The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן רי"ב סעיף א'

Overview

Siman 212 Seif 1 (a):

Anytime a food contains a primary ingredient and a subordinate ingredient (meaning unimportant) **one recites the beracha on the primary food and this exempts the subordinate food for its beracha rishona as well as its beracha acharona. This is true not only when the primary food is mixed with the subordinate food but even when each food is by itself. Even bread which is the most important food, if it is subordinate to another food, e.g. one is eating salty fish and eats some bread so that it won't hurt his throat he recites the beracha on the fish and exempts the bread since it is subordinate.**

- For example, if there is a mixture of two foods where one is the primary food and the second food comes to improve or enhance the other food. Also if both are primary foods but there is more of one than the other the majority is the primary food. This principle is limited to where both foods are important but if one food is not important, even if it is the majority it is subordinate to the other food. (M.B. 1)
- Regarding the five grains we were taught (siman 204:12) that as long as they give taste to the mixture they are considered the primary ingredient even if they constitute the minority ingredient in the mixture and one recites מזונות and exempts the other foods in the mixture since the five grains are always considered the primary ingredient. (M.B. 1)
- It doesn't matter whether one eats the primary and subordinate ingredients together or separately. (M.B. 2)
- For example, one ate a sweet food and then the salty fish to counter the sweetness. Afterwards he ate some bread so that the salt should not be harmful but he is not hungry for bread at all and for that reason the bread is subordinate. If he is interested in eating the bread as well it is not subordinate even if one has a greater interest in eating the fish and one would recite המוציא on the fish. (M.B. 3)
- It is not necessary for the subordinate food to be present when one recites the beracha on the primary food as long as one had the subordinate food in mind or if it is common to eat the subordinate food after eating the primary food. If it is not common to eat the subordinate food and one did not have it in mind when he recited the beracha on the primary food one recites שהכל on the subordinate food. (M.B. 4)

Halacha Highlight

Primary and subordinate foods

Shulchan Aruch Siman 212 Seif 1 (a)

כל שהוא עיקר ועמו טפלה

Any food that has a primary ingredient as well as a subordinate ingredient

Shulchan Aruch introduces the topic of עיקר וטפל— a food mixture that contains a primary ingredient and a subordinate ingredient. He rules that when eating a primary food together with a subordinate food one recites the beracha on the primary food and that beracha exempts one from the obligation to recite a beracha on the subordinate food. Mishnah Berurah notes two ways to differentiate between the primary food and the subordinate food. One way is if one of the ingredients is added to improve or enhance the taste of the other food that ingredient is subordinate to the other food. A second indicator of what is primary and what is subordinate is that the ingredient that constitutes the majority is assigned the status as the primary food. Even if each ingredient is recognizable by itself the one that constitutes the majority is the primary ingredient.

Sometimes a salad will contain both vegetables (בורא פרי האדמה) as well as some fruit (בורא פרי העץ). Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and Rav Yosef Sholom Elyashiv (וזאת הברכה עמ' 94) rule that the beracha should be recited on the ingredient that is the majority. Similarly, Rav Auerbach rules that when eating rice mixed with meat one recites the beracha on the food that constitutes the majority and we do not automatically assign the meat the status as being the primary ingredient. Rav Auerbach then adds that when reciting the beracha on a mixture one should make sure that his fork or spoon should contain a majority of the food upon which he will recite the beracha. In other words, if the salad contains more lettuce than mandarin oranges one should make sure that when he recites the beracha he has more lettuce on his fork than pieces of mandarin orange. Teshuvas Or L'Zion (ח"ב פי"ד תשובה כ"ט) maintains that if the fruit is cut large enough that one eats a piece of fruit by itself without any of the vegetables he recites a separate beracha on the fruit.