



Halacha For Today: Week In Review

PARASHAS B'HA'ALOSECHA (Shelach in Eretz Yisroel) 5782

When Reading in Shul, Please Refrain From Reading During Davening and Krias HaTorah

CURRENT TOPIC: HILCHOS SEUDAH - FOOD & MEALS

Halachos for Sunday, June 12, 2022

1) On Shabbos and Yom Tov, when we are required to recite the Bracha on two complete loaves, the Halacha of tearing a piece of the bread before the Bracha does not apply.

However, a small cut should be etched into the Challah, as an indicator where to start cutting upon the completion of the Bracha.

If one did in fact tear a small piece on Shabbos or Yom Tov, as is done in the weekdays, B'dieved it is still considered complete "Lechem Mishna" (See Mishna Berura 167:10 and 11 and 274:5)

2) The Halacha of cutting a small piece of the bread only applies to bread, Challah, bagels, rolls etc., and not to Matza or thin bread (pita) which takes no time after the Bracha to break/cut off a piece. (Shulchan Aruch HaRav Siman 167:3, Biur Halacha 167:1 Dibur HaMaschil V'Tzrich. The Kaf HaChaim 167:18 goes so far as to suggest that it is better to take a Matza or thin bread that doesn't require this cutting, as then you will have a real complete bread (Shalem). However, the Chayei Moshe quotes the Toras Chaim to Sanhedrin 102a who maintains that even thin bread requires a "cut", and this cut is more important than having a real Shalem.)

Halachos for Monday, June 13, 2022

1) On Shabbos (or anytime) when giving out the Challah to those seated around the table, the bread should not be placed directly into their hands. Rather it should be placed in front of them, as placing it directly in their hands is a "Siman Ra- bad omen" of mourning. One should

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be careful with this even when giving bread to his/her small children.(Mishna Berura 167:90 and Ben Ish Chai Parshas Emor Siman 18)

When giving bread to a mourner, it is indeed placed into his/her hands. However, on Shabbos it should be placed in front of him/her , as public signs of mourning are not displayed on Shabbos in front of other people. (Mishna Berura 167:89)

2) Bread should never be thrown across the table in a disrespectful way, especially the Challah at the Shabbos Seudah with which a Mitzvah was performed. (Mishna Berura 167:88. However, some people actually have the minhag to "throw" the Challah to each person at the table. This was the Minhag of the Chasam Sofer and the Divrei Chaim of Sanz. See Shu"t Hisorerus Teshuva Vol. 1 Siman 178. Even those whose custom it is to throw it, should do so in a respectful manner)

Halachos for Tuesday, June 14, 2022

1) When breaking/cutting the piece of bread on which Hamotzi was recited, it is best not to cut a piece that is smaller than a Kzayis, as doing so seems like a "Tzar Ayin - a less than generous person".

It is also best not to cut a piece that is larger than a usual piece, as doing so seems like a "Ra'avson - a gluttonous person" (See Mishna Berura 167:8 and 9. See also Shu"t Igros Moshe Orach Chaim Vol. 5 Siman 16 for a more in depth discussion about this)

However, if the big piece that is cut will not be eaten from, rather smaller pieces will be broken off from it throughout the meal, it is permitted. (Mishna Berura 167:9)

2) On Shabbos it is a Mitzvah to cut a large enough piece that will last for the entire meal, as doing so shows our love for the Mitzvah of Seudas Shabbos, and we don't say that it looks gluttonous. (Mishna Berura 167:12)

Some Poskim maintain that the above is true by any Seudas Mitzvah, not just Shabbos. (See Ketzos HaShulchan Siman 37:13)

Halachos for Wednesday, June15, 2022

1) It is a Mitzvah for there to be salt on the table before beginning to eat a meal.

The reason for this is that the table is likened to the Mizbeach (altar) in the Bais HaMikdash, and the food we eat is likened to the Korbanos (ritual sacrifices) that were offered on the Mizbeach. All Korbanos required salt, hence the table requires salt. Having salt on the table also protects from misfortune. (See Ram'a 167:5 and Mishna Berura there)

Furthermore, it's a Mitzvah to dip the bread of Hamotzi into salt before eating. (Not as some people mistakenly do and "Sprinkle" the salt on the bread).

Some have the custom to dip it three times. (See Mishna Berura 167:33 and Be'er Heitev Siman 167: 8. The seforim bring that the Gematria (numerical value) of the Hebrew words Melach, as well as Lechem equals 78, and when we divide this in 3 (i.e. 3 dippings of the Lechem, bread into Melach, salt) we get 3 iterations of 26, which is the Gematria of Hashem's holy name. This is an allusion to the Pasuk (Devarim 8:3) that man does not live on bread alone, rather on the word/will of Hashem. See also Kaf Hachaim Siman 167:37)

2) If no salt is available, according to some Poskim, it should be dipped into sugar (as the Korbanos were allowed to be salted with sugar. See Shu"t Halachos Ketanos Siman 218, Shu"t Divrei Chaim Yoreh Deah Siman 25. The Chasam Sofer also had this custom when no salt was available. However, the Kaf HaChaim 167:37 maintains that sugar is not an acceptable substitute)

If sugar is also unavailable, it is best to dip the bread into a salty food item (fish, spread or a dip that has brine) that is on the table, as to give the bread the taste of the salt. (See Shu"t Teshuvos V'Hanhagos Vol. 4 Siman 50. See also Shulchan Aruch HaRav 167:8)

Halachos for Thursday, June 16, 2022

1) When one person is reciting the Hamotzi and thereby exempting other participants of the meal (as is common in many households on Shabbos and Yom Tov) **it is best for the one that recites the Bracha to eat a piece of the Challah/bread before distributing pieces to the rest of the people at the table, as to avoid an interruption between his Bracha and his eating.** (Pask of the Mishna Berura Siman 167:79, although the Rama and others rule like Tosefos and the Mordechai that he may slice all the pieces, give them out and then eat, as they hold doing so is not a Hefsek)

However, there is no need for him to swallow his piece before distributing the rest, as he may L'Chatchilah give out the Challah while still chewing. (See Sefer Toras Shabbos Siman 274:4)

2) When distributing the Challah, a man should give his wife first and then the rest of the participants according to chashivus (importance, e.g. Talmid Chacham, Kohen, by age etc.), or age. (As heard from a recognized, prominent Posek)

Halachos for Erev Shabbos Kodesh, June 17, 2022

Double Portion L'Kavod Shabbos Kodesh

Halachos for Erev Shabbos Kodesh

1) It is a Mitzvah to say words of Torah during every meal, as a meal that lacks Torah is considered as if it was a meal (i. e. a sacrifice) offered to Avoda Zarah (idol worship).

Even people who cannot have lengthy Torah discussions at their meals, should at least say a short Halacha or even a Mizmor of Tehillim (Preferably, psalm 23) to satisfy this obligation, and avoid the punishments detailed in the Seforim for partaking of a meal that is devoid of any Torah. (See Mishna Berura Siman 170:1. See also Aruch HaShulchan Siman 170:1)

Birchas HaMazon does not suffice to satisfy the requirement for Torah.(ibid.)

2) One should not talk while eating, even a simple "Gezuntheit" to a sneeze or even words of Torah, as it is a choking hazard to talk while eating.

Obviously, this is only while chewing, and doesn't apply between bites. (Mishna Berura ibid. See also Aruch HaShulchan 170:2 who has a more lenient approach, as does the Ben Ish Chai Parshas Behar Siman 5. However most contemporary Poskim are stringent with this Halacha, and it is indeed advisable to be cautious and not talk with food in the mouth.)

Halachos for Shabbos Kodesh

1)When sitting around the table at a meal, it is prohibited to begin eating before the head of the household or an important person (i.e. Talmid Chacham, Osek BTzorhei Tzibbur etc.) at the table eats first.

This applies even if all the people around the table have their own plates of food; still they should not begin eating before the important person. (Mishna Berura 170:28)

This applies only to the main dishes, and not to salads and drinks, though waiting for these items as well, is considered an act of Derech Eretz.

2) One who does not wait, and eats first, is considered a "Gargaran" (Shulchan Aruch Siman 170:12 based on the Mishna in Maseches Derech Eretz Rabbah Perek 7:1. As to the exact literal translation of this word, which is commonly translated as a "glutton", from the commentaries on the Mishna it seems to mean something to the effect of a disrespectful, immodest, haughty person; definitely not something to want to be.)

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