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

Overview

Siman 225 Seif 1:

One who sees a friend he hasn't seen in thirty days recites שהחינו and if it is after 12 months he recites מחיה מתים. This applies when the friend is dear and one is happy to see him.

- There is no difference between a man and a woman. (M.B. 1)
- If one received letters or heard from others about his well-being there is a dispute whether the beracha is recited and due to that uncertainty the beracha is not recited. (M.B. 2)
- All these berachos are recited with Hashem's Name and mention of His Kingdom, even מחיה מתים. (M.B. 3)
- Being that Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur passed he was judged whether he should live or die, therefore we recite מחיה מתים that he was saved from potential death. (M.B. 4)

Siman 225 Seif 2:

One who had never seen a friend but was in touch with him by writing letters does not recite the beracha, even though he derives pleasure from seeing him. Some maintain that when one's son becomes bar-mitzvah he recites: ברוך אתה ה' וכו' שפטרני מענשו של זה. It is best to recite the beracha without mentioning Hashem's Name or His Kingdom.

- Being that one never saw him he is not so joyous that he should recite the beracha. Pri Megadim writes that one who was informed that his wife gave birth while he was out of the country recites שהחינו or מחיה מתים the first time he sees his child. (M.B. 5)
- Nowadays the custom is that the beracha is not recited until the child leads the tzibbur in davening or when he first reads from the Torah which demonstrates that he is a bar-mitzvah. It is a mitzvah to make a seudah on the day that one's son becomes bar-mitzvah similar to the day that he enters the chupah. The celebration is that he became obligated in mitzvos. If the boy delivers a drosha it is a seudas mitzvah even if it is not the day of his bar-mitzvah. (M.B. 6)
- Until now the father was punished for his son's transgressions. Although the mitzvah of chinuch no longer applies a father must rebuke his son if he sees him doing something wrong and if he doesn't he will be punished. (M.B. 7)
- The reason is that the beracha is not mentioned in the Gemara. Vilna Gaon contends that since it is recorded in the Midrash and codified by Maharil it should be said with Hashem's Name and mention of His Kingdom. (M.B. 8)

Halacha Highlight

The beracha when one's son becomes a bar-mitzvah

Rema Siman 225 Seif 2
מי שנעשה בנו בר מצוה
When one's son becomes a bar-mitzvah

Rema (סע' ב') writes that there are those who write that when a child reaches the age of bar-mitzvah his father should recite ברוך אתה ה' וכו' שפטרני מענשו של זה. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ז) explains that until the boy is bar-mitzvah his father was punished for the transgressions of his son since he did not properly teach him Torah and mitzvos. Now that the child is an adult he is responsible to strengthen himself in the mitzvos of Hashem and has no one else to blame for his misdeeds. There are those who indicate that the beracha should be recited in the presence of the bar-mitzvah boy and the reason is that it should serve as a reminder that he now bears responsibility for his actions. This explanation is supported by the wording of the beracha מענשו של זה and the word "זה" indicates that the father is referring to the child that is present. A second, opposite explanation of the beracha is that until the age of bar-mitzvah the child could be held accountable for the sins of his father but now that he is an adult he is no longer subject to punishment due to his father's misdeeds. According to this approach there are authorities who maintain that it is the child who recites the beracha rather than the father (חיי משה).

Although the wording of Rema indicates that the beracha is recited on the day the boy becomes a bar-mitzvah, nevertheless, Mishnah Berurah (סק"ו) relates that nowadays the custom is that the beracha is not recited until the child leads davening as the shaliach tzibbur or receives an aliyah. The reason is that these moments demonstrate that the child is now considered an adult. If, for whatever reason, the beracha was not recited when the child received his first aliyah or davened as the shaliach tzibbur the beracha may be recited even later since there is no fixed time for the recitation of the beracha (קצות השלחן סי' ס"ה ס"ק י"ד).