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

Overview

Siman 159 Seif 2:

This (the *halacha* mentioned in the previous *seif*) is true only if one will wash from the opening on top so that the hole in the side nullifies the part above it from being considered a utensil and it is not considered as though one is washing from a utensil. However, if one pours water out of the hole it is permitted since the utensil contains a *revi'is* below the hole.

- Many authorities maintain that if an earthenware utensil has a hole that allows liquid to enter the utensil it loses its status as a utensil altogether and it may not be used at all. If there is no other utensil available one may certainly rely upon Shulchan Aruch's position. (M.B. 10)
- If the earthenware utensil is made to hold food or a utensil made from other materials that do not lose their status as a utensil if there is a hole that allows liquid to enter, the utensil may be used to wash by pouring the water out that hole. These *halachos* are true in difficult circumstances but *l'chatchila* one should use a utensil that is complete. (M.B. 10)
- Some later authorities write that if there is a crack in a utensil that allows liquid to seep out it may not be used for washing even if it contains a *revi'is* below the crack. Taz disagrees and asserts that there is no difference between a crack and a hole. Chaye Adam rules that when there is no alternative one may rely upon Taz's position. It would seem that even the stringent opinion would agree that if the utensil is made of metal a crack does not cause it to lose its status as a utensil. Biur Halacha asserts that if the utensil is made from glass and has a crack that restricts the use of that utensil with hot liquids it may not be used for washing. (M.B. 11)
- Clay may not be used to close a hole in a utensil but pitch works for earthenware utensils and one may use the material of the utensil to close up a hole in a utensil, e.g. wood for wood and glass for glass. (M.B. 11)

Halacha Highlight

Washing through a hole or over a jagged edge

Shulchan Aruch Siman 159 Seif 2

אם נוטל דרך הנקב שרי

If one pours through the hole it is acceptable

Shulchan Aruch explains that the restriction against using a utensil that has a hole is if one pours the water over the rim, but if one pours the water out of the hole onto one's hands it is acceptable as long as the *kli* can hold a *revi'is* of water beneath the hole. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"ב) discusses a *kli* that has a jagged edge along the rim and rules that if one has no other utensil, such a *kli* may be used for washing but one should be careful to wash from the lowest part of the *kli*. His rationale is that the higher edges are not considered a *kli* being that the utensil could not hold water in that section since the material does not extend to that height for the entire circumference of the utensil.

Kaf HaChaim (אות י"ב) disagrees with Mishnah Berurah and rules that one may not wash from a *kli* that has a jagged edge altogether. He explains that it is impossible to assure that the water will be poured only from the lowest part of the rim and as a result some of the water was not poured from a *kli*. Chazon Ish (סי' כ"א אות ח') initially wrote in accordance with Kaf HaChaim that one may not use a utensil with a jagged edge altogether. It troubled him, however, that such a position is not found in the writings of earlier authorities. Consequently he wrote that even if as the water is poured it rises higher than the lowest spot of the jagged edge the washing is valid. He explains that the water coming out of the jagged edge is no different than Shulchan Aruch's ruling that it is acceptable to pour water out of the hole in the side of the utensil even though some of the water will come through the upper part of the hole. Since the water is coming from a part of the *kli* that is intact and it is the flow of the water that pushes it higher than the lowest edge of the utensil it is still considered as though the water is being poured from a *kli* and thus valid.

Stories to Share

At Whose Expense?

ש"ע ס' קנ"ט, ב': "כיון שמחזיק רביעית..."

Today's amud discusses the halachos of washing one's hands for bread.

Rav Yisrael used to stay with a certain family fairly often, and the people in the house noticed that Rav Yisrael Salanter had a very strange custom. Although there was an abundance of water at all times, Rav Yisrael would wash with a minimal amount of water. Rav Yisrael was very careful to fulfill all the words of our sages, and Rav Chisda said that one who washes with an abundance of water will gain much good, so his use of a small measure of water was surprising.

When they finally asked him about this, his reply surprised them and gave them insight into the depth of the Rav's character. "Before being free with the water, I must first check how it gets here. I noticed it is the maid's job to replenish the water, and it must be brought from something of a distance. Naturally I am not allowed to be strict regarding a mitzvah at another person expense!"

אוצר שיחות צדיקים, ע' ס"ד