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

Overview

Siman 159 Seif 6:

One may not pour water onto a friend's hands with one's hands since washing requires a utensil. Similarly, if one poured from a utensil onto his hand and then poured that water from that hand onto his other hand it is not effective. Rabbeinu Tam permits this since the washing onto the first hand was from a utensil. This allowance assumes that his first hand was tahor, e.g. he poured a full *revi'is* onto that hand. The custom is to be lenient in accordance with Rabbeinu Tam but the first rationale is more correct, therefore, one should be stringent in accordance with that line of reasoning.

- If one placed his hands one above the other and someone poured on the upper hand and the water dripped from the upper hand onto the lower hand the washing was effective as will be discussed in *siman* 162:5. (M.B. 30)
- The reason it was emphasized that the first hand was *tahor* was so that the water would not become *tamei* from the first hand. (M.B. 31)
- The water did not become *tamei* since a *revi'is* does not become *tamei* but this is true only if the water was properly poured onto his hand, meaning both sides of his entire hand. (M.B. 33)
- Maharshal is stringent even *b'dieved* and even according to Rema if more water becomes available one should wash a second time without reciting the *beracha*. (M.B. 35)

Halacha Highlight

Washing with one's hands

Shulchan Aruch Siman 159 Seif 6

לא יתן מים לחברו בחפניו

One may not pour water on one's friend with his hands

Shulchan Aruch gives two examples of washing that is invalid because the washing was not done with a *kli*. One example is a person who gathers water in his hands and pours it on his friend's hands. The second case is when a person washes his first hand from a *kli* and then pours the water from his first hand onto his second hand. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ל) rules that if a person puts one hand on top of the other and a friend pours water over the top hand and the water spills onto the lower hand as well both hands are *tahor*. The difference between Shulchan Aruch's second case and Mishnah Berurah's case is that in Mishnah Berurah's case there is one act of washing and that one act covers both hands. In contrast, in Shulchan Aruch's case there are two acts of washing and the second act is invalid since it involved the use of one's hand to pour the water rather than a *kli*.

Shulchan Aruch then notes that Rabbeinu Tam is lenient in the second case. Since the water initially came from a *kli* the fact that it was collected in one hand and then poured on the second hand is inconsequential. The only restriction he places on this procedure is that one must make sure that the first hand is *tahor* when it is used to pour water from that hand onto the second hand. Biur Halacha (ד"ה ורבינו תם) relates that there is actually a disagreement whether Rabbeinu Tam is lenient even in Shulchan Aruch's first case. Levush and Olas Tamid maintain that Rabbeinu Tam agrees in the first case that the washing is invalid since for the second person the water was never poured from a *kli*. Gra disagrees and contends that according to Rabbeinu Tam if the first person's hands were *tahor* and he poured water onto his friend's hands the washing was effective.

Stories to Share

Relevant Information

ש"ע קנ"ט, ו: "אלא מן הכלי..."

Many find it somewhat difficult to learn halachos that seem hardly applicable. Rav Boruch Schneerson, the previous Rosh Yeshivah of Tchebin, explained why it is still important to learn and know such halachos. "There were three places in Shulchan Aruch that I figured would never be relevant in my life. Although I learned them well—like the rest of Shulchan Aruch—I thought they were inapplicable in modern life. The first section I felt this way about was the halachos of which vessels one may use to wash for bread. All the unusual cases brought there seem hardly relevant in today's world. The second such section was how to make a seder when one does not have a k'zayis of matzah. Such a situation seemed completely unthinkable. The third subject that seemed impractical was how to figure out when the holidays fall out without a calendar.

"But during the Second World War when I was confronted with very unusual circumstances, proficiency in these halachos was very important for me..."

When his son, Rav Dov Beirish Schneerson, shlit"a, recounted this story he added, "My father was always very careful to learn all the details of every halachah as if it applied to him. One person who wrote a complex work about ribbis came to see him and figured he wouldn't have much to say, since the halachos are very complex and many are not very relevant for most people. To his surprise, he found that my father immediately began what turned out to be a long conversation dealing with many of the most complex halachos of this abstruse subject matter. He was sure that he must have just finished learning the halachos, despite it having been quite some time since my father had learned them through!"

דביר המוצנע, ע' י"ז