The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן ע"ז סעיף א'-ב'

Overview

Siman 77 Seif 1:

It is prohibited to read *shema* in the presence of *mei raglayim* unless one pours over it a *revi'is* of water and then it is permitted. It does not matter whether it is on the ground or in a utensil as long as it is not a utensil designated for human waste. It also does not matter whether the *mei raglayim* was in the utensil and someone poured on top water or whether the water was there first.

- Since the restriction against *davening* in the presence of *mei raglayim* on the ground is only Rabbinic, Chazal were lenient that a single *revi'is* of water is sufficient to nullify it. If, however, it smells then one must pour enough water to neutralize the smell. (M.B. 2)
- There is an opinion that maintains that one must pour the *revi'is* all at once. (M.B. 3)
- One must be careful that the water should cover every part of the *mei raglayim* that is moist enough that it can wet a surface to the degree that that surface can wet another surface. (M.B. 4)
- It is also acceptable to pour water on the ground and then have the *mei raglayim* land on that water. (M.B. 6)

Siman 77 Seif 2:

One *revi'is* is effective for one *mei raglayim*, for two *mei raglayim* two *revi'os* are needed and three are needed for three and so on and so on.

- All authorities agree that a single *revi'is* is sufficient for a large quantity of *mei raglayim* and most authorities maintain that if the *mei raglayim* is less than a *revi'is* an amount of water greater than the *mei raglayim* is sufficient even though it is less than a *revi'is*. (M.B. 7)
- Shulchan Aruch follows Rambam's opinion regarding the method of nullifying *mei raglayim*. Magen Giborim asserts that there is no dispute between Rambam and Rashba and Rambam requires additional water only if more *mei raglayim* was added after the first *revi'is* of water was poured in but if one begins with many *revi'os* of water it is sufficient to pour a single *revi'is* of water to nullify it. (M.B. 8)

Halacha Highlight

Nullifying *mei raglayim*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 77 Seif 1

אסור לקרות כנגד מי רגלים עד שיטיל לתוכן רביעית מים

It is prohibited to read in the presence of *mei raglayim* unless one pours in it a *revi'is* of water

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') writes that it is prohibited to read *shema* in the presence of *mei raglayim* unless one pours a *revi'is* of water on the *mei raglayim* to nullify it. The reason why it is allowed to nullify *mei raglayim* with a *revi'is* of water regardless of the quantity of *mei raglayim* is that *davening* in the presence of *mei raglayim* is only Rabbinically prohibited. According to the Torah, the only prohibition is to *daven* in the presence of a stream of *mei raglayim*. Once it lands on the ground it is Rabbinically prohibited to read *shema* or *daven* but at the same time they instituted that a *revi'is* of water could nullify the *mei raglayim*. Additionally, the Rabbinic restriction against *davening* in the presence of *mei raglayim* is limited to where the *mei raglayim* is still halachically moist. This is defined as moist to the degree that the *mei raglayim* could moisten a surface that would be moist enough to moisten another surface (טופח על מנת להטפיח).

Rav Chaim Kanievski (ע' תשובותיו בסוף ספר אשי ישראל סי' ע"א) writes that it is possible that one could use liquids other than water. Teshuvas VaYa'an Dovid (או"ח סי' י"ח) contends that nullification of *mei raglayim* must be done specifically with water and other liquids will not be effective. The reason is that the rationale behind this *halacha* is not related to nullifying the *mei raglayim* in a majority of water nor is it based on an attempt to nullify its appearance. The mechanics behind this *halacha* is that a *revi'is* of water is considered significant and important in that it is technically fit to immerse pins and needles. Since the *halacha* is based on the importance of a *revi'is* it follows that the *halacha* should be limited to water since we don't find other liquids having this characteristic. It is unclear whether water that has coloring or syrup mixed in may be used for nullifying *mei raglayim* (פסקי תשובות הע' 6).

Stories to Share

The Patient's Dilemma

מ"ב ס' ע"ז, ס"ק ב': "ומדרבנן אסור לקרות אפילו אחר שנפל על הארץ.."

A certain man was in the hospital with a catheter. He was about to daven ma'ariv when he realized that he may have a halachic problem. After all, how could he daven when urine was dripping into a bag? As we find on today's amud, it is forbidden to daven or learn Torah while urinating. Since the urine was always dripping, perhaps this forbids one from davening or learning?

Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zt"l, he ruled leniently. "A sick person who has a catheter from which urine drips into a bag may daven or learn. This is not considered the same as urinating during which one may not daven or learn."

אליבא דהלכתא, גליון 9

But the man then had another question. What about the presence of the bag itself? As we find on today's amud it is rabbinically forbidden to daven or learn Torah in the presence of urine. But then he thought of a simple solution. Presumably if he covered the device and bag, he would certainly be permitted to daven. But it was inconvenient to leave it covered, so he preferred to daven with it as is.

When this question was brought before Rav Eliyashv, zt"l, he ruled decisively. "It depends what the catheter is made of. If it entirely or partially rubber, these parts must be covered. But if it is plastic, it need not be covered according to the strict letter of the law."

אשי ישראל, פי' נ"ב, סי' י"א, והערה מ'-מ"א