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Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, Apr 30, 2022 ■ כ"ט ניסן, תשפ"ב
סימן קס"ז סעיף א'-ד'

Halacha Highlight

Attaching two halves to make a whole

Shulchan Aruch Siman 168 Seif 2

אם יש לאדם שני חצאי לחם

If a person has two halves of a loaf

Bais Yosef (בית יוסף או"ח סי' קס"ח ד"ה כתב המרדכי) in the name of Rokeach writes that a person who has two halves of a loaf may connect them with a toothpick so that the loaf appears as though it is whole and one may use it as one of the whole loaves needed for Hamotzie on Shabbos. Panim Meiros (פנים מאירות למס' זבחים ק"ה) challenges this ruling from the Gemara in Zevachim (105). The Gemara discusses the possibility of connecting two pieces of neveilah, each of which is smaller than the volume of an olive, with liquid. Once the two pieces are connected it is considered as though one has an olive's volume of neveilah in one place and the neveilah will make tamei food and drinks that touch the pieces of neveilah. However, the two pieces are not considered connected for the purpose of making a person or clothing tamei. Tosafos (תוס' שם ד"ה חיבורי) in his discussion of the Gemara cites a Tosefta that teaches that an esrog that was split cannot be repaired by placing a toothpick inside, since human connections are not considered connections. This ruling seems to contradict Bais Yosef's ruling regarding the allowance to attach two halves of a loaf together.

Tosefes Shabbos (תוספת שבת סי' רע"ד סק"ב) suggests a resolution to the challenge of Panim Meiros. The fact that an esrog cannot be repaired by placing inside a toothpick does not prove that connections made by humans are not considered connections. The reason why an esrog cannot be repaired is that the Torah mandates that an esrog must be whole and when there is such a Biblical requirement, a human repair is not sufficient. In contrast, the requirement to make hamotzi on whole loaves is only a Rabbinic requirement. The rationale behind the enactment is that using a whole loaf gives greater honor to Shabbos. Accordingly, if one can use a toothpick to make the loaf look whole the intent of the enactment is fulfilled.

Stories to Share

Eating with Sanctity

ש"ע, ס' ק"ח, י"א: "וכל זה כשרוצה לאכול משניהם..."

Today's amud discusses the halachos of breaking bread. The following stories teach that where one focuses his attention is the key to eating with sanctity.

When Rav Ezra Attiya was a young man, he took his meals at home. Once he washed and sat down at the table to eat, where a place had already been set with a portion of bread and an empty plate. Rav Attiya was so absorbed in his learning, however, that he didn't even notice that the plate that normally held salads was bare. Imagine his mother's surprise when she entered the room to the very strange sight of her son dipping his bread into an empty dish!

A similarly deep absorption in Torah study could be seen in the Chazon Ish, rendering him oblivious to such a mundane matter as his own eating. Once, a person who was quite close to the Chazon Ish came to visit during mealtime. After the gadol's Rebbetzin served her husband and left the room, the Chazon Ish turned to his visitor.

He confided, "For me, there is absolutely no difference between how I feel before I eat or afterward. This is why it is so easy for me to forget whether or not I ate a meal. How do I know when it's time to eat, then? My calculation is simple; if my wife serves me a meal, it is safe to assume that I have not yet eaten!"

דרכה של תורה, ח"ב, ע' קס"ב-קס"ג

Overview

Siman 168 Seif 1:

If one has slices of bread and a whole loaf from the same variety he should recite the beracha on the whole loaf even if it was made from coarse flour (meaning bread that is not "clean") **and is small and the slices are "clean and large. If the whole loaf is barley and the slices are wheat and small one should place the slice beneath the whole loaf and break them together.** This applies when one intends to eat them both but if one intends to eat only one of them he should break that one without regard for the other even if it is more important and more dear.

- If one only had a slice of bread and then a whole loaf was brought to him he should recite the beracha on both of them but if he already recited the beracha on the slice he should break that. (M.B. 1)
- The Gemara is clear that the slice of wheat is preferred; however, in order to satisfy all opinions one should place the slice under the whole loaf. (M.B. 3)
- Magen Avrohom writes that if the whole loaf was made from rye and the slices from wheat or barley one need not hold the whole loaf and slices together; rather he should recite the beracha on the slice since rye is less important than barley since it is not mentioned in the pasuk. (M.B. 3)
- The priority that one bread has over another does not obligate one to eat that bread. It is logical that this applies when one will eat only one bread but if one will eat both of them it is preferred to recite the beracha on the bread that is mentioned earlier in the pasuk or has one of the other preferences. (M.B. 5)

Siman 168 Seif 2:

If two loaves are made from the same ingredients but one is large and the other is small he should recite the beracha on the larger one. If one has two halves rather than a whole loaf he should attach them together with wood or some other material that will not be seen and it is considered whole. One may even attach them on Shabbos.

- If the small loaf was made from sifted flour and the large one from coarse flour he should recite the beracha on the small loaf. (M.B. 6)
- Magen Avrohom questions this ruling and contends that during the week he does not have to attach the two halves but on Shabbos when whole loaves are necessary he should attach them. (M.B. 7)
- If one has a loaf that is whole he should not combine two halves. (M.B. 9)

Siman 168 Seif 3:

Two rolls that were attached and baked and then one cut a slice from one of those rolls while the other remains whole, it is preferred to separate the cut roll from the whole one so that it should appear whole rather than leave it attached so that it should appear larger. One should not break the bread where it was attached to the other roll since it looks as though it was sliced already; rather he should break the bread on a place where it appears whole.

- With regards to a slice there is no preference to cut it on the part which is still whole. (M.B. 11)

Siman 168 Seif 4:

If one has barley bread and spelt bread he should recite the beracha on the barley since it is one of the seven species even though spelt is better. If one has bread of sifted flour and bread of coarse flour one should recite the beracha on the sifted flour bread. If both are from sifted flour but one is whiter than the other the beracha should be recited on the one that is whiter.

- Although spelt is in the wheat family since it is not mentioned explicitly in the Torah barley is considered more important. (M.B. 12)
- In siman 211 there is an opinion that maintains that the one that is preferred takes precedence and according to that opinion the halacha here refers to where the two loaves are equal. (M.B. 13)
- Spelt takes precedence over rye since spelt is in the wheat family and rye takes precedence over oats since it is more preferred. (M.B. 13)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to where in other aspects the two loaves are similar. (M.B. 14)
- The order of preference is: A grain from the seven species, whole, clean and then large. (M.B. 15)