The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן קס"ז סעיף ג'-ה'

Overview

Siman 167 Seif 3:

One should not recite the beracha before grasping the bread.

- B'dieved if one recited the beracha without grasping the loaf he is not required to repeat the beracha. (M.B. 22)

Siman 167 Seif 4:

He should have both hands on the bread while he recites the beracha since his ten fingers correspond to the ten mitzvos involved in preparing bread. For this reason there are ten words in the beracha of המוציא, ten words in the pasuk מצמיח חציר לבהמה, ten words in the pasuk עיני כל אליך ישברו, ten words in the pasuk ויתן לך and ten words in the pasuk ארץ חטה ושעורה.

- It is appropriate to have both hands on the bread. One who is wearing gloves should remove them for the beracha. Later authorities write that when one says Hashem's Name he should lift the loaf and on Shabbos he should lift them both. (M.B. 23)

Siman 167 Seif 5:

One should not recite the beracha until salt or relish (Rashi translates "relish" as anything eaten in conjunction with bread) **that will be eaten with the bread has been brought out. If the bread is clean or spiced with spices or salt as our loaves are or if one intends to eat dry bread he is not required to wait.** However, there is a mitzvah to put salt on the table before breaking the bread since the table is comparable to the altar and eating is comparable to the korban and the pasuk states על כל קרבנך תקריב מלח and it protects one from tragedy (see below siman 170).

- If many people are eating together one must wait until salt is brought out before everyone since they have to eat after his recitation of המוציא. (M.B. 26)
- One eats to strengthen himself and by doing so he is healthy and has strength to serve Hashem. (M.B. 31)
- Midrash teaches that when people wait for המוציא without doing a mitzvah the Satan accuses them and the salt protects them. (M.B. 32)
- It is a mitzvah to place salt on the table. Mekubalim write that one should dip the bread in salt three times. (M.B. 33)

Halacha Highlight

Placing sugar on the table rather than salt

Rema Siman 167 Seif 5

מצוה להניח על כל שלחן מלח

There is a mitzvah to place on every table salt

Rema (סע' ה') states that there is a mitzvah to put salt on the table before making hamotzie because the table is similar to the mizbeach and one's eating similar to the korban, and the Torah mandates that korbanos should have salt. Teshuvas Torah L'shma (שו"ת תורה לשמה סי' ת"ק) questioned whether it is a fulfillment of this mitzvah to put sugar on the table rather than salt in those places where salt is unavailable.

Teshuvas Halachos Ketanos (שו"ת הלכות קטנות ח"א סי' ר"י) explains that the Torah mandates that salt must be placed on korbanos since one of the properties of salt is that it is a preservative. This is similar to Sefer Chinuch's explanation (ספר החינוך מצוה ק"כ) that the salt on the korban is an allusion to the fact that the korban serves to protect its owner as salt preserves meat. Based on this, Halachos Ketanos asserts that one could also "salt" a korban with sugar since sugar is also a preservative. He goes so far as to say that sugar is actually a form of salt and the fact that sugar has a dramatically different taste from salt is inconsequential. Many fruits, for example, contain one part that is sweet and another part that is bitter.

Torah L'shma explains that it is clear that sugar may not be used to kasher raw meat since only salt has the capacity to extract blood from the meat. The only question is whether for this halacha of placing salt on the table before making hamotzie could be fulfilled with sugar. He then suggests that perhaps it is in accordance with the approach of Halachos Ketanos that for Rosh Hashanah people have the custom to replace salt with something sweet. His conclusion, however, is that the assertion that sugar is a variety of salt in questionable and one should not use sugar for this mitzvah in place of salt even if salt is not available. Therefore, even one who has the custom to use something sweet on Rosh Hashanah should make to have salt on the table as well and the bread should be dipped into the sweet item as well as the salt.

Stories to Share

The Table of Fellowship

ש"ע, ס' קס"ז, ה': "כי השלחן דומה למזבח והאכילה כקרבן..."

On today's amud we find that, sometimes, one's food is likened to a sacrifice.

Many wonder why chassidic rebbes conduct tischen. Why isn't this bitul Torah for those who could otherwise spend the time learning? The Avnei Nezer would praise the greatness of chassidic tischen. "What the tables of the rebbes achieved we shall only comprehend when our righteous Moshiach arrives!"

Rav Elchonon Halperin explains this practice with a famous statement of our sages. "We find in Menachos 97 that one's table atones for him. Rashi explains that one's table atones in the merit of feeding poor people at the table. Yet imagine the embarrassment of destitute people who have no choice but to take their meals as charity at another's table. Surely only a very rare person can give the poor food in a manner which will not be a huge embarrassment. Most people eating at the table of another out of necessity feel nothing less than bitter darkness.

"But at the table of tzaddikim, everyone eats for free. Both the poor and the wealthy join together and one who is hungry can obtain as much food as he wants in an honorable manner. No one feels above his friend, since everyone is there for the same reason and is treated in the same way. All those who attend a tisch feel a sense of togetherness that emerges out of holy love and companionship. With such a pleasant atmosphere is it any wonder that we cannot imagine the great atonement of a chassidic tisch?"

שיחתן של עבדי אבות, ח"ב, ע' פ"ח