The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Tues, Jun 16, 2026 ■ א' תמוז, תשפ"ו
סימן צ"ב סעיף ב'-ג'

Overview

Siman 92 Seif 2:

If the urge to relieve one's self begins while one is saying *shemone esrei* he should restrain himself until he finishes and should not interrupt. If the urge to relieve one's self in any manner begins while one is saying *shema* or its *berachos* he may continue to read as normal assuming the urge is not so great that he violates בל תשקצו but if that is not the case it is better for him to interrupt. **If one chooses to move away and urinate he may do so.**

- Even though he feels the urge to relieve himself he is not allowed to stop in the middle of *shemone esrei*. It is obvious, however, that once he finishes *shemone esrei* he may not restrain himself any longer. (M.B. 8)
- During *shema* one is not required to pause to relieve himself and may read at his normal pace since he confirmed the cleanliness of his body before he began. Biur Halacha explains that he may only continue until *shemone esrei* but he must relieve himself before he begins *shemone esrei*. It is best to pause "between paragraphs." (M.B. 9)
- If the urge to relieve one's self arises towards the end of *pesukei d'zimra* it is prohibited to say *borchu* unless he can restrain himself for a *parsa* in which case he may follow the lenient opinion that he could *daven* in such a condition. (M.B. 9)
- Even if one could restrain himself until he finishes he should nevertheless pause to avoid violating בל תשקצו.(M.B. 11)
- Magen Avrohom asserts that when *davening* with a *tzibbur* all opinions agree that one may continue to *daven* and even when one is by himself he may rely upon the lenient position that allows him to continue to *daven*. (M.B. 11)
- If one can not restrain himself he may leave in the middle of *shemone esrei* but should not interrupt by talking. The implication is that he is not required to start *shemone esrei* from the beginning. (M.B. 11)
- The last ruling of Shulchan Aruch refers to reading *shema*. (M.B. 12)

Siman 92 Seif 3:

Before *davening* one must remove saliva, phlegm and anything else that may distract him.

Stories to Share

Human Weakness

ש"ע סי' צ"ב, ב': "אם באמצע תפילה נתעורר לו תאוה..."

One of the challenges faced by some elderly people is a loss of control of the bladder. As we see on today's amud, there are clear guidelines regarding when one needs to stop davening if he has an urge to use the bathroom. An older man who could not control his urge to use the bathroom once asked the Kaf Hachaim what to do when this occurs in shul, during shemonah esrei. The rav's reply shows his boundless sensitivity to the feelings of others.

"The halachah is that one who has an overpowering urge and passes water during shemonah esrei need not stop his davening because of this. While he is urinating he must pause but the moment he finishes he can continue davening since this is merely a rabbinic prohibition. If the urine is entirely absorbed by his garments he need not even move from his place. And if the urine is not absorbed he must distance himself four amos from it and continue davening. This is clear from siman 78."

But the Kaf Hachaim clarified that there was an exception to this rule. "Sometimes a person has very little control over his bodily functions. In such circumstances it is common for him to urinate quite a bit and he cannot hold it in for the time it takes to complete the shemonah esrei. In such circumstances the older person can go out of the synagogue to use the bathroom since if he stays and urinates he will be disgraced. Since the rule is that a person's honor is paramount he can interrupt the shemonah esrei, use the lavatory and then return to his davening."

כף החיים, סי' צ"א, ס"ק ח'

Halacha Highlight

One who feels the urge to relieve himself while *davening*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 92 Seif 2

ואם באמצע תפלתו מתעורר לו תאוה וכו'

If in the middle of *davening* the urge began etc.

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ב') writes that if the urge to relieve oneself arises while in the middle of *shemone esrei*, one should finish *shemone esrei* and is not required to interrupt. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ח) explains that Shulchan Aruch refers to where the person checked to assure that his body was clean before he began *davening* or felt no urge whatsoever to relieve himself before he began *shemone esrei*. Since he started under the correct conditions he must finish *shemone esrei*. When he finishes *shemone esrei* he may not wait to relieve himself until after *kedusha* since *kedusha* is another prayer and he may not begin another prayer while sensing the urge to relieve himself. Rema limits the allowance to continue saying *shemone esrei* when one feels the urge to relieve himself to a case in which one does not violate the prohibition of בל תשקצו, but if the urge is so strong that continuing *shemone esrei* would violate בל תשקצו it is better to interrupt to relieve one's self. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ק י"א) cites authorities who write that even one who violates בל תקשצו may continue if he wants as long as he can restrain himself until after *shemone esrei* but if he cannot restrain himself until the end of *shemone esrei* he may walk out to relieve himself but must be careful not to interrupt.

Regarding *krias shema* Shulchan Aruch writes that if one was saying *shema* or *birchos krias shema* and the urge to relieve one's self arose he may continue reading *shema* as he normally would. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ט) explains that even though during *shema*, in contrast to *shemone esrei*, one is allowed to walk to another place to relieve himself, nevertheless, if he wants he may continue reading *shema* assuming that he made sure that he did not have the urge to relieve himself when he started reading *shema*.