The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Thurs, Aug 11 2022 ■ י"ד אב, תשפ"ב
סימן קצ"ז סעיף ב'-ג'

Overview

Siman 197 Seif 2:

If nine people ate grain and one ate an olive's volume of vegetables they may combine to mention Hashem's Name. Even if he only dipped food in brine or didn't drink more than a cup that contains a revi'is of any beverage other than water, they may combine. The one leading birkas hamazon should be one who ate bread. Even if seven people ate bread and three people ate vegetables they combine but if only six people ate bread they do not combine since there must be a recognizable majority.

- Even though one does not recite birkas hamazon after eating vegetables he may nevertheless respond with the words ברוך שאכלנו משלו. (M.B. 7)
- If one already recited a beracha acharona he may no longer be included in the zimun. (M.B. 9)
- In other words he dipped vegetables in brine and the volume of all the food was equal to an olive. (M.B. 10)
- Drinking is also considered eating. (M.B. 11)
- Water doesn't satisfy and is not significant enough to allow one to join a zimun even if he was thirsty. Magen Avrohom contends that one who drank water may join in the zimun but other authorities follow Shulchan Aruch's ruling. (M.B. 12)
- The same is true for beverages. (M.B. 14)

Siman 197 Seif 3:

One who joins must recite a beracha acharona on the food that he eats and does not fulfill his obligation by listening to the others recite birkas hamazon. The allowance to join a zimun after eating other foods is limited to joining a zimun of ten but if one wants to join a zimun of three one must eat an olive's volume of bread. Some maintain that eating an olive's volume of grain is sufficient even if it is not bread. Others contend that vegetables and other foods are also sufficient. Therefore, if two people eat and a third person joins them, it is best if they can convince him to eat an olive's volume of bread but if he doesn't want to they should not give him something to drink or any other food. If they did give him something to drink or eat they may form a zimun even though he did not eat bread.

- Even if he has in mind to fulfill his obligation with their recitation it is ineffective since birkas hamazon is not a replacement for another beracha acharona. If one ate dates or drank wine listening to birkas hamazon is effective. Magen Avrohom advises having in mind not to fulfill one's obligation through their recitation. (M.B. 16)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to varieties of grain that require an על המחיה. (M.B. 19)
- Drinking is the same as vegetables. (M.B. 20)
- He should be encouraged to eat bread to satisfy the first opinion but if he doesn't want to eat bread he shouldn't be given anything so that he is not in a circumstance of doubt. (M.B. 21)
- Nowadays the custom is in accordance with the latter opinion and if he doesn't want to eat bread he may be given other foods or beverages. (M.B. 22)

Halacha Highlight

Which beverages allow one to join a zimun?

Shulchan Aruch Siman 197 Seif 2
מכל משקה חוץ מן המים
From any beverage other than water

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ב') discusses what a person must eat in order to be able to join a group so that they can add Hashem's Name to the zimun. Shulchan Aruch rules that even if the tenth person merely dips vegetables into brine or drinks a revi'is of any beverage other than water he may join them. The rationale behind this ruling is that water doesn't satisfy one's hunger and thus is not important enough to allow him to join the group. Even if he drank the water because he was thirsty he may not join their zimun (מ"ב סי"ק י"ב). Mishnah Berurah mentions that Magen Avrohom disagrees with Shulchan Aruch and contends that any drinking, even water, is sufficient since drinking is comparable to eating. Other authorities disagree with Magen Avrohom and follow Shulchan Aruch's ruling that one who only drank water may not join a zimun so that they should be able to add Hashem's Name.

Aruch HaShulchan (סע' ה') writes that in his opinion one who drinks lemonade or soda water may join a zimun since these are considered somewhat important beverages. Teshuvas Maharshag (ח"ב סי' ק"פ) writes that even if could agree with Aruch HaShulchan regarding lemonade, he disagrees with his position concerning soda water. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (קובץ תשובות ח"א סי' כ"ב) ruled that even tea with sugar and other sweetened drinks are no different than water and one who drinks them may not join the zimun as an active participant. Teshuvas Or L'Tzion (ח"ב פמ"ו תשובה ל"ב) also writes that one who drinks coffee does not become a member of a zimun and this is true for all beverages that are essentially sweetened water. However, one who drinks natural fruit juice may join a zimun as an active participant.