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Digest
Mishna Berura
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סימן קס"ז סעיף א'-ב'

Halacha Highlight

The wording of the beracha of hamotzi

Shulchan Aruch Siman 167 Seif 2
יברך המוציא לחם מן הארץ
One should recite המוציא לחם מן הארץ

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ב') writes that the correct wording of the beracha of hamotzi is המוציא לחם מן הארץ. Levush explains that the primary intent of the beracha is to thank Hashem for the bread that has already been produced. He then notes that the Gemara teaches that all opinions agree that the word מוציא refers to the past and there is a disagreement whether the word המוציא refers to the past or not. Seemingly then, Chazal should have chosen the word מוציא since all opinions would agree to the meaning of that term. Nevertheless, the term המוציא was chosen in order to assure that the "מ" of the word מוציא would not become swallowed up by the "מ" at the end of the word העולם.

Avudraham explains that the wording of the beracha was taken from the pasuk (Tehillim 104:14) that states להוציא לחם מן הארץ. It is for this reason they chose the word לחם—bread—rather than the word דגן or תבואה which mean grain. Another explanation for the choice of words is based on the Gemara in Shabbos (30b) that relates that in the future following the redemption the Land of Israel will produce ready made cakes. For the same reason Chazal chose the word הארץ—the land as a reference specifically to Eretz Yisroel. According to this explanation it is also understood why Chazal chose the word המוציא rather than מוציא. By using the word המוציא they allude not only to the fact that the ground already produced what was made into bread but that in the future it will literally produce bread. Shulchan Aruch also writes that one should make sure to pause between the word and לחם and the word מן so that the words do not combine into a single word. Elya Rabba cites Hilchos Maharan who writes that one who is careful to separate the two words is assured that he will not be harmed during that meal.

Stories to Share

Whole Loaves

ש"ע קס"ז, א': "כדי שיהיו ככרות שלימות..."

On today's daf we find that one should have two whole breads for lechem mishneh on Shabbos.

The halachah is that it is preferable for women to bake challah for Shabbos. It was always common for the smell of freshly-baking challah to permeate Jewish homes from early Friday the morning.

One time, in a certain family, the challos got overdone—in some parts even burnt. The family wondered if they could use one of the burnt challos for lechem mishneh. Perhaps a burnt challah doesn't count like a whole bread since the burnt parts will eventually be cut away? If this was the case the challah could hardly be called complete.

When this question reached the author of the Sha'ar Efraim he permitted it. "In Chulin 73 we find that Ravina rules that what is going to be cut off is considered cut off even while attached. According to this, a burnt challah may not be used if too much is burnt. We can learn from the Mishnah in Tevul Yom that up to a finger-width of burnt matter does not disqualify. Even according to Ravina, only if more than a finger's width is burnt is the challah rendered unfit for lechem mishneh.

"But the halachah does not follow the opinion of Ravina. It follows that even a challah burnt more than is considered whole and can be used for lechem mishneh."

שו"ת שער אפרים, ס' א'

Overview

Siman 167 Seif 1:

One should break the bread where it is baked well (Regarding our bread it should be broken on the side and one should cut a little from the top and the bottom) **and he should cut the broken piece. He should cut it only a little bit so that if he were to grasp the cut piece the rest of the loaf would lift up with it for otherwise it is considered a piece of bread rather than a loaf. It should remain attached to the loaf and he should begin the beracha. Upon completion of the beracha he should separate that piece so that the beracha will conclude while the loaf is complete. He should not break a small piece because he would look stingy nor should he break a piece larger than the volume of an egg since it will make him appear ravenous.** On Shabbos one should not cut the loaf until after the beracha so that the loaves will be complete. If, however, one forgot and cut the loaf as he does during the week he causes no harm. It appears that the restriction against breaking a piece larger than the volume of an egg applies during the week when one is eating by himself but on Shabbos or if one is eating with many people and he must give an olive's volume piece to each one of them it is permitted to cut a piece the size that one requires. See below siman 274.

- One gives honor to the beracha when he breaks the bread where it is baked well. (M.B. 1)
- Since there are differing opinions whether to break the bread on top or below one should cut on both sides. Some authorities maintain that one should cut the bread on the side opposite where it split. (M.B. 3)
- Technically one should recite the beracha and then break the bread so that the beracha will be on a complete loaf. However, in order to minimize the delay between the beracha and eating it is preferred to cut into the loaf slightly before beginning the beracha and then pull the piece off after the beracha. (M.B. 4)
- Even when eating a slice one should not cut all the way through before the beracha so that the piece looks larger. (M.B. 5)
- If one cuts so deeply that the loaf would not lift when the piece is grasped it is considered as though the piece has already been detached from the loaf. (M.B. 6)
- Small means less than an olive's volume. (M.B. 8)
- The restriction applies when one will eat the loaf right away but if one pulls off a large piece and cuts that into smaller pieces it is acceptable. (M.B. 9)
- The same halacha applies on Yom Tov since there is also a requirement to recite the beracha on a complete loaf. (M.B. 10)
- In other words it is not considered as though one did not recite the beracha on complete loaves. (M.B. 11)
- L'chatchila when reciting המוציא for others one should give each of them a piece from the part that he broke off from the loaf and not from what remained as part of the loaf. In a large meal one must be mindful of this to cut off a large enough piece to be able to give to all the people. (M.B. 14)
- Each person receives an olive's volume so that he should not appear stingy. According to others it is preferred for each person to eat an olive's volume following the beracha of המוציא. (M.B. 15)

Siman 167 Seif 2:

One should recite המוציא לחם מן הארץ. (If many people are eating together they should pay attention and listen to the beracha and respond אמן and the one who recited the beracha should listen to their recitation of אמן.)
He should pause between the word לחם and מן.

- If one recited מוציא he discharged his obligation. (M.B. 16)
- By answering אמן one confirms what was said in the beracha and it is as if one recited the beracha himself but answering אמן is not essential. (M.B. 19)
- By answering אמן the beracha becomes more important, therefore the one who recited the beracha should concentrate on their אמן.(M.B. 20)