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

Halacha Highlight

Maintaining a clean body for *davening*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 80 Seif 1

מי שברי לו שאינו יכול לעמד על עצמו מלהפיח

Someone who is certain that he will not be able to restrain himself from passing gas

Shulchan Aruch (סי' פ' סע' א') rules that one who is certain that he will not be able to restrain himself from passing gas even for *shema* and *shemone esrei* (ע' מ"ב סק"ב) should allow the time for *shema* and *tefila* to pass rather than *daven* with an unclean body. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) explains that later authorities agree that one should not allow the time for *shema* to pass, and he should at least read *shema* since the reading of *shema* does not involve standing before the King. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ד) then explains that Shulchan Aruch refers to someone who is temporarily suffering from a condition that causes him to pass gas with great frequency. Someone who has a condition that causes him to pass gas all the time and adopting a stringent approach would mean he would never *daven* or read *shema* is allowed to read *shema* and *shemone esrei* even with his condition. Pri Megadim wonders whether this leniency extends to *tefillin* as well. Mishnah Berurah explains that what Pri Megadim meant was that perhaps for the brief time it takes to put on *tefillin* and then take them off it would be permitted rather than to forgo the *mitzvah* of *tefillin* altogether.

Regarding the prohibition against passing gas while wearing *tefillin,* there is a disagreement whether it is Biblical or Rabbinic. Sha'agas Aryeh (סי' מ') maintains that it is Biblically prohibited to pass gas while wearing *tefillin* since it is degrading to the *mitzvah*. Other authorities disagree and maintain that it is only Rabbinically prohibited to pass gas while wearing *tefillin* (ע' חיי משה סי' ל"ח אות ב' בשם פמ"ג סי' פ'). Eshel Avrohom (בוטשאטש) rejects Sha'agas Aryeh's proofs and maintains that the prohibition is only Rabbinic. Furthermore, he contends that even according to Sha'agas Aryeh the Biblical prohibition is violated only if the gas produces an audible sound but if it does not make an audible sound it is not degrading to the *mitzvah*.

Stories to Share

A Communal Problem

ש"ע סי' ע"ט, ט': "אבל לקרות קריאת שמע אסור עד שיכלה הריח..."

A certain person was annoyed by the situation in his shul. They were a large minyan that davened vasikin, and a certain person—or persons—apparently suffered from an upset stomach. Unfortunately, the entire minyan also suffered from the effects of this person's indigestion. Every day without fail he would pass gas several times. They would open the windows, even in winter, but it still took some time for the atmosphere to clear. Being forced to wait a few moments here and there while trying to daven with kavanah was torturous for him. He loved davening vasikin, but also knew that when someone asked Rav Dovid Baharan whether vasikin is preferable even if he would have less kavanah, Rav Dovid replied that davening later with more kavanah was obviously superior.

When the man learned today's amud, he thought he might have a simple way around the problem. "Why can't I just hold my nose when there is a smell? That way I won't smell anything at all. Perhaps in this manner I will avoid the entire matter."

But Rav Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv, zt"l he ruled that closing one's nose does not help at all. "The Shulchan Aruch rules that one must stop davening while there is an odor that stems from no tangible physical source, and in such a case closing one's nose does not avail. The problem is the odor, not that he can or cannot smell it at a particular point in time!"

שו"ת אבני ישפה, ח"ה, סי' י"ב, ה'

Overview

Siman 79 Seif 9:

If one passed gas it is prohibited to study Torah until the smell dissipates. If the gas came from a friend it is permitted to study Torah since there is no alternative being that some students study while others sleep and pass gas while they are sleeping. However, it is prohibited to read *shema* until the smell dissipates.

- Since learning in the presence of a foul odor that has no source is only Rabbinically prohibited Chazal did not enforce their decree if it would cause a person to be unable to study Torah. (M.B. 30)
- It is also prohibited to recite berachos. (M.B. 31)
- Elya Rabba writes that a person could move to a place where he can no longer smell the foul odor. (M.B. 32)

Siman 80 Seif 1:

It is better for one who is certain that he will not be able to restrain himself from passing gas for *shema* and *shemone esrei* to allow the time for *shema* and *shemone esrei* to pass than to *daven* with a body that is not clean. If the time for *davening* passes he is considered an *ones* and may *daven shemone esrei* twice at *mincha*. If he thinks he will be able to restrain himself from passing gas for *shema* he should put on his *tefillin* between אהבה רבה and *shema* and recite the *beracha* at that time.

- One who is not sure that he will pass gas and refrains from *davening* lest he may pass gas is not behaving correctly. (M.B. 1)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to one who will be able to restrain himself even for just *shema* and *shemone esrei*. (M.B. 2)
- Later authorities agree that one should not allow the time for *krias shema* to pass for this reason and what Shulchan Aruch means is that he should read *shema* and its *berachos* without *shemone esrei* and at some point later on in the day he should put on his *tefillin*. (M.B. 3)
- Immediately after *shema* he should take off his *tefillin* but he is permitted to continue to wear his *talis*. (M.B. 4)
- This *halacha* refers to where one ate something that causes gas but later on during the day he will be able to *daven* with a clean body. However, someone who regularly has gas and by following this *halacha* would never be able to *daven* is permitted to *daven* even though his body is not clean. Pri Chadash agrees with this *halacha* but adds that after passing gas he should pause until the smell dissipates. (M.B. 4)
- Pri Megadim is uncertain whether someone who cannot restrain himself altogether is also permitted to put on *tefillin*. Mishnah Berurah explains that Pri Megadim refers to putting on *tefillin* just for a moment and if he can't do that he should put each one on without the other. Additionally, he should not recite the *beracha* on *tefillin* in such a circumstance. (M.B. 4)
- Teshuvas Rema rules that one who has a condition that causes *mei raglayim* to drip from his body preventing him from being able to *daven* may be lenient and wrap a garment around his waste to keep his outer garments clean. He may then go to *shul* to *daven* and when he senses the *mei raglayim* exiting his body he should pause and then continue *davening* when it stops. This leniency assumes that he does not sense that the *mei raglayim* will drip as he begins to *daven*. (M.B. 4)