The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן ב' סעיף ו'-סימן ג' סעיף ב'

Overview

Siman 2 Seif 6:

It is forbidden to walk with an erect posture and one should not walk four *amos* with an uncovered head. One should determine whether he needs to use the bathroom. One should cover his body and not walk barefoot. One should accustom himself to use the bathroom in the morning and at night.

- It is virtuous to not go even less than four *amos* with an uncovered head and even to cover one's head when sleeping. (M.B. 11)
- Taz rules that nowadays it is prohibited to walk around or even sit with an uncovered head. (M.B. 11)
- Magen Avrohom writes that one should accustom children to also cover their head so they should develop fear of Hashem. (M.B. 11)
- It is prohibited to make a beracha with an uncovered head and using one's hand is not sufficient. In difficult circumstances one could use his sleeve. (M.B. 12)
- One should not rely on a wig as a head cover since people will not realize that his head is covered. Some authorities, however, are lenient about this matter. (M.B. 12)
- If one does not feel the urge to use the bathroom after checking he is considered to have a clean body and should not delay davening out of additional concern that his body is not clean. (M.B. 13)

Siman 3 Seif 1:

When one enters the bathroom he should declare, "With respect to the honored ones…" but nowadays we are not accustomed to say it.

Siman 3 Seif 2:

One should behave modestly in the bathroom and should not uncover himself until he is sitting. Two people should not go into the bathroom together, nor should one speak there and one should close the door behind him out of concern for modesty.

- One should also not stand while still exposed. (M.B. 2)
- It is permitted to go into the bathroom with one's child who is lacking *daas*. (M.B. 3)

Halacha Highlights

The requirement to wear a kipah

Shulchan Aruch Siman 2 Seif 6

ולא ילך ארבע אמות בגילוי הראש

One should not walk four *amos* with an uncovered head.

Shulchan Aruch ruled that one should not walk four *amos* with an uncovered head and Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק י"א) added that it is virtuous to make sure that one does not even walk less than four *amos* with an uncovered head. Rav Shlomo Kluger (שו"ת האלף לך שלמה סי' ג') maintains that uncovering one's head entirely is prohibited and making sure that one's head is not even partially uncovered is an act of piety. Accordingly, when the Gemara (Shabbos 118b) records the declaration, "I am deserving of reward because I did not walk four *amos* with an uncovered head," the intent was that he did not walk four amos with even part of his head uncovered. Rav Moshe Feinstein (שו"ת אג"מ ח"א סי' א'), however, adopts a more lenient approach. He maintains that the obligation to cover one's head is that the covering should be the size that people describe as covering one's head. Once one's head is covered to this degree one is even allowed to make berachos. He further asserts that Rav Shlomo Kluger meant that covering the majority of one's head is only an act of piety. Unfortunately, Rav Feinstein does not give the percentage of one's head that should be covered to meet this requirement.

Rav Ovadia Yosef (שו"ת יחוה דעת ח"ד סי' א') rules that although it is pious to wear a kipah that covers one's entire head or at least the majority of his head, according to the letter of the law it is acceptable to wear a smaller kipah as long as it could be easily seen from all sides of one's head. It is not acceptable to wear a kipah that is so small that it is difficult to detect that it is there. Furthermore, while one is davening or reciting Birkas Hamazon one should wear a kipah that covers at least the majority of one's head since one is obligated to dress more formally during these activities.

Stories to Share

"Cover Your Head So That You Will Have Yiras Shomayim"

***Mishnah Berurah* 2:11**

Rav Levi Chazan, z"l, worked as a chazzan and shochet in Kfaurvar but when the chazzan and shochet of Pupa wished to retire, Rav Levi applied for the job. Since Kfaurvar was not an officially Orthodox community, the roshei hakahal were wary of accepting him. But they agreed to hear his singing. While the community leaders enjoyed his voice, he knew that this was not enough; he was also required to pass a test in hilchos shechitah from their rabbi, Rav Moshe Yosef Hoffman, zt"l. He would get the job only if the rav agreed.

Since Rav Levi was coming from a congregation with leanings towards Neolog, the Hungarian equivalent of Reform, he was afraid that the rav would give him an especially rigorous test to ensure that he fail. To avoid embarrassment, he spent two months with his father—a prominent shochet—reviewing the halachos and learning them in great depth. Sure enough, when he came before the rav to be tested, the exam was much harder than any other that he had ever endured. But he was ready for anything and the rav could not ask him a single question he did not know.

Although he was proficient in the halachos, the rav was not satisfied. Perhaps he was secretly a freethinker without any yiras shomayim? Rav Hoffman sent the secretary of the chevrah kadisha to check on how he acted in private to see if he was really G-dfearing. When he returned he described what he had seen and the rav accepted him as chazzan and shochet without further questions.

The secretary said, "I saw that every child, even his baby, had a yarmulke on his head." Since Rav Levi didn't even know the purpose of the secretary's surprise visit, it was clear that this was how he lived. The rav reasoned that a man who works hard that his children develop yiras shomayim as early as possible must have yiras shomayim himself!