

הלכות ברכת המזון (סימן רא: מי הוא המברך)

רא:א-ד

Outline

1. Today's Topics
 - a. Forgoing the ברכת האורה
 - b. Prioritizing a כהן for bentsching and other מצוות
 - c. Refusing the opportunity to lead bentsching
2. (רא:א) ויתור בעה"ב
 - a. If the head of the household wishes to forgo his ברכה and to lead the bentsching himself, he may (שו"ע), and he may also give the right to lead to anyone he wishes (רמ"א)
 - i. Q: Why?
 1. Because חז"ל established the ברכה for the head of the household's good (משנ"ב ו)
 - ii. Q: In what case is it advisable for the head of the household to forgo the ברכה?
 1. If the guest is not upright in his eyes (משנ"ב שם)
 - iii. Q: Who does the רמ"א come to include?
 1. One who pays the head of the household for his food, such that he is not obligated to bless him (משנ"ב ז)
 - iv. Q: What is the source for ברכת האורה? (הע" 8)
 1. It is alluded to by "וברכת את ה'", the "את" of which comes to include the בעה"ב (באר היטב, א"ר)
 - v. Q: What if there are two heads of household, such as at a wedding? (שם)
 1. One should say "בעלי בית" (כף החיים)
3. (רא:ב) קדימה לברך
 - a. A wise ישראל should not prioritize a non-wise כהן to bentsch before him as a principle of the כהונה, but if the head of the household chooses the non-wise כהן, there is no issue. However, a wise כהן should be prioritized, as the פסוק instructs us to sanctify the כהן to open first and bentsch first (שו"ע)
 - i. Q: Why not?
 1. The גמ' says that one who does so is considered amongst those who cause people to hate ה' because they will cause the public to dislike the תורה and to say that it is not so important when they see that a ת"ח is inferior to one who is ignorant; even though the ignorant is a כהן, the quality of wisdom take priority to the quality of כהונה (משנ"ב ח) כהונה
 - ii. Q: What is the meaning of "as a principle?"
 1. The משנ"ב ט) כהונה should not be prioritized as a law of the כהונה
 - iii. Q: Why may the head of the household give the כהן the right to bentsch?
 1. This is not considered decreasing the value of the ת"ח because the ת"ח cannot bentsch without the consent of the head of the household, and even if the כהן were not a כהן, the head of the household could choose him to bentsch (משנ"ב י)
 - iv. Q: In what other cases does a כהן take precedence?
 1. If both people are not תלמידי חכמים (משנ"ב יא)
 - v. Q: What if the ישראל is a greater ת"ח than the כהן?
 1. The ישראל is not obligated to prioritize the כהן, but it is still good to do so since the כהן is also a ת"ח, and one who does so prolongs his life (משנ"ב יב)
 - vi. Q: What is included in the מצוה of "ויקדשתו"?
 1. Receiving the first עלייה, making the ברכה at a meal, whether המוציא or ברכת המזון or saying קידוש on behalf of others, being the first to speak at a gathering or in yeshiva (משנ"ב יג)
 2. A כהן receives the first portion at a meal or of צדקה but not of a division of partnership since it is said that anyone who chases after a good portion does not see forever (משנ"ב שם) סימן ברכה
 - vii. Q: May a כהן forgo his priority?
 1. Yes, except for the first עלייה (משנ"ב שם)

- viii. Q: What is the stature of the מצוה of "וקדשתו"?
1. It is a מצוה דאורייתא, and it is unclear why we are not careful about it nowadays (מג"א מובא שם); perhaps, it is because we are not absolutely sure who is a כהן (מג"א הע' 11)
- ix. Q: Does a לוי take precedence to a ישראל?
1. Yes, for המוציא and ברכת המזון and צדקה, if they are of equal wisdom (משנ"ב שם)
4. קיצור ימים (ג: רא)
- a. If one is given the opportunity to lead the bentsching and he refuses, his days are cut short (שו"ע)
 - i. Q: Why?
 1. One who refuses to bless another Jew who is of the progeny of אברהם אבינו, about whom it is said, "ואברהם מברכיך", receives the opposite of ברכה and thereby causes himself to be cursed (משנ"ב יד)
 - ii. Q: In what case does this apply?
 1. When the bentsching is done on a cup of wine because in that case there is an obligation to bless the head of the household; however, even if there is no cup, it is not proper to refuse the opportunity for a מצוה (משנ"ב שם)
 - a. Q: Do all agree that the הלכה is limited to bentsching on a כוס (הע' 13)
 - i. No (שעה"צ טו, קצה"ש)
 - iii. Q: Does this הלכה apply nowadays? (הע' 14)
 1. Perhaps not because everyone says "הרחמן הוא יברך את בעה"ב" (שעה"צ יד)
 - a. Q: If so, who should lead the bentsching? (הע' 15)
 - i. The head of the household should take advantage of the מצוה (כף החיים)

5. לחזור אחר כוס של ברכה (ד: רא)

 - a. One must search after the opportunity to lead the bentsching on a כוס של ברכה (שו"ע)
 - i. Q: Why?
 1. Because the reward is given first to the one who says the words on behalf of the others who are listening (משנ"ב טו)