**טו.** מי שבירך על היין ופטר את כל המשקים, ולאחר מכן רוצה לשתות קפה ורוצה לאכול מעט סוכר לבדו כדי למתק את הקפה, אין צריך לברך גם על הסוכר. [ילקו"י ח"ג עמ' קע, ע"פ גליון כה"ח למרן הראש"ל]

## דין מים ומשקים בסעודה

**טז.** אם אין לו יין ושותה מים או שאר משקה, אין לברך עליהם דחשיבי כבאים מחמת הסעודה, לפי שאין דרך לאכול בלא שתייה. ואף יין לא היה צריך ברכה לפניו אלא מפני שהוא חשוב קובע ברכה לעצמו, אבל מים או שאר משקים לא חשיבי, ואינם טעונים ברכה, ואפילו אם היה צמא קודם סעודה כיון שלא רצה לשתות אז כדי שלא יזיקו לו המים, נמצא כי שתיית המים בסבת הפת היא ופת פוטרתם.

**Sugar cube with coffee**

**15)** If someone recited the blessing of *bore peri hagefen* over a cup of wine intending to drink other beverages as well, but he finds that his coffee is too bitter and he wishes to eat a sugar cube to sweeten his mouth, he does not need to recite any blessing on the sugar.[21]

## Water and Beverages During Meals



**Blessing on water during a meal**

**16)** If someone drinks water and other beverages during a meal but not wine, he does not have to recite any blessing for the beverages. They are considered an integral part of the meal since most people do not eat without drinking something along with their food. Wine is also an integral part of a meal, but we recite the blessing of *bore peri hagefen* over it anyway since our Sages awarded it an exalted status. No other beverages have such a status and therefore no blessing is needed for them; the blessing of *hamotzi* covers them.[22]

**21.** Apparently it was once a common practice to eat sugar after drinking strong, bitter coffee. The *Hatam Sofer* (responsa #47) ruled that the sugar is considered *tafel* to the beverages. Since he does not need a blessing for the coffee, he does not need a blessing for the sugar either. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (174:6) took issue with this ruling. He pointed out that there are some *Rishonim*, notably the *Mordekhi*, who disagreed with this entire thesis and ruled that the blessing recited on wine does not at all cover other beverages. While it is true that we follow the ruling of the *Shulhan Arukh* in this matter, logic dictates that we should limit this dispensation. It is enough that we treat other beverages as *tafel* to the wine; we should not treat items that are *tafel* to other beverages as *tafel* to the wine as well. Therefore he recommended that people make a conscious decision to eat the sugar as a treat on its own, not as a *tafel* to the coffee. Then, they can recite a blessing for the sugar safely.

**22.** Maran cites three opinions in the *Shulhan Arukh* and this one is the first. After citing it as if it is the unanimous ruling, he added that some *Poskim* disagree. This means that Maran ruled in practice according to the first opinion. The second opinion is cited later in this halakha, and the third opinion is that it is necessary to recite the blessing of *shehakol* each time one interrupts his eating to take a drink of water. The logic of the third opinion is that the person drank his fill the previous time and now he drinks to quench a new bout of thirst.

Maran then recommended that one avoid having to choose any one opinion by reciting the blessing of *shehakol nihya bidvaro* before beginning the meal. In the *Bet Yosef* he

**ואמנם** מכיון שיש אומרים שיש לברך על המים שבסעודה. לכן הרוצה להסתלק מן הספק, ישב קודם נטילה במקום סעודתו, ויברך על דעת לשתות בתוך סעודתו. [ש"ע סי' קעד ס"ז]. ויזהר שכששותה מים, שתהיה השתייה לצמאו. [ביאוה"ל ד"ה ויברך. וע"ע בא"ח פ' נשא הלכה ה, ובהליכו"ע ח"א עמ' שנ, ח"ב עמ' ל]

There are *Poskim* who ruled that in every case one must recite a separate blessing for water when drinking it during a meal. In order to satisfy all opinions, it is recommended to sit down at the dining table[23] and recite the blessing of *shehakol* over water before performing *netillat yadayim*, intending for that blessing to cover the water one will drink during the meal. This strategy can be used only if the person is actually thirsty for a drink of water at that time; if he is not thirsty, it is forbidden for him to recite any blessing for water.[24]

explained that this will satisfy the third opinion as well, since the person specifically intends his blessing to cover all the water he might drink throughout the meal.

**Beer**

The *Ture Zahav* ruled that all the *Rishonim* agree that it is not necessary to recite any blessing when drinking beer during a meal, and therefore it is not necessary to take a drink of beer before beginning the meal. He explained that the *Rishonim* debated the halakha about drinking plain water during a meal, but not flavored beverages. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (174:41) took issue with this ruling since it does not appear that the *Shulhan Arukh* agrees with it; it seems that Maran understood that this dispute concerns drinking any beverage other than wine, not only water. Therefore he ruled that one should likewise drink a bit of beer (less than *revi'it*) before beginning the meal to avoid all doubts. The *Halakha Berura* (page 118), however, demonstrated that Rabbenu Menahem Hame'iri ruled clearly like the *Ture Zahav*.

**23.** Maran (*Siman* 174:8) instructed us to sit down where we plan to eat the meal to demonstrate that we have designated this place for our drinking so that this blessing will cover all that we drink throughout the meal. The *Aharonim* added that if someone follows these instructions, he must take care not to walk outside at any time during the meal, for then the original blessing of *shehakol nihya bidvaro* will not cover whatever he drinks afterward. They remarked that this pre-meal drink must take place before one performs *netillat yadayim*. It is forbidden to interrupt to drink for one's thirst between *netillat yadayim* and reciting the blessing of *hamotzi*. See the *Mishna Berura* (174:35) and the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (174:45).

**24.** Maran ruled in the *Shulhan Arukh* (204:7) that one recites the blessing of *shehakol nihya bidvaro* for water only if one is thirsty. The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Naso* halakha 5) suggested that perhaps in this case it is permissible to recite the blessing even if one is not thirsty since one wishes this blessing to cover water one will drink during the meal when one will be thirsty. Although some *Poskim* actually ruled thus, the *Ben Ish Hai* concluded that one should not rely on this. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* Vol. I, page 350) cited the different *Poskim's* opinions on this matter.

**Alternative strategies**

If someone is not thirsty before the meal begins, he may still avoid the doubt by reciting the blessing on some other item that calls for *shehakol nihya bidvaro* having in mind for it to cover the water he will drink during the meal. The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Naso* halakha 5) suggested reciting it on a bit of sugar, but Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Hazon Ovadya Berakhot* page 74) pointed out that the purpose of this strategy is to avoid doing something incorrect according to any of the *Poskim*. If so, one must not recite the blessing of *shehakol nihya bidvaro* over cane sugar since there are *Poskim* (cited in the *Arba'a Turim Siman* 202) who ruled that the proper blessing for it is *bore peri ha'adama*. Others ruled that it is *bore peri ha'etz*. Therefore, Maran the Rishon Letziyon suggested that one recite the blessing on some other snack food.

Alternatively, the *Mishna Berura* (*Bi'ur Halakha*) suggested that one may recite a blessing on some wine [during the meal] and that will cover all beverages as explained above in halakha 7. Another choice, suggested by the *Mishna Berura* (174:38) and the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (174:49), is that when the person wishes to drink water during the meal he should ask someone who is not eating at this time to recite the blessing of *shehakol nihya bidvaro* on a beverage having in mind that the blessing will be also on behalf of the person eating the meal.

**Drinking at the end of the meal**

All this discussion is relevant to drinking during a meal or at its beginning. The *Halakha Berura* (pages 119 and 120) cited *Poskim* who ruled that if someone finished eating a

**יז.** כשבא לשתות מים קודם הסעודה יזהר לשתות פחות משיעור רביעית, ויותר טוב שיהיה פחות מכשיעור כזית, כדי שלא יכנס למחלוקת הפוסקים בחיוב ברכה אחרונה. [ראה הליכו"ע ח"ב עמ' כז בהערה] **ואם** טעה ושתה שיעור רביעית בבת אחת, לא יברך ברכה אחרונה, כיון שיש אומרים שברכת המזון פוטרת כל משקים ששותה קודם הסעודה, וספק ברכות להקל. ומכל מקום הרוצה לברך ברכה אחרונה על מים ששתה קודם הסעודה, אין למחות בידו שיש לו על מי שיסמוך, ובלבד שאין בדעתו לשתות עוד בתוך הסעודה. אבל אם יש בדעתו לשתות עוד בתוך הסעודה, אינו רשאי לברך ברכה אחרונה על המים ששתה קודם הסעודה. [הליכו"ע שם עמ' כח]



**Drink less than *revi'it* before the meal**

**17)** When drinking water before beginning a meal as described in the previous halakha, one must make sure to drink less than *revi'it*. If one would drink *revi'it* before beginning the meal, he would become entangled in yet another dispute among the *Poskim*, since according to some he must recite *bore nefashot rabot* before performing *netillat yadayim* for the meal. It is best, in fact, to drink less than *kazayit* of water since there are *Poskim* who ruled that one must recite *bore nefashot rabot* after drinking *kazayit* of a beverage.[25]

If someone mistakenly drank *revi'it* of water all at once, he should not recite *bore nefashot rabot* since many *Poskim* ruled that *Birkat Hamazon* will cover the beverages that one drank before the meal. Therefore, we revert to the principle of *safek berakhot lehakel*.

If someone drank *revi'it* of water and he chooses to recite the blessing of *bore nefashot rabot* before beginning the meal, he is not to be protested; he has a strong halakhic basis upon which to rely. This is permissible only if this person has decided not to drink any beverages during the meal. If he wishes to drink during the meal it is forbidden for him to recite *bore nefashot rabot* for the water he drank before the meal.[26]

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meal and the table [or at least the tablecloth] has been removed from his presence and he wishes to drink before reciting *Birkat Hamazon*, then not only must he recite a blessing before drinking, he must also recite a blessing after drinking the beverage and he must not rely on *Birkat Hamazon*. All the recommendations offered here would not affect this halakha. Therefore, it is best to postpone this drinking until after reciting *Birkat Hamazon*.

**25.** The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Naso* halakha 2) ruled that one should avoid drinking *revi'it* since some *Poskim* ruled that one must recite *bore nefashot rabot* before beginning the meal in such a case. According to those *Poskim*, the *Birkat Hamazon* recited after the meal will not cover the water that a person before the meal. To avoid this issue, one should make sure to drink less than *revi'it*.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* Vol. II, page 27) pointed out that Maran in the *Shulhan Arukh* (190:3) cited a dispute among the *Rishonim* whether one becomes obligated to recite the blessing of *me'en shalosh* after drinking *revi'it* of wine or after drinking *kazayit* of wine. The *Magen Avraham* commented that the same dispute applies to all other beverages as well, and that a person should always drink less than *kazayit* or more than *revi'it* of any beverage to avoid any doubts. In this case as well, therefore, one should make sure to drink less than *kazayit* of water.

**26.** The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Naso* halakha 5) ruled that if someone mistakenly drank *revi'it* of water before the meal he should recite *bore nefashot rabot* before proceeding to begin the meal. He testified that this the ruling of the Arizal, who with his Divine Spirit saw a mark written on the forehead of Harav Hayim Vital accusing him of drinking without reciting *bore nefashot rabot*. Rav Hayim admitted to him that he drank *revi'it* of water before a meal and had continued to eat without reciting the blessing after drinking. The Arizal rebuked him for this error.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* Vol. II, page 27) took issue with this ruling. He cited the *Magen*