



Parshas Emor 5769

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Volume VIII Issue 20

## Hilchos B'rachos part XXXI

### Hilchos Zimun, Part III

#### The laws and customs of bentsching with wine – Siman 182-183

##### *When should one bentsch with wine or grape juice?*

We find various opinions amongst the *Rishonim* as to whether one should bentsch with a כוס.

**Tosefos** learns that whenever one bentesches, one must bentsch with a כוס and recite בורא פרי הגפן at the end of bentsching. According to this opinion, if two people dined together, each must have his own כוס, just as each person bentesches on his own. If three people dined together, one person can recite *Birkas Hamazon* and be מוציא the other two diners and one כוס will suffice.<sup>1</sup>

**Midrash Ruth** cites that one is required to bentsch with a כוס when three dine together. A single diner is not required to bentsch with a כוס.

The **Rif** and **Rambam** learn that even three are not obligated to bentsch with a כוס.

The *Vilna Gaon* writes<sup>2</sup> that all opinions agree that if one has wine (or grape juice) in

one's home than one should bentsch with a כוס.

##### *How does the Shulchan Aruch pasken?*

The *Shulchan Aruch* cites these three opinions and does not direct us to a *p'sak*. The *Bach* and *Maharshal* rule that one is obligated to bentsch with a כוס but the custom is to follow the third opinion and not bentsch with a כוס.

The *Rama* writes<sup>3</sup> that nevertheless (even though one is not obligated to bentsch with a כוס), it is a מצוה מן המובחר<sup>4</sup> to do so. Consequently the *Mishna Berura* writes that when one has wine or grape juice, it is a מצוה מן המובחר to do so when three people or more dine together.<sup>5</sup>

Rav Benzion Abba Shaul זצ"ל<sup>6</sup> also writes that one should try to bentsch with a כוס when three adults dine together. It seems that most people do not bentsch with a כוס during the week, only on Shabbos.<sup>7</sup>

##### *When should everyone refrain from speaking?*

The person reciting the *zimun* should not talk once handed the cup of wine to say *zimun*. The other diners must not speak once the *meẓamein* begins *zimun* until he drinks from the כוס, unlike those who talk once

<sup>1</sup> *Siman* 182 and *M"B* 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by *M"B siman* 182:4.

<sup>3</sup> *Siman* 182:1.

<sup>4</sup> Preferred and special merit.

<sup>5</sup> *M"B siman* 182:4.

<sup>6</sup> אל"צ פמ"ו כ'.

<sup>7</sup> HaGaon Rav Sternbuch *shlita*.

they have concluded their own *Birkas Hamazon*.

There are opinions that learn that the other diners follow the example of the *mezamein*, and from the point he may not speak, they may not either. The *Mishna Berura* writes that it is right to follow that opinion.<sup>8</sup>

#### Who drinks from the כוס?

Obviously the *mezamein* drinks, and he drinks first.<sup>9</sup> He then passes the wine to his wife to drink, because a wife is blessed from her husband's כוס של ברכה. It is a מצוה מצה for all diners to sip from the כוס.<sup>10</sup>

#### When is it a mitzvah for other diners to drink from a כוס?

The *Shulchan Aruch* writes<sup>11</sup> with regards to drinking wine Friday night that it is a מצוה מזה for all participants to sip from the כוס קידוש. We see that the *Mishna Berura* wrote that all diners should also sip from the כוס, which would seemingly apply to the כוס of *Sheva Berachos* as well, and yet many refrain from doing so. Is there a source for that?

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach זצ"ל points out<sup>12</sup> that the *Shulchan Aruch* rules<sup>13</sup> that after one drinks from a cup one should not hand it to someone else to drink from, lest that person would rather avoid drinking from someone else's cup. Because he is handed the cup he is embarrassed to decline even though we see that it is a mitzvah to drink after the *mekadeish* or *mezamein*. He says that perhaps this is the halachic source why people, other than family, do not usually drink from the כוס.

For *Kiddush Rabah* (the Shabbos day Kiddush), it is known that the Brisker Rav was meticulous that people sip from the כוס<sup>14</sup> and yet most people do not have that custom.<sup>15</sup>

#### How much of the כוס should the mezamein drink?

Halachically it is sufficient to drink the majority of a *Revi'is*<sup>16</sup> but then one encounters the problem of a *b'racha abcharona*, because there are opinions that hold that one recites *al hagefen* after drinking a *k'zayis*, so the *Shulchan Aruch* says<sup>17</sup> that one should imbibe the entire *revi'is* and subsequently recite *al hagefen*.

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#### Vort on the Parsha

The אור החיים הקדוש says that *Hashem* created the world to last for six days, where Shabbos grants the world another six days. This concurs with the *Zohar Hakadosh* that says that the six days of the week draw their *b'racha* from the Shabbos.

In that sense, one who keeps Shabbos is a partner with *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* in creation. We can deduce that the more kedusha and enthusiasm one infuses into one's Shabbos, the more *b'racha* one will have during the week.

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<sup>8</sup> *Siman* 183:22.

<sup>9</sup> *Siman* 183:4.

<sup>10</sup> *M"B siman* 183:19.

<sup>11</sup> *Siman* 271:14.

<sup>12</sup> See *SS"K* 48 footnote 69 and the תיקונים ומילואים.

<sup>13</sup> *Siman* 170:16.

<sup>14</sup> Because the day Kiddush is only בורא פרי הגפן and if one does not drink, one has not had Kiddush.

<sup>15</sup> See *SS"K* 50:9 and footnotes 17-18.

<sup>16</sup> More than 44cc.

<sup>17</sup> *Siman* 190:3.

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**Note:** The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive p'sak.