כד. פת יבשה שכוססים אותה (סוג ג' הנ"ל בסעיף י"ב) אף שאין בעיסה אלא קמח ומים בלבד, ברכתה "בורא מיני מזונות" ומעין שלש. ובכלל זה קרקרים ובייגלה הנכססים.

הברכה על "צנימים" שנעשו מלחם רגיל, "המוציא" וברכת המזון, אע"פ שכעת הם נכססים. אולם ה"צנימים" המשווקים בחנויות שנעשו במיוחד משעת אפייתם לשם כך, דינם כהקרקרים הנ"ל, וברכתם "מזונות" ו"על המחיה". [ראה כה"ח ס"ק סו, אול"צ עמ' שא, מנח"ל ח"א סי' עא אות ח. וע"ע וזאת הברכה עמ' שיז. ודו"ק]

כה. ברכת המצה בכל שאר ימות השנה שנוי במחלוקת הפוסקים, ומנהג הספרדים לברך על המצה לאחר הפסח "בורא מיני מזונות" ולאחריה ברכת מעין שלש. ויש להם על מה שיסמוכו. אלא שהחרדים לדבר ה' נוהגים לאכול המצה בתוך הסעודה של פת, ונפטרים בברכת הפת וברכת המזון, ויש שקובעים סעודה על המצה, דהיינו שאוכלים שיעור שבעים ושנים דרהם שהם כמאתים ועשרים גרם, ואז מברכים עליה (אחר נטילת ידים) המוציא וברכת המזון. ורוב האשכנזים נוהגים לברך על המצה גם בשאר ימות השנה המוציא וברכת המזון. [חזו"ע עמ' סא, יחו"ד ח"ג סי' יב]

Day 11

Crackers and pretzels

24) Bread dough that is baked to be dry and crispy like a cracker is *pat haba'a bekhisanin* according to opinion C, as explained above in halakha 12. The correct blessing for it is *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh*. This includes all types of crackers and hard pretzels.

The correct blessings for toast made of ordinary bread are *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon* although it has become hard and dry. Toasted bread does not lose its original status. Marketed toast that is produced specifically to be eaten in this form, however, has the status of crackers. The correct blessing for it is *bore mine mezonot*.

Matzo during the year

25) The *Poskim* debated which blessing is to be recited over matzo during the year other than on Pesah. The custom of Sefardic Jews is to recite the blessing of *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh*, and there is a solid basis in the halakha for this practice. Nevertheless, those who are devout and God-fearing eat matzo only after reciting *hamotzi* on ordinary bread. Another possibility is to eat 216 grams (72 dram) of matzo. In that case, it is considered to be bread and it requires *netillat yadayim* and the blessing of *hamotzi*. After eating, one recites *Birkat Hamazon*. Most Ashkenazic Jews treat matzo as ordinary bread all year long. They always recite *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon* when eating matzo.[235]

235. Maran the Rishon Letziyon explained this halakha in *Hazon Ovadya Berakhot* (page 61). As explained in the preface to these halakhot, the third definition of *pat haba'a bekhisanin* is that of Rav Hai Gaon. He defined it as bread that is baked to be dry and crunchy. Maran ruled that we follow all three definitions of *pat haba'a bekhisanin*. According to this, the correct blessings for matzo ought to be *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh*. Indeed, this is the ruling of the responsa *Besamim Rosh* (#22) and *sefer Tzeror Hamor* (*parashat Haye Sara* page 25b). The *Sheyare Kenesset Hagedola* (*Siman* 158, gloss #1 on the *Bet Yosef*) ruled that the correct blessing for matzo is *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon* since matzo "is not so hard." He testified that this was the practice of Mahara"m Sagis and that he also follows it. It might be, however, that he was speaking about matzo that really is somewhat soft and chewy. The standard matzo marketed nowadays is totally dry and it might be that those *Poskim* would agree that its blessing is *bore mine mezonot*.

The responsa *Bet David* (#70 and #83) discussed this issue at length. He concluded that one should recite *hamotzi*

and *Birkat Hamazon*. He explained that Rav Hai Gaon was speaking of bread that is placed in the oven a second time to toast it, or bread that is left extra time in the oven so it will become toasted. Matzo, on the other hand, is baked for a very short time. It is crispy only because the dough is rolled out into very thin layers. Therefore it has the status of regular bread despite its crunchiness. Furthermore, crackers are rarely used as the basis of a meal; they are meant to be a snack food. Matzo is used as the basis of our meals on Pesah and therefore it is considered bread at that time. Because of that, its status continues to be bread even after Pesah.

Harav HIDA (*Mahazik Berakha* 158:5) took issue with the *Bet David*. He agreed that during Pesah matzo is considered regular bread, but he maintained that after Pesah people look upon matzo as just another form of cracker. He testified that during the year the great majority of people recite only the blessing of *bore mine mezonot* before eating matzo, and the blessing of *me'en shalosh* afterward.

After pondering the question for some time, Harav HIDA decided that the conclusion of the *Bet David* is indeed plausible. Therefore, he recommended that anyone who is God-fearing should avoid eating matzo after Pesah unless he eats an entire meal's volume of it, and then he should recite the blessing of *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon*.

It seems from this that in principle the common custom, which is to recite the blessings of *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh* on matzo, is correct. It is best, however, to eat an entire meal's volume and to recite *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon*. Although the responsa *Ohel Yitzhak* (#4) and the *Hukat Hapesah* (*Siman* 482) concurred with the ruling of the *Bet David*, many *Aharonim* concluded that a God-fearing person should eat matzo during a meal only, when he has already recited *hamotzi* on ordinary bread.

Since the status of matzo is uncertain, it seems that the correct practice is to recite the blessings of *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh*. This follows the principle laid by the author of *sefer Hamikhtam* (cited by the *Orhot Hayim*, *Hilkhot Se'uda* #27) that when it is unclear whether a product needs the blessing of *bore mine mezonot* or *hamotzi*, people should recite the blessings of *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh* since it is obvious that people do not base their meals on these products. Maran concurred with this principle, as is evident from *Siman* 168:6.

The responsa *Avne Shoham* (Vol. I, #17) commented that although it is common in the United States to recite the blessing of *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh* on matzo after Pesah, the truth is that matzo should be regarded as regular bread throughout the year and it requires the blessing of *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon*. Likewise, the responsa *Olat Yitzhak* (Vol. I, #35) cited Harav Shelomo Zalman Auerbach stating that those Sefardic rabbis who claim that one may recite *bore mine mezonot* on matzo after Pesah are mistaken.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Hazon Ovadya Berakhot* page 64) expressed his amazement at these criticisms, since Harav HIDA testified that the common custom is to recite *bore mine mezonot* over matzo and he did not object to this practice. He showed that the *Ginat Veradim*, Mahar"i Sasson, Mahara"sh Florentin, the *Bet Menuha* and the *sefer Pekudat Elazar* (page 23b) also confirmed that the common custom is to recite *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh* over matzo. Harav Shalom Messas (responsa *Shemesh Umagen* Vol. I, *O.H.* #34) also testified that the common custom is as Harav HIDA wrote, and he verified that it is correct.

Some authorities suggested a compromise – until 14 Iyar the correct blessing is *hamotzi* and afterward the correct blessing is *bore mine mezonot*. Maran the Rishon Letziyon refuted this opinion soundly.

The God-fearing eat a meal's volume of matzo or eat it after reciting *hamotzi* on bread

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Hazon Ovadya*, page 61) recommended following this stringency since a number of *Aharonim* ruled that one must always recite *hamotzi* over matzo. As mentioned above, the *Bet David* argued that matzo is not the same as other crackers for two reasons.

The *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, page 96) testified that the custom of Sefardic Jews is to recite *bore mine mezonot* over matzo since it is crunchy, and he added that this was the opinion of the Rosh Hayeshiva, Harav Ezra Attiah. Nevertheless, he concluded that it is best to always perform *netillat yadayim* before eating matzo, but without reciting the blessing of *al netillat yadayim*. Better yet, one should eat an entire meal's volume of matzo or eat it only after having recited *hamotzi* over bread. Alternatively, he suggested breaking the matzo into pieces smaller than *kazayit* and to soak them in wine or some red juice. Then, the correct blessing is definitely *bore mine mezonot*.

What is meant by "eating an entire meal's volume" of matzo? On first thought, it should be the volume of four eggs, or 216 grams of matzo. On second thought, it is likely that the volume of three eggs is sufficient, just as the *Halakha Berura* (page 484) ruled regarding pizza that it is sufficient to eat a volume of 162 grams. This is because many *Poskim* ruled that the blessing for pizza is definitely *hamotzi*, and this is likely the opinion of Maran as well.

Likewise, since many *Poskim* ruled that the correct blessing for matzo all year is *hamotzi*, and Maran the Rishon Letziyon agreed that this opinion seems more plausible, it seems that it should be sufficient to eat the volume of three eggs (162 grams) and to recite the blessing of *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon*.

Personal practice of Maran the Rishon Letziyon

It is common knowledge that Maran the Rishon Letziyon always recites the blessing of *hamotzi* over matzo, regardless of how much he plans to eat. Indeed, the *sefer Ma'yan Omer* (page 341) testified that Maran the Rishon Letziyon admitted that this is his practice. He feels that the logic of the *Bet David* is sound and that one can question the validity of the "common custom" cited by Harav HIDA. Even so, it seems that Maran the Rishon Letziyon contradicts his own ruling by doing this. Perhaps it is because he eats matzo very often instead of bread, and

כו. חולה שאינו אוכל פת אלא מצה, מטעמי בריאות, מברך על המצה המוציא וברכת המזון. [יחו"ד ח"ג סו"ס יב, חזו"ע ברכות עמ' סא]

כז. האוכל מצה בפסח ברכתה "המוציא לחם מן הארץ" בין במצה הרכה בין במצה היבשה. ואין הבדל בזה בין אם אוכל כזית או פחות מכזית, שלעולם ברכתה המוציא. ואם אכל כזית מצה ברכתה המוציא וברכת המזון. [ראה חזו"ע ברכות עמ' סה בהערה]

Day 12

As above

26) If for health reasons someone always eats matzo instead of regular bread, he must recite the blessing of *hamotzi* over the matzo and recite *Birkat Hamazon* afterward.[236]

Matzo during Pesah

27) During Pesah, the correct blessing for matzo is *hamotzi*. This applies to both soft matzo and dry, crunchy matzo. Even if someone wishes to eat less than *kazayit* of matzo during Pesah, he must recite the blessing of *hamotzi*. If someone eats *kazayit* or more of matzo, he must recite *Birkat Hamazon*.[237]

therefore for him matzo is bread all year like it is for others during Pesah. In fact, he ruled (*Hazon Ovadya* page 61) that if someone always eats matzo instead of regular bread because of health reasons, he should recite the blessing of *hamotzi* over it. See below in halakha 26.

Custom of Ashkenazic Jews

The responsa *Tzitz Eliezer* (Vol. XI, #19) strengthened the basis for the custom of Ashkenazic Jews to always recite *hamotzi* and *Birkat Hamazon* over matzo, but he conceded that the custom of Sefardic Jews is to recite *bore mine mezonot* and *me'en shalosh*. The responsa *Shevet Halevi* (end of Vol. I) recommended that Ashkenazic Jews always recite *hamotzi* on regular bread and then eat matzo during the meal.

Soft, thick matzo

This entire discussion is about the thin, dry matzo that is crunchy like crackers. Soft matzo definitely calls for the blessing of *hamotzi* all year long, and this might be the meaning of the *Kenesset Hagedola's* ruling cited at the beginning of this footnote. Since many *Poskim* ruled that one must recite *hamotzi* even on dry, thin matzo, this is certainly the correct ruling for soft, thick matzo.

236. This is the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Hazon Ovaday Berakhot* page 61; responsa *Yehave Da'at* Vol. III, #12). In the previous footnote it was explained that the personal practice of Maran the Rishon Letziyon is always to recite the blessing of *hamotzi* over matzo since he eats it regularly instead of bread. This is in contrast to the *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, page 96) who ruled that even if someone eats matzo all year long as bread, he must not recite the blessing of *hamotzi* over it. This person's personal practice is not taken into account, he argued. This fits in with the ruling cited above in halakha 20, that even if someone regularly eats sweetened rolls instead of bread he must nevertheless recite the blessing of *bore mine mezonot* over them since to most people they are not bread.

There is a fundamental difference between the two cases, however. Even someone who regularly eats sweetened rolls eats regular bread as well. He uses these rolls for informal meals only. This cannot be compared to someone who eats matzo exclusively for health reasons and almost never eats other breads. Furthermore, many *Poskim*, including the *Bet David*, ruled that everyone must recite *hamotzi* whenever eating matzo, whereas the opinion of Maran is clear that the correct blessing for sweetened rolls is *bore mine mezonot*. Therefore, Maran the Rishon Letziyon ruled that someone who substitutes matzo for regular bread on a regular basis should recite *hamotzi* when eating it.

237. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Hazon Ovadya*, footnote on page 61), commented that this ruling is in conflict with that of Harav Moshe Halevi (*Tefilla LeMoshe* Vol. II, #14, page 145). Rav Halevi ruled that if someone tastes a bit of matzo during Pesah, he must recite the blessing of *bore mine mezonot*. This is incorrect, however. Harav Shalom Messas (responsa *Shemesh Umagen* Vol. II, #11) likewise refuted this ruling, concurring with that of Maran the Rishon Letziyon.