cheese curd by adding the skin of a calf's stomach to milk, or by letting the milk sit in a calf's stomach. The *Rema* states that where the stomach has been salted and dried to the extent that is like a piece of wood, and milk is subsequently added, one would be permitted to use the resulting cheese. The *Shach* notes that although one may use such milk products, it is not proper to do this intentionally. The *Pri Megadim* notes that the *Rema's* leniency

applies specifically to the stomach of an animal which contains less meat flavor, and not to regular meat. The *Pri Megadim* adds that the *Rema* allowed this only where the stomach was removed from the milk after a short time, and was not heated together with the milk. If the stomach stays for a period of over 24 hours, or if it is heated with the milk, it would absorb the meat flavor which would render it forbidden for use.

These statements were made in reference to dried kosher meat parts, which were kosher and did not carry a prohibition. The fact that they were dried prevents them from attaining a prohibited status when mixed with milk. This may not be the case when the source is not kosher. There is a rule that states, "That which comes out of an unclean (non-kosher) source remains unclean (non-kosher)." If so, we should say that the by-products of a non-kosher animal retain their non-kosher status.

As to the question regarding whether hides are considered to be meat, *Horav* Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* addressed this issue in *Igros Moshe* (*Yoreh Deah* Vol 1 #37). He writes that animal hides are not considered to be meat (prohibiting its mixture with milk) by *Torah* law; they are, however, prohibited with milk by rabbinic law. If they are dried and processed, the resulting

gelatin is not included in this rabbinic prohibition. Therefore, gelatin produced from kosher slaughtered animal hides may be intentionally used with milk, provided that the hides are cleaned in order to remove any meat residue. Some opinions disagree with *Horav* Feinstein's conclusion, most notably *Horav* Aharon Kotler *zt"l*, who concludes that gelatin produced from kosher hides is considered to be a meat product. However, there is room for leniency when dealing with gelatin that is derived from kosher hides, as the gelatin has little or no taste. Therefore, it can be nullified in *pareve* ingredients which

would result in a *pareve* product. (This does not contradict the rule *ein m'vatlin issur lechatchila*, as it is *heter*.) However, gelatin from non-kosher hides retains its forbidden status.

It must be noted that we have not addressed the question of blood in or on the hides. We know that blood is prohibited for consumption by *Torah* law. This is why we salt our meats prior to cooking. There is a question regarding animal hides, and whether or not we assume there is blood absorbed in them which must be removed. To satisfy all opinions, one would be required to salt the hides prior to processing.

The question of whether or not the bones of a non-kosher animal carry the same prohibition as the meat is discussed in *Yoreh Deah* (99). The *Shulchan Aruch* maintains that the bones of a prohibited animal are kosher and would, in fact, count as part of the permitted food, in constituting a majority of sixty kosher parts. The *Rema* maintains that although the bones themselves are not prohibited, they do not count as part of the kosher percentage when mixed with other kosher food. The *Shach* quotes the strict view that the moisture in the bones of non-kosher animals is not kosher; only dry bones are viewed as kosher.

GELATIN USES	
Gel Desserts	Marshmallows
Ice Creams	Toffees
Gummy Bears	Vitamins
Throat Lozenges	Frostings
Low Fat Items	Capsules
Sugar Glazes	Yogurts
Emulsifiers	Protein Supplements



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Some rabbinic authorities interpret the collagen as being part of the natural liquid of the bone, which was prohibited by the *Shach*.

It should be noted that even the *Shulchan Aruch* was only talking about the actual bone itself, not the marrow of the bone, which is treated as meat and is prohibited. Furthermore, if the bone was already cooked with non-kosher meat or bone-marrow, it is rendered unkosher.

As you may have deduced from the above information, in order to produce gelatin from a non-kosher animal bone, it may only be done with cleaned and dried bone, without any marrow or soft tissue. Rabbinic authorities note that one cannot assume that the manufacturer's process alone will be pure enough to produce gelatin in a kosher manner. We should also take into account the opinions that the collagen in the bone is prohibited as part of the animal's liquids. All things considered, one should refrain from consuming gelatin from a non-kosher animal. Indeed, this is the practice of most reputable kosher certifying organizations. Where the source of the gelatin is a kosher animal, there are still logistical problems to overcome. Aside from the prohibitions of *tamei* and *nevela*, as previously noted, we must also be concerned with the prohibition of *treifa*. This refers to the *Torah's* prohibition against the consumption of animals that possess certain injuries or disorders. Since most of the inspections conducted to determine if the animal is *treifa* are done after the slaughter and skinning of the animal, the hides must be tracked to be sure that *treifa* hides are not mixed with kosher hides. For this reason, meticulous supervision is needed to oversee production. As with any kosher food, it must be produced on kosher equipment. If the processing is to be done in a non-kosher plant (as is usually the case), the equipment must be cleaned and kosherized before kosher production.

Similarly, fish gelatin must be produced from a kosher species of fish if it is to be considered kosher. The use of fish gelatin with meat foods poses an interesting question. As previously noted, the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Yoreh Deah* 116) prohibits the cooking of meat and fish together due to health concerns. We tend to be more stringent when dealing with possible health issues than with concerns of *Issur* (prohibited substances). Therefore, there is a question among the commentaries as to whether or not the rule of one in sixty nullification applies to unhealthy substances just as it does with prohibited substances. The custom is that unhealthy substances become nullified at a ratio of 1 to 60 (see *Nekudas Hakesef*, *Yoreh Deah* 116 & *Pische Teshuvah*).

There are many reasons for leniency in the use of fish gelatin together with meat. Many rabbinic authorities are of the opinion that the nature of some foods has changed, thus rendering the mixture of meat and fish no longer unhealthy (see *Magen Avrohom Orach Chaim* 173:1, *Teshuvos Chasam Sofer* vol:1 #101). Furthermore, there is a rationalization that not all fish would be considered a dangerous mixture with meat. It may be that only the type mentioned in the *Gemora* (*Binita*) is unhealthy (see *Pische Tshuvah*, *Yoreh Deah* 116:3). It may also be maintained that the

unhealthy aspects of fish cooked with meat are found in the flesh of the fish, and not in their skin, scales and bones (from which gelatin is made). Since gelatin may not have fish flavor, it may not harbor the harmful effects that fish may carry (see *Pische Tshuva*, *Tshuvos Sride Eish* vol:2 #67 re: cooking beef in fish oil). With this same reasoning, we can say that gelatin can be *batel* (nullified) with a majority of other food ingredients and can be eaten with meat (according to R' Aharon Kotler, ז"ל regarding animal gelatin and milk). For these reasons, it may be acceptable to use products containing fish gelatin with meat, or use the same reasoning to allow products containing animal gelatin with fish.

In summary, gelatin produced from *tahor* species that are properly processed (slaughtered, internally checked, and salted in the case of animal source) and produced on kosher equipment is acceptable.

Gelatin Substitutes : Agar Agar, Carrageenan

Gums & Thickeners : Gum Arabic, Carob, Guar, Karaya, Pectin, Tragacanth, Xanthan

In today's market, there are reliably kosher gelatins available from both animal and fish sources.

There are other gelatin substitutes that are not animal or fish based, which have properties similar to gelatin and can serve in its stead. Common among them are Agar Agar and Carrageenan, made from sea vegetation. Agar Agar or Katen is derived from a red algae known as *gelidium comeum*. Agar Agar has strong setting properties similar to gelatin. In fact, unlike gelatin which needs refrigeration to set, Agar Agar will gel at room temperature. Gels made from Agar Agar are affected by acidity more than gelatin. Thus, one may find that fruity deserts made with Agar Agar are more likely to turn watery.

Carrageenan, also known as Irish Moss, is a reddish purple seaweed. Its gel is not as stiff as gelatin or Agar Agar, but it is quite useful as an emulsifier as well as a gelling or thickening additive. There are other vegetable derivatives that can serve to replace gelatin as stabilizers, emulsifiers, or thickeners. Pectin, used in jams and jellies, is a complex carbohydrate extracted from apple pulp and citrus rinds. There are many other vegetable gums that can be used, as well. Amongst them are the gums of Guar, Carob, Gum Arabic, Tragacanth, and Karaya. Guar is a legume commonly found in Pakistan and India. Gum Arabic is derived from the sap of acacia trees found in the Sudan and West Africa. Locust bean gum extracted from carob beans (*Buxser*) is common in the Middle-East and the Mediterranean. Tragacanth gum is gathered from the sap of the astragalus shrub common to Asia. Karaya or sterculia gum is from the sterculia tree found in India. Xanthan Gum, often seen as an ingredient in kosher salad dressings and the like, is not of plant origin. It is produced by the microbial fermentation of a carbohydrate with the *xanthomonas campestris* organism. Gelatin substitutes are also making headway in the field of vitamin and medicinal capsules.

So, when you want to get into the thick of it, or if you want your dessert to gel, there are alternatives that do not compromise good *kashrus* standards.



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agent, which is kneaded, shaped, and baked. What are the *halachic* qualifications for *lechem*? The *Chochmas Odom* sets down six criteria:⁴

1. The flour has to be made from at least one of the five main cereal grains, *chameishes minei dagan*: Wheat, Barley, Rye, Oats, Spelt.
2. The flour should be kneaded with water and not any other liquid, such as juice.
3. The dough should not be kneaded or filled with additional products, such as nuts and fruits.
4. The dough should have a thick consistency, unlike batter.
5. The dough that is being baked should have some thickness.
6. The baking should be done in an oven or a pan without water.

If these conditions are met, this bakery product fulfills the criteria of bread, and the *brocha* recited on this type of product is *Hamotzi Lechem Min Haaretz*.

Grain products that do not fulfill these criteria may fall into various categories. If the dough is boiled instead of baked i.e. *knaidlach*, wontons, or pasta, this dough product would not be considered bread and the *brocha* recited would be *Mezonos*.⁵ Breads produced from flour other than the five main bread grains, such as corn or rice flour,⁶ would not qualify for a *brocha* of *Hamotzi*. These products would bear a *brocha* that could vary from *Shehakol* to *Hoadama* to *Mezonos*, depending upon the flour used and the size of the grit. If the combination of ingredients has a thin batter-like consistency, similar to that of a pancake which is cooked on a griddle, the “*lechem*” criteria is not fulfilled; the *brocha* recited would be *Borei Minei Mezonos*.

There are some specialty bread products that do not fulfill the criteria of *Hamotzi* bread, and if consumed in small amounts the *brocha* required would be *Borei Minei Mezonos*. If consumed in sizable amounts, one would be required to wash and recite *Hamotzi*. These specialty breads are known as *pas habaa b'kisnin*. The *Shulchan Aruch*⁷ lists a number of possibilities which would qualify an item as *pas habaa b'kisnin*, which is described as either a bread dough baked and filled with honey, nuts, oil and spices, or a sweet dough recipe such as a yeast cake or *bobka*. Another explanation of *pas habaa b'kisnin* is a bread dough that is baked into a hard cracker-like texture, such as flat bread crackers, bread sticks, or pretzels. Some maintain that if the dough is mixed with oil, honey, milk, or fruit juices the sweet roll would then be considered to be *pas habaa b'kisnin*.

There are those who maintain that the infamous *Mezonos* rolls, which are bread rolls mixed with water and apple juice, fall into the category of *pas habaa b'kisnin*, and one would not be required to wash *netilas yadayim* on these types of rolls. However, since these rolls usually taste like regular bread rolls, there are two fundamental issues associated with them.⁸ First, if they taste like a regular bread roll then they do not meet the criteria of *pas habaa b'kisnin*. Second, these rolls are typically served with an airline meal as an alternative to the dinner roll. The *halacha* clearly states

that if one is eating *pas habaa b'kisnin* with a dinner meal, then one would be required to wash and recite *Hamotzi*.⁹

Breads can be classified into two distinct categories: a) yeast breads that rise, such as *challah*, rye bread, Italian and French bread, and b) flatbreads such as pita, lavash, Indian naan and roti, as well as flour tortillas. These ‘flatbreads’ should not be confused with the hard flat bread crackers, which are considered *pas habaa b'kisnin*. These flatbreads are made with yeast or baking soda and use the same ingredients as their high-rising counterparts. They do not rise as long and are baked in a high heat oven for only a couple of seconds. The thin dough and the high heat cause the pita or roti bread to expand and form a “pocket.” A modern day pita oven using a combination of direct fire and heat, ranging between 800° and 900° F, will bake the pita in 15 to 20 seconds; older ovens will take 40 to 60 seconds. Traditional lavash or “*aish tanur*” is actually slapped onto the side of a cylindrical stone brick oven and baked, as it adheres to the side of the *tanur*; in a brick oven, it would take 30 seconds. As the lavash turns slightly brown, it is removed from the oven. Industrial lavash will bake even faster than pita because it is thinner; lafa, which is thicker than lavash, will also bake very quickly. Homemade flour tortillas are made on a griddle and baked long enough to form air pockets, which turn slightly brown. Industrial pressed tortillas require 24 to 40 seconds baked at an oven temperature of 375°F to 500°F, depending upon the thickness of the tortilla. Die-cut tortillas require only 17 to 25 seconds to bake.

There has been much *halachic* discussion about the flour tortilla. It is about the same thickness as lavash, and definitely thicker than a ‘*bletel*’, a crepe. Furthermore, when describing a thin crepe-like product called “*niblash*”,¹⁰ the *brocha* of which is *Borei Minei Mezonos*, the *Mishna Brura* describes a Russian delicacy called “*nolsilka*”,¹¹ which was a water and flour batter that was either poured over vegetables and baked in the oven or poured onto a griddle. He reiterates that the crepe has to be very thin. If the product would have a thicker consistency, the *brocha* recited would be *Hamotzi*.

A flour tortilla wrap conforms with the *Chayei Odom*’s criteria. It is made from a dough, *bliloso ova*. It is proofed and baked, just like a pita, albeit at a lower temperature and for a longer amount of time. Nevertheless, there have been naysayers who claim that a wrap should not be categorized as a bread product. As one great detective famously said, “The facts Ma’am. Just the facts.” Resolving the tortilla issue requires just that – the facts. So, we turned to the experts, who shared with us how they perceive flour tortillas. Eugene Suarez Sr., President of S&K Industries, producer of Abuelita brand flour tortillas, imparted the following:

Flour tortillas, made with wheat flour and used as a substitute for bread in many households, were the original products found in retail outlets, restaurants, and households throughout the United States and northern Mexico. The flour tortilla was a precursor to the tortilla wrap, which is now manufactured in a variety of sizes, flavors, and colors. While the original flour tortilla is also used in the processing of wraps, the exotic flavors and colors tended to be used as the product of choice for making wraps.

Wraps can be best described as a sandwich full of a variety of food products such as cheese, lettuce, and any deli product. A wrap

4. *Chayei Adam* 42:1

5. *Orach Chaim* 168:13 *Rema*

6. *O.C.* 208:7, 8

7. *O.C.* 168:7

8. *O.C.* 168 *Mishna Brura* 29

9. *Biur Halacha* *ibid*

10. *O.C.* 168:8

11. *O.C.* *Mishna Brura* 37

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"-ASE" לכל חפץ

BY RABBI ZUSHE BLECH



In the course of his daily routine, a *mashgiach* deals with dozens – if not hundreds – of food ingredients. In the arcane world of modern food technology, terms like “enzymes”, “substrates”, “emulsifiers”, “stabilizers”, and “surfactants” lend some technical significance. But, in the real world one may ask, “What has an enzyme done for me lately?” This article will address some of the direct applications of enzymes in our diet.

The first thing we should do is clarify enzyme terminology. The word *enzyme* comes from the Greek meaning “in leaven”. Long ago, it was recognized that the fermented dough which was used to leaven bread (שארור) brought about changes in dough that could not be attributed to the ingredients of the leaven itself. This unknown component found in leaven was called an “enzyme”. We now know that an enzyme is a protein that acts as a “biological catalyst”, causing changes in other foods. As more enzymes were recognized, they were given names that classically ended with “-in” – such as *rennin*, *pepsin*, *trypsin*, *papain*, *bromelain*, etc. Modern names associated with enzymes consist of a word ending with “-ase”, such as *protease*, *amylase*, *lipase*, etc. The enzyme name is formed by adding “-ase” to the base material that is to be modified.

Enzymes are critical to the production of many basic foods. The production of fruit juice uses *pectinase* to break down the pectin naturally found in the fruit. Pectin is a colloid that causes gelling, and is often added to jams and jellies for this purpose. In order to squeeze the most juice from a fruit, however, pectinase is added. *Cellulase* is also used to break down the cellulose pulp in the fruit for the same reason. Many natural fruit juices contain a small amount of starch that causes them to appear cloudy; therefore, an *amylase* (*amylum* is Greek for starch) is added to help clarify the juice.

Corn syrup is made from cornstarch, which has been broken down (*hydrolyzed*) into its component glucose. Different types of amylase are used for this purpose. High Fructose Corn Syrup is produced with an enzyme called *glucose isomerase*, which converts glucose into fructose. Granulated sugar (sucrose) is a molecule consisting of glucose and fructose; *invertase* is often used to separate glucose and fructose to make invert syrup.

Enzymes are added to a product in the factories, far removed from the household. When was the last time someone made a batch of High Fructose Corn Syrup in their kitchen? Do enzymes ever make their way directly into one's life?

The answer is yes – and in some very interesting ways. For example, many people are lactose intolerant. Lactose, or milk sugar, is a complex sugar composed of glucose and galactose. In order to be able to digest this sugar, an enzyme called lactase is required. While this enzyme is abundant in the digestive tract of children, lactose production often declines as people reach adulthood. Without lactase, lactose merely passes through the digestive tract where it ferments in the large intestine with less than pleasant results. Modern food science has been able to address this issue by producing lactase enzymes through fermentation. Concentrated lactase is then added to milk to make lactose-reduced milk. Alternatively, lactase tablets can be swallowed immediately prior to eating dairy products, in order to increase the amount of lactase available in one's digestive system.

Similarly, there are certain sugars that are poorly digested, e.g. raffinose that occurs in beans. While *עניג שבת* may call for a good *cholent*, the bean sugars in this delicacy are not well digested. They wind up rather unceremoniously fermenting in the large intestine. Modern food technology has again come to the rescue. They have developed a specialized enzyme called *alpha galactosidase*, which enables the breakdown of the offending sugars and allows them to be more easily digested.

Another household use of enzymes can save money at the dinner table and even help lower cholesterol, albeit indirectly. The USDA grades meat based upon the amount of fat it contains (marbling). The more marbled the meat, the tastier and more tender it is. USDA Prime grade is the most tender grade, has the highest level of fat and cholesterol, and costs the most. USDA Choice has less fat than USDA Prime, while USDA Select has even less and is more economical. With the drive to lower the amount of fat and cholesterol consumed, much of the beef sold today is of a lower grade. However, these grades of meat tend to be tougher and less tasty. Without a means of remedying this deficiency, the popularity of these grades would clearly suffer. To solve this problem, meat tenderizers have been developed. Meat is a protein, and a class of enzymes called *protease* breaks down tough meat protein into softer and more tender fare. Some of these proteases are produced through fermentation, while others are natural plant extracts from the pineapple plant (*bromelain*) and papaya (*papain*). In the hands of a skilled and economical chef, these meat tenderizers can be used to masquerade some of the toughest cuts of meat as prime rib! Indeed, enzymes can help to make one healthy, wealthy, and wise.



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is considered a finger food as opposed to a burrito, which is the traditional method of eating the tortilla. The flour tortilla is also used as a scooper by aficionados of Mexican food.

The flour tortilla, made with wheat flour as its main ingredient, can be compared to “Wonder Bread.” This is not to say that flour tortillas are identical to bread, because additional ingredients are used to render the tortillas as flat and pliable, with distinctive flavor.

While there will always be a cultural difference between “Mexicans” and “Americans” who consume flour tortillas, the perception is the same: Both cultures eat



wraps, as well as burritos. Witness the fact that American restaurants also feature wraps alongside a traditional “meat and potatoes” menu.

Eugene's above explanation was mirrored by Martin Galvan, Research & Development Manager for La Reina Mexican Foods, who stated that flour tortillas are the Mexican bread counterpart.

As we clearly see, these bread varieties – whether tall, short, long or thin – share one thing in common. They are the staples, as well as the pride of their country of origin that grace their respective breadbaskets, and the *brocha* that one would recite on them is *Hamotzi*.



Insights from the Institute

SHAILOS FROM THE
INSTITUTE OF HALACHAH



RABBI MORDECHAI FRANKEL
DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF HALACHAH

Q: Could you give me some guidelines as to when sheva brochos are recited?

A: When a *chosson* and *kallah* get married, *sheva brochos* are recited on three occasions: (i) under the *chupah*, (ii) at the end of the meal following the *chupah*, and (iii) at the end of subsequent meals that are made *lekovod* the *chosson* and *kallah*. It is this third category which is commonly known as *sheva brochos*. If the *chosson* and *kallah* have both been previously married, *sheva brochos* are recited only on the day of the wedding.¹ If either the *chosson* or *kallah* has not been previously married, *sheva brochos* are recited on the seven days following the wedding, with the day of the wedding reckoned as the first of those seven days.² If neither the *chosson* nor the *kallah* have previously been living an observant lifestyle (or if one of them has not been living an observant lifestyle, and the other had been previously married), a rabbi should be consulted as to whether *sheva brochos* should be recited for seven days.³

Sheva brochos are recited immediately after *Birchas Hamazon*. *Ashkenazim* may recite them at any meal prepared in honor of the *chosson* and *kallah*, regardless of where it takes place.⁴ However, *sheva brochos* are only recited if the *chosson* and *kallah* are present to hear them.⁵ Furthermore, *sheva brochos* are recited only when ten males over the age of *bar mitzvah* are present.⁶ The *chosson* may be counted as one of the ten men.⁷ At least seven of the ten men should eat bread, and the remainder of

the ten men should eat some food.⁸ In such circumstances, the *zimun* can be recited with the name of *Hashem* and all ten men can respond.⁹

Sheva brochos are recited only when there are *ponim chadashos* present at the meal.¹⁰ '*Ponim chadashos*' means 'new faces', and refers to a person over the age of *bar mitzvah* who has not yet participated in any of the *sheva brochos* for a particular *chosson* and *kallah*.¹¹ A person is considered one of the *ponim chadashos* if he did not partake of the meal following the *chupah* and did not hear the subsequent *sheva brochos*, even though he did hear the *sheva brochos* recited under the *chupah*.¹² For *Ashkenazim*, *sheva brochos* may be recited at a meal made *lekovod* the *chosson* and *kallah*, as long as at least one of the people present is a *ponim chadashos*.¹³ Ideally, the *ponim chadashos* should be someone who increases the *simcha* of the *chosson* or *kallah*.¹⁴ This includes a friend of the *chosson* or *kallah*, a friend of their parents, or a distinguished person whose presence is an honor.¹⁵ If no such person is in attendance, it is customary to recite *sheva brochos* if at least one of the people present is a *ponim chadashos*, even if this does not increase the *simcha* of the *chosson* or *kallah*.¹⁶

The *ponim chadashos* need to be present, but do not need to partake of the meal.¹⁷ *Ponim chadashos* are not necessary at the night and day meals on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*;¹⁸ they are not necessary at *seuda shelishis* on *Shabbos* if a *drasha* is given at the meal,¹⁹ even if the meal finishes at night.²⁰ *Ponim chadashos* are necessary on *Chol Hamoed*,²¹ *Chanukah*, and *Purim*.²² *Sheva brochos* may be recited only if the meal is conducted in a manner condoned by the *Torah*, such that the *simcha* of the *chosson* and *kallah* is shared by the *Ribbono Shel Olam*.²³



1 שו"ע אהע"ז סי' סב סעי' ו, ובענין אלמון שנשא אלמנה ביום ולא עשו הסעודה ראשונה עד הלילה האם יברכו שבע ברכות עי' בב"י סי' סב בבדק הבית ובח"מ שם ס"ק ו ובב"ש שם ס"ק ה ובט"ז שם ס"ק ג ובבאר היטב שם ס"ק ה ובעזר מקודש שם ובפת"ש שם ס"ק י ובערוך השלחן שם עי' לג ובשו"ת אג"מ אהע"ז ח"ד סי' פח אות ב ובשו"ת יביע אומר ח"א אהע"ז סי' ז אות ב.
2 שו"ע סי' סב סעי' ו, ולגבי מתי נחשב סיום הז' ימים עי' ברמ"א שם ובח"מ שם ס"ק ז ובפת"ש שם ס"ק ב ובערוך השלחן שם סעי' לא ובספר אהלי ישרון ח"א פ"ב הערות 9-10 בשם הגר"מ פיינשטיין זצ"ל ובספר הנשואין כהלכתם פרק יד הערה 25 בשם הגר"ש אלישיב זצ"ל ובשו"ת שבת הלוי ח"א או"ח סוף סי' לט וח"ג סי' צא.
3 עי' פת"ש סי' סב ס"ק ט
4 ט"ז סי' סב ס"ק ז בשם המהר"ל מפראג וב"ש שם ס"ק יג וערוך השלחן שם סעי' לה-לו, ולעדת בני ספרד יש מנהגים שונים בזה. והפת"ש שם ס"ק יט הביא שהחכמת אדם כתב שבמלון שלנין שם חתן וכלה אין לברך ז' ברכות משום שאינם עושים הסעודה לכלבד החתן וכלה, ובספר אהלי ישרון ח"א פ"ב הערה 62 הביא בשם הגר"מ פיינשטיין זצ"ל שאם אומרים לכל הקרואים לסעודה שהוא בשביל החתן וכלה מהני שזדה מוכח דהאי סעודה נעשה בשבילם, וגם ראוי לבקש מהחתן וכלה שישבו במקום שניכר דהסעודה לכבודם ולשמחתם.
5 הנשואין כהלכתם פרק יד הערה *188 בשם הגר"ש אלישיב זצ"ל, ועי' בשו"ת יביע אומר ח"א אהע"ז סי' ט מש"כ בזה.
6 שו"ע סי' סב סעי' ד.
7 שו"ע שם.
8 עי' בפת"ש סי' סב ס"ק ח ובשו"ת יביע אומר ח"א אהע"ז סי' יא.
9 שו"ע או"ח סי' קצז סעי' ב.
10 שו"ע סי' סב סעי' ז.
11 בחי' הריטב"א כתובות דף ז ע"ב הובא בשטמ"ק שם כתב שאשה אינה יכולה להיות

פנים חדשות, ודברי השטמ"ק מובאים בפת"ש סי' סב ס"ק יד, וזהו דלא כחי' חתם סופר כתובות דף ז ע"ב ד"ה אלא שכתב שאשה יכולה להיות פנים חדשות, ועי' בספר משמר הלוי כתובות דף ז בשם מרן הסטייפלר זצ"ל בזה.
12 בשו"ע סי' סב סעי' ז כתב שכן פשט המנהג, ועי' בב"ש שם ס"ק ח ובעזר מקודש שם.
13 ח"מ סי' סב ס"ק ט וב"ש שם ס"ק ז, ולגבי מנהג הספרדים עי' בשו"ת יביע אומר ח"א אהע"ז סי' יא.
14 שו"ע סי' סב סעי' ח בשם י"א, ובספר הנשואין כהלכתם עמ' תמ הערה 116 הביא מספר שובע שמחות שהחזון איש היה מקפיד בזה.
15 עי' בספר אהלי ישרון ח"א פ"ב הערה 55 בשם הגר"מ פיינשטיין זצ"ל.
16 עי' בערוך השלחן סי' סב סעי' כג-כו ובשו"ת יביע אומר ח"א אהע"ז סי' יא, ומו"ר ר' היינעמאן שליט"א אמר שכן נוהגים.
17 עי' בח"מ סי' סב ס"ק יג ובב"ש שם ס"ק י ובקיצור שו"ע סי' קמט סעי' ה ובדרך חיים דיני בהמ"ז בבית חתן בשבעת ימי המשתה.
18 שו"ע סי' סב סעי' ח.
19 רמ"א שם וכ"כ בשו"ת רמ"א סי' קלב אות געוועי' בפת"ש שם ס"ק טז ובשו"ת יביע אומר ח"א אהע"ז סי' יא מש"כ בזה.
20 כ"כ הלבוש במנהגים בסוף או"ח סעי' ל, ודלא כשו"ת האלף לך שלמה אהע"ז סי' קח.
21 כן מוכח משו"ע סי' סב סעי' ח, ועי' בשו"ת בצל החכמה ח"ב סי' א.
22 הבאר היטב סי' סב ס"ק י כתב שצ"ע אם פורים נקראים פנים חדשות, ועי' בכף החיים או"ח סי' תרצו ס"ק נד ובשו"ת בצל החכמה ח"ב סי' א.
23 עי' בספר חסידים סי' שצ"ג וסי' תתש"כ ובב"ש סי' סב ס"ק יא ובלבוש או"ח מנהגים בסוף או"ח סעי' לו ובפת"ש סי' סב ס"ק יח.

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STAR-K 10TH ANNUAL *Kashrus Training Program*

Star-K's *Kashrus Training Program* will take place July 8-11, 2013. This intensive seminar, held at the STAR-K's office in Baltimore, Maryland, is limited to 25 students *rabbonim*, *kollel* fellows, and others serving as *klei kodesh* – who have studied *Yorah Deah*. In addition to lectures, audio-visual presentations and a hands-on practicum, several field trips are planned.

To apply, visit www.star-k.org and click on "Programs" to download the application form, or call the STAR-K office at 410-484-4110 to speak with Rabbi Zvi Goldberg.

STAR-K's Diverse Kashrus Administrative Staff Takes Kashrus on the Road

By M. Pensak

The field of *kashrus* is diverse and multi-faceted. These attributes are mirrored in the multi-talented, eclectic STAR-K *Kashrus* Administrators, who have taken *kashrus* on the road to audiences in Baltimore, Lakewood, North Miami Beach, Oak Park, and Toronto.

Rabbi Dovid Heber delivered *shiurim* on the *molad*, International Dateline, and the *kashrus* of medicines at Kollel Bnei Torah in Lakewood, NJ. He also spoke to tenth graders from Lakewood, NJ's Oros Bais Yaakov (about astronomy) and Edison, NJ's Reenas Bais Yaakov (about "The Kosher Certification Process").

In December, Rabbi Mayer Kurcfield participated in "The State of *Kashrut* Today: A Symposium", presented by the Young Israel of Greater Miami and Congregation Shaaray Tefilah. Rabbi Sholom Tendler took part in a *kashrus* symposium at Young Israel of Oak Park, Michigan.

In November, Rabbis Avraham Mushell, Moshe Schuchman, and Sholom Tendler presented "Behind the Kosher Curtain" to

fellow Baltimore community members. In March, Rabbis Zvi Goldberg, Dovid Heber, Zvi Holland, and Avrohom Mushell participated in STAR-K's three-part Pre-Pesach Prep Program, and shoppers' questions were answered in a Seven Mile Market kiosk. Rabbi Heber also lectured in Toronto on "Kosher for Passover: Not What it Used to Be" at the *Kashruth* Council of Canada's (COR's) Pre-Pesach community lecture. In addition, he was a guest on Rabbi Yosef Wikler's radio show on 97.5 FM, "*Kashrus* on the Air", bringing *Pesach* preparations to the airwaves.

STAR-K's Speakers Bureau topics span the spectrum from the basics of keeping a kosher home to its philosophical and spiritual significance, as well as its practical application. It also explores the technical world of *kashrus*, with a look behind the scenes of manufacturing and processing in several industries. For further information, visit <http://www.star-k.org/cons-abou-speak-bureau.htm> or call STAR-K at (410) 484-4110.



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(The Star-K Passover Book, not included in this subscription, is available for purchase in Jewish bookstores during the Passover season.)

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