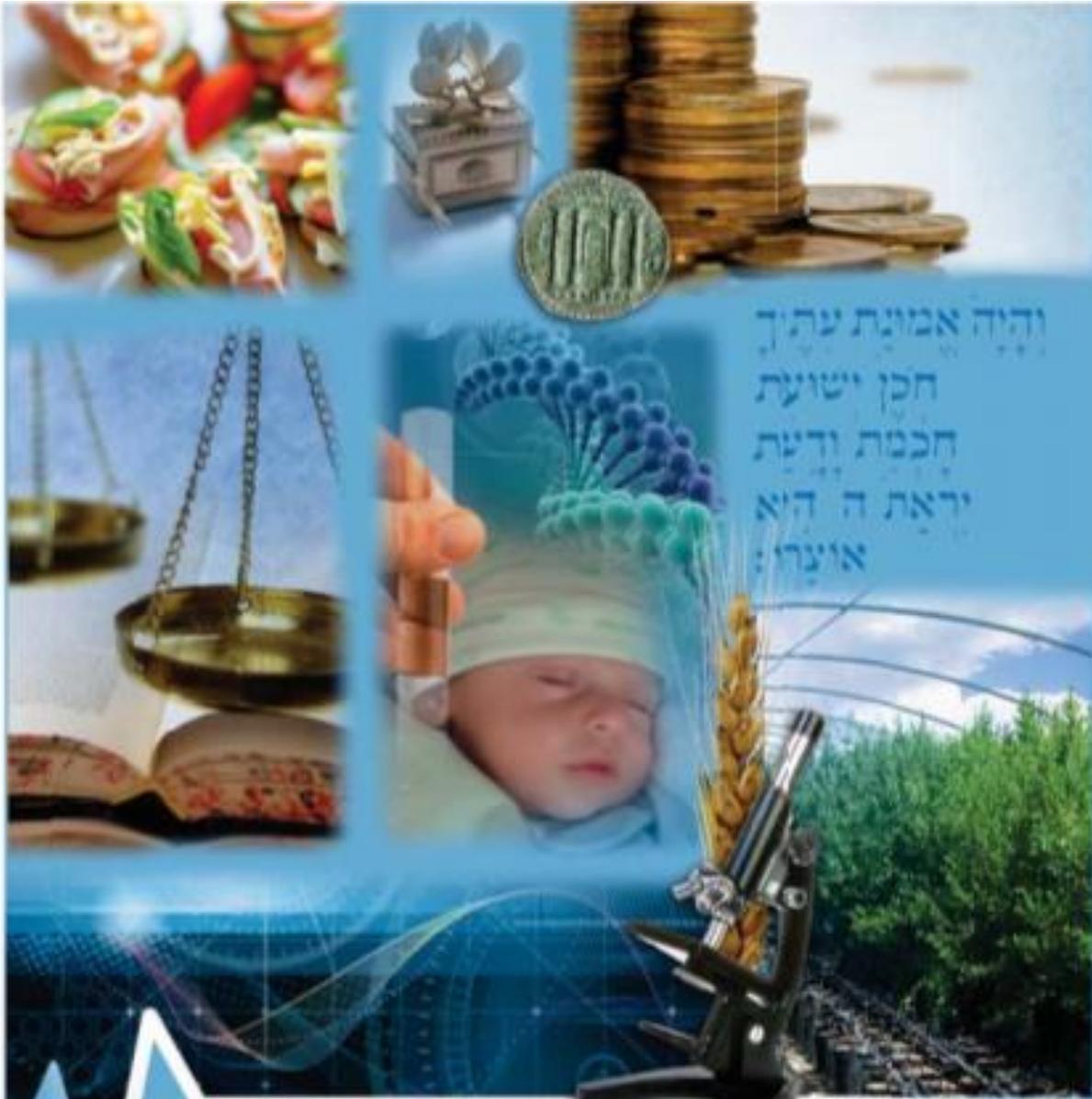


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What to do if you forgot to do *bi'ur ma'aserot* by the deadline / Rabbi Netanel Oyerbach

Question: What should a person do who forgot to do *bi'ur ma'aserot* (removing *ma'aserot* from one's domain) today, and one still has the *ma'aser sheni* coin?

Answer: The Minchat Chinuch deliberated on this question (*Mitzvah* 607): "It is unclear if one did not remove the *ma'aser sheni* ... if it can be removed afterwards, or if the *mitzvah* is no longer applicable after the holiday (Pesach)."

The doubt relates to the definition of *bi'ur ma'aserot*. One approach is that *bi'ur ma'aserot* is simply part of the *mitzvot* of *terumot* and *ma'aserot*: we are commanded to give our tithes to the people intended to receive them, but the Torah set up a deadline for us to do so.

Alternatively, *bi'ur* could be a *mitzvah* in its own right; namely, *ma'aser sheni* produce should be removed from one's domain at the appointed time of *bi'ur*.

What, then, happens if the deadline passed and someone still has the *ma'aser sheni* produce or the *ma'aser sheni* coin that one did not redeem? Many *poskim* maintain that both the produce and coin are forbidden to benefit from and must be destroyed. This approach is based on the view of *bi'ur ma'aserot* being its own independent *mitzvah*. If the time of the *mitzvah* passed, and someone fails to remove the produce from his domain or redeem the coin, he has transgressed a positive injunction. Accordingly, this approach views the produce as prohibited: it cannot be redeemed, nor can the sanctity in the coin be transferred to sugar. The coin must be defaced or thrown into the sea.

In practice, one who still has the *ma'aser sheni* coin and forgot to do *bi'ur* on time should deface it so it cannot be used.

***Gemar melacha* for winemaking and the stage at when *terumot* and *ma'aserot* are taken from wine / Rabbi Yoel Friedemann**

What is considered *gemar melacha*, the final stage of the preparation process, in winemaking according to *halacha*? From which stage is it possible to separate *terumot* and *ma'aserot* from the wine? From which stage in the winemaking process is it forbidden to drink or taste the wine? Are vintners' taste tests for the purpose of taking various operative decisions vis-à-vis the winemaking process considered *shetiyat aray* (casual drinking) or *shetiyat keva* (fixed drinking)?

Conclusions: The mainstream halachic consensus is that *gemar melacha* for wine takes place at the end of the fermentation process, after filtration and separation of the grape skins and pips.

- For this reason, *terumot* and *ma'aserot* should be separated after the completion of the fermentation process, after the liquid is poured into the grape press. It is optimal to wait until the later stage of clarification (the process in which solids are removed from the liquid, such as dead yeast cells).
- Even if the end-product is grape juice and the fermentation process is halted immediately at the beginning of production, *terumot* and *ma'aserot* are separated when

the peels and pips are separated from the juice. In this case, fermentation is not part of the process and thus is not a parameter for *gemar melacha*. It is even permitted to separate *terumot* and *ma'aserot* from grape juice to exempt wine, since in both cases they are considered completed at this stage (following the rule of *hamafrish min hagamur al hagamur*).

- When producing white wine, the peels and pips are separated from the liquid immediately at the start of the winemaking process (at times from as early as four hours from the grapes' arrival from the vineyard). In this case, the *gemar melacha* takes place only after the completion of the fermenting process, as mentioned above.
- If *terumot* and *ma'aserot* are taken after the grapes are pressed—before the completion of the fermentation process and after filtration—the separation is nevertheless effective (since there are several lenient opinions).
- For red wine, which is filtered upon the completion of the fermentation process, it seems that one can be lenient and taste the wine before filtration. After pouring the wine into the press, tastings should be prohibited without *terumot* and *ma'aserot*.
- For the preparation of white wine, where filtration comes before the end of the fermentation process, it seems that one can be lenient and taste the wine after filtration. This is as long as the alcoholic fermentation process has not been completed to the point that the wine is considered fit for drinking.
- It is possible to find solutions that facilitate separating *terumot* and *ma'aserot* in a fast and easy manner: 1) Say at the beginning of the day the text for separation ahead of time on the cups of wine that will be drunk throughout the day; 2) If this is not possible, one may separate *terumot* and *ma'aserot* before each tasting and say the shortened text.

Taking *challah* from dough composed of different types of flour / Rabbi Shai Levi

In recent years, there have been changes in types of breads produced both at major bakeries and in the private kitchen where various flours are used. This change raises several issues, including if the various flours can be combined to form one dough obligated in *challah*. Also, if it is possible to take *challah* from dough from one type of flour to exempt dough from a different type of flour.

Flour from the five grains is obligated in *challah*: wheat, barley, rye, spelt, and oats. The Yerushalmi cites two contradictory *mishnayot* regarding combining flours. According to one *mishna* various types flours can combine, while a different *mishna* says that this is only true for similar species (such as wheat with spelt). The Yerushalmi resolves this difficulty as follows: different flours can be combined for *challah* purposes when mixed together in a flour state. However, if each dough is prepared separately and one wants to combine them after they are kneaded by performing *neschicha* (placing the doughs next to one another so they are touching,

so when a piece from one dough is taken a piece of the other dough is taken as well), this can only be accomplished with doughs from a similar species.

The *Acharonim* discuss cases where each dough is composed of a different type of grain, and then the **doughs** are combined into one dough. Some maintain that even in this case the different grains can combine for *challah* purposes, since in the end it becomes a single entity. Others hold that in this case, they wouldn't combine for *challah*. So if one wishes to mix different types of flours, they need to be combined while still in the flour state.

When it comes to taking *challah* from a dough from one type of grain to exempt a dough composed of various types of grains (when they do not touch at all): first, one should ascertain whether the level of obligation for each dough is the same. It is possible to exempt one dough with another type of dough only when each are of an equivalent level of obligation. According to most *poskim* the level of obligation for dough composed of various grains is biblical.

After we are sure that both doughs have the same level of obligation, we need to define the dough composed of various grains (which we refer to here as "combined dough"). This is because we cannot take *challah* from one dough to exempt a dough from a different type of grain—such as a wheat dough exempting a barley dough. The issue of defining a combined dough is the subject of various halachic disputes. For this reason, we cannot take *challah* from a dough made of one grain to exempt a combined dough. There is an exception to this rule, however: taking *challah* from a wheat dough to exempt a wheat and spelt dough. This is because spelt is a subspecies of wheat. Barley can be combined with oats, spelt, and rye; oats with spelt; and rye with spelt (Shulchan Aruch YD §324:2). The rule, then, is that the flours in the combined dough include the type of flour used in the simple dough.

In practice: (1) It is possible to take *challah* from a dough composed of various flours. It is preferable to mix them together while still in a flour state rather than already dough. (2) One should not take *challah* from dough from one type of flour to exempt a combined dough when the flours in either dough are from different types of grains. If the doughs are composed of similar grains, it is possible to take *challah* from one dough to exempt another.

The influence of Israel's forests on the climate / Dr. Mordechai Shomron, agron.

Can forests impact the world climate in general and that in Israel in particular? If so, in which way, and what are the ramifications on the quality of life in Israel today?

To answer this global question, a network of approximately 600 state-of-the-art meteorology stations were set up all over the world to measure the impact of vegetation on the climate. Some 18 years ago one such station was erected in Israel in the Yatir Forest, situated on the edge of the desert, to examine the influence of the vegetation on the climate. The results were published recently in the periodical *Ecology and Environment 2018* (Heb.) in an article by Dr. Eyal Rotenberg and Prof. Dan Yakir: "Forestry, climate, and the future of forests in Israel." The results were fascinating and indicate the presence of a mutualistic relationship between the climate and Israeli forests.

The main findings are as follows: (1) The increase in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations is the result of pollution by industry, transportation, etc., which are responsible for global warming. Vegetation, on the other hand, cools off the earth by regulating carbon dioxide. (2) Vegetation also has an impact on solar radiation absorption and albedo (sunlight reflected off the Earth's surface), on changes in the evaporation and heating rates, and on the wind regime. In these ways it impacts the climate both directly and indirectly. (3) In the transpiration process (the way water moves through plants and evaporates), water vapor is released into the atmosphere; this, in turn, increases cloud formation. Clouds play a key role in reflecting some solar radiation back into the atmosphere and moderating warming on the soil. (4) The rate of carbon dioxide absorption during photosynthesis in the Yatir Forest is similar to pine forests in Europe (approximately 200g of carbon dioxide per sq. m.). (5) The average temperature of foliage in the Yatir forest is 5 °C lower than in its environs; in the afternoon during summertime, the gap can reach up to 20 °C. (6) Models of mutualistic relationships between vegetation and climate indicate that increasing the scope of forests in semi-arid regions, such as the Yatir Forest, can affect change in synoptic relationships and thus increase precipitation.

Current research highlights the importance of forests, which have a positive impact on the climate and increase precipitation. The results of this research conducted in Israel underlines the importance of planting trees and forests throughout the country.

Fortunate are we that we merit to witness this vision come to fruition before our very eyes!