

Laws of Blessings, Chapter 9 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

Shiur Overview

Summary of Shiur – Laws of Blessings Chapter 9, Law 1 (and further)

A. General Introduction: Blessings on Pleasant Fragrance – The Foundation

The Rambam's Words: "Just as it is forbidden for a person to derive benefit from food or drink before a blessing, so too it is forbidden to derive benefit from a pleasant fragrance before a blessing."

Simple Meaning: Just as one may not eat or drink without a blessing, one may not derive pleasure from a pleasant fragrance without a blessing.

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **The novelty that fragrance requires a blessing – and the source for this:** This is a great novelty, because with food and drink one takes something away from it – the Rambam said earlier that deriving benefit without a blessing is somewhat like theft. But with fragrance there is no "stealing" – "**zeh neheneh vezeh lo chaser**", no one loses anything when one smells. Therefore the Gemara brings an additional teaching: the **Kesef Mishneh** brings the verse "**kol haneshama tehallel Kah**" – "**davar shehaneshama neheneit mimenu velo haguf**". The exposition is that "neshama" means "neshima" (breath), and for every breath of pleasure one must give thanks. This is necessary because the regular reasoning of "assur lehanot" alone would not suffice for fragrance, which is a different type of pleasure.

2. **Birkat hariach is an obligation, not optional:** Blessings of enjoyment on fragrance are certainly an obligation – just like with foods. The only doubt that is raised is specifically regarding **spices at Havdalah** – there one is uncertain whether to make a blessing, because no one really "enjoys" it (i.e., it is not a natural pleasure that one seeks, but rather an enactment).

3. **Why is birkat hariach so neglected today:** In earlier times people were more involved with fragrances – perhaps because they needed to combat bad odors (there was no sanitation), or perhaps because **we are "coarse fellows" who don't appreciate refined pleasures**. It is also attributed to **shikchat haTorah** – children are not taught in cheder the laws of birkat hariach, so people simply don't know that one must make a blessing. Jews are careful about blessings on fruits and all blessings, but birkat hariach has almost been forgotten.

4. **With spices there is no measure of a kezayit as with eating** – because "neshama neheneit" from fragrance, not the body, and therefore it is a different type of pleasure.

B. The Different Blessings According to the Source of the Fragrance

The Rambam divides: On tree or tree species – "**borei atzei besamim**"; on grass or grass species – "**borei isvei besamim**"; on something not from tree and not from earth, such as musk which comes from an animal (musk deer) – "**borei minei besamim**"; on fruit that is edible (like an etrog) – "**shenatan reiach tov bapeirot**".

Simple Meaning: The blessing is determined according to the source of the fragrance: tree, grass, animal, or fruit.

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **"Borei minei besamim" as a general blessing:** "Borei minei besamim" is like the "Shehakol" of smelling – it covers everything that doesn't fall into the specific categories (atzei, isvei, fruits). The Rambam's example is musk which comes from an animal – not from tree and not from earth. **Bedi'aved, if one said "borei minei besamim" instead of the specific blessing – yatza.** But lechatchilah one must say the correct blessing.

2. **Practical question: Does one make a blessing when entering a grocery where fresh fruits smell?** This becomes a lively dispute:

- **One side** argues that **one must make a blessing**, because the grocery deliberately places fresh fruits in front that have a pleasant fragrance, and one derives pleasure from it. This is no different from an etrog that one smells.

- **The other side** argues that **one need not**, because the person is **not "aware"** (conscious) of the pleasure – he is focused on shopping, and most people don't notice the fragrance at all. Without conscious pleasure there is no obligation to bless.

- **The first side responds sharply:** This is **built on shikchat haTorah** – people have stopped enjoying and noticing, but that doesn't mean there is no obligation. He brings a proof from **etrogim in shul on Sukkot** – people smell them and don't make a blessing, but **in Shulchan Aruch it clearly states that one must**. This is an obligation, not optional.

- It is clarified that **we are not talking about artificial fragrances** that stores put in (scent marketing), but rather the **natural fragrance of fresh fruits** – for example, by the place where fruit is cut. **If one derives pleasure from the fragrance of fruits, one makes a blessing "borei shenatan reiach tov bapeirot."** Oranges and citrus fruits have a strong fragrance – one should make a blessing.

3. **Question about coffee:** Fresh coffee when ground has a delicious fragrance. **What blessing does one make?** Coffee is not a "fruit" in the simple sense – **there is a question whether coffee is tree or earth** (there is a responsum on this, because coffee comes from a tree). **Lemaaseh it is said "borei minei besamim"** because it is always a doubt whether it is fruits. But **it is raised that even "borei minei besamim" has a problem** – because the Almighty did not

create coffee as a perfume, and perhaps "besamim" doesn't apply to it. The answer: **If you derive pleasure, we are not concerned** what the primary purpose of the creation is. It is mentioned that a question was brought before **Rav Chaim Kanievsky** regarding this matter.

4. **Etrog shel mitzvah:** On an **etrog shel mitzvah one does make a blessing** (hanoten reiach tov bapeirot), but **not on hadassim** (because they are muktzeh lemitzvatan). Also mentioned is the custom on **Yom Kippur** to walk around with an etrog stuck with cloves.

5. **Perfume — does one need a blessing?** On perfume one would seemingly need to make "**borei minei besamim**", but one must still consider **synthetic products** (not natural spices). The Rambam will soon bring a law about this distinction. (See further at "riach belo ikkar".)

6. **Tobacco:** According to this calculation one would also need to check what tobacco is made from, in order to know which blessing to make. On tobacco it is already understood that one must make a blessing, but the public doesn't conduct itself this way.

C. Blessing on the Fragrance of Foods — Food That Has Fragrance

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **Sharp question:** The same cloves that one smells at Havdalah are put into foods — fish, meat, etc. When one brings a portion of fish with spices that smell good, why doesn't one make "borei minei besamim"? **Mah nafshach** — either one says a blessing levatalah at Havdalah (if fragrance doesn't obligate a blessing), or one forgets to make blessings many times throughout the week on the fragrance of foods.

2. **The Rambam's approach:** With **food that has fragrance** (spices were added for fragrance), the eating is primary and the fragrance is **tafel** — one doesn't make a separate blessing on the fragrance. But it is added that **seemingly one must think more** about this matter.

D. Mugmar (incense) — Blessing and Timing

The Rambam's Words: Mugmar — something that is lit in order to produce a pleasant fragrance (like "incense sticks" today). The custom was to bring mugmar at the end of a meal, as a pleasure for the guests.

Simple Meaning: One makes a blessing on mugmar when it is lit to smell.

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **When does one make the blessing: One makes the blessing only "ad shetaaleh timrto"** — when the smoke begins to rise. This means: **even before one smells it**, but after the smoke comes out. **Conversely:** if one already smells it but the smoke is not yet visible, one doesn't make it.

2. **The language "timrto"** (not "ashano") is interesting — it means like a **tamar** (palm), the smoke goes up straight.

3. **Blessing on mugmar — tree or grass:** If one uses **tree** for mugmar — one makes "**borei atzei besamim**". If it is **grass** — one makes "**borei isvei besamim**". (The same rules as with smelling itself.)

E. Shemen shel Afarsemon — Borei Shemen Arev

The Rambam's Words: "Shemen shel afarsemon vekayotza bo — mevarkhim alav borei shemen arev."

Simple Meaning: Afarsemon was a special fruit/plant that grew in Eretz Yisrael (area of Jericho, Ein Gedi). According to commentators on Mishneh Torah it is **not found today**. The oil from it received a special blessing: "**borei shemen arev**".

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **"Arev" doesn't mean "sweet" like sugar (matok), but rather "pleasant" — agreeable, tasty.** With a fragrance "arev" means it is a **sweet/pleasant fragrance**, not literally sweet. The novelty is that **oil is usually only for anointing, but this oil also has an "arev" — a fragrance.**

2. **Essential oils today:** It is asked whether today's "essential oils" would also receive the blessing "borei shemen arev". A distinction is made: **There is when oil only holds the fragrance** (from other spices added), **and there is when the oil itself has the fragrance.** Only when the oil itself has from its own essence a special fragrance (like afarsemon) does it receive "borei shemen arev".

F. Shemen Zayit Shekafsho — Borei Atzei Besamim

The Rambam's Words: "Aval shemen zayit shekafsho o techano ad shehechzir reiach nodef — mevarech alav borei atzei besamim."

Simple Meaning: Olive oil that was processed (pressed or ground) until it acquired a strong pleasant fragrance — one makes **not** "borei shemen arev", but rather "**borei atzei besamim**", because it comes from a tree/fruit.

Novel Points and Explanations:

The distinction between shemen afarsemon (borei shemen arev) and shemen zayit (borei atzei besamim) is: **Shemen afarsemon has from its own essence a special fragrance, but shemen zayit's fragrance comes only through processing** — therefore it doesn't receive the special blessing.

G. Shemen Shebishmo — Borei Minei Besamim

Simple Meaning: If spices were added to oil (like **shemen hamishchah**), the oil now smells, but **not from its own oil, but from the spices** that were added — **one blesses "borei minei besamim"**.

Novel Points and Explanations:

The oil receives the blessing of the spices that were added, not from the oil itself. This is the hint: **shemen shebishmo** — the oil's blessing follows its "shem", i.e., follows what gives it the fragrance.

H. Hevi'u Lefanav Shemen Vehadas — Mevarech Al Hahadas Ufoter Et Hashemen

The Rambam's Words (Mishnah): "Hevi'u lefanav shemen vehadas — mevarech al hahadas ufoter et hashemen."

Simple Meaning: When oil (olive oil with pleasant fragrance) and hadassim (tree spices) are brought, one makes first on the hadassim and exempts the oil.

Novel Points and Explanations:

Both — olive oil and hadas — have the same blessing "borei atzei besamim", therefore one can exempt the other. This confirms that **oil stam (without "mefusam") means tree.**

I. Hevi'u Lefanav Bosem She'ein Uvosem She'etz — Two Blessings

Simple Meaning: When one has **both — isvei besamim and atzei besamim** — one makes **two separate blessings**, one doesn't exempt the other.

J. Hevi'u Lefanav Yayin Veshemen — Order of Blessings at a Meal

The Rambam's Words: "Hevi'u lefanav yayin veshemen — yotzei yayin bimino veshemen bismalo, mevarech al hayayin veshoteh, ve'achar kach mevarech al hashemen umariach bo, vetochvo berosh hashamash."

Simple Meaning: When wine and oil (fragrant oil) are brought: wine is more important, one takes it in the right hand. One makes first a blessing on wine, drinks, then makes on the oil and smells. Then **one rubs it on the head of the shamash** (the attendant).

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. "**Tochvo berosh hashamash**" is explained as a **custom of tipping** — instead of wiping the hands on a napkin, one gives the shamash (attendant) the expensive oil on the head, as a gift/tip. This fits with what we learned earlier in seder haseudah, that fruits were placed in the mouths of the attendants.

2. Oil served both for fragrance (besamim) and for anointing (like shampoo) — it was pleasant to have in the hair.

[Digression: Talmid Chacham and Besamim] — from Hilchot De'ot: a talmid chacham may not go out with spices in the street, because young men used to do this so girls would catch them. This is only a detail for talmidei chachamim — a simple person may, a chassidic Jew may also. The talmid chacham, after being with his wife, goes to tevilat Ezra, and if he smells, one knows he anointed himself — this is the reason why it is a disgrace.

K. Bosem She'ervo Harokhel — Mixture of Spices

The Rambam's Words: "**Bosem she'ervo harokhel — when a merchant has mixed different types of spices, one makes borei minei besamim.**"

Simple Meaning: When different types of spices are mixed together, one makes the inclusive blessing "borei minei besamim".

Novel Points and Explanations:

A distinction is raised between spices and food: with food there is no such law that when one mixes two types (for example potatoes with apples) one makes a Shehakol. With food one seeks which is primary and which is secondary. But with spices, when one mixes together different types, one makes one blessing "borei minei besamim" — **not because one seeks a primary, but because it literally fits:** "borei minei besamim" means He created different types of spices. This is not like "Shehakol" which is an inclusive blessing;

"minei besamim" literally means several types, and this fits precisely when there are ten types mixed together.

L. Nichnass Lechanuto Shel Bosem — Entering a Spice Shop

The Rambam's Words: "**Hanichnass lechanuto shel bosem sheyesh bo minim harbeh — mevarech. Nichnass veyatza venichnass veyatza kol hayom kulo eino mevarech ela achat. Nichnass veyatza venichnass veyatza — mevarech al kol pa'am vefa'am.**"

Simple Meaning: Whoever enters a spice shop where it smells good from different types, makes a blessing. If he stays inside the entire day — only one blessing. If he goes out and comes back in — a new blessing each time.

Novel Points and Explanations:

The distinction is explained: when one stays inside the entire day, it is like a long meal where one makes one blessing at the beginning — not because one stops deriving pleasure, but because the blessing covers the entire continuation. But when one goes out and comes back, each time is a "fresh pleasure" — a new awareness of the fragrance.

[Digression: Sephardic custom at Havdalah] — Among Sephardic Jews on Motzaei Shabbat in shul several types of spices are brought — people know what is isvei besamim, what is atzei besamim, and it smells very pleasant in the beit midrash. **But on "arak"** (licorice-flavored drink) **one doesn't make "borei minei besamim"** — because it is not a fragrance, but a taste.

M. Specific Spices — Shoshana, Vered, Nerd

The Rambam's Words: "**Al hashoshana vechalfei hamayim mevarkhim aleihen borei atzei besamim. Nerd shel ginah — atzei besamim, shel sadeh — isvei besamim. Havered umei vered...**"

Simple Meaning: Shoshana, chalfei hamayim, vered — are atzei besamim. Nerd from a garden is atzei besamim, from a field is isvei besamim. Mei vered (rose water) is also a spice.

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **Distinction between shoshana and vered:** The Zohar says that shoshana is a rose, but most poskim and commentators on Tanach hold that shoshana is a type of lily (a broader flower), and vered is a rose. This is the simple meaning of the Mishnah. Practically there is no distinction, because both are atzei besamim.

2. **Distinction between nerd shel ginah and nerd shel sadeh:** What grows on trees in a garden is atzei besamim, and what grows on the earth/grass is isvei besamim.

3. **Mei vered** (rose water) is a distilled perfume from roses.

4. **Levonah:** One doesn't make a blessing on levonah, because levonah is something that was offered for avodah zarah.

N. Three Types of Fragrance on Which One Doesn't Make a Blessing

The Rambam's Words: "**Sheloshah minei reiach tov ein mevarkhim aleihem: (1) reiach tov she'assur lehariach bo, (2) reiach tov she'ein asuy lehariach bo [but rather to eliminate a bad smell], (3) reiach she'ein asuy lehariach bo [not made for smelling].**"

Simple Meaning: Three categories of pleasant fragrances where one doesn't make a blessing: (1) forbidden fragrances (like avodah zarah, ervah), (2) fragrances that are not for positive pleasure but to drive away a bad smell, (3) fragrances that are not made for smelling.

Novel Points and Explanations:

With category (2) — it is compared to "**shoteh mayim litzmo**" — it is not a positive pleasure, but elimination of a negative. Like water that one gulps down — it is not a pleasurable thing.

O. Besamim Shel Avodah Zarah Uvesamim Shel Ervah

The Rambam's Words: "Besamim shel avodah zarah o besamim shel arayot ein mevarkhim aleihem."

Simple Meaning: On spices of avodah zarah or of ervah one doesn't make a blessing.

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **Avodah zarah:** One may not go into a church and smell the spices there — it is spices of avodah zarah or offerings of avodah zarah.

2. **What does "arayot" mean?** The **Rashba** wondered about this and says it must be in a manner where "einah shel yetzer hara" is present — a sign of transgression. From the commentators one sees that the Rambam added the detail of "besamim shel arayot" himself — it is not stated clearly in the Gemara.

3. **Who is "ervah" in this context?** It becomes likely that "ervah" means actually an ishah assurah alav — even his own wife when she is niddah, or a sister (who is certainly an ervah). The Rambam's approach is that with an ervah where there are harchakot (like eishet ish, niddah), **one may not smell the spices she'aleha at all** — this is not just a matter of blessing, but an actual harchakah. But with an ervah like a sister, where there are no laws of harchakot (one may be with her in yichud), one may smell, but a blessing one doesn't make.

4. The Rambam says that chibuk venishuk with a sister is "meguneh me'od" — so it may be that smelling spices she'aleha is also somewhat problematic.

5. **Practical point:** "I have never heard anyone make a blessing on the perfume of another woman" — that is indeed a transgression.

6. A question is raised whether the law of "arayot" also applies to males (issur korbah lezecharim), but the discussion is not concluded.

P. Reiach Belo Ikkar — Begadim Hamugmarim and Perfume

The Rambam/Law: One who smells clothes that have a pleasant fragrance doesn't make a blessing, because it is reiach belo ikkar — it is not primary spices, but a fragrance that has transferred to the garment.

Simple Meaning: When the fragrance is not in the primary spice-object itself, but in something that has absorbed the fragrance (like clothing), one doesn't make a blessing.

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **Perfume:** Most perfumes are a water-based mixture that is sprayed on the person. Is this also "reiach belo ikkar" like

begadim hamugmarim? The conclusion is that perfume is **not** like begadim hamugmarim — perfume is more comparable to **besamim shekhatshan** (ground spices), where the primary spice is still present in the mixture, and **seemingly one does make a blessing** on it.

2. **Distinction between smoke (fragrance without a physical essence) and a drop of perfume:** With begadim hamugmarim the fragrance is like "smoke" — there is no physical spice-object present. But with perfume there is a physical drop of water with spice-ingredients.

3. **Deodorant:** Deodorant is **certainly natehav reiach** (made to eliminate bad smell), not primary spice. But it is also asked: deodorant has a pleasant fragrance, and the person applies it because he wants a pleasant fragrance — is this his "cologne/perfume"? The conclusion: **There is a distinction between cologne and deodorant** — cologne is for fragrance, deodorant is for eliminating bad smell, and "lecholei alma" they are two separate things.

4. **[Digression:]** Previously people/women wore a necklace with actually a piece of spices — that was the primary spice, not like today's perfumes.

Q. Besamim Shel Mesibat Goyim — Law of Majority

Gemara/Law: "Besamim shel mesibah shel goyim — ein mevarkhim aleihem." A regular gathering of non-Jews, when they bring spices, one doesn't make a blessing, because a regular gathering of non-Jews is for avodah zarah.

Simple Meaning: When Jews gather together, they praise the Almighty. When non-Jews gather together, they praise their idols. Therefore a regular gathering of non-Jews is connected to avodah zarah.

Novel Points and Explanations:

1. **Law of majority with doubtful fragrance:** The Gemara says: "**Havi mehalech chutz lakerach veheriach reiach tov**" — someone enters a city and smells a pleasant fragrance, he doesn't know if it comes from Jews or from non-Jews. **Im rov ir goyim — ein mevarech** (one follows the majority). **Im rov Yisrael — mevarech.**

2. **Whether majority applies to fragrances:** There is a dispute, but **most poskim say that majority applies to fragrances.**

3. **Practical example:** He passes by a restaurant, half serve avodah zarah, half mean the Almighty — one follows the majority. Or an entire city made a fire with spices, and there is a majority of Jews — one makes a blessing.

R. Shamash at Havdalah — Rema

Novelty: The **Rema** says that **the shamash (server) should also make a blessing** on spices at Havdalah. When the shamash goes through after everyone has already smelled the hadassim — **he smells the fragrance that is still present**, and this is a question whether this is "reiach belo ikkar" (because everyone has already handled/smelled the hadassim).

Until here Chapter 7 Siman 109.

Full Transcript

Laws of Blessings Chapter 9 – Blessings on Pleasant Fragrances

Introduction: Why We Don't Learn the Laws of Blessings on Fragrance Anymore

Speaker 1:

Gentlemen, we're going to learn Laws of Blessings Chapter 9. Yes?

Speaker 2:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

Say, say. So, we're going to learn about the blessing, we're seeing Laws of Blessings, we're going to learn all the blessings on smelling good things.

So, it's an interesting thing, in earlier times it seems that people were much more involved in this. Today it's not such a big deal. We don't have such... There are things like perfume, there are things like things that make the house smell good, but we don't pay so much attention to it.

It could be that, I don't know, there are those who say that in earlier times there wasn't... people often had to combat bad smells, because there wasn't the sanitation, there wasn't this, there wasn't that. Therefore it came more into daily life to make things smell good.

It could also be that we are simply, we are how do you say it? We don't appreciate refined, refined pleasures. We're a bit coarse fellows, and we are... as the Gemara says that there is a neshama (soul) that derives pleasure from fragrance.

Announcement About the Fundraising Campaign

Now, before we continue with the shiur (lecture), I want to remind you that these days there's a big campaign going on, a fundraising drive for the beis medrash (study hall) Ohela L'Machshava, the beis medrash in which we learn for this shiur, the beis medrash of my friend and partner HaRav HaGaon Rabbi Yitzchak, who gives many other shiurim in various parts of Torah, deep shiurim in nigleh (revealed Torah) and nistar (hidden Torah), taste and see that it is good, and fortunate is the portion of all those who support and sponsor the shiurim and so forth.

And we think, we also have here such an aspect of fragrance that not everyone derives pleasure from, and one must taste it in order to know. And one tastes it by entering the chamra d'mishtael busya (wine shop with spices), as we'll learn further. Rabbi Yitzchak is the chamra d'mishtael busya with all types of good spices and good fragrances. Now, and we also have Rabbi Yoshe who helps with the same thing, not just us.

Law 1: The General Obligation of Blessing on Fragrance

Speaker 1:

Now, so, the Rambam says: **"Just as it is forbidden for a person to derive pleasure from food or drink before a blessing"**, as we learned earlier that it's forbidden to derive pleasure from anything without a blessing, as the Rambam said that it's even somewhat like deriving pleasure, even hours from something like theft.

"So too it is forbidden to derive pleasure from a pleasant fragrance before a blessing." One also may not derive pleasure from a pleasant fragrance before a blessing.

The Innovation of Blessing on Fragrance

It's a great innovation, because when a person takes food or drink, he takes it away from the other. Smelling is very difficult, because there's no such thing as stealing a smell. What does "kol yitmala" (all will be filled) have to do with it if you stole it? Since a poor person walks by a wealthy person's house where food smells are coming out, nothing is lacking for him. It's zeh neheneh v'zeh lo chaser (one benefits and the other loses nothing).

Perhaps that's why the Gemara brings extra derivations. Perhaps that's the matter, it's not necessarily... it could be that the other is also a matter, but as you say, **"Kol haneshama tehallel Kah"** (Let every soul praise God), in practice you have pleasure. You simply need to thank the Almighty in any case.

But apparently that's precisely why the Gemara brings another derivation. The Kesef Mishneh brings in his commentary that it says in the Gemara precisely the verse, **"Kol haneshama tehallel Kah"**, **davar she'haneshama nehenis mimenu** (something from which the soul derives pleasure). Apparently because of this, because the simple thing of "forbidden to derive pleasure" isn't enough, because it's actually a somewhat different type of thing. But the neshama...

Speaker 2:

You mean that **"Kol haneshama tehallel Kah"** means to thank for breathing?

Speaker 1:

Yes, that's what the Gemara says. **"Kol haneshama tehallel Kah"** means to thank for breathing. **Davar she'haneshama nehenis mimenu v'lo haguf** (something from which the soul derives pleasure and not the body). Yes. It's interesting that we learn from this, because simply there it means **"Kol haneshama tehallel Kah"** that every breath obligates praising God, on a breath. The neshama itself praises God. The person should thank for his breathing, for his fragrance.

The Different Blessings on Pleasant Fragrance

Speaker 1:

He says thus, **the blessing on pleasant fragrance is shortened**. Which blessing is it?

He says thus, **if this thing that has the fragrance is a tree or a type of tree**, if the pleasant smell is a tree or something that comes from a tree, leaves from the tree, one makes **"borei atzei besamim"** (Who creates fragrant trees), he thanks the Almighty Who created trees of spices.

And if they were grass, if it's something that grows like grass, **or a type of grass**, one blesses **"borei isvei besamim"** (Who creates fragrant grasses), grasses of spices.

And if they were neither from a tree nor from the earth, if it's not from a tree and not from earth, **such as musk**, something that smells very good called mor, they say that today's... It's called "musk", I think even today it's used, it's a certain creation, **such as musk that comes from an animal**, from a certain ah... certain animal, an animal called ayil hamusak (musk deer), which is a type of deer, a type of ah... what's a deer? A deer is the... such a little deer. A wild animal that runs around in the wilderness. Yes. Ah... which is a type of animal, **one blesses borei minei besamim** (Who creates various kinds of spices).

Speaker 2:

Mmm.

Speaker 1:

That's like the shehakol (catch-all blessing) of fragrances.

Speaker 2:

Yes, I saw that.

Speaker 1:

And if it was a fruit fit for eating, he brought an esrog (citron) with a pitom (stem), which now one only smelled, one derives pleasure from the smell and makes a blessing on the smell, **one blesses she'natan rei'ach tov ba'peiros** (Who gave pleasant fragrance to fruits).

Speaker 2:

Okay, good.

Discussion: Do We Make a Blessing When Entering a Grocery Store?**Speaker 1:**

By the way, what you say that today we don't make a big deal of it, it's actually true, very often people simply don't know that one must make a blessing. Often an esrog for example, an esrog shel mitzvah (for the commandment) one must learn the law that on the esrog one does make a blessing by the way, not on the hadassim (myrtle branches). But for example...

Speaker 2:

And you can see it, there are on Yom Kippur people walk around with an esrog that's stuck inside, because apparently perhaps one needs to make both blessings.

Speaker 1:

True, true. But for example, the same thing is, there are things, I don't remember right now at the moment, one brings certain food that has such a... or a fruit with flowers, people bring flowers for a simcha (celebration), one must make a blessing.

Speaker 2:

Perhaps it could be, certainly, there's no doubt. Or just fruits. By the way, a good question occurred to me from this. You go into Gourmet Glatt, into the store, the first thing they put the fruits on the side.

Speaker 1:

The bakery smells, the bakery.

Speaker 2:

Ah, the bakery, no, the bakery is in the back. Always in every store, almost every business, every grocery store in the world, so they have a wisdom the grocery store makers that they need to do, they put in the front the green produce and the things, and often it has a smell, and one must make a blessing on this. It's not crazy.

Speaker 1:

I wouldn't say that one must make a blessing on this, because first of all there's no such blessing on something that's in the background, something that you derive pleasure from.

Speaker 2:

But that's being said! The person is now going shopping.

Speaker 1:

Not correct. He's not aware of the pleasure he has. It's a long sugya (Talmudic discussion), you need to have a focus on your

shopping. Ask a person, does it smell here? Most people won't notice. Only if you tell them.

Speaker 2:

It's true, I understand what you're saying.

Speaker 1:

It's true, I'm talking about myself, I'm talking about myself. I touch an esrog, I touch an esrog.

Speaker 2:

Because you forgot about this, precisely because you forgot about this. That should only be when the... what do you say? When one prays and gives thanks, there's no blessing on good words. First of all, perhaps there is, one needs to think. But the things from which one derives pleasure one must make a blessing.

If someone makes a blessing when he enters Gourmet Glatt because it smells good, that's a beracha levatala (blessing in vain). Why shouldn't one say "shefoch chamatkha" (pour out Your wrath) for all good things? As the Rambam concludes, that one can include the Almighty.

I don't agree, I don't agree. I don't agree. I don't agree. You're talking about a person who has pleasure, he takes the food and says "Baruch Atah Hashem" (Blessed are You, God). From where did you have pleasure? From where did you have pleasure?

What you understand, what you're saying, there's no blessing on good words. What you understand, that's the shakla v'tarya (back and forth) of what we're talking about. We've accepted this, when one takes something a piece, a torn nail that one takes at havdala (separation ceremony), then comes "borei minei besamim".

But you go into a store where they deliberately placed this to make a pleasant smell, and it's one of the things - either trees, or grasses, or kinds, or all together make kinds - you say that one doesn't make a blessing because you don't want to be mindful of the fragrance.

You say thus: if you go into a home and there's a diffuser, and the diffuser isn't nothing, it could be such a diffuser, and the diffuser smells good.

Speaker 1:

In Gourmet it also doesn't smell good.

Speaker 2:

I'm talking to you yes about the produce. They put there a whole pile of produce, fresh produce that has a pleasant smell. That's what we're talking about. In Shulchan Aruch it says about fruits. An apple, one puts there an apple, an apple, yes? Only if one is aware and derives pleasure.

But now we can convince ourselves, as Rabbi Yitzchak bar Chaim says, that one is mindful, there are people who are mindful. Because I, when I go into a grocery store, someone asks me afterward, "Did you smell that there's a good grocery?" Perhaps yes. The same thing is the bakery. Near the bakery there are various kinds. Soon we'll talk about the bakery. For bakery there's a different blessing. Soon we'll talk, the Rambam, I said earlier, the Rambam says that there's a blessing on a bakery too, by the way. And there's an investigation in the Rambam that one needs to think about.

But what you're saying, you're saying thus, "harchev picha va'amal'ehu" (open your mouth wide and I will fill it). People

snack all day, everyone doesn't think what he's doing, he doesn't make a blessing. Every Jew knows, even if one doesn't think, one makes a blessing without thinking. So a Jew goes, he makes a blessing, he mumbles a blessing.

One needs to delve into the laws of blessings. The same thing, people have simply forgotten about the thing called blessing on fragrance. One needs to awaken oneself, I'm awakening, instead of justifying oneself, one needs to say the truth, one must make a blessing, and it's a good thing, it's an opportunity, one can make a blessing. If someone is missing blessings, I don't know what, one can make a blessing, there's no question at all.

The only thing I would perhaps agree with is, perhaps on perfume, or really something that one puts in order to have a pleasant fragrance, perhaps one should have investigated which of them is made from something on which one can make atzei or borei.

Speaker 1:

But he didn't make... It doesn't say that one needs to put, it doesn't say any intention, I don't know how... If someone puts on olam ha'adama (of the earth) it's borei minei besamim. And the same law on perfume, apparently one would need to make a borei minei besamim. One needs, we'll soon see with spices and not products. Because something that one puts so there should be a pleasant atmosphere in the grocery...

Speaker 2:

That is the smell for a good year! That's what we're talking about! That's a davar she'yesh lo neshama v'hana'at haguf (something that has a soul and bodily pleasure).

No, no. You're innovating wondrous innovations that our forefathers never imagined which is built on forgetting the Torah, because people have stopped enjoying, and he tells you "ah, it doesn't smell". I tell you, I'll tell you, people once knew, one made a blessing, one made a blessing, one made a blessing. There's no doubt that one makes a blessing. There's no doubt that one makes a blessing.

People have simply forgotten the law. People have simply forgotten. I go to shul every Sukkos, people smell the esrogim, they don't make a blessing, it's written in Klal Yisrael that one must make a blessing. People have simply, we don't teach children in cheder the laws of blessing on fragrance. Therefore one has complaints, teach yourself the laws, look in Shulchan Aruch, but there's no doubt that one makes a blessing on this.

One revives oneself, it's not forbidden, it's not forbidden to derive pleasure without a blessing, you have pleasure from the good smell, you must make a blessing. It's not just, you say that blessing on fragrance is weak, blessing on fragrance is not weak. Blessing on fragrance is an obligation. It's a question whether one must make a blessing. The same thing on the spices that one smells at havdala, it's a doubt whether one must make a blessing because no one enjoys it.

But the same thing there's a matter to make... Yes, but if it smells, one makes a blessing. But do you derive pleasure from it?

Speaker 1:

I'm asking you a question. I'm asking you a question. The same cloves that you smell at havdala, they put into many foods that are served to you to eat, in fish that you order. You have a recipe for fish, do you make a blessing when they bring

you such a portion of fish? "Ah, it smells good, borei minei besamim". Or is it a beracha levatala levatala (blessing in vain in vain), or do you forget to make blessings many times a whole week.

Speaker 2:

When one brings a food, I asked, when one brings in a... I don't know what the law is, one brings a food that one put in things for fragrance, I once asked, they said yes, one makes it is... so mugmar such a... so...

Blessing on Fragrance is an Obligation, Not Optional

Speaker 1:

There's no such thing, it's not forbidden, "aser te'aser" (you shall surely tithe) is a blessing. You need to have pleasure from the good smell, you must make, but it's not optional. You need to say here that blessing on fragrance is weaker than optional blessings. Okay, blessings of enjoyment are certainly obligatory blessings, there's no question that one must make a blessing. The distinction is on the spices that one smells at havdala, there I'm doubtful whether one makes a blessing, because no one enjoys it.

Question: Why Don't We Make a Blessing on the Smell of Foods?

Speaker 1:

Fine, but then there's a matter to make "borei minei besamim" on something that would smell. One has pleasure, but the matter is, one smells it, true, you derive pleasure from it. I'm asking you a question, it's simple, I'm asking you a question. The same cloves that you smell at havdala they put into many foods that are served to you to eat, and fish, what's the recipe for fish? Does one make a blessing when they bring you such a portion of fish? Ah, it smells good, "borei minei besamim".

I want to tell you, either way, either you say a blessing in vain at havdala, or you forget to make blessings many times a whole week. When one brings a food, I don't know what the law is, when one brings a food that one put in things for fragrance, the Rambam, I said earlier, the Rambam says that one makes... like mugmar. No, not mugmar, a food that has fragrance, one put in a spice for the sake of fragrance. The Rambam, I said, one doesn't make a blessing, it's called secondary, but for the fragrance one needs to separately make a blessing apparently. It's not... okay, I admit that one should think about it.

Blessing on Fragrance is a Forgotten Matter

Speaker 1:

True, that one needs to think much more about blessing on fragrance. Rabbi Yitzchak brought earlier a very good point, thank God that Jews are careful about blessings on fruits and on all things, but blessing on fragrance is very much like a matter that has been forgotten. And according to this calculation one would need to look even more sharply what tobacco is made of and what it's made from, and one should know which blessing to make.

Very good, on tobacco one already has, true, the understanding that one must make a blessing on the fragrance, and people don't conduct themselves that way. And when one brings in a food that has a pleasant smell, one also apparently needs to think what should be the permission not to make. Meaning, chicken soup has a certain smell, but one needs to know what the law is that something that's related to

the main thing, and we'll soon see, just things that are completely nothing it could be that one doesn't make a blessing, because it's just air, as the... okay, true, it's not... I admit, but it's not something that you can say that meat doesn't smell.

"Borei Minei Besamim" — General Blessing or Specific?

Speaker 1:

Good, let's finish the chapter. Let's finish the chapter, see, here are details that one can address, we'll see many more details. But a principle, on all types of the mentioned things on which one makes "borei minei besamim"...

Discussion: Is "Borei Minei Besamim" Like "Shehakol"?

Speaker 2:

I certainly thought that "al hakol" (on everything) means on all things that smell good, but not lastly what he says here. Just, one of the four things.

Speaker 1:

No, like "shehakol".

Speaker 2:

No, when the Rambam says "such as myrrh that is fatty," he means anything that smells good, so... and two things would...

Speaker 1:

No no, the halacha doesn't say that. The halacha says "al hakol," that bedieved one says "al hakol" if one already said "minei" - yatza. But there's another halacha about this.

Sephardic Custom: Multiple Types of Besamim at Havdalah

Speaker 1:

By the way, by us Ashkenazim... by the Sephardic Jews, in almost every Sephardic beis medrash you come in on Saturday night, they bring several types of besamim and people know this is isvei besamim, this is atzei besamim, and it smells from many things, it's very pleasant. It becomes a pleasant smell in the beis medrash. But on the Eretz [Israel], they don't make any "borei minei." It smells from licorice. It smells from licorice. So it has no taste and no smell.

Halacha 2: Mugmar — When Does One Make the Bracha

Speaker 1:

Okay, one more word about al hamugmar, says the Rambam, you need chassidus. Okay, one more word about al hamugmar. So what we learned earlier about something called mugmar that people used to carry around in the good old days, by the way, not necessarily by chachamim, just at a meal they would bring in a certain hot thing that brings a good smell. Not a hookah, they do hookah today. It's a type of thing. There's something, you know when you go up on the plane they give you a warm wet cloth that also has a good smell to wash yourself. It's such a custom, you can find this custom also in certain restaurants, maybe they give it on the plane.

But by the way, there are people who do light today, it's called that one makes such a stick, it's such an incense stick, you light it and it makes a pleasant smell. The order used to be that you do it at the end of the meal, you can use sage which calms a bit. Okay, it makes a pleasant smell.

If a person lights any of these, one makes a bracha, it's called mugmar. Yes, that's mugmar basically. You can buy it, they still sell it, people make it, those who are in certain cultures do it more. But it's interesting, once it was a part of the meal. At

the meal there was an opportunity when the wealthy person or the host wanted to give pleasure to the guests with all kinds of pleasures, so he wasn't stingy with drink and with food.

Mugmar is a Social Situation

Speaker 2:

A meal is a social situation. I didn't know that the simple Jew had access to mugmar.

Speaker 1:

It's not connected with a meal, but with invited guests they would bring mugmar. There's such a thing, it's not a chiddush. Today, I know people who like to bring these sticks that you light, and you bring it in.

There they also check which thing you lit. There are things that give off a good smell. There are things that you light, and that's called mugmar.

"Ad She'ta'aleh Timarto" — When the Smoke Goes Up

Speaker 1:

In mugmar, the mugmar that you light so it should make a good smell, you only make the bracha **ad she'ta'aleh timarto**, when smoke starts to come out. Interesting, he calls it timarto, not ashen, but tamar, it goes up. Ta'aleh timarto, yes, it's a lashon. It's like a tamar. Interesting, this means even before it smells. You lit it, and it became a nice smoke. On the contrary, even though you already smell it, but before the smoke comes, you won't make the bracha.

Bracha on Mugmar — Ets or Eisev

Speaker 1:

If one uses wood to take a piece of it and burn it and make mugmar, one makes "atzei besamim." And if it's an herb, as we learned earlier regarding the ruta, one blesses isvei, or minei, or kol minei, one makes "borei isvei besamim," the same as before.

Halacha 3: Shemen Shel Afarsemon — Borei Shemen Arev

Speaker 1:

Shemen shel afarsemon, it was a type of fruit. I saw in his Rambam, the commentary on Mishneh Torah, that it's no longer common today, or afarsemon doesn't grow anymore. Some fruit that used to be planted in the area of Jericho, Ein Gedi, it used to grow in Eretz Yisrael, but he says it's not common.

Is Afarsemon a Persimmon?

Speaker 2:

Isn't afarsemon a persimmon? That's what they call it today.

Speaker 1:

I don't know if that makes oil. Some certain fruit that gave off a very good smell. We see a lot in Chazal that this is, for tzaddikim there are prepared rivers that have a good smell, afarsemon. A treasure, shemen afarsemon received a special bracha. Baruch atah Hashem Elokeinu melech ha'olam **borei shemen arev**.

"Arev" Doesn't Mean "Sweet," Rather "Pleasant"

Speaker 1:

Thank you Hashem, who created shemen arev. Interesting, arev means sweet. It has a sweet smell, it seems. Interesting that smell is related to sweet.

But apparently this isn't specifically shemen afarsemon, anyway nowadays there are essential oils, any kind of oil that's special, not just oil. A special oil...

Speaker 2:

The, when one is already seeing. There is when oil only holds the smell, and there is when oil holds the smell. Because it is smell.

Speaker 1:

Shemen shel afarsemon vechayotza bo mevarechin alav borei shemen arev. So it's an interesting lashon, arev. Because arev means sweet. Arev, it seems, doesn't necessarily mean what we're used to sweet, like sugar is arev. It means it's a sweet smell. The point is, that it's not regular oil. It doesn't have...

Speaker 2:

I already know Rebbe arev, I say arev doesn't mean like sweet. Arev means pleasant.

Speaker 1:

I don't see, I don't see the difference. There is such a thing as a sweet smell also. It says somewhere that a person eats sugar... he puts more sugar in his coffee, he'll say I drink arev.

Speaker 2:

No, I drink sweet. Arev means pleasant.

Speaker 1:

Borei shemen arev, for us it's enough that arev means sweet, sweet means in a way or like a child is sweet, pleasant.

Speaker 2:

Could be, could be.

Speaker 1:

I mean the chiddush is that oil, usually, oil is made for smearing, and this is an oil that also has to it an arev which is smell.

Shemen Zayis Shechafso — Borei Atzei Besamim

Speaker 1:

Aval shemen zayis shechafso o techano ad shehechzir rei'ach nodef, there's also a way of making olive oil have a very good smell. It was crushed, or ground, which makes a very good smell, one doesn't make borei shemen arev, because originally it's a... rather one says, **borei atzei besamim**, because it's something that comes from the... from the tree. From the fruit.

Speaker 2:

Yes. The... yes, yes. And yes. 1995 brings smell from such, good, what because it's some smell, and that brings smell from such. Yes.org. , a spice. It's the smell-makers. The whole thing from it is the smell-giver.

Shemen Shebishmo — Borei Minei Besamim

Speaker 1:

There's another way of actually smearing in the oil. Instead of saying to or it perhaps can be extracted something and you put it into oil. That's how they made the shemen hamishcha. The shemen hamishcha they also used oil with various types of besamim. It's simple that the oil now smells, but it doesn't smell from its own oil, it smells from the shemen hamishcha's oil, from the besamim that were put in. **Mevarech alav borei minei besamim.**

Now, there's sometimes when you make two... understand the hint here from shemen shebishmo, it gets the bracha from the besamim.

Hevi'u Lefanav Shemen Vahadas — Mevarech Al Hahadas Ufoter Es Hashemen

Speaker 1:

"Hevi'u lefanav shemen vahadas" — this I just didn't say, because this is a completely new learning about a talmid chacham, he is the borei minei besamim. **"Hevi'u lefanav shemen vahadas, mevarech al hahadas ufoter es hashemen"**. Someone who... they bring, the Mishna tells us to say, they bring them good smelling oil and hadasim, which hadasim is atzei besamim. And they bring... first they make the bracha on the hadasim, and one is poter es hashemen. Why do they both have brachos? Borei atzei besamim, and we're talking here about shemen zayis, so... apparently, as we're clarifying, it's obvious. One would have had to say atzei. It's interesting. Oil, we see that oil simply without the words "crushed" or that, means atzei.

Hevi'u Lefanav Bosem She'eisev Uvosem She'etz — Two Brachos

Speaker 1:

So, says the Rama, **"Hevi'u lefanav bosem she'eisev uvosem she'etz"**, you have both, like **"Hevi'u lefanav minei merkachas"**, it's also that one bracha once is poter es chaveiro, you don't make one bracha that doesn't poter the other. You have to make both, you have to make atzei besamim and isvei besamim.

Halacha 4: Hevi'u Lefanav Yayin Veshemen — Order of Brachos at a Meal

Speaker 1:

So, the Rama tells us, what does one do with the brachos on smell in the order of the meal. **"Hevi'u lefanav yayin veshemen"**, they bring wine and oil. That was the order. What's more important? Wine is more important. **"Yotze yayin bimino veshemen bismalo"**, because the wine is more important. **"Mevarech al hayayin veshotho"**, he first makes a bracha on the wine and he drinks, **"ve'achar kach mevarech al hashemen umeri'ach bo"**, and he smells it.

"Vetochvo Berosh Hashamash" — A Custom Tip

Speaker 1:

And then the Rama says an interesting thing, **"vetochvo"**, we also learned this earlier, and he wipes it into the head of the shamash. I mean it's such a small tip that they used to give to the shamash. You have here an expensive oil, and the shamash can use, someone should give him a bit of good besamim. So instead of wiping the hands in a napkin, he wipes it up on the head of the shamash as a tip. One can say it's a custom tip.

Oil on the Heads of Shamashim

I mean it's a small tip that they used to give to the shamashim. You have here an expensive oil, and the shamashim can use that someone should give them a bit of good besamim, so instead of wiping the hands in your napkin, wipe it up on the head of the shamashim as a tip.

One can sometimes, a custom tip, that the shamashim complain, we already learned the halacha earlier by the order of the meal, as we already stood there the fruits that you have to give the shamashim, you have to give, put in the mouth of the shamashim, also a type of tip, yes.

Apparently, the oil was used both for smelling and for anointing, like our shampoo, it's pleasant to have in the hair. Or it smells good in the hair, because who says a talmid chacham shouldn't smell? It's a disgrace for a talmid chacham that he smells.

Why? Because we learned in Hilchos Deos that young men walk around in the street with besamim so the girls will catch them, for a talmid chacham this is absolutely not. So they spray the besamim before the shtreimel, so it says in the Gemara, for the girls. But a young man, a talmid chacham, doesn't walk around like that. A simple person may.

Do you understand what I'm telling you? There's nothing wrong. This isn't a bad thing, the oil isn't a non-Jewish thing, it's a chassidic Jew. And not only not talmidei chachamim, a chassidic one may, he's also a person. A talmid chacham has the detail from Hilchos Deos which is only for talmidei chachamim.

Ah, I'll tell you the explanation, because the talmid chacham, after being with his wife, he goes to tevilas Ezra. So if it smells, the explanation is because he anointed himself. But still, the shamashim can each one be a talmid chacham.

Davar Shesof Lavo Eino Adam - Bosem She'ervo Harochel

Davar shesof lavo eino adam. A thing that's uncertain, you don't know what the thing is. Like by shehakol nihiyeh bidvaro, like there's a ma'aser lechol hamachanos by fruits, there's the borei minei besamim on things that don't have a specific bracha.

Says the Rambam, **bosem shericho veta'amo shaveh**, the same thing, when the peddler, the merchant, has mixed various types of besamim, "**bosem she'ervo harochel**", that the peddler mixed from various types, it's also "**borei minei besamim**", like when you eat various types.

Discussion: The Difference Between Besamim and Food

He says, but entering... there's no such halacha that you eat various types, by the way.

What? There's no such halacha that when you eat various types of food you make a shehakol nihiyeh bidvaro.

No, but various shehakols. There's no such halacha. But here it's different than food. There's no such halacha by food that you mix potatoes with apples and you make a shehakol at once. Here there's a different thing, that you only make one bracha that you mixed it together, not that you look for which is the main one. There's no such thing.

By food it's also important what you eat, what's mixed, when you eat many things. There's never that it becomes under shehakol. When you say that one is the main and one is secondary, there's no such halacha by food. But here there's a verse.

The question is because most things are borei minei besamim, so it is indeed a type of main and secondary. Because most types of besamim from a merchant, from a bosem...

No, I mean it's different. I mean it's different, because borei minei besamim isn't the same type that you call that you make a shehakol. Shehakol is indeed a comprehensive bracha, everything Hashem made. Minei besamim can be literally translated, He made various types of besamim. You understand? So, two types, it fits exactly the right bracha.

There's no such thing as borei bosem alone, but shemen arev or...

Right, but it's not borei kol minei, it's borei minei. So minei is indeed a few types, if he makes ten. Because you can't now check which is a tree and which is an herb...

No, I'm just saying it's different, it's not exactly the same as shehakol. There's no such thing by shehakol that you should make lechatchila on two types to mix to shehakol.

Halacha 5: Entering a Besamim Store

He says, but "**hanichnas lechanuto shel bosem**", someone goes into the store of someone who sells besamim, not someone who has a fruit store, Reb Zari, "**sheyesh bo minim harbeh**", where there are various types of besamim and it smells good, "**mevarech**".

But the main halacha here is that when you go into the store of someone who sells besamim, you have pleasure, you immediately make borei minei besamim.

"**Nichnas lechanuto shel bosem veyatza venichnas veyatza kol hayom kulo eino mevarech ela achas**", he only makes one bracha. He doesn't make every time he remembers that it smells good. But "**nichnas veyatza venichnas veyatza**", every time he comes in he has a fresh pleasure, "**mevarech al kol pa'am vafa'am**".

Discussion: Fresh Pleasure and Awareness

So... I mean there's a smell for hadasim, as I said earlier, but you're not aware of the good smell. So that's what you do the whole time. Not about it's not awareness, about that here you come home with a fresh pleasure, a fresh awareness of the pleasure. I don't have with the awareness.

Like you eat a big meal, you don't make on every piece another bracha. What should I do? It's simply a halacha of every bracha in the world goes like this. You eat a meal for two hours, you make a bracha at the beginning. It's not because it's with the mother to... it's not because the beginning of every... okay, another thing. But you can't come in the middle and say, I'm already sitting, I'm now going to eat challah.

It's also not said that it should be a kezayis of what smells. It's a different type of thing, because it's a neshama that benefits from this.

Halacha 6: Shoshana, Vered, Nerd

Says the Rambam afterwards, "**Al hashoshana vechalfi hamayim**". Hashoshana is the holy rose that Jews buy on Shabbos, a type of rose, or types of flowers. Vechalfi hamayim, other types of flowers that we don't know exactly what it is. **Mevarchin aleihen borei atzei besamim.**

Nerd shel gina is also **atzei besamim**. It's atzei besamim, but **shel sadeh isvei besamim**. So it's already the garden, where it grows. It's something that grows either on the ground, or on grass, or does it grow on trees. So those that grow on trees in the garden are atzei besamim, and those that grow on the ground are isvei besamim.

He continues, "**havered**". Vered is a type of flower. Vered I also thought that vered is a rose. It's a rose, I thought. So you have to say that shoshana is simply not a rose. Shoshana, I remembered, ah, you learned about the brachos. The sages say, the Zohar said that shoshana is a rose. But most poskim hold, most commentators on Tanach hold that shoshana is a type of lily, it's such a broader flower, and vered is a rose, that's the simple meaning of the Mishna. So vered is a rose,

and shoshana is something like a lily. There's no difference, both are atzei besamim here.

"**Umei vered**", or the water from the rose. There's such a smell, it's called rose water. There's such a type of perfume, you distill the rose, you make from it. The Zohar where he says that shoshana has red and white, one place he says that he means to say that the shoshana is red, and that's the reason why you don't make a bracha on levona, because levona is something that used to be burned for idolatry.

In short, yotza chai, anything else like that?

Halacha 7: Three Types of Good Smell That One Doesn't Bless On Them

Translated Text

Okay, so what does the Gemara say in the middle? These are just details of which things they are. Okay. **Three types of good fragrance on which one does not make a blessing.** It's interesting, the language means, until now it appeared that everything requires yes. Every thing that has a good smell requires making a blessing. It's just perfume or just deodorant, every thing that has a smell one should make a blessing.

Okay, now you'll see, you'll already see the things that have the three answers. **Three types of good fragrance on which one does not make a blessing, and these are: a good fragrance that is forbidden to smell,** something that one is not allowed to smell, **and a good fragrance that is forbidden to smell,** the reason why one applies it is not for the positive but for a bad smell, **and this fragrance,** it's not made that one should smell it, it's made that one should smell some other part.

Law 8: Fragrances of Idolatry and Fragrances of Forbidden Relations

Now you'll already see, the Rambam goes into the examples. **How so? How so?** This is the first, the examples of things that are not allowed. **Fragrances of idolatry or fragrances of forbidden relations, one does not bless on them.**

Discussion: What Does "Forbidden Relations" Mean?

Okay, ervah (forbidden relations) means what? A woman who is forbidden to him, a married woman. Even an unmarried woman is meant. She put on fragrances. Are you talking about an unmarried woman, a niddah, a married woman? Does ervah mean it's talking about a woman or does it mean it's talking about a forbidden woman? This is something I want to know, I don't know what the translation is.

By a niddah there's a different reason for distancing. By a niddah there's a rule by a person himself, that even the voice of a niddah is not forbidden, one may be with her in seclusion, right? There are things that one doesn't say are forbidden. There are those who say that even with her there is indeed, right? It's not every thing. There are more distancing from a niddah than by other women, and there are also less, right? Right, right. There's affection with one's wife, there's... but...

No, I'm just asking, whether "ervah" means to say, perhaps it simply means to say other women, or does it specifically mean ervah a married woman? What the simple prohibition is that he shouldn't come to closeness, perhaps his own wife, or even if it's an unmarried woman that I know which, let's say it's

only a rabbinic prohibition, or the Rambam says it's biblical, I don't know, perhaps it's a prohibition.

But the Rashba wondered about this, he says, it's a sign for transgression to open the eyes of the evil inclination. So apparently it must be in some way that there are eyes of the evil inclination.

So very good. It appears here from the commentators that I see on this side here, they say that the Rambam added it himself, it's not stated clearly in the Gemara. But it appears to me from what is quoted here from below, it appears to me clearly that he's indeed talking about a married woman forbidden to him, even his own wife, or even I don't know, his sister, there is seclusion with a sister, there is indeed an ervah, it's certainly an ervah.

There's an ervah that he's not allowed to smell the fragrance that's on her. It's not just that he doesn't need to make a blessing, but he's not allowed to go near, because that's what the Rambam says, because this is a distancing. But an ervah like a sister where there's no law of distancing, one may smell, but a blessing one doesn't need to make.

I'm just saying that it appears from the Rambam's words that fragrances of smell are indeed permitted. "Ervah" means his sister is permitted, because I think it's written somewhere that one is not allowed, the Rambam says it's very disgraceful to do hugging and kissing. So it could be that it's also something, I don't know, one needs to know the law.

But fragrances of smell, I haven't found ever, I've never heard anyone make a blessing on the perfume of another woman. It's indeed a transgression, it's indeed a biblical transgression. It's indeed a thing that unfortunately has good colors, perhaps one shouldn't do pleasing the eye. There's another reason, it's also forbidden relations, yes?

Yes, every male is also forbidden relations. Hello, that's what I'm asking, do we have a prohibition of closeness to males? What I mean is, you say there's a prohibition of seclusion. I can tell you that a male is probably not so... no, but

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Speaker 1: Okay, soon there's another giant. If it's also forbidden relations, yes? Yes every male male on. Hello, that's what I'm asking, I have here a prohibition of closeness to males, not because it is, I mean with here seclusion seclusion what they say it's seclusion seclusion. No, it could be that here has a thing that fragrances wouldn't be forbidden in it, it would have been written on people in general. Forbidden relations. Forbidden relations is there, forbidden relations simply. Let's already say it, simply simply ervah, forbidden relations means ervah, and that's it, a woman forbidden to him. And most women, is it a woman, or we ervah.

Okay, another thing. Or idolatry, idolatry if someone goes into a church and there they use the interesting law, because the smell hasn't changed, you have it in the Gemara. You'll see that it was previously in a church to what.

Speaker 2: No, do you mean when it's there?

Speaker 1: Or this became forbidden would you go further one way? And one is not allowed to go into a church! One is not allowed to smell the... which prohibition is it smells the become, does it mean apparently? It was in idolatry, or was it offerings of idolatry.

The Gemara, **frangrances of a party of gentiles**. Ah, correct. Just a party, a gentile makes a party and he brings fragrances, **one doesn't bless on them**. But what about just a gentile party for idolatry? I spoke earlier about fragrances of idolatry, one doesn't make fragrances at all.

Yes, just when Jews come together they praise the Almighty, just when gentiles come together they praise something their deity. Yes, correct.

"One who walks outside the city and smells a good smell", he comes into the city, he smells, he doesn't know from where comes a good smell, from perfumed, from Jews or from gentiles. We say, **if the majority of the city is gentiles, one doesn't bless**, because we follow the majority. **And if the majority is Israel, one blesses**. And so if it is evening, a smell on which one doesn't bless, a smell that doesn't come into consideration or not? One of the three types.

Just idolatry or other mixed smells, there's also a dispute, but most authorities say that a majority applies, smells is a majority, yes, one can have it.

He says, one goes alone, if the majority of Jews are gentiles, the same law is like gentiles. No, it's a majority smell that doesn't come into consideration, majority smell that doesn't come into consideration. A city, majority Israel, the first law is that he doesn't know from where comes the smell. He travels to a restaurant, half the restaurant serves idolatry, half the restaurant means the Almighty, and it smells there, a person walks in, he doesn't know how many there are. Or the whole city made a fire, and there's a majority of Jews, it's simple that it's so.

So be it, until here chapter 7 section 109.