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One is faced with many questions in regard to the *beracha* to recite on a fragrance. For example, when one walks into a flower shop and smells a nice fragrance is a *beracha* recited? Is a *beracha* recited on the smell of cut grass? What *beracha* is recited when one smells an *esrog*? All these questions and many others will be answered in this issue.

#### Reason

Just as one is not allowed to benefit from food or drink without reciting a *beracha*,<sup>1</sup> one may not benefit from smelling something without reciting a *beracha* on it beforehand.<sup>2</sup> The reason is because a fragrance gives the *neshama* enjoyment,<sup>3</sup> however one who has no enjoyment when smelling an item does not recite a *beracha*.<sup>4</sup> No *beracha achrona* is recited.<sup>5</sup>

#### Nice Voice etc.

Since hearing a nice voice<sup>6</sup> or washing oneself<sup>7</sup> is not something which is enjoyed by the body, no *beracha* is recited.

#### Food and Smell

One who has a food item and an item which has a nice fragrance, recites the *beracha* on the food item first, since it goes into the body.<sup>8</sup>

#### Unsure if an item smells

One who is unsure if a specific item has a fragrance on which he can recite a *beracha* may smell the item without a *beracha*.<sup>9</sup> This is common if one is in a store and he smells a certain item to see if it has a good fragrance in order to buy it. If you can't smell no *beracha* is recited.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mesechtas Berochos 35a.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mesechtas Berochos 43b and 44b, Rambam Hilchos Berochos 9:1, Tur 216:1, Mishanh Berurah 1, Aruch Ha'shulchan 2. Whether this *beracha* is a *birchos haneinen* or a *birchos ha'shvach* is discussed at length in Birchos Hariach pages 14-15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mesechtas Berochos 43b, Rosh 6:38, Rif page 31b, Levush 1, Ben Ish Chai Ve'eschanan 1:1, Aruch Ha'shulchan 216:1-2, Kaf Ha'chaim 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Rashi in Mesechtas Niddah 52a "reichani," Bach, Magen Avraham 1, Taz 1, Be'er Heitiv 2, Mishnah Berurah 4. See Bais Yosef, Machtzis Hashekel, and Teshuvos V'hanhugos 2:134.

The Beracha on Fragrances

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:1, Levush 1, Kaf Ha'chaim 10. Refer to Elya Rabbah 2. Refer to Birchos Hareiach pages 27-28. Some say *toch k'dei dibbur* a *beracha* may be recited (Halichos Shlomo Tefilla 23:38).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Darchei Moshe 1, Be'er Heitiv 2, Mishnah Berurah 4, Kaf Ha'chaim 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Darchei Moshe 1, Be'er Heitiv 2, Aruch Ha'shulchan 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Elya Rabbah 6, Ben Ish Chai Ibid 4, Mishnah Berurah 4, Aruch Ha'shulchan 3, Lekutei Maharich 1:page 264 (new), see Chai Adom 61:8, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 58:9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ben Ish Chai Ibid:2, Chesed L'alafim 3. Refer to Vezos Ha'beracha page 179.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Kaf Ha'chaim 297:34, Sharei Ha'beracha 19:footnote 71, see Shevet Ha'kehusi 2:99.

## Intention

Each time one smells an item he should have in mind היה אשה לה<sup>11</sup> One should say this after he smells the item since otherwise it would be a *hefsek* between the smelling and the *beracha*.<sup>12</sup>

# Holding it in the Right Hand

According to some *poskim* just as when one recites a *beracha* on food,<sup>13</sup> the item is held in the right hand, so too when one holds an item to recite a *beracha* on the fragrance it is also held in the right hand.<sup>14</sup> The *Biur Halacha*<sup>15</sup> feels that doing so is not required.

## Different Berachos

As we know different foods have different *berachos* recited over them. The same is true for *berachos* on a fragrance.

s Atzei B'samim- If an item is from a tree<sup>16</sup> the beracha is boruch ata... Atzei B'samim.

s Eisvei<sup>17</sup> B'samim- If an item is from the ground the beracha is boruch ata... Eisvei B'samim.

s *Minei B'samim*- If an item does not grow from the ground and is not a tree the *beracha* is *boruch ata....Minei B'samim*.<sup>18</sup>

s Asher Nosson Reiach Tov B'Peiros- is the beracha recited on a nice smelling fruit.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Kaf Ha'chaim 16, Birchos Hareiach page 183.

- <sup>12</sup> Haberacha V'hilchoseha 65:5.
- <sup>13</sup> Shulchan Aruch 206:4, Mishnah Berurah 18.
- <sup>14</sup> Ben Ish Chai Ibid:3, Chai Adom 61:1, Birchos Hareiach page 179. Refer to Piskei Teshuvos 216:1.
- <sup>15</sup> 216 "kodem."

<sup>16</sup> In regard to what is considered a tree refer to Ben Ish Chai Ibid:1:5, Mishnah Berurah 216:6, Ketzos Ha'shulchan 62:3, see Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 9, Aruch Ha'shulchan 8, Vezos Ha'beracha page 173.

<sup>17</sup> Elya Rabbah 23, Mishnah Berurah 216:50, Lekutei Maharich ibid, Birchos Hareiach page 43:19, see Pri Megadim M.Z. 216:12, Kaf Ha'chaim 79.

<sup>18</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:2. One who has many different items to smell in front of him should recite one long *beracha* which we include all the *nuschoes* (Sharei Teshuva 216:6, see Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 58:9).

There is a dispute as to which is the correct *nusach* for the *beracha* made on a fruit which one smells. Some say it is *sh'nosson*<sup>20</sup>... others say *hanosson*,<sup>21</sup> while others say it is *asher nosson*.<sup>22</sup> The custom seems to be that the *beracha* is *hanosson*,<sup>23</sup> each one according to his custom.<sup>24</sup> The *Ben Ish Chai*<sup>25</sup> says because of this dispute one should refrain from smelling any fruit in order to avoid a *machlokes haposkim*. This is not the overwhelming custom.<sup>26</sup>

On all items which are taken to smell if one recited a *shehakol* on them he was *yotzei b'dieved*,<sup>27</sup> just as one is always *yotzei b'dieved* when he recites a *shehakol* on a food item which requires a different *beracha*.<sup>28</sup> Others say one who made a *shehakol* on an item which was taken to smell was *yotzei* even *l'chatchilah*.<sup>29</sup> Some say one who recited a *besamim* on a fruit was *yotzei b'dieved*.<sup>30</sup>

Mistakes in the Berachos

One who recited an *eisvei..* on a specific spice that grows from a tree whose *beracha* is therefore an *atzei..* was not *yotzei.*<sup>31</sup> The same is

- <sup>22</sup> Chai Adom 61:2, Seder Birchos Haneinen 11:3, Mishnah Berurah 9.
- <sup>23</sup> Opinion of Horav Sheinberg Shlita quoted in Vezos Ha'beracha page 174, and this is how it is printed in all *siddurim*.
- <sup>24</sup> Lekutei Maharich ibid:page 265.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid:1:15.
- <sup>26</sup> Ohr L'tzyion 2:14:38.
- <sup>27</sup> Refer to Rama 216:2, Rav Akiva Eiger, Mishnah Berurah 38, Kaf Ha'chaim 216:32, Be'er Moshe 3:54:7, Yabea Omer 8:27.
- 28 Levush 2.
- <sup>29</sup> Aruch Ha'shulchan 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:14. Some say if one reciting a *minei besamim* on a fruit the *beracha* was valid (Bais Yosef 216, Prisha 7, Elya Rabbah 8, see Taz 3).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 4, Elya Rabbah 5, Shulchan Hatohar 4,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Elya Rabbah ibid, Aruch Ha'shulchan 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Ohr L'tzyion 2:46:53:page 309.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Chai Adom 62:9, Mishnah Berurah 10, Aruch Ha'shulchan 5.

true in the opposite scenario.<sup>32</sup> *B'dieved* one who smelled something without making a *beracha* beforehand does not recite the *beracha* over smelling it, even if he will smell the same item again.<sup>33</sup>

## Made to Smell

A *beracha* is only recited on an item if one has the intention to smell it.

# Smelling a Fruit

Even if one enjoys the smell of a specific fruit, a *beracha* is only recited if it is taken in one's hand in order to smell, and not if it is lying on the table.<sup>34</sup> Others say it is only if one designates it to smell.<sup>35</sup> One who peels a fruit and smells it does not recite the *beracha* said on a fruit, but says *minei besamim*.<sup>36</sup>

# Smelling an Esrog

There is a dispute if one who smells an *esrog* on *Succos* needs to recites a *beracha* (since the main purpose for the *esrog* on *Succos* is for a *mitzvah* and not to smell it).<sup>37</sup> Therefore, it is proper for one not to smell it at all.<sup>38</sup> One who did smell it should not recite a *beracha*.<sup>39</sup> However, this is only on *Succos* where the *esrog* is used for a *mitzvah* and not for smelling, but after *Succos* (and after using it on *Hoshana Rabbah*)<sup>40</sup> it may be smelled and a *beracha* should be recited.<sup>41</sup> Some say on *Yom Tov* when the *esrog* is not

<sup>33</sup> Magen Avraham 1, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 1, Mishnah Berurah 3.

- <sup>37</sup> Magen Avraham 21, Taz 14, Mishnah Berurah 52.
- <sup>38</sup> Bach, Shulchan Aruch 216:14, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 21, Aruch Ha'shulchan 7, see Biur Halacha "oh leochlo."

being used for the *mitzvah* (not in *shul* etc.) smelling it is permitted, but one should refrain from doing so since others argue with this premise.<sup>42</sup> On *Shabbos* (*Succos*) smelling an *esrog* is permitted because it is not used for a *mitzvah*.<sup>43</sup> Some say the same is true for smelling the *esrog* at night.<sup>44</sup> One who touched an *esrog* and wiped the moisture of the *esrog* onto a garment etc, does not recite a *beracha* when smelling his garment afterwards.<sup>45</sup> The custom is to recite a *beracha* on the *esrog* with cloves which is passed around on *Yom Kippur*.<sup>46</sup>

# Hot Bread - Dish

Many times one passes a bakery and is faced with the question if he should recite a *beracha* on the smell of hot bread which emanates from the bakery. Some *poskim* say to recite a *beracha*,<sup>47</sup> while others maintain that no *beracha* is recited even if one takes the bread in his hand to smell it.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, it is best to refrain from smelling hot bread,<sup>49</sup> and one who did smell it should not recite a *beracha*.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, no *beracha* is recited on a pleasant smelling hot dish (food),<sup>51</sup> or nice smelling cakes.<sup>52</sup>

## Coffee

One who smells the fragrance of coffee does not recite a *beracha* on it.<sup>53</sup> Some say if one has

<sup>43</sup> Mishnah Berurah 653:2, 658:3, Kaf Ha'chaim 658:5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Birchei Yosef 216:15, Chai Adom ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Biur Halacha "k'shenatlo."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Chazzon Ish O.C. 35:5-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Birchei Yosef 216:4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Mishnah Berurah 53, see Magen Avraham 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Elya Rabbah 22, Kaf Ha'chaim 81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Taz ibid. Refer to Pri Megadim M.Z. 14, see Halichos Shlomo Tefilla 23:footnote 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Biur Halacha "ha'meriach."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Eishel Avraham Butchatch 216:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 58:13, Biur Halacha ibid, Kaf Ha'chaim 84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Refer to Shevet Ha'kehusi 2:98.

<sup>47</sup> Rama 216:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Shar Ha'tzyion 47, see Aruch Ha'shulchan 14. Refer to Birchos Hareaich pages 144-145:footnote 65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Bais Yosef 297, Prisha 216:27, Rama 216:14, Levush ibid, Kaf Ha'chaim 86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Birchos Habayis 26:39, Mishnah Berurah 56, Aruch Ha'shulchan 14, Kaf Ha'chaim 86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Aruch Ha'shulchan 14.

<sup>52</sup> Sharei Ha'beracha 19:66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Kaf Ha'chaim 86, Lekutei Maharich ibid:page 265, Birchos Hareiach page 130:9.

intention to smell it than a *beracha* should be made,<sup>54</sup> and the *beracha* is *hanosson*.<sup>55</sup> According to the opinion of the *Gr'a* this is only if one designates it to smell.<sup>56</sup>

### Entering a Flower Shop

Many times one enters a flower shop and there is a strong smell emanating from the flowers, and the question is if a beracha is recited at that point. The Shulchan Aruch<sup>57</sup> says one who enters a store where there are fragrances and spices recites a minei besamim.58 One who sits in such a store a whole day recites one beracha which lasts for the duration of the entire day,<sup>59</sup> although others argue with this.60 If he left and then came right back61 then the beracha he made at the beginning of the day is still valid.62 One who walks into a different store would recite a different beracha.63 The reason why a beracha is recited in such a situation is because the store owner wants to attract customers so he places nice smelling flowers etc. on display.<sup>64</sup> Some say one only recites a beracha if one enters the store and has intention to smell the flowers etc, but if he has no intention to smell them then no *beracha* is recited.<sup>65</sup> Others say even without having intention to smell, a

*beracha* is recited.<sup>66</sup> No *beracha* is recited on dry flowers since they have no real smell.<sup>67</sup>

The proper way to act is to walk into the store, have intention to smell the nice flowers and recite the *beracha* of *minei besamim*.<sup>68</sup> If there are only flowers in the store (and not spices etc.) then an *eisvei besamim* should be made.<sup>69</sup> Some say to recite a *beracha* on flowers in a flower shop would depend if the owner has intention to attract customers with the smell or not, and it would depend on each individual store owners intent.<sup>70</sup> Even according to the lenient view one who takes the flowers etc in his hands to smell would recite a *beracha*.<sup>71</sup>

#### Perfumes

A smell which has no real source does not require a *beracha*. Therefore, one should avoid smelling such items.<sup>72</sup> One who enters a perfume store would not recite a *beracha* on the fragrances offered for sale because the smell is not a real smell, and is also possibly made form chemicals which according to some *poskim* would not require a beracha.<sup>73</sup> One who knows how a specific perfume etc is made and knows that it is a real fragrance would recite a *beracha* upon smelling it.<sup>74</sup> However, in most cases one does not know how it is made and therefore it does not warrant a *beracha*. Similarly, although

<sup>70</sup> Refer to Vezos Ha'beracha page 177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Yaskil Avdi 8:14 in the hashmutos, Vezos Ha'beracha page 174 quoting the opinion of Horav Fisher zt"l. Refer to Oleinu L'sha'be'ach 2:page 599.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Mishnah Berurah 216:16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Chazzon Ish O.C. 35:5-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> 217:1. The source for this is a Gemorah in Mesechtas Berochos on 53a. Refer to the Tur 217, Levush 217:1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> The reason for the *beracha* of *minei* is because there are *atzei* and *eisvei* smells (Mishnah Berurah 3).

<sup>59</sup> Refer to Taz 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Shar Ha'tzyion 5. Therefore, it is preferable for him to have in mind to smell the fragrances and then he would recite a *beracha* (Mishnah Berurah 4, Shar Ha'tzyion 5).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Magen Avraham 2, Mishnah Berurah 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Bais Yosef, Shulchan Aruch ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Magen Avraham 3, Be'er Heitiv 3, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 3, Elya Rabbah 3, Mishnah Berurah 5, Aruch Ha'shulchan 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Mesechtas Berochos ibid, Magen Avraham 1.

<sup>65</sup> Taz 1, Aruch Ha'shulchan 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, Pri Megadim 3, Elya Rabbah 1, Mishnah Berurah 2, Shar Ha'tzyion 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Sharei Ha'beracha 19:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita. Refer to Piskei Teshuvos 217:1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Sharei Ha'beracha 19:footnote 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Mishnah Berurah 1, Shar Ha'tzyion 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:6, Mishnah Berurah 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Yeishiv Moshe page 18:2, Avnei Yushfei 2:16:1,
Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 2:61:footnote 32, Vezos Ha'beracha page 175, Halichos Shlomo Tefilla 23:36:footnote 54, Piskei Teshuvos 217:footnote 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Refer to Vezos Ha'beracha page 181, Ohr L'tzyion 2:14:38, see Olos Yitzchok 2:78.

aftershave smells nice, no *beracha* is recited over it.<sup>75</sup>

## Toy Smell

A smell from a new toy would not require a *beracha*.<sup>76</sup>

# Strolling Through a Garden

When one takes a walk in a garden and smells flowers, the question arises if a *beracha* is recited over the flowers etc. Some *poskim* feel that unless one takes the item in his hand to smell no *beracha* is recited on it,<sup>77</sup> since in a garden the flowers are not there for nice smell but to look nice.<sup>78</sup> Others feel a *beracha* should be recited.<sup>79</sup> One does not recite a *beracha* on flowers placed in front of one's home (in his garden etc.).<sup>80</sup>

## Smelling Besamim of a Woman

One is not allowed to smell *besamim* of an *ervah*<sup>81</sup> if it's on her neck,<sup>82</sup> hand or face because one may come to improper closeness.<sup>83</sup> This applies even to the *besamim* of a single

girl.<sup>84</sup> There is no difference between a Jewish woman and a non-Jewish woman.<sup>85</sup> Girls who have reached *halachic* maturity are considered an *ervah*.<sup>86</sup> The same is true for one's wife who is in her impure state.<sup>87</sup> Some say if the perfume is not on her but it is in a bottle then smelling the perfume is permitted,<sup>88</sup> while others hold it is forbidden.<sup>89</sup> One should try to be stringent in this area. One is permitted to smell deodorant or other lotions of a woman even when she is impure.<sup>90</sup>

### Bathroom Aerosol Sprays

A *birchos hare'ach* is not recited on a spray that is used to remove any bad smell emanating from a bathroom.<sup>91</sup> The same is true for any nice smelling deodorant or soaps.<sup>92</sup> In a situation that the bathroom is clean and you are placing a pleasant smelling item in the bathroom for it to smell good then a *beracha* should be made.<sup>93</sup> An air freshener in a car

<sup>88</sup> Ohr L'tzyion 2:14:39. Refer to Aruch Ha'shulchan Y.D. 195:23, see Pischei Teshuva 195:1.

<sup>89</sup> Opinion of Horav Sheinberg Shlita quoted in Vezos Ha'beracha page 179. This is if one knows who she is (Mishnah Berurah 17).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Avnei Yushfei 2:16:3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Opinion of Horav Sheinberg Shlita quoted in Vezos Ha'beracha page 179.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Opinion of Horav Fisher zt"l quoted in Vezos Ha'beracha page 178. Refer to Piskei Teshuovs 217:footnote 10 in great depth.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Ketzos Ha'shulchan page 103b, Oz Nedberu 14:11:2. When one goes to the Botanical Gardens a *beracha* should be recited (Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Ohr L'tzyion 2:14:37. Refer to Keren L'Dovid O.C. 55, Chazzon Ish O.C. 35:7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, Oz Nedberu 14:11:2, Chai Moshe 3:page 85. Some say a beracha should be recited (Ketzos Ha'shulchan 62:18).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> A smell which is forbidden to eat but permitted to have enjoyment from, then a beracha may be recited over it (Be'er Heitiv 216:1, Kaf Ha'chaim 6). *Chometz* may not be smelled on *Pesach* (Biur Halacha "afilu").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Some say even if it is not on the neck (Taz 3).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Shulchan Aruch 217:4, Levush 4, Ben Ish Chai Tzav 2:25, Chai Adom 62:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Machzik Beracha 1, Sharei Teshuva 5, Elya Rabbah 7, Mishnah Berurah 16, Aruch Ha'shulchan 7, Kaf Ha'chaim 16. See Magen Avraham 6. Some are stringent with this even in regard to one's own daughter (Kaf Ha'chaim 17).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> Birchos Habayis 26:19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Mishnah Berurah 16. Refer to Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Mishnah Berurah 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Chut Shuni Niddah 195:page 215.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Refer to Shulchan Aruch 217:2, Levush 2, Magen Avaraham 216:18, Pri Megadim M.Z. 217:17, Mishnah Berurah 217:9, Aruch Ha'shulchan 217:5, Piskei Teshuvos 214:5, Vezos Ha'beracha page 176, Avnei Yushfei 2:16:4, Ohr L'tzyion 2:page 137, Yalkut Yosef 217:2-3, Shevet Ha'kehusi 1:103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Aruch Ha'shulchan 5, Birchos Hareiach page 130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Birchos Hareiach page 166:75:footnote 75. Potpourri placed in a bathroom for fragrance does not require a *beracha* (Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita).

would require a *beracha* if it's made with real ingredients and not chemicals.<sup>94</sup>

## Smelling Cut Grass

According to botanists, the smell of cut grass is caused by gases emitted from each injured blade. Chopped grass releases a long list of volatile organic compounds, including methane (swamp gas), acetone (as in nailpolish remover), ethanol (grain alcohol) and acetaldehyde, a chemical similar to the toxic preservative formaldehyde. Plants produce the volatile compounds within seconds of being cut. Some also produce the chemicals when they are damaged by frost.

One does not recite a *beracha* on the smell of cut grass even if one has enjoyment from it.<sup>95</sup>

### Smoking

Many times one passes by someone who is smoking and he enjoys the smell. The question arises if such a person recites a *beracha* on that smell? The consensus of the *poskim* is that no *beracha* is recited on the smell of a cigarette<sup>96</sup> (or any good smelling smoke). One of the reasons is because the "good" smelling smoke is not meant for one to smell but is there to drain the smell out of the tobacco.<sup>97</sup>

## Besamim at Havdala

The reason for the *beracha* on the *besamim* on *Motzei Shabbos*, is because we are sad that our *neshama yesiera* is leaving us, and the smell of *besamim* enlightens us.<sup>98</sup> One may use any spice

he has in the kitchen for *besamim*.<sup>99</sup> According to the opinion of others this may not be done.<sup>100</sup>No *beracha* is recited over inexpensive perfumes because it is made from chemicals.<sup>101</sup> Whatever one uses for *besamim*, the *beracha* is *borei minei besamim*.<sup>102</sup>

### Shehechiyanu

Most *poskim* say one who smells a fruit or spice for the first time does not recite a *shehechiyanu*.<sup>103</sup> Although others say one does recite *shehechiyanu*,<sup>104</sup> this is not the overwhelming custom.

### List of Items

Balsam - the correct *beracha* to recite when smelling balsam is *shemen orev*.<sup>105</sup> The reason for its own *beracha* is because it is grown in *Eretz Yisroel* and is *chashuv*.<sup>106</sup> One who recited *atzei* was *yotzei* b'dieved.<sup>107</sup>

Cinnamon- the *beracha* made over smelling cinnamon is *hanosson*...<sup>108</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Shevet Ha'kehusi 1:103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> Vezos Ha'beracha pages 178-179.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Be'er Heitiv 216:13, Kaf Ha'chaim 216:54, 210:33, Yalkut Yosef 216:12, Birchos Hareiach pages 28-30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Aruch Ha'shulchan 4, Vezos Ha'beracha page 181 quoting the opinion of Horav Sheinberg Shlita, pages 319-322 in depth.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Tur 297, Bais Yosef, Prisha 1, Taz 1, Pri Megadim M.Z.
1, Shulchan Aruch Harav 1, Taamei Haminhagim 409, Mishnah Berurah 2, Aruch Ha'shulchan 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Vezos Ha'beracha page 180.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Chazzon Ish 35:5-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> Opinion of Horav Moshe Feinstein zt"l quoted in Koved V'oneg Shabbos page 132:footnote 17, see Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 61:12:footnote 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Mishnah Berurah 297:1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> Refer to Magen Avraham 216:1, Birchei Yosef 2, Machzik Beracha 3, Ben Ish Chai ibid:1:1, Sharei Teshuva 2, Mishnah Berurah 225:16, Kaf Ha'chaim 216:11, Lekutei Maharich ibid:page 264, Birchos Hariach pages 31-32, Sharei Ha'beracha 19:2. Refer to Chaim Shel Beracha page 92. The Shulchan Aruch Harav in *seder birchos haneinen* 11:16 says to say it without mentioning the *shem* or *malchus*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Radvaz 1:297:page 48, 2:740:page 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Magen Avraham 10, Taz 6, Levush 4, Elya Rabbah 11, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 58:6, Mishnah Berurah 23, Aruch Ha'shulchan 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Elya Rabbah 11, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Refer to Shulchan Aruch 216:2, Levush 3, Taz 4, Mishnah Berurah 15, Shar Ha'tzyion 12, Aruch Ha'shulchan 8. The Elya Rabbah 9 says the *beracha* is *atzei*.

Cloves- according to some *poskim* the *beracha* made over smelling cloves is *hanosson*...<sup>109</sup> Others say the *beracha* in *minei besamim*.<sup>110</sup>

Eucalyptus- the *beracha* recited when smelling eucalyptus is *atzei besamim*.<sup>111</sup>

Flowers- the *beracha* recited on smelling flowers is *eisvei besamim*.<sup>112</sup>

Frankincense- the *beracha* recited when smelling frankincense is *atzei besamim*.<sup>113</sup>

Honey Suckle- the *beracha* recited on honey suckle is *minei besamim*.<sup>114</sup>

Jasmine- the *beracha* recited when smelling jasmine is *atzei besamim*.<sup>115</sup>

Lavender- the *beracha* recited on smelling lavender is *atzei besamim*.<sup>116</sup>

Lemon- some say the *beracha* recited over smelling a lemon is *minei besamim*,<sup>117</sup> while others say the *beracha* is *atzei*..<sup>118</sup>

Mint- the *beracha* recited on smelling mint is *eisvei besamim*.<sup>119</sup>

- <sup>112</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:8, Mishnah Berurah 36, Kaf Ha'chaim 216:63-65, Sharei Ha'beracha 19:footnote 33.
- <sup>113</sup> Mishanh Berurah 20, Aruch Ha'shulchan 8, Sharei Ha'beracha 19:page 442.
- <sup>114</sup> Vezos Ha'beracha page 173.
- <sup>115</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:7, see Mishnah Berurah 34.
- <sup>116</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:7, Mishnah Berurah 33.
- <sup>117</sup> Ketzos Ha'shulchan 62:badi:9.
- <sup>118</sup> Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 58:7, see Yalkut Yosef page 558:7.

Mushrooms- a mushroom that has a good smell would have a *minei besamim* recited on it.<sup>120</sup>

Olive Oil- the *beracha* recited on olives which are smashed and have a strong smell is *atzei besamim*.<sup>121</sup>

Orange- the *beracha* recited when smelling an orange is *atzei besamim*.<sup>122</sup>

Roses- the *beracha* recited when smelling roses is *atzei besamim*.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> Refer to Shulchan Aruch ibid, Levush 3, Taz 4, Pri Megadim M.Z 4, Aruch Ha'shulchan 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Mishnah Berurah 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita. Refer to Sharei Ha'beracha 19:page 441:5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Refer to Kaf Ha'chaim 13. See Ohr L'tzyion 2:46:56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 58:5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> Shulchan Aruch 216:5, see Magen Avraham 11, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 58:7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita. Refer to Shulchan Aruch 216:3, Ben Ish Chai ibid:7, Mishnah Berurah 17, Aruch Ha'shulchan 8, Ohr L'tzyion 2:46:54, Sharei Ha'beracha 19:footnote 101.

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#### Halachically Speaking

Halachically Speaking is a bi-weekly publication compiled by Rabbi Moishe Dovid Lebovits, a former chaver kollel of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath and a musmach of Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita. Rabbi Lebovits currently works Rabbinical as the Administrator for the KOF-K Kosher Supervision.

Each issue reviews a different area of contemporary halacha with an emphasis on practical applications of the principles discussed. Significant time is spent ensuring the inclusion of all relevant shittos on each topic, as well as the psak of Horav Yisroel Belsky, shlita on current issues.

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