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## Taste and Matter

“One who makes dough from wheat flour and rice flour, if it bears the taste of wheat it is liable for *challah* (i.e. a portion of it must be separated and given to a *kohen*) and a person may use it to fulfil his obligation (of eating *matza*) on Pesach...” (*Challah* 3:7)

The *Rosh* (an early talmudic commentator), when commenting on *Gemara Zevachim* (78a-b), cites the reasoning for the ruling in this *mishna* as being related to the principle of *ta'am ke-ikar* (“The taste of a particular food is akin to the food itself”). Thus, since the aforementioned dough mixture possesses the taste of wheat it is considered to be wholly made of wheat for the purposes of *challah* and *matza*.

The question that must be addressed is where does the *mishna* and/or *halacha* derive the principle of *ta'am ke-ikar*. We will examine one piece of *gemara* which provides some relevant background to the issue, recognising that its conclusions may not be final and that in its entirety this is a far larger matter with a number of variable factors.

The *gemara* in *Pesachim* (44a-44b) cites a *braita* (Tanaite teaching) which derives the principle of *ta'am ke-ikar* (TKI) from the Torah. The *passuk* quoted is *Bamidbar* 6:3 which relates to the specific prohibitions affecting a *Nazir*.

“From new or aged wine shall he abstain, and he shall not drink vinegar of wine or vinegar of aged wine; anything in which grapes have been steeped he shall not drink, and fresh and dried grapes he shall not eat.” (Artscroll translation).

Reads the *braita*: “‘Anything in which grapes have been steeped’ comes to make the taste of an edible object akin to the object itself; if grapes were steeped in water and the water gains the taste of wine, the *Nazir* would be liable for drinking (a *kezayit* of) this liquid. From here one may apply this principle to all other *halachic* matters...”

Thus we see from the *Torah* equates water infused with the taste of wine with wine itself - that taste is equivalent to food matter. It must be noted that although scientifically the process of steeping involves the transfer of actual particles from the grapes to the water, since these particles are not visible they are regarded as “taste” rather than food matter in *halachic* terms.

The *gemara* however presents this teaching only in the name of the Sages. *Rabbi Akiva* disagrees on the Biblical source for TKI. He cites the *passuk* in *Bamidbar* 31:23 as the Biblical Source. This *passuk* deals with the purification for *kashrut* purposes of metallic vessels taken by Bnei Yisrael as spoils following their victory against the Midianites: “everything that comes into the fire - you shall pass through the fire and it will be purified...” The *passuk* teaches that *Bnei Yisrael* were commanded to purify the vessels in the manner in which they were used by their Midianite owners. For example, those vessels (such as grills) which would have absorbed the taste of the Midianite food over a fire, had to be purged through fire. This was needed to ensure that the food that Bnei Yisrael would cook using these vessels would not become tainted by the non-kosher flavours which had been absorbed from the use by their former Midianite owners. According to *Rabbi Akiva*, this is the source for TKI from the Torah.

Notwithstanding this Tanaite dispute, this issue is subject to much further discussion. Due to further complications with regards to the appropriate use of the hermeneutical principles of the Torah and the strength of the linkages between the aforementioned exegeses and their source-*passukim*, the notion of taste being equivalent to food matter may in many cases, according to some opinions, be of Rabbinic legislation. The quantities from which taste is regarded as significant in a mixture is a further point of *halachic* controversy.

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**Revision Questions**

חלה ג'ז' – ד'י'

- Is one obligated to separate *challah* from dough that is made from a mixture of rice and wheat? (ז':ג')
- What are the two options for one who has taken leaven from dough that has not had its *challah* removed and placed it in dough that has had its *challah* removed? (ח':ג')
- What are the two cases relating to *trumot* and *ma'asrot*, cited in the *Mishnah*, that are similar to the case stated in the previous question? (ט':ג')
- Is one obligated to separate *challah* if they took leaven from wheat dough (that has not had its *challah* removed) and placed it in rice dough? (י':ג')
- If two women each had dough that was less than the minimum quantity that requires the separation of *challah*, and their dough came into contact, are they required to separate *challah*? (יא':א')
- If one woman had two portions of dough, each less than the minimum amount, and they came into contact with one another, when is she required to separate *challah* and when is she exempt? (יא':א')
- With which other grain can wheat combine to complete the minimum measure that obligates one to separate *challah*? (יב':א')
- With which other grain can barley combine to complete the minimum measure that obligates one to separate *challah*? (יב':א')
- If one had two portions of dough each less than the minimum amount and neither of which have had *challah* removed, and a third in the middle – in which two cases do the portions not combine to obligate one to separate *challah*? (יג':א')
- Explain the debate regarding what one should do if two portions of dough, each from produce from different years and each less than the minimum amount, come into contact with one another. (יד':א')
- Explain the debate regarding the status of *challah* removed from dough which was less than the minimum amount. (יד':א')
- Explain the debate regarding a case where *challah* was removed from two portions of dough which were less than the minimum shiur, and then these two portions were combined together. (יה':א')
- Explain the debate regarding whether an *aris* working in a non-Jewish field in *Surya* is required to separate *trumot* and *ma'asrot*? (יז':א')
- What are the three geographical regions that affect the manner in which one separates *challah* and in what manner and quantity is the *challah* separated in these areas? (יח':א')
- Which priestly gifts can be given to any *kohen*? (יט':א')
- What were the three cases where one tried to bring a particular gift and it was not accepted? (י':א')

**Local Shiurim**

**Sunday**  
Between mincha and ma'ariv  
Mizrachi Shul  
David Bankier

**Monday -Thursday**  
Between mincha & ma'ariv  
Mizrachi Shul  
Avigdor Einat

**Friday & Shabbat**  
10 minutes before mincha  
Mizrachi Shul  
David Bankier

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**Next Week's Mishnahyot...**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
24 <sup>th</sup> July י"ז תמוז	25 <sup>th</sup> July י"ח תמוז	26 <sup>th</sup> July י"ט תמוז	27 <sup>th</sup> July כ' תמוז	28 <sup>th</sup> July כ"א תמוז	29 <sup>th</sup> July כ"ב תמוז	30 <sup>th</sup> July כ"ג תמוז
Challah 4:11 – <b>Orlah 1:1</b>	Orlah 1: 2-3	Orlah 1: 4-5	Orlah 1: 6-7	Orlah 1: 8-9	Orlah 2: 1-2	Orlah 2: 3-4

