



Eating Before Musaf on Rosh Hashanah/Shabbat

לעילוי נשמת
 יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

Question: In our relatively new *minyan*, we have finished Musaf of Rosh Hashanah at around 1:00, and have not made *Kiddush* before *tekiot*. Someone suggested that this year's first day being Shabbat changes the equation. What does Halacha say about this?

Answer: One should not fast in the morning until *chatzot* on Shabbat (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 288:1) and *Yom Tov* (Mishna Berura 288:2). Considering that one generally must not eat before *davening* (Shulchan Aruch, OC 89:3) and the long *davening* of Rosh Hashanah (=RH), this raises a challenge.

One solution is the claim that the need to eat by *chatzot* does not apply to RH (see Mishna Berura 597:1), because of its different nature compared to the three *regalim*. First, there

are opinions (see Rama, OC 597:3) that there is value in fasting on RH, the Day of Judgment. Although we do not accept that approach, it may justify at least not eating until *chatzot* (Mateh Ephrayim 597:2). Another reason to be lenient on late eating is that since it is appropriate to say many prayers, late eating is a justifiable price (see Magen Avraham 584:4; Yam Shel Shlomo, Beitza 2:4).

There are, though, opinions that one should eat before *chatzot* even on RH. One solution is to rely on drinking water or tea (permitted before *davening* – Shulchan Aruch, OC 89:3) before *davening* to forestall the fast (Eleph Hamagen 597:2; see opinions in Dirshu 597:7 on whether this is enough), for at least six hours from the drinking. As you know, some shuls solve the problem by having a *Kiddush* after *Shacharit*. It is debated whether it is permitted to eat a snack before a special daytime *mitzva* (see Magen Avraham 652:4 regarding before *lulav*; Mikraei Kodesh (Frank), RH 29 regarding *shofar*). We will not go further into that debate, with its legitimate *minhagim*, and will focus on your question – RH on Shabbat.

On Shabbat, the scales lean more toward allowing and/or encouraging *Kiddush* before *Musaf*. For one thing, on Shabbat there is no *shofar* blowing to avoid preceding. Admittedly, many say not to eat too much before

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any Shabbat *Musaf* (see development in this column, Shelach 5783). The Shulchan Aruch (OC 286:3) allows "tasting," which in a parallel context (see Shulchan Aruch, OC 639:2) means up to a *k'beitza* (size of an egg) of bread and any amount of "fruit." *Poskim* posit that a *k'beitza* is the limit for *pat haba'ah b'kisnin* (baked grain-based foods, e.g., cake). There is less certainty regarding limits on grain-based cooked foods (e.g., *cholent*) (see Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 52:(52); Ishei Yisrael 36:76). There is no limit on non-alcoholic beverages (ibid.). The grounds we mentioned for the possibility of being more lenient apply here as well. Thus, with good cause, a *shul* could provide a light *Kiddush* menu and not be overly concerned if people eat more than ideal. Do realize that there is also a minimum for how much to eat, for the *Kiddush* to count (see Shulchan Aruch, OC 273:5)

The major point is that while the "leniency" for partial fasting is plausible on RH, it is forbidden on Shabbat. Therefore, some *poskim* are insistent that one eat before *chatzot* when RH falls on Shabbat (Yam Shel Shlomo ibid.; Mishna Berura 584:5). So why do many shuls not make *Kiddush* before RH/Shabbat *Musaf*? Rav M. Willig (Am Mordechai, Moadim 3) explains and supports the practice of not having this *Kiddush* as follows. The Maharil, accepted by the Rama (584:1) allows davening past *chatzot* without eating because the long *davening* is a *mitzva* that applies even if RH is on Shabbat. The Mishna Berura followed the Yam Shel Shlomo who justified late eating on RH because eating is not crucial on RH, and therefore requires pre-*chatzot*

eating when it falls on Shabbat. Therefore, an early *Kiddush* makes more sense on RH/Shabbat, but is not clearly required. Considering that RH *Musaf* is shorter on Shabbat, you might finish before *chatzot*.

A major factor to consider is the *Kiddush*'s impact on your *minyán*, which can be positive (e.g., gives strength for *Musaf* with *kavana*) or negative (e.g., hard to be intense in *Musaf* after socializing). ■

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