KIDDUSH IN SHUL: PROPER CONDUCT

by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

KIDDUSH

Kiddush is recited over a cup(1) of wine or grape juice which holds a revi'is (3.3. fl. oz.). At least a cheekful (approx. 1.7. fl. oz.) must be drunk.(2)

There is no requirement for anybody but the person who makes Kiddush to taste the wine. As long as the listener intended to fulfill the mitzvah of Kiddush and heard every word of the blessing, he fulfills the mitzvah. It is, however, desirable (a mitzvah min ha-muvchar) to partake of the Kiddush cup.(3) For this reason, many people make certain to drink some wine when attending a kiddush in shul. Doing so, however, can lead to a problematic situation regarding the correct blessing for any other beverage which will be drunk at the kiddush. Let us explain:

The blessing of Borei pri ha-gefen automatically includes any beverage which is on the table or which will be brought to the table during the kiddush. No shehakol is recited on soda or juice, etc. that will be drunk during the kiddush.(4)

Even those who did not actually recite Borei pri ha-gefen but heard Kiddush from another person do not recite a shehakol on other beverages. This rule applies only if one drank a melo lugmav (a cheekful) of wine or grape juice.

If one drank some wine or grape juice ? but less then a melo lugmav ? and wishes to drink another beverage, it is questionable(5) if he needs to recite a shehakol on the other beverages. It follows, therefore, that those who listen to someone else's Kiddush and partake of the wine and then want to drink another beverage, must do one of the following(6): Drink at least a cheekful; Recite a shehakol on a food item; Listen to a shehakol recited by another person.

KIDDUSH ON SCHNAPPS

It is a common practice to recite Kiddush Shabbos morning over a 1 oz. cup of schnapps [or liqueur.(7)] Although many poskim(8) object, as Kiddush must be recited over a cup which holds at least a revi'is and at least a cheekful must be drunk, still there are poskim(9) who defend this minhag Yisrael.(10) They reason that schnapps is different from wine since it is normally consumed in much smaller quantities and is therefore subject to a different set of measurements.(11)

Those who rely on this leniency and recite Kiddush over schnapps, must also recite a Borei nefashos over the schnapps, even though only a small amount was drunk. Although one does not recite a Borei nefashos unless he drinks 3.3. fl oz. of a beverage,(12) schnapps - according to this view - is an exception and requires a Borei nefashos even on a much smaller amount.(13)

When no wine or grape juice is available, there is a way of reciting Kiddush over schnapps which will satisfy the opinions of most poskim: Recite Kiddush on a revi'is of schnapps and drink a cheekful or a revi'is, but instead of swallowing it in one shot, sip it slowly, for a period of up to 3-4 minutes.(14) When even this is not possible, a next best option is to share the cheekful with others who are listening to the Kiddush.(15)

KIDDUSH B'MAKOM SEUDAH

Kiddush must always be followed by a seudah (meal). Most poskim(16) maintain that mezonos eaten at a kiddush is considered a "seudah" for this purpose.(17) After making Kiddush, at least a k'zayis (approx. 1.1 fl. oz.) of mezonos must be eaten within a span of 3-4 minutes. One who failed to do so must repeat Kiddush at home before his meal. A mezonos kugel is considered full-fledged mezonos in regard to this halachah.(18)

On Pesach or other times when mezonos items are not available, the preferred method is to eat the seudah immediately after reciting Kiddush. If that is difficult, one should drink an additional revi'is (3.3 fl. oz.) of wine or grape juice. If one has no other wine or grape juice, he can rely on the revi'is of wine he consumed for Kiddush.(19)

There are poskim(20) who maintain that even l'chatchilah, one may eat fruit or shehakol items after Kiddush is recited if there are no mezonos items available. But then, Kiddush must be repeated at home before the meal. Other poskim(21) allow this practice only under special circumstances, such as the case of a person who is weak and needs to eat and has no mezonos available.

There is no need to repeat Kiddush at home if the requirements for Kiddush were met earlier in shul or at the simchah hall, unless there are other people at home who did not yet hear Kiddush. One who made Kiddush on schnapps should preferably repeat Kiddush at home over wine or grape juice.(22)

CHOLENT

The proper blessing over cholent depends on the ingredients:

A cholent which contains beans, potatoes and small pieces of meat or chicken requires only Borei pri ha-adamah. It is considered a "single entity mixture" since the entire mixture is eaten together in one spoonful. Because the ha-adamah ingredients constitute the rov (majority) of the cholent mixture, they determine the blessing for the cholent ha-adamah.(23) Even if the cholent has a soupy consistency, no shehakol blessing is required. The berachah acharonah is Borei nefashos.

When kishke is served along with the cholent, the kishke requires a blessing of Borei minei mezonos. Since the kishke is generally not eaten in the same spoonful as the cholent, its blessing does not exempt the rest of the cholent from the blessing of ha-adamah,(24) and so two blessings are required.

The other type of cholent is the kind which contains barley in addition to potatoes, beans and small pieces of meat or chicken. This kind of cholent requires only a mezonos blessing. Since it is a "single entity mixture" which contains a member of the five species of grain (barley), the barley assumes the halachic status of ikar (a preeminent ingredient), even if there is less barley than beans and potatoes.(25) The mezonos said over the barley exempts all the other ingredients in the cholent. In order for the barley to be considered the ikar, the following two conditions must be met: The barley must be added to the cholent to enhance its taste. If it is added to the cholent just as a binding or thickening agent,(26) or to give it color or aroma,(27) a mezonos is not said over the barley [or the cholent]; The taste of the barley must actually be noticeable in the mixture.(28) In most cases when barley is added to the cholent, the above two conditions are met. The proper blessing, then, is mezonos. No other blessing should be made over the other ingredients.(29) If, after reciting a mezonos on the barley, one recites another blessing, such as ha-adamah on the potatoes or shehakol on the meat, he may be reciting a blessing in vain (berachah l'vatalah).(30) If one recites ha-adamah or shehakol before the mezonos, he may be reciting an unnecessary blessing(31) (berachah she-einah tzerichah).

An exception to the above rules is when the cholent contains large pieces of meat and chicken which are not eaten together with the rest of the cholent.(32) In that case, a shehakol is said over the meat or chicken after the mezonos has been recited over the cholent.

The berachah acharonah on barley cholent depends on the amount of barley consumed. If one eats a k'zayis of barley (approx. 1.1 fl. oz.) in 3-4 minutes or less, Al ha-michyah is said. No Borei nefashos is required.(33) If less than that amount of barley is eaten, a Borei nefashos is said over the rest of the cholent.

The preferred method when eating a barley cholent at a kiddush is to recite a mezonos over the cake at the beginning of the kiddush while having in mind the cholent as well(34); this obviates the need for a blessing over the cholent. The Al ha-michyah recited over the cake will include the cholent also, thus making it unnecessary to estimate the amount of barley eaten and the time span within which it was consumed.

Note, however, that when barley cholent is served there is no need at all to eat cake, as one may fulfill his obligation of Kiddush b'makom seudah by eating a k'zayis of barley from the cholent.(35)

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FOOTNOTES:

1 Some poskim advise against using a disposable cup for Kiddush (Igros Moshe O.C. 3:39; Minchas Yitzchak 10:23) while others are not particular about that (Harav Y.S. Elyashiv, quoted in Shevus Yitzchak, Muktzeh, pg. 48; Tzitz Eliezer 12:23).

2Based on the shiur of Harav M. Feinstein. A cheekful is a little more than half a revi'is.

3 O.C. 274:14. There is a minority view (Brisker Rav quoted in Mo'adim u'Zemanim 3:243) that holds that on Shabbos morning one must partake of the kiddush cup in order to fulfill the mitzvah. The poskim, however do not agree with this stringency; see Yechaveh Da'as 5:20.

4 O.C. 174:2. Note, though, that Harav Y.S. Elyashiv is quoted (Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 267) as ruling that only a Borei pri ha-gefen over wine exempts all other beverages; when it is recited over grape juice it does not exempt other beverages.

5 Derech ha-Chayim rules that it is sufficient, but Beiur Halachah 174:2 questions that. See Yechaveh Da'as 5:20 and Minchas Yitzchak 8:19.

6 Beiur Halachah 174:2. [It is not sufficient to have specific intention that the blessing over the wine should not cover other beverages; Harav Y.S. Elyashiv, quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 100.]

7 Minchas Yitzchak 10:22.

8 Mishnah Berurah 272:30; Aruch ha-Shulchan 272:13; Minchas Shabbos 79:29; Ketzos ha-Shulchan 89:5.

9 Ktzei ha-Mateh (Mateh Efraim 625:99); Eishel Avraham 272:6; Maharsham 1:175; Chelkas Yaakov 1:94.

10 Because the practice was defended (in part) due to the scarcity and expense of wine, some poskim suggest that nowadays, Kiddush should be made over wine or grape juice only, see Nimukei Orchos Chayim 273.

11 This is based on the view of the Taz O.C. 210:1, which is rejected by the latter poskim; see Mishnah Berurah 190:14.

12 O.C. 190:3.

13 Har Tzvi O.C. 159. It follows therefore, that those who follow the majority view and do not recite kiddush on schnapps, do not recite a Borei nefashos when drinking an amount of schnapps less than a revi'is.

14 Mishnah Berurah 271:68. No talking should take place until the minimum amount is drunk.

15 Mishnah Berurah 272:30.

16 Mishnah Berurah 273:25.

17 A notable exception is the view of the G"ra, who maintains that kiddush can be made only when a seudah of bread follows. His view is quoted by the Beiur Halachah 273:5 without comment. Aruch ha-Shulchan 273:8 considers this to be the preferred method. The general custom, however, follows the view of most poskim.

18 Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 54:22; Az Nidberu 8:31. See Me'or ha-Shabbos, vol. 2, pg. 576.

19 Mishnah Berurah 273:25, 27.

20 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:63. See also Ein Yitzchak O.C. 12; B'tzeil ha-Chochmah 4:2; 5:115.

21 Mishnah Berurah 273:26.

22 To satisfy the view of the majority of the poskim.

23 O.C. 208:7. Mishnah Berurah 204:57; 207:7; 212:1.

24 Aruch ha-Shulchan 212:2.

25 Mishnah Berurah and Aruch ha-Shulchan 212:1. This is true even if the taste of the barley is not the preferred one.

26 O.C. 208:2.

27 O.C. 204:12.

28 Mishnah Berurah 208:49; Beiur Halachah 208:9; Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 212:6; oral ruling from Harav M. Feinstein (quoted in Guide to Practical Halachah, vol. 2, pg. 204).

29 Note that a dissenting opinion (Chayei Adam 51:13; 54:9 and Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 54:5) maintains that when each item is recognizable, a separate berachah is made over each. Mishnah Berurah and Aruch ha-Shulchan, however, do not agree, and Harav S.Z. Auerbach (Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 94) and Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (V'sein Berachah, pg. 63) rule that one need not concern himself with the dissenting view.

30 Mishnah Berurah 168:43.

31 This depends on a disagreement among the Poskim ??see Sha'arei Teshuvah 212:1; Shulchan Aruch Harav 249:4; Sha'ar ha-Tziyon 212:15.

32 Aruch ha-Shulchan 212:2; Harav Y.S. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezos ha-Berachah, pg. 109).

33 O.C. 212:1; Mishnah Berurah 208:48; Igros Moshe O.C. 1:68.

34 The blessing is valid even though the cholent has not yet been served.

35 See O.C. 639:2, Mishnah Berurah 15 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 35.

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