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Digest
Mishna Berura
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סימן קצ"ג סעיף ד'-ה'

Halacha Highlight

Forming a zimun of people who did not eat together

Shulchan Aruch Siman 193 Seif 5

ואפילו לא אכלו אלו השלשה ביחד משנתחברו

And even if these three did not eat together after they joined

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ה') discusses the unusual circumstance of three people joining together for a zimun who did not eat together. The case involves three groups of people with three members in each group. In the event that each group did not already form a zimun and a member from each group joins together to form a new group, they are obligated to recite birkas hazimun together. This obligation is in force even if they did not eat together after the new composite group was formed. Be'er HaGolah disagrees with this simple reading and suggests two alternate understandings of Shulchan Aruch. According to his first suggestion Shulchan Aruch refers to where the three groups ate within the same house, just in different areas. As such it is comparable to moving from one corner to another and it is considered as if to some degree they already were part of the same group. According to his second explanation Shulchan Aruch means that once they combined together to form a zimun they may not separate and they are obligated to eat together and then recite birkas hazimun. Be'er Heiteiv (סק"ז) in the name of Magen Avrohom and Taz explains that Shulchan Aruch means that they did not eat together after they formed this new group but each one ate by himself.

As mentioned, the simple reading of Shulchan Aruch is that these three people may form a zimun by joining together even though they did not eat together. Chazon Ish (או"ח סי' ל"א סק"ט) explains that being that each one was obligated to be part of the zimun in their original group but are now unable to do so since those groups disbanded, it is considered as though they have formed a permanent group for birkas hamazon and that allows them to form a zimun.

Overview

Siman 193 Seif 4:

If three people ate together and recited hamotzi they may not separate even if each person ate from his own loaf and even if they did not yet eat an olive's volume of bread.

- Even if one wants to finish the meal ahead of the others he may not do so since the obligation to form a zimun took affect as they began to eat together. (M.B. 28)

Siman 193 Seif 5:

Regarding three people that joined together that came from three different groups which each had three people in it, if they were part of a zimun in their original group, for example, each one of them interrupted for the other two until they said הזן they may not form a new zimun even if they eat together and finish their respective meals. If they did not already participate in a zimun they are obligated to form a zimun and may not separate, even if they did not eat together once they formed this group.

- The obligation to be part of a zimun disappeared since they were already part of a zimun. (M.B. 30)
- The reason is that they have now combined together and came from a group that obligated them to be part of a zimun. (M.B. 31)