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Rabbi Yishai Natan

A MISLEADING MABROOK

I live in Brooklyn and recently traveled to Lakewood to attend a wedding. While driving through town, I passed another wedding hall and suddenly remembered that a friend of mine was getting married there that same night. Since I was already nearby, I decided to stop in for a few minutes to wish him *Mabrook*. When I walked into the hall, the *hatan* was surprised and excited to see me. He gave me a big hug and thanked me for coming all the way from Brooklyn to celebrate with him. I realized that he assumed I had made the trip especially for his wedding, when in truth, I had only stopped by because I happened to be passing his hall. I felt uncomfortable correcting him and ruining his excitement, especially on his wedding night. On the other hand, I did not want him to think I had gone out of my way for him when I really hadn't.

Was I required to tell the *hatan* that I had not made a special trip for his wedding? Was remaining silent considered *genevat da'at*?

Opening a Barrel for a Guest

The *Gemara* in *Hullin* (94a) says that if someone was already planning to open a new barrel of wine to sell, he may not open it in front of his guest without informing him that it was not opened in his honor. Otherwise, the guest may mistakenly believe that his host opened an entire barrel especially for him. From this *Gemara*, it seems that whenever someone may mistakenly think you did something special for him, you must clarify the truth.

When Someone Misleads Himself

However, the *Gemara* there gives another case. If an animal was a *terefa* and could not be eaten by Jews, the seller was allowed to announce in the marketplace, "Meat has fallen for the soldiers." This was a code phrase that allowed the Jews to understand that the meat was *terefa*, while the gentiles would not realize it. Although the meat was *mutar* for the gentiles to eat, they might not want to buy meat that Jews themselves would not eat. Nevertheless, the *Gemara* says this is not *genevat da'at*, because the gentiles misled themselves into assuming that the meat was properly *shechted*. The seller never told them that it was.

Similarly, the *Gemara* relates that *Mar Zutra* was traveling toward the city of *Mahuza* when *Rava* and *Rav Safra* happened to be leaving the city. *Mar Zutra* assumed that they had come out specifically to greet him. *Rav Safra* wanted to correct his misunderstanding, but *Rava* told him that this was unnecessary. They had done nothing to create that impression; *Mar Zutra* had made the assumption on his own.

The Three Opinions

The *Rishonim* discuss how to reconcile these cases with the case of the wine barrel. *Rashi* explains that the wine-barrel case involved the host actually telling or indicating to his guest that he was opening the barrel for him. That is *assur*. Had he simply opened the barrel without saying anything, it would have been *mutar*. Similarly, the meat seller never said that the meat was *shechted*, and *Rava* and *Rav Safra* never indicated that they came out to greet *Mar Zutra*.

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MEZONOT ON DESSERT

Q Should I make a *Mezonot* on cake served for dessert during a meal, before *Birkat Hamazon?*

A *Maran*, in *Shulhan Aruch* (OH 177:1), rules that foods normally eaten as part of a bread meal do not require a new *berachah*, since they are covered by *Birkat Hamotzi*. However, foods normally served for dessert require their own *berachah rishonah*, such as fruits. *Maran* writes that the same applies to *mezonot* served for dessert (OH 168:8).

The *Mishnah Berurah* (*Biur Halachah*, ibid.) points out that there is a problem with cake because it is not clear what qualifies as *pat haba'ah bekisnin*—a bread-like food that generally receives *Mezonot*. *Maran* (ibid. 7) brings a *mahloket*: some say it is dough with a filling, some say dough kneaded with sugar or other sweet ingredients, and some say thin, crisp bread, such as crackers.

If these opinions disagree, each opinion considers the other types to be bread that require *Hamotzi*. Normally, we make *Mezonot* on all these foods because of safek *berachot lehakel*. However, during a bread meal, that same doubt works in the opposite direction. Perhaps the cake is really

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Parasha and Halacha

PARASHAT TOLEDOT

KIBBUD AV VA'EM

We all know that *Esav* went to extraordinary lengths to honor his father. The *Midrash* (*Bereshit Rabbah* 65:16) relates that *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* said his own *Kibbud Av* did not reach even a fraction of *Esav's*. Yet the Torah only records *Yaakov's* fulfillment of this *mitzvah* when he left to obey his parents, rather than to escape his brother or find a wife: *"Vayishma Yaakov el aviv ve'el imo"* (*Bereshit* 28:7).

The *Aruch HaShulhan* (Y.D. 240:2) explains that although honoring parents is a logical *mitzvah*, we should fulfill it because Hashem commanded us. *The Sefer HaHinuch* (33) explains that it develops *hakarat hatov*, teaching us gratitude toward our parents and ultimately Hashem. The Torah promises long life for this *mitzvah*. The *Gemara* (*Kiddushin* 39b) connects this reward to *Olam Haba*, while the *Mishnah* (*Pe'ah* 1:1) teaches that we also enjoy its fruits in this world. **Kavod Versus Mora:**

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Excerpted and adapted from a shiur by Rabbi Yishai Natan. To print and listen to the full shiur, visit www.theshc.org.

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Tosafot disagrees. According to *Tosafot*, opening the barrel is *assur* even without saying anything. Opening an entire barrel was unusual, so the guest had no reason to assume that the host would have opened it anyway. In the other cases, however, the gentiles should have realized that the meat might be *terefa*, and *Mar Zutra* should have considered that *Rava* and *Rav Safra* might simply have been leaving the city when he arrived.

The *Ran* gives a third explanation. The barrel case is *assur* because the host intended to mislead his guest. In the other cases, there was no intention to trick anyone.

Therefore, according to *Rashi*, *genevat da'at* occurs when you say or indicate that you are doing something especially for the other person. According to *Tosafot*, it can be *assur* even without saying anything when the other person has no reasonable reason to assume otherwise. According to the *Ran*, it depends on whether your intention is to deceive him.

The *Halachah*

Maran in *Shulhan Aruch* (*Hoshen Mishpat* 228:6) appears to follow the approach of *Tosafot*, although the *Rashal* understands that the *Rambam* follows the *Ran*. *Maran* writes that when the other person should have realized that something was not necessarily being done for him, and he misled himself, there is no obligation to correct him.

Therefore, in your case, since you traveled from Brooklyn to Lakewood and unexpectedly stopped by your friend's wedding, the question depends on whether your actions caused him to believe that you came specifically for him. If you simply walked into the wedding and wished the *hatan Mabrook*, without saying or indicating that you made a special trip, there is room to permit it. After all, it is common for someone to attend more than one wedding on the same night. Your friend should not necessarily assume that you traveled all the way from Brooklyn just for his wedding.

When Silence Becomes Agreement

The *Yerushalmi* (*Shevi'it* 10:3) says that if people honor someone because they mistakenly believe he knows two *masechtot*, when he only knows one, he must correct them. The *Maharit* (2, *Orah Haim* 8) asks why this is different from someone who misleads himself. He answers that when people praise him in his presence, his silence is considered agreement and becomes *genevat da'at*. Accordingly, when the *hatan* thanked you for making a special trip, perhaps you were required to correct him. However, the *Hida* (*Haim Sha'al* 1:71:6) questions the *Maharit*. After all, *Mar Zutra* also expressed his mistaken assumption directly, yet *Rava* said there was no need to correct him. Furthermore, the *Minhat Yitzhak* (3:104) explains that the *Yerushalmi* concerns the special humility required of a *talmid hacham,* rather than the general prohibition of *genevat da'at*.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach Story

There is a well-known story about *Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach* (*Sefer Tet Emet LeYaakov* 5:125). He once attended a wedding and specifically told the family that he had not come especially for their wedding. When people were amazed by his honesty, he responded that this is an explicit *Gemara*. This story does not clearly fit with all three opinions discussed above and requires further examination to understand why *Rav Shlomo Zalman* felt obligated to clarify his reason for attending.

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bread and was already covered by *Hamotzi*. Therefore, the *Mishnah Berurah* writes that one should not make *Mezonot* on cake served for dessert unless it has all three characteristics—it is sweet, filled, and crisp.

The *Mishnah Berurah* adds that if it has a filling, since most *Rishonim* consider it *pat haba'ah bekisnin*, one who makes *Mezonot* has what to rely on. He also suggests that perhaps there is no *mahloket*, and each opinion is simply giving another example of *pat haba'ah bekisnin*. In that case, one should make a *berachah* on any of these *mezonot* desserts. Still, because of the doubt, we follow *safek berachot lehakel* and only make *Mezonot* on dessert if it has all three characteristics.

HaRav Dovid Yosef (*Halachah Berurah* 168:29) writes that although *Maran* holds that one should make *Mezonot* on any of these foods when served for dessert, we apply safek *berachot lehakel* even against *Maran*. Therefore, one should generally not make *Mezonot* on cake served for dessert.

It is better to avoid the doubt and eat the cake after *Birkat Hamazon,* making *Mezonot* and a *berachah aharonah*. Alternatively, one can make *Mezonot* on something that is definitely not bread, such as Bissli, and have the cake in mind. Another option is to eat some cake before washing for *Hamotzi*, having in mind to cover the cake eaten later. If none of these options are possible, eat the cake for dessert during the meal without making *Mezonot*, because of *safek berachot lehakel.*

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The *Gemara* (*Kiddushin* 31b) distinguishes between *kavod* and *mora*. *Kavod* includes feeding, serving, and assisting parents. *Mora* prohibits sitting in their designated seats, directly contradicting them, or calling them by their first names (*Shulhan Aruch* 240:2–4). **Standing for Parents:** The *Shulhan Aruch* (240:7) requires children to stand when parents enter. The *Hayei Adam* (67:7) generally limits this to twice daily, while the *Hida* and *Yalkut Yosef* (4:8) require standing every time, even one hundred times daily. Parents may explicitly waive this obligation, explaining why many families do not practice it today. **Must You Obey Every Request?** The *Maharik* (166) holds that *Kibbud Av Va'em* primarily concerns requests directly benefiting parents. The *Havot Yair* (214) takes a broader approach. *Yalkut Yosef* (9:1) follows the more limited obligation but considers obeying other requests *middat hasidut*. Therefore, requests to attend family celebrations or make personal decisions require considering whether the parents actually benefit or suffer distress. The *Shulhan Aruch* warns parents against excessive demands that could cause their children to stumble. **Financial Obligations:** The *Gemara* (*Kiddushin* 32a) rules *mishel av*: expenses generally come from the parents' money. However, the *Shulhan Aruch* (240:5) requires financially capable children to support needy parents according to the laws of *tzedaka*. The *Rama* permits using *ma'aser* when necessary, but criticizes doing so when one can afford to use regular funds. If parents want their married child to pay for airline tickets to visit them for *Yom Tov,* is the child obligated to do so? Maybe. **Honoring Other Relatives**: The *Gemara* (*Ketubot* 103a) requires honoring older brothers. The *Hida* and *Ben Ish Hai* extend this to older sisters, while the *Shevut Yaakov* disagrees. The *Shulhan Aruch* (240:24) requires honoring in-laws, though the *Shach* limits this to the honor of elders. Regarding grandparents, the *Maharik* exempts them, while the *Rama* obligates honoring paternal grandparents. The *Ben Ish Hai* includes maternal grandparents. Finally, the *Sefer Haredim* (1:35) teaches that true *Kibbud Av Va'em* begins in the heart. Viewing our parents as genuinely honorable, not merely performing acts of service.

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