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

Halacha Highlight

Leaving a meal in the middle of the meal

Rema Siman 178 Seif 2 (b)

לכתחלה לא יעקר ממקומו בלא ברכה

L'chatchila he should not change his location without reciting a beracha

Regarding the issue of changing locations during a meal Rema disagrees with Shulchan Aruch on two points. Shulchan Aruch maintains that once a person changed locations he is required to recite a beracha acharona on the food he has eaten and a beracha rishona on the food that he will eat. Rema, however, maintains that a new beracha rishona is required but a beracha acharona is not required. The second point of dispute is that according to Shulchan Aruch the laws of changing one's location apply even when eating a meal of bread whereas according to Rema it applies only when one was eating fruit or was drinking beverages. Accordingly, Rema rules that if one was eating a meal of bread and he changed locations upon his return to the meal he is not required to recite another beracha since it is considered as though the meal is ongoing. Nevertheless, Rema writes that l'chatchila one should not go to another location without first reciting a beracha acharona out of concern that one will forget to return and continue eating. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק ל"ה) citing Biur Halacha writes that if one's intent is to return to the meal right away he should not recite a beracha and it is only when he sees that there is a possibility that he may be gone for an extended period of time that he should recite a beracha before he leaves.

Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק ל"ג) adds that even when one was invited to join a meal elsewhere and he will eat bread at that second location so there is no fear that he will forget to eat or recite the beracha acharona, nevertheless, he should recite a beracha acharona before he leaves. Shulchan Aruch HaRav (סע' ד') explains that if a food is important enough that it requires one to recite the beracha acharona in the place where one ate it is also important enough to mandate a beracha acharona before one moves locations (חיי משה).

Stories to Share

Under the Same Roof

ש"ע, ס' קע"ח, ב': "והלך לבית אחר..."

Apartment buildings have their own distinct feel. Having neighbors so close by can be a friendly situation if relations are good.

One apartment house had many close neighbors. Tenants would often quickly visit each other for advice or just to speak for a few moments. Even while in the middle of drinking a coffee or eating a snack, if one neighbor wished to speak with another, he or she would quickly pay them a visit to see if it was a good time for a quick chat.

When one tenant learned the halachah on today's amud she wondered whether quickly leaving her apartment while in the middle of a cup of coffee would require a new berachah on her return. "Although we are under the same roof, it seems obvious that the stairwell at least is all of our property and shouldn't require a new berachah if it is not unusual to go out for a short time."

When this question reached Rav Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv, zt"l, he ruled decisively. "The general rule is that one who goes out of his home—even if the place he went to is under the same roof—has changed domains. Now, if part of the stairwell is set aside for his use alone, that part is considered an extension of his home and does not constitute a change of domain. Even the stairwell of an apartment building is considered a change of domain from one's home. He went from his own domain to a domain in which he only has a share!"

שבות יצחק, ח"ח, ע' ע"ר, וזאת הברכה, ע' 57

Overview

Siman 178 Seif 2 (b):

Some authorities disagree with what was written in this siman and contend that changing one's place is nothing more than losing one's concentration, therefore, if one moved from one location to another he is not required to recite any more than a beracha before eating and he is not required to recite a beracha on that which he already ate. This is true if he did not leave some friends at the meal and he ate foods that do not require the beracha acharona to be recited in the place where one ate but if one left behind some friends or even if he did not leave behind some friends but ate foods that require the beracha acharona to be recited in the place where one ate, he is not required to even recite a beracha on what he will eat. Accordingly, someone who interrupted his meal and went to another house or was eating and was called out to speak to a friend outside of the entrance or to another place when he returns he is not required to repeat the beracha rishona since bread requires one to recite the beracha where he ate. However, if he lost his concentration when he returns he is certainly required to recite a beracha on what he will later eat and there is no difference whether he returns to the place where he ate or whether he finishes his meal elsewhere and this is the custom in these countries. Nevertheless, l'chatchila one should not move from the place where he was eating without reciting a beracha out of concern that he may forget to return and eat. If there is a mitzvah opportunity that is passing it is permitted to leave. See siman 184.

- This opinion disagrees with two points, the first is that they do not require a beracha acharona if the person leaves and secondly, a new beracha rishona is mandated only if one ate fruit or was drinking beverages so that the meal ends when one leaves but if he was eating bread even a new beracha acharona is not necessary unless he lost his concentration. (M.B. 26)
- Magen Avrohom writes that one must eat an olive's volume of bread for otherwise he would be required to recite a new beracha rishona. Therefore one must be careful to eat an olive's volume before leaving even if he goes from one room to another. (M.B. 28)
- Rema is referring to the beginning of his comments and is teaching that even if one will finish his meal elsewhere he is not required to recite a new beracha but if he eats foods that do not require a beracha acharona in the place where one ate a new beracha rishona would be required. (M.B. 31)
- If one ate bread in the second location he should recite birkas hamazon there. (M.B. 32)
- One should not leave without reciting a beracha acharona out of concern that he will forget to return or he will delay long enough that he becomes hungry again. If one is invited to eat bread in a second location it is still preferred for him to recite birkas hamazon before he leaves the first location. If when he recited hamotzi he had in mind to change places it is permitted even l'chatchila to change locations. (M.B. 33)
- Tosafos and Rosh assert that this stringency is limited to where one will be gone for a period of time but not when one intends to return immediately. (M.B. 34)
- Biur Halacha ruled that even though l'chatchila one should follow Rema's ruling when one leaves for a voluntary purpose but if one does leave he should not recite a beracha acharona if his intent is to return. When he has reason to believe that he may get delayed he should recite birkas hamazon before he leaves. (M.B. 35)
- Many later authorities write that even when eating fruit one should recite a beracha acharona before leaving. (M.B. 36)