# בְּרָכוֹת פֶּרֶק ו׳ מִשְׁנָה ז׳

Normally every type of food requires its own ברכה — an apple (העץ) never covers a cucumber (האדמה). Yet when one food is primary (עיקר) and another is secondary (טפל), a single ברכה on the עיקר exempts the טפל completely — even if the טפל is bread itself.

Why? A ברכה on food is not on the ingredients of the food — it's thanking Hashem for the pleasure (הנאה) you came to enjoy. A טפל is not eaten for itself — if not for the עיקר, you wouldn't eat it at all. Because it has no independent purpose and only serves the main food, it merges halachically into the עיקר, and one ברכה covers both.

## 1 הֵבִיאוּ לְפָנָיו מָלִיחַ בַּתְּחִלָּה וּפַת עִמּוֹ — מְבָרֵךְ עַל הַמָּלִיחַ וּפוֹטֵר אֶת הַפַּת, שֶׁהַפַּת טְפֵלָה לוֹ




If a salted food, like salted fish, was brought before a person first, and bread with it, he should make a ברכה on the salted food and he does not have to make a ברכה on the bread, because the bread is secondary to the salty food.

If someone ate sweet Ginosar fruit, he would then eat salted fish to cut the sweetness. Together with the salted fish one would eat some bread so the harsh salt wouldn't burn his throat. Since the salted fish is his whole goal, saying שהכל on the fish exempts the bread (both ברכת המזון and ברכה המוציא).

The Mishnah specifies בַּתְּחִלָּה ("first") and עִמּוֹ ("with it") to teach three practical rules:

- **Order:** Preferably, you should always make the ברכה and eat the עיקר first. You do not need to chew both foods in the same bite — eating a small amount of טפל right afterward still counts. However, if you do eat the טפל before the עיקר, the later ברכה cannot reach backward to cover it, so you must make a ברכה on the טפל first (poskim debate whether to say שהכל, since it is secondary, or its regular ברכה — which is why it is best to eat the עיקר first).
- **Intent:** The טפל must be in front of you — or at least in your mind — when you make the ברכה on the עיקר, and eaten in the same sitting. If you only decide afterward to grab something to calm the taste, your earlier ברכה did not include it.
- **In a chaser case — only a small amount to neutralize sharpness:** When eating a chaser after a sharp food or drink, it only counts as a טפל if you take just a small amount solely to neutralize the sharpness or protect your throat, with no desire for it itself. If you eat more than that to satisfy hunger, or enjoy both foods together (like herring with bread or crackers at a kiddush), it is no longer a טפל — the bread or cracker is the עיקר and covers the herring (מ"ב רי"ב:ה).

## 2 וְזֶה הַכְּלָל: כָּל שֶׁהוּא עִקָּר וְעִמּוֹ טְפֵלָה — מְבָרֵךְ עַל הָעִקָּר וּפוֹטֵר אֶת הַטְּפֵלָה




This is the general rule: whenever there is a primary food (עיקר) with a secondary food (טפל) alongside it, you recite the ברכה on the עיקר and exempt the טפל.

Why add a general rule after the salted-fish case? You might have thought שהכל only covered bread because שהכל works בדיעבד on bread anyway. The general rule teaches that עיקר always exempts טפל — even when the עיקר's ברכה could never cover the טפל on its own (for example, האדמה on a sharp radish exempting העץ on an olive eaten afterward to blunt its bite).

In practice, the Halacha of עיקר וטפל applies in three simple ways:

- **When they are mixed together** (soups, stews): When many foods are in the same spoonful, the food item that is the majority (רוב) inside the spoon is considered עיקר. This majority rule only applies when the foods are eaten together in the same spoonful — if you pick out a distinct piece (like a chunk of meat or a potato) from a stew and eat it by itself, it is no longer part of a blended bite and needs its own ברכה. If the mixture contains even a small amount of wheat, barley, spelt, oats, or rye added for sustenance (like barley in soup) or just for taste, it makes the whole mixture מזונות — unless flour or matzah meal was added strictly as a binder or thickener (gefilte fish, gravy). (Rice is not one of the five grains.) Spices and sauces are always a טפל.
- **When eaten together in one bite:** Bread or a cracker with a spread (peanut butter, cream cheese, butter) is a עיקר and covers the spread. A plain, tasteless cone or wafer used only to hold ice cream or jam is a טפל — though a tasty waffle cone you want for itself needs a מזונות. And even with a plain wafer or cone, if you first eat all the jam or ice cream off and then eat the leftover wafer or cone by itself, you must make a ברכה (מזונות) on it — because once you eat it alone, it is no longer serving as a holder and becomes a עיקר (however, if you ate them together and only a small leftover bit of plain wafer remains at the very end, no new ברכה is needed; מ"ב קס"ח:מ"ו).
- **When eaten right after:** A small chaser taken right after a sharp food or liquor solely to cut the taste or protect your throat is a טפל — provided it was in front of you, or you already had it in mind, when you made the ברכה on the עיקר. If you only decide afterward to grab a chaser because the taste was stronger than expected, your earlier ברכה did not cover it.

- **After-blessing:** A true טפל needs no אחרונה ברכה either. (In a minority-grain mixture, you only say על המחיה if you ate a full כזית of actual grain within ~3–4 minutes; otherwise say בורא נפשות.)
- **Priority:** עיקר וטפל overrides priority rules like the שבעת המינים or a favorite (חביב), as described in משנה ד׳ — as long as the טפל is only there to serve the עיקר.

## רַבֵּינוּ עוֹבַדְיָה מִבַּרְטְנוּרָא

**מָלִיחַ.** כָּל דָּבָר מָלוּחַ:
**שֶׁהַפַּת טְפֵלָה לוֹ.** מִי שֶׁאָכַל אֲכִילָה גַּסָּה מְלִיחַ לְתַּחְתּוֹת הַלֶּחָיוֹת הַנִּדְבָּקוֹת בְּגוּפוֹ מְפָרְסוֹת מְתוּקִים בְּיוֹתֵר אוֹכֵל אַחֲרָיו דָּבָר מַחֲמֶת רֹב הַפֵּרוֹת, וּמִפְּנֵי שֶׁאֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לֶאֱכֹל הַמָּלִיחַ לְבַדּוֹ אוֹכֵל מִן הַפַּת עִמּוֹ. אֲבָל הַמָּלִיחַ לְבַדּוֹ עִקָּר וְהַפַּת טְפֵלָה לוֹ: