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

Overview

Siman 155 Seif 1:

After leaving the *Bais HaKnesses* one should go to the *Bais HaMidrash* and designate time for Torah study. That time should be fixed and one should not miss it even if one stands to earn a significant sum of money. Even one who is incapable of studying should go to the *Bais HaMidrash* and earn reward for going (or) [and] designate a place to study what he knows and consider his ways in order to cultivate in his heart *yiras shamayim*.

- One who leaves the *Bais HaKnesses* to go to the *Bais HaMidrash* to study Torah merits to greet the Divine Presence. (M.B. 1)
- It is best to designate the time immediately after *davening* to study Torah. (M.B. 2)
- A person must study Tanach, Mishnah, Gemara and Poskim every day. Those who only have three or four hours a day for Torah study should focus their studies on *halacha*. (M.B. 3)
- The primary *mitzvah* of Torah study has no limit and the obligation is to study whenever one has time. Chazal's statement that one who has fixed times to study Torah defiles the covenant refers to one who only studies during his designated time for Torah study to the exclusion of other available times during the day. (M.B. 4)
- One's time for Torah study should be fixed in the sense that if one misses his time for Torah study it should be made up some other time during the day. Later authorities write that even if one will have to miss his set time for learning he should study something before he leaves the *Bais HaMidrash*. (M.B. 4)
- Even if one does not understand what is studied he should go to the *Bais HaMidrash* since remaining in the *Bais HaMidrash* is itself a *mitzvah*. Someone who comes to the *Bais HaMidrash* and listens to Torah being studied will merit to be with Torah scholars in the World-to-Come. (M.B. 6)
- Even one who is capable of studying only a little should nevertheless designate a place to study to study what he can. (M.B. 8)
- When one can only study a little he should study *halacha* so that he knows how to fulfill *mitzvos*. (M.B. 9)
- As he sits he should contemplate whether he violates *halacha* in the course of his business dealings. (M.B. 10)

Siman 155 Seif 2:

Before going to the *Bais HaMidrash* one may eat morning bread if he is accustomed to do so and it is proper to become accustomed to this practice.

- The Gemara relates that there are 83 illnesses that can be avoided if one eats bread with salt and drink a container of water. A person should always look to protect his health so that he will be able to serve Hashem. (M.B. 11)

Stories to Share

The Masmid's Mistake

ש"ע קנ"ה, א': "ויקבע עת ללמוד..."

On today's amud we find that one is obligated to fix a set time for learning.

Rav Yisrael Salanter was very clear that one must take responsibility for his actions. One must always be aware that he is accountable for his actions to Hashem and his fellow man.

In a certain place there was a man who learned with amazing diligence. He was so careful to use every instant to learn that he when he was tired he would hold a lit candle in his hand to ensure that if he fell asleep he would wake up in a short time and continue learning.

One night he was especially tired, and instead of the candle waking him, he dropped it and continued to sleep. The wooden shul in which he dozed went up in a blaze of fire. Although eventually it was doused, the flame caused a huge amount of damage.

When people found out how much this dedicated masmid had pushed himself to learn, they praised his superhuman dedication to Torah, calling him an angel. But Rav Yisrael Salanter, zt"l, vehemently disagreed with this approach. "See how this kind of 'hasmadah' is likely to have ruined this man's ability to learn undisturbed for the rest of his life! Obviously it is forbidden for him to continue learning as was his wont, since he must now work full time to repay the vast damage that he caused. Due to an error in judgment of a single night he now is bound to pay the community back for his negligence."

תנועת המוסר, ח"א, ע' 321-322

Halacha Highlight

Studying Torah every day

Shulchan Aruch Siman 155 Seif 1

ויקבע עת ללמד

He should establish a time for learning

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') emphasizes the importance and necessity to establish a set time to learn each and every day. Even if one thinks that he could earn a significant sum of money by missing his set time for learning he should not do so. One who has the ability to forgo such an opportunity and adheres to his learning schedule is one who demonstrates great trust in Hashem by demonstrating that his choice to learn will not cause him financial harm (מ"ב סק"ה). Sefer Or Tzadikim (סי' כ"ב אות ה') suggests that one imagine that he is sitting in Gan Eden in front of the Divine Presence rather than in this world and by conjuring up that image he will save himself from the many distractions that pull him away from his learning.

Rema writes that even one who is not able to study Torah should go to the *Bais Midrash* and will at least earn reward for having walked to the *Bais Midrash*. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ו) explains that one should go to the *Bais HaMidrash* even if he does not understand what the people there are studying since being in the *Bais HaMidrash* is in and of itself a *mitzvah*. Sefer Piskei Teshuvos (אות ב' הע' 8) observes that this is an obvious rebuke to those who excuse themselves from attending a shiur in the *Bais HaMidrash* because they are tired and fall asleep during the shiur. The very act of sitting in the *Bais HaMidrash* is a *mitzvah* so even if one falls asleep he receives reward as opposed to those who stay home and fall asleep while learning who from that point forward no longer receive reward. This also makes it clear that people who struggle in their learning cannot excuse themselves from studying regularly. Or Zarua (הל' קריאת שמע סק"ו) writes that any effort a person made to study Torah will generate reward regardless of what he retained from his studies since Hashem rewards based on effort rather than on what one retains.