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

Overview

Siman 178 Seif 2 (a):

If friends were sitting and eating and they left to greet a chosson and kallah, if they left some people behind they may return and finish the meal without reciting a new beracha. If they did not leave anyone behind when they leave they must recite a beracha and when they return they must recite a new beracha rishona. The same halacha applies if they were gathered to drink or eat fruit since any time one changes his place his eating session has ended and he is required to recite a beracha acharona for what he ate and a new beracha rishona for what he will eat. One who moves from one corner to another corner in the same house is not required to recite a new beracha. If one moves from the east side of a fig tree to the west side of a fig tree he is required to recite a new beracha.

- The same halacha is true for one who leaves for a voluntary reason. (M.B. 13)
- Shulchan Aruch is teaching that leaving behind friends is effective even for drinking or a meal of fruit. (M.B. 18)
- Interrupting the meal is worse than a הסח הדעת where the only requirement is to recite a beracha rishona, since in this case it is as if he finished the meal altogether. (M.B. 19)
- One is not required to return specifically to his place and it is sufficient to recite the beracha in the second location. (M.B. 21)
- In this context "house" refers to a room. (M.B. 22)
- It doesn't matter whether one ate bread and other foods or whether one ate fruit. (M.B. 24)
- The fig tree is a barrier that prevents him from seeing the second location. Shulchan Aruch refers to where there are no walls around the tree because if there were another beracha would not be required even if he could not see the second location. According to some authorities if he had in mind to eat on the other side of the tree a new beracha is not required. (M.B. 25)

Halacha Highlight

Leaving friends at a meal

Shulchan Aruch Siman 178 Seif 2 (a)

חברים שהיו יושבים לאכל

Friends who were sitting and eating

Shulchan Aruch discusses a circumstance in which friends were eating together and some of them left to celebrate with a chosson and kallah. He rules that if they left behind some of the people they may return and resume that meal without having to recite any additional berachos. If they don't leave anybody behind they must recite a beracha acharona before they leave and a beracha rishona upon their return. Teshuvas Peulas Tzadik (ח"ב סי' ל') asserts that even if the ones left behind did not eat it is unnecessary for those who leave and return to recite another beracha. It is for this reason that when the Gemara presents this halacha it mentions leaving behind someone old or ill. The significance of framing the halacha in this context was to present an example of people left behind who are not eating. Machazik Beracha rejects this argument and maintains that leaving people behind is effective only if those people are eating the meal as well. Kaf HaChaim (אות ז') Sefer Birkas HaBayis (שער כ' סע' ז') writes that leaving behind friends is effective only if the people left behind do not recite a beracha acharona on the meal. However, if the people left behind recite a beracha acharona on the meal before the others return then it is not considered as though they are returning to a meal in progress and must recite a new beracha rishona. Teshuvas B'Tzeil HaChochmah (ח"ו סי' ע"א) adds that even if the people who remained behind who had recited a beracha acharona were to start eating again it would not be effective since this would constitute a new meal rather than a continuation of the old meal. He also adds that leaving behind someone at the meal is effective only if those who leave are aware that someone is staying behind. If, however, they left and upon their return discover that someone had remained behind they must recite a new beracha on the food that they will eat (חיי משה).

Stories to Share

Deceptively Simple

ש"ע, ס' קע"ח, ב' "או לאכול פירות שכל המשנה מקומו הרי פסק אכילתו..."

Rav Dovid Baharan was known to be a great expert in hilchos berachos, and his yeshiva pursued the subject in all of its intricacy as part of the curriculum. When one wealthy man who supported Rav Baharan's yeshiva found out that his money was supporting the study of the laws of berachos, he felt cheated. After all, didn't everyone know these simple halachos? This man was very stubborn and there was no way that speaking with him would convince him to continue helping the yeshiva.

When Rav Dovid heard about this, he invited the man to his home. When the wealthy man arrived, he found a tray laid out with many different types of fruits and other delicacies. When the wealthy man was invited to help himself he chose one delicious looking fruit on which to make his blessing.

Rav Dovid gently chided him. "But don't you know that one takes from the seven species first..."

When his visitor took a fruit from the seven species, Rav Dovid again corrected him in a caring fashion. "Weren't you aware that that is not the first fruit to take?"

After several more errors, the gevir finally got the message; the laws of berachos are anything but simple.

Whenever Rav Dovid was unsure whether he required a berachah or not, he would go out for a short walk. When he came back, he would make a new blessing.

When Rav Shlomo Yechiel Friedman, zt"l, once observed him going out for a short walk and quickly returning—which was not his wont—he didn't understand what was behind this practice and didn't ask.

Rav Dovid took him to task for this. "Too bad you didn't ask what was behind my peculiar behavior. If you had you would have learned another halachah!"

ארח דוד, ע' מ"ב-מ"ג

When Rav Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv, zt"l, was asked whether this practice helps resolve the doubt, he answered that it does indeed.

שבות יצחק, ח"ח עמ' ע"ר