The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Wed, Aug 9 2023 ■ כ"ב אב תשפ"ג
סימן רצ"ז סעיף א'-ג'

Overview

Siman 297 Seif 1:

One recites a beracha on fragrances, if one has them and if he doesn't it is unnecessary to search for some.

- The beracha is בורא מיני בשמים regardless of the origin of the fragrance. However, it is preferable to take something whose beracha is בורא מיני בשמים. (M.B. 1)
- The reason it is unnecessary to search for besamim is that their function is to restore one's soul that is pained by the end of Shabbos. (M.B. 2)

Siman 297 Seif 2:

One does not recite the beracha on besamim from a bathroom, ones used for a corpse, specifically those above the deceased's casket, or besamim taken from an idolater's feast since their feasts are generally for the sake of their idol. If one did recite the beracha on besamim for one of these categories, the mitzvah was not fulfilled and one must recite the beracha on other besamim.

- They were not intended to generate a smell, their function is to counter a foul odor. (M.B. 3)
- The ones that are used ahead of the corpse (לפני מטתו) may be used. (M.B. 4)
- If they were not used in a meal they may be used but it is best to be stringent in accordance with Rabbeinu Yonah who maintains that they should not be used unless it is evident that there was never intent to use them for idolatry, for example, a merchant who sells to many people or one who uses spices for his food. (M.B. 5)

Siman 297 Seif 3:

Concerning sacks filled with besamim that idolaters place into their containers of wine, although it is permitted to smell such besamim they may not be used for havdala.

- The wine does not impart taste to the besamim and people's intent is to smell the besamim rather than the wine. (M.B. 6)
- Taz writes that one may not recite the beracha on a utensil that previously contained besamim unless one sees dust from the besamim on the bottom of the utensil. (M.B. 7)

Halacha Highlight

Besamim

Shulchan Aruch Siman 297 Seif 1

מברך על הבשמים

One recites the beracha on besamim

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') writes that we recite a beracha on besamim if one has some available but if one does not have any available it is unnecessary to search for some. Mishnah Berurah (סק"א) rules that the beracha on besamim is בורא מיני בשמים regardless of the variety that one uses. Even though during the week one should recite the more specific beracha, e.g. if the source is from wood one should say בורא עצי בשמים and if the source is an herb one should recite בורא עשבי בשמים, nevertheless for havdala we always recite the generic בורא מיני בשמים. The reason is so that people do not become confused regarding the correct beracha to recite since many people are not well-versed in this area of halacha. Although the beracha of בורא מיני בשמים is generic and covers any item that is aromatic, nevertheless, one should make an effort to obtain something whose beracha is בורא מיני בשמים such as musk or clove.

Shulchan Aruch HaRav (סע' ג') writes that it is acceptable for havdala to take myrtle (See seif 4) together with clove and recite בורא מיני בשמים. Even though there are authorities who maintain that when one has different categories of besamim one should recite the appropriate beracha on each category, for havdala it is acceptable to recite just בורא מיני בשמים. In the event that one recited havdala without besamim since at the time they were not accessible and later obtained besamim that is derived from a tree or herb, which beracha should be recited? Is this considered part of the custom to recite בורא מיני בשמים during havdala regardless of the origin of the besamim or should one recite the more specific beracha for that besamim? Shemiras Shabbos K'Hilchasa (פס"א הע' כ"ז) wrote that it is logical that one should recite the more specific and accurate beracha since even for havdala there are many authorities who maintain that one should recite the more specific beracha (פסקי תשובות אות ג' והע' 31 ו32).