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Digest
Mishna Berura
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סימן קע"ד סעיף ב'-ג'

Halacha Highlight

The beracha on grape juice exempting other beverages

Shulchan Aruch Siman 174 Seif 2

יין פוטר כל מיני משקין

Wine exempts all different beverages

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ב') rules that once a person recited a beracha on wine he is not required to recite a beracha rishona on other beverages that he will drink. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) cites a disagreement whether the other beverages have to be on the table when one recites the beracha on wine or not. According to the first opinion, the other beverages must be on the table at the time that one recites the beracha and merely bringing them to the table while the wine is still on the table is not sufficient. Others contend that as long as one had the other beverages in mind when he recited the beracha on wine it is sufficient. If one settled to drink wine, many authorities adopt a lenient position that the beracha on wine will cover the other beverages as long as they were brought to the table while the wine was still on the table.

The reason why wine exempts one from having to recite a beracha on other beverages is that wine is first andforemost of all drinks. Poskim debate whether the halacha applies to grape juice as well. On the one hand it does not have alcohol that brings a person into a state of joy, but on the other hand it still maintains the unique beracha of בורא פרי הגפן. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (שבות יצחק פסח פי"א אות ב') maintains that one should adopt a conservative position that grape juice does not exempt one from having to recite a beracha on other beverages. He adds further (שם הלכות שבת בשבת פי"ז הע' 73) that if one drank less than a cheekful of grape juice it is clear that one is not exempt from having to recite a beracha on other beverages. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה פסח פי"ט הע' 78), on the other hand, ruled that grape juice is the same as wine and exempts all the other liquids.

Overview

Siman 174 Seif 2:

The beracha on wine exempts all different beverages even the beracha rishonah.

- All other beverages are subordinate to wine. (M.B. 2)
- There is a disagreement whether the other beverages must be on the table when one recites the beracha on the wine or having the other beverages in mind is sufficient. If one sat to drink wine many authorities agree that it will exempt other beverages even if they were not on the table as long as the wine was still on the table when he began drinking the other beverage but it is preferable for the beverages to be on the table when he recites the beracha on the wine. (M.B. 3)
- If one recited kiddush on wine for others but they did not drink any wine they must recite the beracha on the other beverages even if the other beverages were on the table during kiddush. (M.B. 3)

Siman 174 Seif 3:

If one has only one cup of wine he should hold onto it until after the meal and then recite the beracha.

- Even the opinion that maintains that it is not necessary to recite birkas hamazon with a cup of wine would agree that it is preferable to recite birkas hamazon with a cup of wine. However, if one is thirsty and has no other beverages to drink he should drink the wine before birkas hamazon to satisfy Mordechai's opinion that when one is thirsty he is not obligated to recite birkas hamazon until he drinks. (M.B. 5)