The Chicago Center
Digest
# Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Thurs, May 14, 2026 ■ כ"ז אייר, תשפ"ו
סימן ע"ח סעיף א'

# Overview

**Siman 78 Seif 1:**

**If one began reading *shema* and *mei raglayim* began to drip down his leg he should pause until the flow stops and then resume reading *shema*. Even if one's garments became wet to the degree that they could wet a surface that could wet another surface it is permitted to read *shema* since it is covered by one's garment. If the *mei raglayim* fell on the ground he should distance himself four *amos*** or the distance mentioned in *siman* 82 or wait until it is absorbed in the ground. **Even if one paused the amount of time necessary to finish *shema* one is only required to resume where he left off.** According to some opinions if he paused the time it takes to finish *shema* he should restart from the beginning and this is the primary position as discussed in *siman* 65 and it is calculated according to the individual reader.

- One must also interrupt his Torah study or *tefila*. (M.B. 1)
- If one became soiled while reading *shema* or other *davar she-b'kedusha* he should remove the garment or at least cover it but regarding *shemone esrei* one may complete his *tefila*. (M.B. 3)
- In Biur Halacha he concludes that if the *mei raglayim* fell on the ground one should distance himself four *amos* even while saying *shemone esrei*. (M.B. 4)
- Magen Avrohom implies that while reading *shema* one need not be concerned that he may pause the amount of time necessary to finish *shema* but if this happens while reading *birchos krias shema* it is preferable for him to move away rather than pause the amount of time it takes to finish *shema* but if he does pause that long it is not necessary to start again. (M.B. 5)
- In *siman* 65 the conclusion was that if one paused due to an *ones* he must restart and our case is categorized as an *ones*. Regarding *shemone esrei* if one paused the time necessary to bring water or for the *mei raglayim* to become absorbed it seems that one is not required to restart from the beginning. (M.B. 7)

# Halacha Highlight

## *Davening* while attached to a catheter

Shulchan Aruch Siman 78 Seif 1

**היה קורא והתחילו מי רגליו שותתין על ברכיו**

**If one was *davening* and *mei raglayim* began to drip on his knees**

Shulchan Aruch writes that if one was reading *shema* and *mei raglayim* began to drip on his knees he should pause until the drip stops and then he may resume reading. Mishnah Berurah (סי' פ' סק"ד) in the name of Teshuvas Rema writes that someone who is ill and as a result *mei raglayim* drips continuously from his body must pause while the *mei raglayim* comes out and then he should *daven*. Even though a person who knows that he will have to relieve himself may not begin to *daven*, nevertheless, since that prohibition is only Rabbinic, Chazal did not impose their restriction if it means that he will not be able to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *shema*. Additionally, they did not impose their restriction if it means that one would not be able to fulfill a Rabbinic *mitzvah* and for that reason he may *daven shemone esrei* as well.

Based on this approach, Rav Moshe Feinstein (שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"א סי' כ"ז) ruled that someone who is attached to a catheter and *mei reglayim* drips regularly without the person sensing that it is exiting his body is permitted to *daven*. Since Mishnah Berurah (סי' ע"ו ס"ק כ"ז) rules that the prohibition against *davening* in the presence of dripping *mei raglayim* is only Rabbinic, it is permitted to *daven* since the restriction was not imposed if it will not permit a person to *daven*. Teshuvas Chelkas Yaakov (ח"א סי' קס"א וח"ב סי' קע"ח) adds that if *halacha* does not take a lenient approach there is a concern that as a result of his distress that he cannot *daven* he may pull out the catheter and thereby put his health at risk.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (הנ"ל) writes that it is preferable to cover the bag even if it is made of plastic since there may be a minority of opinions who would require it to be covered. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (נשמת אברהם ח"א סי' ע"ו סק"ט) disagrees and maintains that there is no need to cover the tubes or the bag since they are disposable and as such are not considered a utensil that may need to be covered. Furthermore, even if it is a utensil, it is similar to metal and glass that is not categorized as a עביט של מי רגלים.

# Stories to Share

## "The Scent of a Field Blessed by Hashem"

ש"ע , ע"ח, א: "היה קורא והתחילו מי רגליו שותתין על ברכיו..."

Sometimes a disturbed or homeless person can walk into a shul or yeshiva, and sometimes such a person might not have the means or interest in maintaining their personal hygiene. Many are unaware that this is not merely unpleasant, but has actual halachic ramifications as well, as we find on today's amud.

The Ruach Chaim writes about what was a prevalent problem in his area, and the same may well apply today. "It is a mitzvah to explain to the elderly who are amei ha'aretz that it is forbidden to say shema, daven or learn when one's clothes are saturated with urine. Most of these people are unaware that their garments are unfit because of the excess of urine which drips onto them, making an unpleasant odor and forbidding their continued presence in a place of prayer. This is not their fault since it is a result of their old age; their infirmity can mean that they do not pay attention to cleaning themselves meticulously. If their garments become soiled they should at least change them, but unfortunately this is not always done. What they do not realize is that there is no mitzvah for them to go to shul and daven, causing others to daven in their presence. This is clearly forbidden and should be stopped. A talmid chacham is careful to keep his clothing clean and changes to clean garments if he has the shadow of a doubt about any unclean residue upon them. It is regarding such a person that the verse extols, "And he smelled the smell of his garments and blessed him, saying, 'Behold, the scent of my son is like the aroma of a field that Hashem has blessed.'"

שו"ת ציץ אליעזר, חלק כ' סי' ב'