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Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Fri, Jul 8 2022 ■ ט' תמוז, תשפ"ב
סימן קפ"ח סעיף א'-ד'

Halacha Highlight

The correct wording for the third beracha

Shulchan Aruch Siman 188 Seif 4

ואין לשנות הנסח משבת לחול

We do not change the wording from Shabbos to the week

The Gemara Berachos (48b) cites a Beraisa that teaches that on Shabbos the third beracha begins with consolation and ends with consolation. Rashi and Tosafos disagree about the meaning of this declaration. According to Rashi, (ד"ה ובשבת מתחיל בנחמה) there are two versions of the beginning and end of the beracha. One version begins with the words: רחם ה' א-לוקינו and concludes with the words בונה ירושלים and the second version begins with the words נחמנו ה' א-לוקינו and concludes with the words מנחם ציון בבנין ירושלים. The Beraisa is teaching that on Shabbos one need not mention Shabbos at the beginning or end of the beracha. Shabbos is added in the middle of the beracha and the beginning and the end of the beracha remain the same. Tosafos (ד"ה מתחיל בנחמה) writes that according to some authorities the Gemara is teaching that on Shabbos the beracha should begin with the words נחמנו ה' א-לוקינו and end with מנחם ציון בבנין ירושלים rather than רחם and בונה ירושלים. This opinion maintains that רחם is a supplication that is not permitted on Shabbos, whereas the word נחם connotes consolation rather than a supplication and does not violate the restriction against supplications on Shabbos. Tosafos then rejects this opinion asserting that there is no substantive difference between the term רחם and the term נחם.

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ד') follows Rashi and Tosafos's own opinion that there is no substantive difference between the terms and which ever version one says during the week should be said on Shabbos. The question that remains is why it is permitted to use language of supplication on Shabbos. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ט) in the name of Bais Yosef answers that any time one uses the standard wording of a beracha one does not violate the restriction against supplicating on Shabbos. For this reason it is permitted to recite the הרחמן section that follows the fourth beracha. Since that section is part of the standard text of birkas hamazon it may recited on Shabbos. Similarly, Birkei Yosef (שיורי ברכה סק"א) writes that it is permitted for a guest to recite the beracha for the host on Shabbos since this is also considered part of the standard text of birkas hamazon.

Stories to Share

The Builder of Yerushalayim

מ"ב ס' קכ"ז, ס"ק ב': "שהיו הפועלים הולכים למלאכתם כששומעים אמן..."

Obviously, a person who prays at home will choose the most private spot. One man who was praying in a mostly unused room heard his wife approaching the door and wondered whether he was permitted to raise his voice while davening. He knew that the moment his wife would hear that he was davening she would immediately leave. On the other hand, perhaps to raise his voice for the express purpose of informing his wife that he was davening was prohibited. Wasn't it a disgrace to use the words of the tefillah for this purpose?

When this question reached Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein, shlit"a, he posited a proof to this case from the source of the Shulchan Aruch on today's amud. "In Berachos 45 we find that Abaye would raise his voice when saying amen to Boneh Yerushalayim so that workers would know that they should go back to their work. It would appear as though one can raise his voice while in prayer to indicate something to someone."

But then Rav Zilberstein explained that there may be an essential difference between the cases. "In the case of Abaye he was also teaching the halachah, that workers leave then to resume their duty. But perhaps if someone just wants to have solitude while davening it is disgraceful to use the words in this manner?

"It is clear, however, that if his wife will be very pained if he ignores her, he should interrupt his davening and open the door for her. And perhaps it is better to intone the words in a loud enough tone that she will hear and understand."

חשוקי חמד, ברכות, ע' רע"ט

Overview

Siman 188 Seif 1:

After the completion of the beracha of בונה ירושלים one answers אמן to his own beracha since that is the completion of the Biblical berachos being that the beracha of הטוב והמטיב is not Biblical.

Siman 188 Seif 2:

This אמן should be said quietly so that others should not realize that the beracha is not Biblical and consequently disparage it. This is true if one is reciting birkas hamazon for himself and no one is answering אמן to his berachos but when one is part of a zimun one should answer אמן as he answers אמן to the other berachos of birkas hamazon. Even though the one reciting the beracha is also answering אמן this will not be so recognizable since others are answering אמן with him. The custom in these countries is to answer אמן out loud even the one leading the zimun and perhaps it is for the above mentioned reason.

- ❖ Some explain that this concern was relevant in earlier times when workers would leave after hearing the words אמן after בומה ירושלים. In order to assure that the workers would not leave and disparage the beracha even when they were not rushing back to work, it was necessary to answer אמן quietly. Nowadays that even employees recite the fourth beracha, this is not a concern. Accordingly, one should always answer this אמן out loud. (M.B. 2)
- ❖ One should pause between the word ירושלים and אמן so that it does not sound as if אמן is part of the beracha. (M.B. 2)

Siman 188 Seif 3:

In the third beracha one must mention Dovid's kingdom and one should not mention any other kingdom. One who says: ומלכותך ומלכות בית דוד has erred since it is not proper to equate an earthly king with the Heavenly King. Similarly, one should not say אבינו מלכנו. Some maintain that when reciting יעלה ויבא he should not conclude with the words מלך חנון ורחום; rather he should skip the word מלך. Although the logic is compelling I have not seen people conduct themselves this way.

- ❖ Instead of the word והאומר it should read לכן האומר. (M.B. 4)
- ❖ Later authorities explain that since it is a separate paragraph we do not object if someone mentions Hashem's Kingdom and it is recited the same as it is during davening. (M.B. 6)

Siman 188 Seif 4:

The nussach of this beracha begins with the words רחם ה' א-לוקינו or מנחם ציון בבנין ירושלים and concludes with the words בונה ירושלים or נחמנו ה' א-לוקינו and one should not switch the nussach from Shabbos to the week. On Shabbos and during the week one should recite the same nussach. Some maintain that one should say בונה ברחמיו ירושלים and this is our custom.

- ❖ The wording implies that even though the concluding beracha is exactly the same as the opening it is not an issue. However, some later authorities are stringent about this and maintain that the conclusion must match the opening. (M.B. 8)
- ❖ The הרחמן section may be recited on Shabbos even though it is not part of the wording coined by Chazal because once it is recited every time one recites birkas hamazon it becomes part of the standard wording of birkas hamazon and is not considered a request that is being made on Shabbos. (M.B. 9)
- ❖ Gra follows Rif that during the week one should say רחם and on Shabbos he should נחמנו and conclude מנחם. Other authorities also maintain this position. (M.B. 10)