The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
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סימן קע"ז סעיף א'

Halacha Highlight

Reciting a beracha on ice cream and popsicles served in a meal

Shulchan Aruch Siman 177 Seif 1
דברים הבאים שלא מחמת הסעודה
Foods that are not part of the meal

Shulchan Aruch discusses which categories of foods are covered by hamotzi and which categories of foods are not covered by hamotzi and therefore require an independent beracha. The basic categories are those foods that are eaten as part of a meal, generally indicated by the fact that they are eaten with bread, and those foods that are not eaten as part of the meal. Meat, fish, cheese and some vegetables are considered part of the meal and are covered by hamotzi. Figs, grapes and other fruits fall into the category of foods that are not eaten as part of the meal and as such are not covered by hamotzi. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ד) explains that any food that is eaten as dessert rather than to satisfy one's hunger is not part of the meal and one must recite a beracha before eating it.

Teshuvas Shevet HaLevi (ח"א סי' ר"ה בהגהות לסי' קע"ד) writes that one must recite a beracha on ice cream that is served during a meal. Since it is served as dessert rather than to satisfy one's hunger, it falls into the category of foods that are not covered by hamotzi. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (ותן ברכה ח"א עמ' פ"ז) issues a similar ruling with regards to popsicles. Teshuvas Or L'Tzion (ח"ב פי"ב תשובה י"ב) disagrees with regards to a popsicles. He asserts that popsicles are categorized as beverages and as such a beracha would not be recited when eating one (ע' סי' קע"ד סע' ז'). He agrees, however, when it comes to ice cream that one should recite a beracha on ice cream since there are ingredients other than milk in the ice cream and those other ingredients render it a food rather than a beverage. Sefer Yalkut Yosef rules that one does not recite a beracha on ice cream since he considers it to be a beverage but he writes that it is preferred to eat it after the meal in order to satisfy all opinions (חיי משה).

Stories to Share

Changing Customs

מ"ב ס' קע"ז, ס"ק ה': "ומלפפונות חיין או צנון ובצל ג"כ צריך לברך..."

In one household every Shabbos meal was graced with a big vegetable plate. One Friday night a learned guest did what was to them a shocking thing. As he took a cucumber off the platter he made a loud, slow blessing, "boreh pri ha'adamah," before taking a bite.

The family was flummoxed and didn't know if they should even say amen to what appeared to them to be a needless blessing. It seemed obvious to them that during a meal one should not make a berachah on vegetables. When they asked him about this, they were astounded when he read a line from the Mishnah Berurah on today's amud: "Similarly…one must make a blessing on raw cucumbers, radishes, squash or onions eaten during the meal. It is only if one eats these with meat that they are secondary to it and do not require a blessing of their own."

מ"ב, ס' קע"ז, ס"ק ה'

But when this question reached Rav Nissim Karelitz, zt"l, he ruled that one should not make a blessing on vegetables eaten during the meal, even if he eats them without bread. "In our times, what is normally eaten at meals has changed from the times of the Chafetz Chaim. Since it is normal to have salad or vegetables as an integral part of our meal now, these foods are secondary to the bread and do not require their own blessing."

חוט שני, ע' קס"ח

Overview

Siman 177 Seif 1:

Foods that are served in a meal, if they are part of the meal, meaning they are foods that people base their meal on and are eaten together with bread, e.g. meat, fish, eggs, vegetables, cheese, cooked grain or salty foods, even if one does not eat them with bread, a beracha beforehand is not required since hamotzi exempts them, nor a beracha afterwards since birkas hamazon exempts them. If they are foods that are not part of the meal, meaning it is uncommon for people to base their meal on them and eat them with bread, e.g. figs, grapes and other varieties of fruit (See above siman 168:8), **if they are eaten without bread a beracha beforehand is required since hamotzi does not cover them being that they are not part of the meal but they do not require a beracha afterwards since they were served as part of the meal and birkas hamazon includes them. If as one began to eat he ate the fruit** (with bread) **and at the end he ate it with bread, even if in between he ate the fruit without bread a beracha beforehand would not be required.**

- Cooked grain that is thick and is eaten by itself rather than with bread is considered part of the meal since it serves to satisfy one's hunger and is subordinate to bread. The same is true of other cooked foods that are served as part of a bread meal. (M.B. 1)
- If one isn't really interested in eating bread other than to exempt the other foods later authorities are uncertain whether the bread will exempt those foods and certainly there is an issue if one eats less than an olive's volume of bread. On the other hand, since it is common to base one's meal on bread it will exempt the other foods. In such a situation it is best to recite a beracha on each food rather than eat bread unless it is Shabbos or Yom Tov where it is a mitzvah to eat bread and everything is subordinate to it. (M.B. 3)
- The same applies to any other food that is served as dessert rather than to satisfy. (M.B. 4)
- Regarding tzimis Sefer Yad Ketanah writes that one should first recite a beracha on raw fruit and if one does not have fruit he should eat the first and last bite with bread. Eating cooked fruit for dessert is not included in this ruling and requires its own beracha. (M.B. 4)
- One who wishes to eat horseradish, raw cucumbers, radish and onion must recite a beracha unless they are eaten with bread. (M.B. 5)
- As far as birkas hamazon is concerned these foods are subordinate to the meal and are covered. (M.B. 7)
- If one began eating the food with bread and intended to eat more of it with bread it becomes part of the meal. This applies when it is served to be eaten with bread but if it is served as dessert even if one eats it with a little bread at the beginning and end, it is ineffective to cover what one eats without bread. (M.B. 8)
- Later authorities write that when fruit is served during a meal to be eaten with bread it is best to recite the beracha on them before eating it with bread and then one could eat them with or without bread. If one eats pie with fruit filling he does not recite the beracha on the fruit since it is subordinate to the flour. (M.B. 10)