The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן רצ"ו סעיף ב'-ג'

Overview

Siman 296 Seif 2:

Havdala is not recited on bread but may be recited on beer if that is a chamar medina and the same is true concerning other beverages other than water. It is more preferred to recite havdala with a cup of wine that is pagum than on beer. The custom is to recite havdala after Pesach on beer rather than wine to demonstrate esteem for the mitzvah. **When Yom Tov falls on motza'ai Shabbos where one recites kiddush that could be recited on bread, there are authorities who maintain that one may also recite havdala with bread while others contend that it is preferred in that circumstance to recite kiddush and havdala on beer** (but the first position is the primary halachic opinion).

- Wine takes precedence ahead of all other beverages. (M.B. 8)
- One should not use liquor for havdala since one should drink the entire kos but if no other beverage is available it may be used but he should make sure to drink at least a m'lo lugmav which is the majority of a revi'is because otherwise the mitzvah is not fulfilled. (M.B. 9)
- This is true even if most people drink water since it is not an important beverage. In order to qualify as chamar medina it must be a beverage that most people drink. (M.B. 10)
- Pagum wine takes precedence over beer only when beer is not a chamar medina. (M.B. 11)
- One should make an effort to obtain wine even if one prefers bread but if wine is not available bread is preferred over beer. (M.B. 15)

Siman 296 Seif 3:

If one does not have wine, beer or other beverage there are authorities who maintain that it is permitted to eat whereas others contend that if one anticipates that he will obtain a beverage the next day he should not eat until he recites havdala the next day. If one has only one cup of wine and does not anticipate that he will have another cup on Sunday, he should eat before havdala and then recite birkas hamazon and havdala on that cup of wine rather than recite birkas hamazon without a cup of wine, according to those who maintain that it is necessary to have a cup of wine for birkas hamazon. According to those who maintain that it is not necessary to have a cup of wine for birkas hamazon one should not eat until after havdala. This refers to where the cup contains precisely a revi'is and was already diluted so that if one added any more water it would not be fit for consumption because if that was not the case one should first recite havdala and drink a little and then add more to complete a revi'is and recite on it birkas hamazon.

- One must first daven and recite havdala in the beracha of חונן הדעת. When one obtains a cup of wine he must recite havdala. (M.B. 17)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to where one will obtain wine Sunday morning but if it will not be obtained until after chatzos it is possible that one is not required to wait further. (M.B. 19)
- Even if Yom Tov falls on motza'ai Shabbos one should not eat without a cup of wine. In the event that one has bread, Rema ruled that in such a circumstance one may recite kiddush and havdala on bread. (M.B. 20)
- One should be stringent in accordance with this view unless a person is ill for whom fasting would be difficult. (M.B. 21)
- If one anticipates obtaining another kos the next day, he should recite havdala on motza'ai Shabbos and wait to eat until the next day when he has another cup of wine for birkas hamazon for those who maintain that a cup of wine for birkas hamazon is essential. Magen Avrohom writes that one need not wait to eat just so that he could have a cup of wine for birkas hamazon. (M.B. 22)

Halacha Highlight

Using beer for havdala when wine is available

Shulchan Aruch Siman 296 Seif 2
אבל על השכר מבדילין
But we do recite havdala on beer

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ב') writes that one may not recite havdala on bread but one may recite havdala on beer if it is a chamar medina (popularly accepted drink). One may also use other beverages that are chamar medina except for water. Mishnah Berurah (סק"י) explains that even if most people drink water it does not qualify as a chamar medina since it is not an important drink. The allowance to recite havdala with beer applies only if one does not have wine but in the event that one has wine he should recite havdala with wine since wine is preferred over all other beverages. The definition of having wine is that one has wine in his home; one who has wine that is located elsewhere is also considered to be one who does not have wine (ע' סי' קפ"ב סק"ז).

Poskim discuss the status of wine nowadays. Wine is readily available and people do not drink other beverages as a replacement for wine. Chazon Ish (קובץ תשובות ח"א סי' נ"ז) maintains that in such a circumstance beverages do not have the status of a chamar medina and one must use wine for havdala even though people do not drink wine regularly. This is also the view of Ketzos HaShulchan (סי' צ"ז בדה"ש סק"ח). In contrast, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (קובץ תשובות שם) contends that even when wine is readily available other beverages are considered chamar medina. The reason is that people do not drink wine even at a simcha other than for kiddush and havdala. Accordingly, wine is not considered a chamar medina but other beverages that are consumed regularly are considered chamar medina. He also notes that this is the custom and it is rooted in Biur Halacha's (סי' רע"ב סע' ט' ד"ה שמקדשין) understanding of Rambam that concerning havdala if most people drink beer it is considered a chamar medina even though wine is readily available. This is also the opinion of Teshuvas Shevet HaLevi (ח"ג סי' כ"ו).