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In memory of their parents Dr. Irving & Mrs. Bernice Mehler & Mr. Gedalja & Mrs. Miriam Zupnik

לעילוי נשמת ר' יצחק מאיר בן אליהו ובריינא בת אברהם ע"ה ור' גדליה בן אברהם מנחם הכהן ומרים בת ישראל ע"ה

Shiurim at the Seder

Rosh Kollel Harav Shachne Sommers shlita

What are the proper amounts of mitzvah food and drink that one must consume at the Seder?

Are there leniencies in extenuating circumstances?

On the night of the Seder, there are many mitzvos that involve eating and drinking, some *midiOrayso* (Scriptural) and some *midiRabanan* (Rabbinic). There is a *diOrayso* requirement to eat matzah. The Sages instituted additional requirements: to eat *maror* (bitter herbs)¹; to eat *korech*, a matzah-*maror* combination; additional matzah for *afikoman*; and to drink four cups of wine.

How Much?: In order to fulfill each of these requirements, a minimum amount must be consumed. The source for these amounts is in the Gemara, and they are codified in the Shulchan Aruch. There is considerable disagreement as to how to interpret these amounts in contemporary terms. It behooves us to make the effort to fulfill these once-a-year mitzvos to the best of our ability.

The Gemara (Pesachim 108a) teaches that the *shiur* (amount) of matzah that must be consumed is a *kezayis*, the size of an olive. Similarly, *maror* requires a *kezayis*, as do the matzah and *maror* of the *korech* combination (Shulchan Aruch 475:1) and the *afikoman* matzah (ibid. 477:1)².

Size of a Kezayis: How large is a *kezayis* in contemporary terms?

The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 486:1) in the laws of Pesach cites the opinion that a *kezayis* equals half the size of an egg.

Others, based on the Rambam, say it's a third of the size of an egg (Mishna Berurah 486:1)³.

Most *poskim* assume that a contemporary *kezayis* is one-half or one-third of the size of an average contemporary egg. This makes it relatively simple to determine the size of a *kezayis*, and, indeed, many authorities use the half- or third-egg measure⁴.

However, there is a very significant complication that was raised by the great 18th century halachic authority Rabbi Yechezkel Landau (better known as the Noda Biyehuda, the name of his famous collection of responsa) in his work Tzelach (Pesachim 116b). He points out a major discrepancy that emerges from the Gemara's discussion of the amount of wine needed for the four cups.

The Gemara (Pesachim 108b) tells us that the four cups must each contain a *revi'is* of wine. Based upon the Gemara's ratios between

¹ During the time of the Bais Hamikdash, this was a *diOrayso* requirement

² The source for the *shiur* of a *kezayis* is a *halacha liMoshe miSinai* (halacha given to Moshe at Mt. Sinai) (Eiruvin 4a)

³ Many point out that today's ratio of olive to egg is much less than a half or a third. The Maharshal explains that the seven species of Eretz Yisrael, which includes olives, were much larger in ancient times, as discussed by the Gemara.

⁴ One relatively minor uncertainty is if one includes the volume of the shell when measuring the egg. This is a matter of debate.

various measurements mentioned in several places, it emerges that a *revi'is* equals the volume of 1.5 eggs (see *Moznei Tzedek* pp. 13-14).

In another place (Pesachim 109a), the Gemara provides a different means of measuring the volume of a *revi'is* in terms of finger-breadths.

The Tzelach measured a *revi'is* using both the egg method and the finger-breadth method, and found a major discrepancy between the two; finger-breadth measurements yielded a volume approximately double that of the egg measurements.

Based on this, the Tzelach determined that eggs used to be much larger, equal to the fingerbreadth measurement. He concludes that we therefore cannot use contemporary eggs as a basis for measuring, but need to follow the larger finger-breadth measurements.

Many disagree with the Tzelach and say that one should use contemporary eggs, as the simple reading of the Shulchan Aruch would indicate. (There are a number of alternative approaches to resolve the discrepancy raised by the Tzelach.)

To summarize, there are two major disagreements regarding the way to measure a *kezayis*.

One is if the measure is half an egg or a third of an egg. The second is if contemporary eggs are used to measure the proper size, or must one use the much larger eggs, as posited by the Tzelach.

Halachic Conclusions: The Mishna Berura (486:1) rules that one should be stringent when dealing with a mitzvah *diOrayso* and measure using the size of half an egg. He also quotes a source that says that by a mitzvah *diOrayso* one should fulfill the opinion of the Tzelach and use the larger egg size. Regarding a *diRabanan*, the Mishna Berura says one need not be concerned with the Tzelach's stringency, and contemporary eggs may be used. However, the Mishna Berura says that one should be stringent, if possible, and to measure the size of half an egg if one will be reciting a *bracha* on the mitzva (e.g., the *bracha* of *al achilas maror* before eating the *maror*).

Implicit in this ruling is that if one is not reciting a *bracha* on the *diRabanan*, one could use the smaller measurement of one-third of an egg.

The Mishna Berura further writes that one who is ill can be lenient even by a mitzvah *diOrayso* to measure a third of a contemporary egg if half an egg would be difficult.

To summarize, there are three basic ways to calculate a *kezayis*:

1. Based on finger-breadths (Tzelach)
2. ½ egg
3. ⅓ egg

Contemporary *poskim* took these three measurements and translated them into units of volume as follows (see Moznei Tzedek pg. 59):

1. 1.5 fl. oz. (approximately ½ hand matzah)⁵
2. .95 fl. oz. (approximately ⅓ hand matzah)
3. .63 fl. oz. (approximately ⅓ hand matzah)

At the Seder: Based on this, the following emerges:

For the initial *kezayis* used for the mitzvah of eating matzah, which is *diOrayso*, one should try to fulfill the Tzelach's stringency and eat ½ of a matzah⁶. If this is difficult, one can use ⅓ of a matzah (½ of a contemporary egg). For an ill person, ⅓ of a hand matzah (⅓ of a contemporary egg) could suffice.

For the *kezayis* of *maror*, upon which a *bracha* is recited, one should *lichatchila* (preferably) measure half of a contemporary egg. This amounts to approximately 1 fl. oz. (the volume contained in a small shot glass) of ground horseradish. If using romaine leaves, one should use an amount equal to ¾-1 standard size (8.5x11 in.) sheet of paper⁷.

For *korech*, which is a *diRabanan* without a *bracha*, one may use the smallest, one-third of a contemporary egg measurement according to the Mishna Berura's ruling⁸. This amount could also be used for *maror* in case of difficulty. This *shiur* amounts to .65 fl. oz. of horseradish or romaine lettuce leaves equal to ½-⅔ of an 8.5x11 inch sheet of paper (Moznei Tzedek page 75)⁹.

Afikoman is likely *diRabanan* but, according to a minority opinion, it is *diOrayso*. Some also say to have two *kezaysim* for *afikoman* (see Mishna Berura 477:1). Thus, it is best to use the stringent measurement of the larger *kezayis* for *afikoman* (which, as noted for the mitzvah of matzah, equals two smaller *kezaysim*), but there are grounds to be lenient and use the more lenient measurements

⁵ This is more than enough for an average hand *shmurah* matzah. See accompanying chart regarding particularly thin or thick matzah.

⁶ See Shulchan Aruch 475:1 that one should eat two *kezaysim*, one from each whole matzah upon which the blessing is recited. However, this somewhat questionable obligation is certainly not more than a *diRabanan*. One who eats enough to fulfill the Tzelach's stringency will also be eating two *kezaysim* of the small *shiur* of ⅓ of an egg which, per the Mishna Berura, is the *shiur* for a *diRabanan* that has no blessing attached, as discussed earlier. In this case, no additional *bracha* is said on this Rabbinic requirement.

⁷ If using just romaine stalks, four medium-size stalks are approximately meet the required amount. Larger stalks obviously require less.

⁸ However, some say to use the same measurements as *maror* unless it's difficult (see Moznei Tzedek pg. 29-30).

⁹ Many combine romaine and horseradish. When doing so, one only needs one *kezayis* in total. For example, ½ fl. oz. of horseradish and leaves equal to just over a ⅓ of a piece of paper is the *shiur* for *maror*.

if necessary¹⁰.

It is important to note that in all cases, the *kezayis* must be eaten within a time frame known as *kiday achilas pras*, which itself is the subject of much debate. Many opinions say this is three to four minutes, while some say it is as short as two minutes and others say it is as long as seven to nine minutes. One should eat the *kezayis* normally but without interruption in order to ensure fulfillment of this condition (see Moznei Tzedek pg. 85 quoting Rabbi Yaakov Yisrael Kanievski [the Steipler]). It should be noted that the time period begins only when one swallows, not when one places the food in one's mouth.

The four cups of wine must each be filled with a *revi'is* (Shulchan Aruch ibid:9).

As mentioned previously, a *revi'is* is the volume of 1.5 eggs, which is three times the size of the half-egg *kezayis*. This equals 2.9 fl. oz. However, according to the Tzelach's stringency of measuring by finger-breadths, the amount would be 4.5 fl. oz. Wine for Friday night kiddush is *diOrayso* according to some, and so it is preferable that for Friday night kiddush, the cup should hold the larger amount. Otherwise, 2.9 fl. oz. is the *shiur* for the wine for the four cups.

Ideally, one should drink the entire *revi'is*; but the obligation is fulfilled if the majority of the *revi'is* is drunk.

There is an opinion (see Shulchan Aruch ibid.) that one needs to drink no less than a majority of the particular cup one is using. For example, if the cup holds two *revi'is*, one needs to drink more than one *revi'is*. (Ideally, the entire cup – two *revi'is* worth – should be drunk) It is preferable to use a smaller cup to enable fulfillment of this opinion (Mishna Berura 472:33).

The Bi'ur Halacha (372:9 s.v. *viyishteh*) says that one with a larger-than-average mouth needs to drink more¹¹. However, it seems from the Shulchan Aruch and other *poskim* (see Chayei Adam 130:10 and Aruch Hashulchan 472:13) that in general, one may assume that a majority of a *revi'is* is sufficient.

The cups should preferably be drunk without any interruption (see Mishna Berura 472:3); at the very least, they should be consumed within two minutes.

In concluding, as we prepare to fulfill these special mitzvos at the Seder, taking a few minutes to prepare and ensure that the proper amount of each mitzvah food or drink is consumed will help each of us fulfill the mitzvah in the best way possible.

¹⁰ One should be aware that there are smaller measurements that could possibly be relied upon in some circumstances. For example, some say that the required amount is the volume of the average contemporary olive, which is far smaller than what has been discussed herein. Consult a halachic authority in case of need.

¹¹ See Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 612:9 regarding drinking on Yom Kippur that one should measure one's mouth.

Points to Ponder:

Can one consume the smaller shiur in the shorter amount of time and complete the larger shiur in the longer time span?

Should one consume the larger shiur if it may fill up the stomach or cause tiredness later in the Seder?

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Halachic Editor: Rabbi Shachne Sommers · General Editor: Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher

1395 Wolff Street, Denver, CO 80204 · 303-820-2855 · info@denverkollel.org · www.denverkollel.org

To receive Halacha Weekly by email, contact info@denverkollel.org

As an addendum, this chart is presented for more detailed calculations of shiurim. While the above article presents clear halachic conclusions, this chart is intended to present a broader range of opinions and methods of measuring, including both volume and weight. In addition, the shiurim below take into account a broader range of opinions, including a more stringent measurement not discussed in the article.

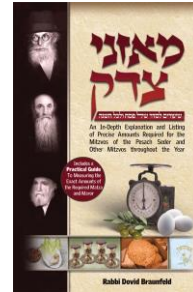
Sizing Up the Seder

by Rabbi Yaakov Zions

in collaboration with Rabbi Dovid Braunfeld

Author of *Moznei Tzedek*,

an in-depth explanation and listing of precise amounts required for mitzvos throughout the year



Matzah

1. Presented are two charts for matzah, one weight-based and one matzah-based.
2. All basic and platinum level *shiurim* (sizes) fulfill the opinions of the Chazon Ish, Rav Chaim Noeh, and Rav Moshe Feinstein.
3. Spelt matzah has the same shiur as wheat matzah.
4. By consuming the basic and platinum level shiurim for the mitzvah of matzah, you have satisfied the stringency of eating two *kizaysim* for the mitzvah of matzah, as well. However, even one who is unconcerned for this stringency must eat the listed amount. The reason for this this is explained in *Moznei Tzedek* p. 53.
5. In all levels listed below, you may recite the appropriate *bracha*.
6. To calculate the *shiurim* based on percentages of the matzah, use the table below. First find how many of your matzos comprise a pound, then use the percentages below:

Weight-based	Motzi Matzah				Korech		Afikoman	
	In extenuating circumstances	In case of difficulty	Basic Level	Platinum Level	Basic Level	Platinum Level	In case of difficulty	Basic Level
Hand Matza	11.2 g	16.7 g	26.1 g	29.0 g	11.2 g	16.7 g	11.2 g	21.9 g
Machine Matza	12.0	17.9 g	27.9 g	31.0 g	12.0 g	17.9 g	12.0 g	23.4 g
Oat Matza	14.5 g	21.6 g	33.8 g	37.5g	14.5 g	21.6 g	14.5 g	28.4 g

Percentage-based	Hand Matzos					Machine Matzos	
	6	7	8	9	10	14	15
Matzos per pound ►							
Motzi Matzah - Platinum Level	38%	45%	51%	58%	64%	96%	1 matzah
Korech – Basic Level	15%	17%	20%	22%	25%	37%	40%
Korech – Platinum Level	22%	26%	29%	33%	37%	55%	59%
Afikoman – Basic Level	29%	34%	39%	44%	48%	72%	77%

Maror

Lettuce			Horseradish		
Maror	Korech		Maror	Korech	
	Basic Level	Platinum Level		Basic Level	Platinum Level
28.8 g	19.3 g	28.8 g	1 fluid oz. (28.8 cc)	2/3 fl. oz. (19.3 cc)	1 fluid oz. (28.8 cc)

4 Cups

1. Basic level of Arba Kosos fulfills the opinions of most *poskim*, including the Mishna Berura, Rav Avraham Chaim No'eh, and Rav Moshe Feinstein. Platinum level fulfills the opinion of the Chazon Ish.
2. The most accurate method to measure the volume of a cup is by filling it with water and weighing the water. 1 cc weighs 1 gram.

	Arba Kosos		Friday evening kiddush (including the first <i>kos</i> when Pesach begins on Friday evening)	
	Basic Level	Platinum Level	Basic level	Platinum Level
Size of the kos (cup)	2.9 fl. oz. (86 cc).	5.1 fl. oz. (150 cc).	4.4 fl. oz. (131 cc).	5.1 fl. oz. (150 cc).

The amount to drink

The ideal amount to drink according to most *poskim*¹ is the entire cup. If this is not feasible, one should preferably drink the majority of the cup or 2.9 fl. oz. (86 cc), whichever is greater. If this, too, is not an option, the minimum amount to drink is the greater of one's own cheekful (כמלא לוגמיו) and 1.5 fl. oz. (44 cc). One can measure his cheekful by filling one's mouth completely with water, measuring the total amount of water, and dividing in half. If one does not wish to measure, he may rely that his cheekful is not more than 55 cc, unless his mouth is noticeably large.

¹ Including the Mishna Berura, Rav Avraham Chaim No'eh, and Rav Moshe Feinstein. According to the Chazon Ish, one should ideally drink 5.1 fl. oz. (150 cc), and the minimum amount to drink for a person with the average-sized mouth is 2.6 fl. oz./76 cc.