

Into the Mix

January 11, 2024

Q What *bracha* is made on cholent?



A In general, when determining the *bracha* of a dish that has multiple components, if one is the *ikar* (main component) and others *tafeil* (secondary), making a *bracha* on the *ikar* exempts the *tafeil* (O.C. 204:12). *Min dagan* (a grain product), if present, is considered the *ikar* even if it is the minority, and only *mezonos* is recited (O.C. 208:2). Accordingly, many *poskim* say to make only *mezonos* on cholent on account of the barley. (Make sure there is some barley in the spoonful upon which the *bracha* is recited.)

Other *poskim* are hesitant about this for two reasons:

- The Chayei Adam (51:13) says that *min dagan* is only primary if the other ingredients aren't recognizable. In cholent, because the potatoes and meat are visible, they aren't *tafeil* to the barley. (Biur Halacha 112:1 cites this opinion but ultimately disagrees.)
- In cholent, the barley is intended as filler, not to flavor the other components. In such cases, *min dagan* isn't considered the *ikar* (Teshuvos Vehanhagos 2:146).

According to these views, *mezonos* is made on barley and then *ha'adamah* on a potato. This is so even if the barley is the minority, because *min dagan* is never *tafeil*. The *ha'damah* should not be made on the beans, because they may be considered *tafeil* to the barley. *Shehakol* is made on the meat, because the pieces are easily discernible. If the meat has fallen apart, it is *tafeil* (ibid.).

One should only recite the *bracha acharonah* of *al hamichya* on cholent if a *kezayis* of barley was eaten *toch kedei achilas pras* (within 3-9 minutes); otherwise, only *borei nefashos* is recited. If *al hamichyah* will be made, it is uncertain whether *borei nefashos* is required, because according to the first view, the other ingredients are *tafeil* to the barley and are covered by the *al hamichyah*. A good practice is to eat or drink something else to incur a

definite obligation and avoid the *safeik*.