

ברוך.... שהחיינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

I. It is a well-known custom, that on the second night of Rosh Hashana we eat a new type of fruit and make on it the Bracha of שהחיינו. The reason for this custom is based on a Machlokes Rishonim if the two days of Rosh Hashana are Halachically considered one long day of 48 hours, or two separate days. Since every new day of Yom Tov requires a Kiddush, therefore, if Rosh Hashana is "one long day", then the second night is not a new day and does not require a שהחיינו. However, if the second night begins a second day and is not part of the first, then one must recite שהחיינו. Due to this, the Minhag is to have on the table a new fruit at the time of Kiddush (when the שהחיינו is recited), and have in mind both the fruit and the Yom Tov, when he makes the Bracha, thereby avoiding all doubt, since he anyway must say שהחיינו on the fruit¹. (Note: one should have all the types of new fruit on the table at the time of the Bracha. The women should have all the new fruits on the table when making שהחיינו at the time of נרות²)

There are several misunderstandings regarding the Din of שהחיינו on new fruits. We will try to clarify some of them as best as we can.

The Gemara in Eiruvim (מ' ע"ב) states, that in addition to the recitation of שהחיינו on Yomim Tovim, R' Yehudah would say שהחיינו on the new crop of squash as well. Most of the Rishonim explain that R' Yehuda would actually make the Bracha upon seeing the new crops for the first time, and not wait until he would eat them³. Hence, the Shulchan Aruch, when he quotes this Halacha, states that "upon seeing the new fruits one makes a שהחיינו". However, he concludes, that the custom nowadays is to only make the Bracha upon eating the fruit and not when seeing them⁴. Nevertheless, the Rama adds, that if one did in fact make a שהחיינו upon seeing the fruit, it is a valid Bracha⁵.

II. The Bracha of שהחיינו is a praise to Hashem that He has allowed us to experience the joy that comes with seeing the new fruit of the season. It is not a praise for the fruit per se, rather for the great joy that accompanies it⁶. Based on this reasoning, there are three basic conditions that must be met, for one to make a שהחיינו on fruit:

1) The term "new fruit" is not only subjective. Even if a person has never tasted this fruit in his life, if the fruit is available year-round, no שהחיינו is said. Therefore, the Bracha may only be made on a seasonal fruit that blossoms annually or semiannually.⁷ A fruit or vegetable that sprouts more frequently than twice a year does not necessitate a Bracha, since there is less joy when seeing them. For example, most vegetables (tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, cucumbers etc.) are grown year-round, and do not have a specific season. Hence, they are not considered seasonal, and do not require a Bracha⁸. Even if there are periods during the year when these fruits are expensive and/or somewhat scarce, one does not make a Bracha⁹. Furthermore, even if the fruit is only imported periodically, if in the place of origin it is available year-round, one does not make a Bracha. This is the case regarding coconuts, which may not always be available in some places, but are available year-round in their place of origin¹⁰.

2) Even if the species itself only blossoms once a year, if the fruits or vegetables are easily stored and are available on the market the whole year, no Bracha is recited. For example, potatoes, onions and dry nuts would not require a Bracha, even if they were from a new crop¹¹.

¹ טור בשם הרא"ש או"ח ס' ת"ר ע"ש ליותר פרטים במחלוקתם כי קצרת

² כי אם עדיין לא ראו הפירות, לא נתחייבו לברך עליהם וא"א להוציאם, כך שמעתי בשם החזו"א

³ שם ברש"י ורשב"א ורבינו יהונתן, וכ"פ הרמב"ם ברכות פ"י ה"ב והסמ"ג עשין כ"ז. וכן הכריע הגר"א ס' רכ"ה אות ה' וע' מעשה רב ס' ע"ה

⁴ ובאמת כ"ה שיטת התוס' בברכות נ"ט, וכ"פ הרא"ש בערוכין ס"י, ורבינו ירוחם נתיב י"ג סוף ח"ב ובסמ"ק ס' קנ"א. והכל בו ס' פ"ז כתב דאם רק

נהנה באכילה מברך רק באכילה

⁵ שו"ע או"ח ס' רכ"ה וברמ"א

⁶ ע' רדב"ז ח"א ס' רצ"ז ובבא"ח ח"א פ' ראה אות א

⁷ ע' רמ"א

⁸ מרדכי סוכה תשע"ג וכ"פ בשו"ע ורמ"א שם, וע' ד"מ בשם מהרי"ל ובפרישה שם

⁹ ס' וזאת הברכה בשם הגר"ש אלישיב שליט"א, אם עכ"פ מצויים קצת

¹⁰ דאינו פרי המתחדש, ע' ס' השיר והשבח ס"א אות י'

¹¹ ע' מ"ב ס"ק י"ח ובביא"ה

However, this is only true, provided that there is no noticeable difference in looks and taste between the old and new crops. If the difference is clearly noticeable, שהחיינו is recited¹².

3) The final condition is that the food must have grown from the ground. One does not make שהחיינו on new livestock, fish, or poultry. Similarly, שהחיינו is said on mushrooms, since they do not grow from the ground, only above it¹³.

It is important to note, that on Tu B'Shvat many stores sell platters of dried fruit and nuts. The purpose of these platters is for the Minhag of eating many types of fruit on this Yom Tov¹⁴. However, שהחיינו may be recited on any of these, since dried fruit and nuts are available in such a state year-round. Only on non-dried / preserved fruit may a Bracha be recited¹⁵.

In the same vein, many people eat on Tu B'Shvat slices of Esrogim. Even if one eats a fresh Esrog (not jellied or candied), שהחיינו should be said, since an Esrog remains on the tree year-round¹⁶.

Regarding carob fruit (buckser), some Poskim say that it is not considered human food and a שהחיינו should not be said¹⁷.

The above guidelines have been very simple and clear-cut until recently. In fact in Eretz Yisrael and other places it still remains so. However, in the US, and especially in New York, modern refrigeration and storage techniques in conjunction with improved importation methods have resulted in the ability for any consumer to purchase nearly any type of fruit or vegetable at any time of the year. Although in some seasons they may be pricier and not in the corner fruit stand, nearly any exotic or "summer" fruit can be obtained. This obviously presents a serious problem regarding שהחיינו. Based on the above guidelines, one can never make a שהחיינו on any fruit.

This Shailah is not as recent as one may think. Forty years ago, shortly before Rosh Hashana, R' Moshe Feinstein ZT"L was presented with this question. His answer was as follows:

Hashem in His wisdom, created two categories of food in this world, staple foods, and non-essential foods. Those foods that serve as basic essentials, such as grain and potatoes (in Eastern Europe almost all meals consisted of potatoes), He designed it in a way that they can easily be stored throughout the year. Aside from this, Hashem also created many varieties of fruits and vegetables for people to benefit from and enjoy, which are not essential for survival. These foods were designed to only be available from time to time. On these types of fruits, the Bracha of שהחיינו was established, to thank Hashem for giving us more than just the bare necessities and allowing us to enjoy these fruits as well. As the Tur ('ס ר"ר) explains the words that we say in Borei N'fashos - בורא נפשות רבות וחסרונם על כל מה שבראת - "who created many creatures and their necessary sustenance, (and also) all that you created (that was not necessary for their survival, rather purely for their enjoyment).

Therefore, continues R' Moshe, although in recent times Hashem revealed to mankind new methods and technology that allows us to store these fruits for extended periods of time, this does not change their Halachic status. These fruits still require a Bracha when one tastes the first of the new season, to thank Hashem for providing us with these delicacies.

R' Moshe concludes, that although not all the earlier Poskim agree with his approach, on the second night of Rosh Hashana one may make a שהחיינו during Kiddush on a new fruit and be Motzei all those present, even if modern technology has made these fruits available year-round. During the rest of the year however, it is preferable not to make שהחיינו on these fruits¹⁸.

III. There is a discussion in the Poskim regarding fruits that are the product of grafting two distinct species. For example, "Pluots" and "Apriums" are a cross between plums and apricots, "Torna Bellas" are a mix of tomatoes and peppers. (Contrary to popular belief, nectarines are not a cross between a peach and a plum, rather they are simply a variety of

¹² שם, ועי' שו"ת באר משה ח"ה ס' ס"ה

¹³ שם ס"ק ט"ז בשם הפמ"ג

¹⁴ עי' מג"א ס' קלא ס"ק טז ובאליה רבה שם ס"ק י"ד ובפר"ח שם סק"ו שהזכירו מנהג זה. ובס' שבט מוסר פרק ט"ז כתב דהענין הוא דוקא לברך עליהם, ע"ש. וראה גם בס' טעמי המנהגים עמ' ש"ע מש"כ בענין זה

¹⁵ עי' בא"ח אות י' שם ובמ"ב ס"ק י"ח וכ"מ בשו"ע הרב

¹⁶ באה"ט בשם הלק"ט ח"ב ס' רל"ג ורנ"ו ובמ"ב, לקט יושר עמ' קמ"ט, שו"ת כת"ס ס' כ"ג, האלף לך שלמה או"ח ס' צ"ב, שער אפרים ס' ל"ה, ושדי חמד מע' ברכות ס"ב

¹⁷ ס' וזאת הברכה בשם הגר"י פישר זצ"ל

¹⁸ אג"מ או"ח ח"ג ס' ל"ד ע"ש

peach that lacks fuzz.) Many Poskim say that since the Torah forbids the practice of grafting trees, one should not make a Bracha upon seeing the by-product of such an act. This would be analogous to making a שהחיינו upon seeing a Baal Aveirah. (באה"ט שם) On the other hand, others say that a Bracha should be made; in the same way that one makes a regular פרי העץ on hybrid fruit¹⁹.

This Machlokes is only in regard to a fruit (or vegetable) that was produced via grafting one tree to another. However, if the fruit was produced from the seed of a fruit produced in this way and not by grafting two types of trees, all would agree that שהחיינו may be recited, since no Issur was done to produce this fruit²⁰. The contemporary Poskim say that if one eats a true hybrid fruit that entailed an Issur to produce it, then one should not make a שהחיינו on it and if possible, try to find another new fruit to make the Bracha on²¹.

IV. If one forgot to make a שהחיינו, and is still in midst of eating the fruit, he may still make a Bracha²². However, if he has already finished eating the fruit, he may no longer make the Bracha²³. If later he can get another new fruit, he should have the first one in mind when making שהחיינו on the second²⁴.

If one has several new fruits before him, one Bracha suffices for all of them. However, if at the time of the Bracha they were not all in front of him, a separate Bracha is required²⁵. Similarly, if one has a new article of clothing (that requires שהחיינו) and a new fruit at the same time, one Bracha is sufficient for both²⁶. However, this Din is only when the שהחיינו is on a new purchase of clothing. If one is required to make שהחיינו upon a Yom Tov or another Mitzva then two separate Brachos should be made²⁷.

V. There is a Machlokes in the Poskim regarding when the Bracha of שהחיינו should be said. Many say that it should be said immediately prior to saying the regular Bracha of פרי העץ. בורא פרי העץ. They explain that if one were to recite שהחיינו after the regular Bracha it would be considered a Hefsek²⁸. However, many others say that שהחיינו should be said after the regular Bracha, citing the rule of תדיר ושאינו תדיר קודם (that which is more frequent takes precedent)²⁹.

A similar question is discussed regarding making the Bracha of לישב בסוכה before or after making a Mezonos on a small amount that does not require eating a in a Succah. R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z'tl paskens that it would be a Hefsek to recite לישב בסוכה following the Bracha of Mezonos in such a case. One should therefore say לישב בסוכה prior to the Bracha of Mezonos³⁰.

VI. Although the Bracha of שהחיינו is, unlike other Brachos, a voluntary Bracha, Klal Yisrael accepted the Bracha of שהחיינו on new fruits as obligatory³¹. It is an expression of our immense gratitude for Hashem's care of every one of our needs, even when they are not at all essential. When Hashem sees our appreciation of his goodness, he will surely bless us with a שנה טובה ומתוקה.

בברכת כתיבה וחתימה טובה
מאיר הלוי הלמן
פעיה"ק תובב"א

¹⁹ שאילת יעב"ץ ס' ס"ג וע' יביע אומר ח"ה ס' י"ט. ודע, דדין זה איירי אפי' נטעו עכו"ם ע' פמ"ג ס' תרמ"ט במ"ז ס"ג וברש"י חולין קי"ד ע"ב ד"ה הרי. ולענין פירות הדר (סיטרו"ס בלע"ז) דעת החזו"א בכלאים ס"ג אות ז' דכולם הוו ספק מורכבים, אמנם נהג לברך עליהם, ע' ארחות רבינו ח"א בהוספות עמ' י"ב וע' שדי חמד שם ס"ב אות ז'
²⁰ הליכות שלמה פכ"ג אות י"ח, אור לצינן ח"ב פי"ד אות י"ח וע' תשובות והנהגות ח"ב ס' קמ"ד
²¹ אג"מ או"ח ח"ב ס' נ"ח ובמנח"י ח"ג ס' כ"ה
²² כ"מ ממ"ב ס"ק י"ג וממה שהביא מהפמ"ג בס"ק י"א וכ"כ הקצוה"ש ס' ס"ג אות ט' ובארחות רבינו שם ובשו"ע הרב, וכן בשו"ת בצל החכמה ח"ה ס' כ"ז אות ב'
²³ שעה"צ אות ט"ו ומ"ב בשם המ"א, שו"ת רדב"ז ח"א ס' ק"ל ובא"ח אות ט"ו
²⁴ מהר"ם שיי"ק או"ח פ"ט
²⁵ יוסף אומץ תכ"ג, וכ"כ באג"מ ח"א ס' פ"ז
²⁶ כה"ח שם סי"ח
²⁷ ובר"ה עושין רק מחמת ספק, ע' מנחת שלמה ח"א ס"כ וכת"ס או"ח ס' כ"ו
²⁸ פמ"ג א"א סק"ז, מ"ב סקי"א, קיצש"ע ס' נ"ט סי"ד, ערוה"ש, יוסף אומץ ס' תכ"ב, א"א בוטשאטש, וחי"א כלל ס"ב ס"ח. ויש שכתבו הטעם משום דכבר נתחייב בראי' מקודם
²⁹ באה"ט בשם הלק"ט ח"א ס' ר"ל, אבנ"ב או"ח ס' ת"נ, הגהות חת"ס על שו"ע (והוא לא נהג כן, ע"ש), וכן נהג הגר"א ע' מעשה רב הוספות אות כ"א, והחזו"א ע' ארחות רבינו ח"א הוספות עמ' י"ב. ובליקוטי מהר"ח כתב דעביד כמר עביד וכו'. וע"ע מ"ב ס' כ"ב סק"ג לענין טלית חדש
³⁰ ועלהו לא יבול ח"א עמ' רכב
³¹ ע' פמ"ג בשם א"ר ס"ו, שיעורי ברכה סק"ב, ערוה"ש ס"ה כה"ח סכ"ב, וע' קצוה"ש ס' ס"ג אות ה