The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן ר"ד סעיף ח'-י'

Overview

Siman 204 Seif 8:

Any food or drink that one consumes for medicinal purposes, if it tastes good and is pleasing to the palate, one recites a beracha before and after. If one is forced to eat or drink, one does not recite a beracha even though it is pleasing to the palate since one was forced.

- In other words, even though one is not interested in eating the food altogether, and the only reason one is eating it is that one is hungry, since it satisfies one's palate one is required to recite a beracha. (M.B. 43)
- Since one is being forced to eat the food he is not required to recite a beracha, as opposed to one who is forced to eat prohibited food because he is ill who is required to recite a beracha since he is not being forced to eat the food. Some authorities disagree and maintain that one is required to recite a beracha when he is forced to eat since he benefits from the food. (M.B. 45)

Siman 204 Seif 9:

If one ate a prohibited food or beverage because of danger he must recite a beracha before and after eating.

- For example, someone who is ill and must eat prohibited food for its medicinal qualities, and certainly this is true if one eats permitted food at a time when eating is prohibited, e.g. Yom Kippur. (M.B. 46)
- Since his life is in danger, he is eating a permitted food and it is a mitzvah to save his life and is not considered a prohibited item. (M.B. 47)

Siman 204 Seif 10:

Bee honey is the same as other honey and one recites שהכל.

- It is categorized as a food that is not grown from the ground. (M.B. 49)

Halacha Highlight

Reciting a beracha on medicine

Shulchan Aruch Siman 204 Seif 8

כל האכלין והמשקין שאדם אוכל ושותה לרפואה

Any food or drink that one eats or drinks as medicine

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ח') writes that one is obligated to recite a beracha when one consumes any food or beverage that one consumes for its medicinal effects which taste good and give pleasure to one's palate. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק מ"ג) explains that although one is not interested in consuming this food or beverage other than for its medicinal effects, since one derives pleasure from it, a beracha is required.

One of the related issues that Poskim discuss is whether one is required to recite a beracha on medicine that is bitter but a sweetener was added to give it a good taste. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (שש"כ פ"מ הע' קצ"א וח"ג בתקונים ומילואים שם) suggests that although the sweetener is subordinate to the medicine, when one does not recite a beracha on the primary ingredient it is possible that he should recite a beracha on the subordinate ingredient. In his conclusion he writes that this position seems logical since it is prohibited to benefit from this world without first reciting a beracha. Sefer Nishmas Avrohom (ח"א סי' ר"ד) cites Rav Auerbach as ruling that when consuming medicine that has sweetener added, e.g. a medicine that one sucks or a syrup, one does not recite a beracha. Being that a healthy person would not consume that medicine, it does not require a beracha. It is only when a pill is coated with a sweetener that a beracha is required, since one enjoys the sweetener before he tastes that medicine. Elsewhere (פתחי הלכה פ"ד הע' 39א), he distinguishes between medicine that is bitter but sweetener is added in order to ease swallowing it, and children's medicine that tastes like candy. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (וזאת הברכה עמ' 114) and Rav Chaim Kanievski (שאלת רב עמ' ר"פ) rule that anytime one derives benefit from the taste of the medicine one is required to recite a beracha.