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

Overview

Siman 177 Seif 2:

Foods that are served after the meal but before birkas hamazon which was the custom in the time of the Gemara that at the end of the meal they would stop eating bread and remove it from the table altogether and then settle to eat fruit and drink whatever was presented to them, whether items that come as part of a meal or whether items that do not come as part of the meal, they require a beracha before and after since hamotzi and birkas hamazon only exempt that which is part of the primary meal. These halachos are not relevant nowadays that we are not accustomed to stop eating bread until birkas hamazon.

- If one ate foods that require על המחיה they are not exempted by the recitation of birkas hamazon. (M.B. 13)
- After the bread is removed the foods that are served cannot be subordinate to it, therefore they require a beracha before eating them. (M.B. 14)

Siman 177 Seif 3:

If one decides to eat fruit as the accompaniment to bread the fruit becomes a food that is part of the meal and even if one begin to eat the fruit without bread he does not recite the beracha before or afterwards but some disagree about this point. Therefore, it is best to eat the fruit with bread and then even if one eats the fruit without bread a beracha would not be required even though one did not finish eating the fruit with bread since the meal was established on the fruit.

- In other words the food that he would eat with the bread was fruit and that is why it is similar to the foods enumerated in seif 1. (M.B. 15)
- The dissenting opinion maintains that if one initially ate the fruit without bread it is not subordinate to the meal and requires a beracha before eating them. (M.B. 16)
- Since the meal will revolve around the fruit one may then continue to eat fruit without a beracha even though one will not eat the fruit with bread. (M.B. 17)

Halacha Highlight

Ending the meal before birkas hamazon

Shulchan Aruch Siman 177 Seif 2

ודברים הבאים לאחר סעודה קדם ברכת המזון

And foods that are served after the meal but before birkas hamazon

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ב') discusses the practice in the time of Chazal to remove the table after serving the meal and then serve fruit and beverages before birkas hamazon. In such a circumstance, once one removes the table it is considered as if the meal is finished and whatever foods one eats after that require a beracha rishona as well as a beracha acharona since hamotzi and birkas hamazon only cover what is eaten as part of the primary meal. He then writes that these halachos do not have much application nowadays since we are not accustomed to stop eating bread until after birkas hamazon.

Biur Halacha (ד"ה שאין אנו רגילין) records a disagreement whether Shulchan Aruch's ruling applies at large meals where at the end of the meal all of the bread is removed from the table and fruit and other desserts are served. According to one opinion, the fact that the bread is removed is not sufficient and Shulchan Aruch's ruling applies only when the table is removed as well. According to the second opinion, Shulchan Aruch's ruling is not related to whether the table is removed; it is a function of whether the bread is removed. He also writes that once a person lifts the cup of wine for birkas hamazon he has effectively ended the meal and if he wishes to eat or drink anything after that he must recite a beracha rishona and acharona on that food. He then notes that according to Magen Avrohom and the Shulchan Aruch HaRav one is required to recite berachos even on those foods that are considered part of the meal. His final conclusion, however, is that one is not required to recite a beracha acharona on foods that are part of the meal that are eaten after one lifted the cup of wine for birkas hamazon. There is a disagreement whether moving tables to make room for dancing at a wedding ends the meal similar to the practice described in Shulchan Aruch (חיי משה).

Stories to Share

A Good Cup of Coffee

ש"ע, ס' קע"ז, ב': "דברים הבאים לאחר סעודה קודם ברכת המזון..."

Today's amud discusses the halachos of foods that one brings to the table after the meal, before bentching.

Coffee is a requirement for many people to start their day. The Eshel Avraham actually suggests that coffee may serve as pas shachris. (אשל אברהם (בוטאשוטש) ס' קנ"ה) For many, ending the meal with a good cup of coffee is just as essential.

One man wondered why most people don't make a blessing before partaking of this special dessert. After all, in many meals coffee would not be a good beverage to enjoy while eating, so it is hard to argue that this is part of the meal. But perhaps since it is so common to have coffee to close the meal this counts like something which is like part of the meal and does not require a blessing?

After a little research he found that the Mishnah Berurah at least is stringent. He rules that one should have some sugar and have in mind to discharge a possible obligation to make a blessing on the coffee.

When this question was brought to Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l, he answered briefly. "I believe the custom nowadays is that people are lenient."

When this question reached Rav Yosef Shov, shlit"a, he shared his rich memories of what gedolei hador actually did. "Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zt"l, drank coffee after the meal without making a blessing or taking some sugar to discharge a possible obligation. But Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach would take some sugar, although it seems clear that the norms have changed in this regard today."

דולה ומשקה, ע' ק"ט