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

# Overview

Siman 197 Seif 4:

**Friends who ate together and some of them are full and others ate only an olive's volume, if they all know how to recite birkas hamazon it is a mitzvah for one who is full to lead birkas hamazon and discharge the obligation of the others. If they do not know how to recite birkas hamazon the one who ate an olive's volume may recite birkas hamazon on behalf of even the ones who are full.** Some maintain that one is not Biblically obligated to recite birkas hamazon if he did not take a drink when he is thirsty for a drink. It is preferred, l'chatchila, if some drank and others did not that the one who drank should lead birkas hamazon.

- Later authorities write that this applies when one will recite birkas hamazon on behalf of the others but if each one will recite birkas hamazon for himself and someone is merely leading the zimun even one who ate only an olive's volume may lead birkas hamazon. (M.B. 23)
- Magen Avrohom is uncertain whether Rabbinically, one could recite birkas hamazon for someone if he did not eat and his inclination is that one should be stringent about the matter. (M.B. 24)
- If one follows Shulchan Aruch's stringency that one who is Biblically obligated to recite birkas hamazon should be the one who leads birkas hamazon one should also be stringent with regards to the opinion that maintains that one is not Biblically obligated to recite birkas hamazon without taking a drink. (M.B. 27)
- If some are full but did not drink and others are not full but drank it is preferable if the one that is full leads birkas hamazon. (M.B. 28)
- If one already reached achila gasah he may recite the associated berachos as long as he still feels pleasure from the food that he eats. (M.B. 28)

# Halacha Highlight

## Taking a drink before birkas hamazon

Rema Siman 197 Seif 4

**אם לא שתה והוא תאב לשתות**

**If he did not drink and he is thirsty for a drink**

Rema records an opinion that maintains that one is not Biblically obligated to recite birkas hamazon if he did not have a drink when he is thirsty for a drink. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק כ"ה) explains that this opinion follows R' Meir's exposition of the phrase ואכלת ושבעת. R' Meir explains that the word ואכלת refers to eating and the word ושבעת refers to drinking. The intent is that one who drinks after eating is Biblically obligated in birkas hamazon but one who does not drink after eating is only Rabbinically obligated to recite birkas hamazon. Sha'ar HaTzion (סי"ק י"ח) notes that according to most Poskim, R' Meir's exposition is just an asmachta – support for a Rabbinic ruling and the Biblical meaning of the exposition is that one is not Biblically obligated to recite birkas hamazon unless he is full.

Mishnah Berurah (סי קע"ד סק"ה) rules that one who finished eating and is thirsty should make an effort to drink before his recitation of birkas hamazon so that his obligation will be Biblical in accordance with this opinion. Rav Chaim Kanievski (שונה הלכות סי' קפ"ד סע' ב') writes that according to this opinion cited by Rema if one drinks after the recitation of birkas hamazon he will then become Biblically obligated to recite birkas hamazon; therefore, one should be careful to take a drink before birkas hamazon so that one does not subject himself to this circumstance. However, Teshuvas Az Nidberu (ח"י סי' כ"ב) ruled that someone who has a medical condition and must wait after finishing eating before he can drink need not be concerned with the opinion cited by Rema. The reason is that this opinion represents a minority opinion and one need not be concerned for a minority opinion when one's health is at risk (פסקי תשובות אות ד' הע' 22).