The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Thursday, Sept 15 2022 ■ י"ט אלול, תשפ"ב
סימן תר"מ סעיף א'-ג'

Halacha Highlight

A woman eating in the sukkah

Shulchan Aruch Siman 640 Seif 1
נשים... פטורים מן הסכה
Women are exempt from sitting in the sukkah

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') writes that women are exempt from the mitzvah of sukkah. Mishnah Berurah (סק"א) explains that this is due to the fact that it is a positive, time-bound mitzvah. As far as a woman who wishes to voluntarily fulfill the mitzvah, not only is it permitted, but according to Ashkenazi custom a woman may even recite the beracha on the mitzvah. However, someone else should not recite the beracha for a woman even if she does not know how to recite the beracha for herself unless he is also reciting the beracha for himself. The reason is that there is no mention in Shas that there is a mitzvah for women to fulfill a positive command that is time bound. Accordingly, it would be preferred for women to not recite a beracha when performing the mitzvah. However, since the custom is for women to recite the beracha we do not protest against the custom, but we do not take it so far that a man may recite the beracha on behalf of a woman (בבה"ל סי' ק"צ סע' ד' ד"ה יטעם בשם דרכי משה).

When a woman intends to recite the beracha on the sukkah, it is permitted for her to recite the beracha on the sukkah in between the beracha of hamotzi or mezonos and eating her food. Although she is not obligated to recite the beracha, it is not considered an interruption between her beracha on food and eating. The reason is that since halacha allows her to recite the beracha she may do so in the same manner as it would be recited by a man (שמירת שבת כהלכתה פמ"ח הע' מ"ו). If a woman is not sitting in the sukkah and she listens to a man recite kiddush she may answer אמן to his beracha on the sukkah and it is not an interruption in her kiddush. Rav Moshe Feinstein (אג"מ או"ח ח"ד סי' כ"א אות ט') explains that the beracha could be effective for her if she decides to eat in the sukkah. Additionally, since the beracha is part of kiddush it is not an interruption for the one reciting kiddush and by extension is not an interruption for those listening to kiddush.

Overview

Siman 640 Seif 1:

Women, slaves and minors are exempt from sitting in the sukkah but a טומטום and אנדרוגינוס are obligated. Similarly, one who is half-slave, half-free is obligated to sit in the sukkah.

- The custom is that a woman who wants to recite the beracha on the sukkah may do so. (M.B. 1)
- If a טומטום or אנדרוגינוס want to voluntarily recite the beracha on the sukkah they may do so. (M.B. 3)

Siman 640 Seif 2:

A child who does not need his mother, approximately when he is five or six, is Rabbinically obligated to sit in the sukkah in order to train him in mitzvos.

- According to some authorities, if a five year-old's father is in town the child must sit in the sukkah even if the child is not so intelligent. (M.B. 4)
- According to all opinions it is prohibited to feed a child outside of the sukkah, meaning to put food in his mouth or to instruct him to eat. (M.B. 5)

Siman 640 Seif 3:

Someone who is ill and his attendants are exempt from sitting in the sukkah. This applies not only to someone who is dangerously ill but even if someone has a headache or his eyes ache. Some maintain that attendants are not exempt other than when the patient needs their assistance. (Someone who blood lets is obligated to sit in the sukkah.)

- Even during the rest of the year the person would go to a place that eases his suffering. (M.B. 6)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to where sitting in the sukkah is painful to him. (M.B. 9)
- If the patient is dangerously ill the attendants are exempt even at the time that they are not immediately needed. (M.B. 11)