

דיני הפרשת חלה

The Laws of Challah.

לעיי"נ ר' יחיאל נתן ב"ר שמאי פעלדמאן ז"ל.
לרפואה שלימה ליעל חנה הדסה בת רבקה.

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם בְּבֹאֲכֶם אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
אָנִי מְבִיא אֲתֶכֶם שָׁמָּה: וְהָיָה בְּאֲכֹלְכֶם מִלֶּחֶם הָאָרֶץ תְּרִימוּ תְרוּמָה לָהּ: רֵאשִׁית
עֲרֹסְתְּכֶם וְזֹלָה תְרִימוּ תְרוּמָה כְּתֵרוֹמֹת גֶּרֶן בֵּן תְּרִימוּ אֹתָהּ: מִרֵּאשִׁית עֲרֹסְתֵיכֶם תִּתְּנוּ לָהּ
תְרוּמָה לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם:

Hashem spoke to Moshe saying, 'Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: When you come to the land to which I will bring you, it shall be that when you eat of the bread of the land you shall set aside a portion for Hashem. As the first your kneading you shall set aside a loaf as a portion, like the portion of your threshing floor so you shall set it aside. From the first of your kneading shall you give a portion to Hashem for your generations¹.

When the Temple was standing there was a mitzvah to separate a piece of every batch of dough and give it to a Kohen. This portion is known as Challah and it has the same halachik status as Terumah, i.e. it may only be eaten by a Kohen or his family, when both he and it are in a state of Tahara. Nowadays, since we assume that all people are in a state of Tumas Meis, Challah may not be eaten by anyone. However there is still a mitzvah to separate Challah from the dough (it is then destroyed, as it may not be eaten).

The Torah mitzvah of separating Challah only applies in Eretz Yisrael when the entire Jewish nation are living there².

As such, the mitzvah of separating Challah, both inside and outside the land of Israel is Miderabanan. However we shall see that there are certain differences between the Challah of Eretz Yisrael and the Challah of Chutz La Aretz.

The Sefer HaChinuch³ explains, 'as man survives on food, of which bread is the most basic, Hashem by giving us a mitzvah which is connected to the making of bread, has provided

¹ במדבר ט"ו:י"ז-כ"א.

² כתובות כה.

³ מצוה שפ"ה.

us with a regular recurring mitzvah. By taking Challah, as this mitzvah is often referred to, a special blessing will rest on our bread and will also give us spiritual reward. Thus our bread will become food for our body and soul.'

The mitzvah of Challah applies to every Jew, but women have the primary obligation to perform the mitzvah. A child may not take Challah.

It is minhag Yisrael for women to bake Challahs on Erev Shabbos⁴, this is for Kavod Shabbos and also to enable them to fulfil the mitzvah of Challah⁵.

Which type of dough requires Challah to be taken.

- The batch of dough must be made from one or a combination⁶ of the 'five grains', namely wheat, barley, rye, oats, spelt⁷.
- A batch of dough containing less than 1.2kg of flour is exempt from Challah⁸.
- A batch of dough containing more than 1.2 kg of flour must have Challah taken without a bracha.
- A batch of dough containing more than 1.6kg of flour must have Challah taken with a bracha. (Some people do not make a bracha unless the batch contains at least 2.25kg of flour⁹.)
- If no part of the dough is going to be baked in the oven, or cooked in a pan without any other liquid it is exempt from Challah¹⁰. As such, dough that is to be used for deep fried doughnuts is exempt from Challah¹¹.
- If the dough contains no water, olive oil, honey, milk or wine, Challah is taken without a bracha.

When is Challah taken?

- If the dough is thick, as it normally is before bread, then Challah is separated before baking¹².

⁴ רמ"א רמ"ב.
⁵ מ"ב שם ס"ק ו', וש"ך יו"ד שכ"ד ס"ק כ"ה.
⁶ ר"ש כלאים א':א' בשם הירושלמי.
⁷ יו"ד שכ"ד:א'. וש"ך ס"ק א'.
⁸ קונטרס השיעורים להגר"ח נאה זצ"ל.
⁹ שיעורין דאורי' לדעת החזו"א. והורה לי הגרמ"צ שפיצער שאע"פ שיש מקילים בד"כ לענין כדעת החזו"א מ"מ לגבי ברכה על הפרשת חלה יש להחמיר כדעת החזו"א.
¹⁰ משנה חלה א':ד', גמ' פסחים לז.
¹¹ יו"ד שכ"ט:א'.
¹² רשב"א פסקי חלה ש"ד.

- If the dough is liquidy, such as a cake dough, it is separated after baking¹³.
- If one forgot to take Challah from a thick dough before it was baked she may do so afterwards¹⁴.

How is Challah taken?

- Until Challah is removed, the entire batch is considered to be 'Tevel'. It is treated as being 'treif' and could potentially 'treif up' any ovens or pans etc that it comes into 'hot' contact with.
- One should therefore be sure to take Challah at the first possible opportunity and not leave 'tevel' dough in the kitchen for an extended period of time¹⁵.
- If appropriate, the bracha is then recited whilst standing¹⁶.

ברוך אתה ד' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להפריש חלה מן העסה.

- A piece of dough, roughly 30g (one Kezayis) is then separated as Challah from the batch.
- After this, one says חלה זו הרי or, 'This is Challah'.
- The Challah is then disposed of. Although many sefarim say that Challah should be burnt, if the Challah is not wrapped well enough it could 'treif up' the oven. As such it is better to wrap it up well and throw it away¹⁷. The reason why the sefarim say to burn it is because in the olden days their ovens were red hot and therefore 'kashered themselves'. This is not the case with contemporary ovens.
- If the separated Challah got mixed up again with the original batch of dough, the whole batch may not be used until a Rav has been consulted.

Combining different batches.

- One may not make many little batches of dough with the intention of getting round the laws of Challah¹⁸.
- However, one may make small batches if they want to make different types of bread (and are particular that the batches do not come into contact with each other)¹⁹.

¹³ עי' ספר הפרשת חלה כהלכתה הערה 80.

¹⁴ שו"ע או"ח תנ"ז מ"ב ס"ק ה'.

¹⁵ ב"י או"ח תנ"ז.

¹⁶ ערה"ש שכ"ח:ה'.

¹⁷ כן הורה לי הגרמ"צ שפיצער שליט"א.

¹⁸ ירושלמי חלה פ"ג ה"א. ושו"ע יו"ד שכ"ד:י"ב.

¹⁹ יו"ד שכ"ד ש"ך ס"ק כ"ה, ט"ז ס"ק י"ז.

- If there are two batches of dough, each one being less than 1.2kg, but together being more than 1.2kg. If they from the same grain, and one is not particular that they do not mix, then they should be placed in a big pot, tray and covered over and Challah should be taken. This process is called צירוף, joining.
- If one makes a batch of dough with the intention that it will be divided up into amounts smaller than 1.2kg. The original batch still has to have Challah taken from it. This would be the case when some dough or some bread is being kept for another week.

Separating Challah on Shabbos and Yom Tov.

- One may not separate Challah on Shabbos and Yom Tov²⁰.
- If one realises on Shabbos that he has not yet taken Challah, the Halacha will depend on whether it is in Eretz Yisrael or Chutz La Aretz.
- In Eretz Yisrael the entire loaf may not be eaten on Shabbos. This applies even if there is no other bread for the Shabbos meals²¹. After Shabbos, Challah must be taken from the loaf and the remainder may be eaten.
- If one took Challah on Shabbos, although this may not be done, the bread is not longer in a state of 'tevel.' However it may only be eaten on Shabbos if it was done בשוגג i.e. the person who separated the Challah did not know that this may not be done on Shabbos. If it was done on purpose then the bread may not be eaten until after Shabbos²².
- In Chutz La Aretz the Halacha is more lenient, one may eat the loaf, but must leave over slightly more than the amount that needs to be separated. After Shabbos, Challah may be taken from that remainder. In such a case, no bracha would be made²³.

²⁰ ביצה לז: שו"ע או"ח של"ט:ד'. וכן מובא באו"ח רס"א מ"ב ס"ק ד'.

²¹ משפטי ארץ הל' חלה פרק ו' הערה 4 ע"פ דברי המ"ב רס"ק ס"ק ד'.

²² תרומות ב'ג'. ועי' משפטי ארץ פרק ו' הערה 10 באריכות.

²³ דעת הגרשז"א המובא בשש"כ פרק מ"ב הערה נ"ז.