The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן ק"ס סעיף ז-י'

Overview

Siman 160 Seif 7:

One may immerse his hands in the hot springs of Tiberias but he may not wash his hands with that water. If he directed the water on the ground via a groove away from its place and cut it off from the spring that flows and it contains the water necessary to constitute a *mikvah* one may immerse his hands there but if the water does not contain that quantity it may not be used. If the groove is connected to the hot water in the spring according to Rashi and Rashba one may not immerse his hands there but according to Rabbeinu Yonah one may immerse his hands there.

Siman 160 Seif 8:

The reason the hot springs of Tiberias may not be used is that the water is bitter and unfit for consumption by a dog. If one were to find hot springs that flow which produces water that is fit for consumption by a dog it may be used for washing.

- Even if the water tastes different from other water so that people would not drink it as long as a dog would drink it the water may be used for washing. (M.B. 37)

Siman 160 Seif 9:

Water that is salty, has a foul odor or is bitter to the degree that a dog would not drink from it is invalid for washing even though it remains valid for immersing in a *mikvah*. If it is cloudy as a result of clay that is mixed in but a dog would still drink it the water may be used for washing but if a dog would not drink it the water is invalid.

- If one boiled sea water and as a result became fit for a dog to drink it may be used for washing. (M.B. 38)

Siman 160 Seif 10:

One may wash with anything that originates from water, for example, red יבחושים (worms) **or fish oil.** It is logical that this is limited to where one ground them up since they are no better than snow.

- In other words it formed in the water. (M.B. 43)
- Magen Avrohom writes that this case is more stringent than snow since if these items were not ground one may not immerse his hands into them even though one may immerse his hands in snow in a pressing circumstance if it was not ground. (M.B. 45)

Stories to Share

Water for Washing

ש"ע ק"ס, ט': "מים מלוחים..."

Even when the Vayechi Yosef of Pupa, zt"l, was hiding in a bunker during the Holocaust, his mind never lost track of Torah and tefilah. Throughout his time in hiding, he learned constantly. Once he spent three full days in a closet, with only his head emerging. Everyone present was astounded that the rebbe continuously looked in a gemara and learned with great sweetness and diligence virtually the entire time. It seemed to survivors that whenever the rebbe wasn't learning, he was davening with intense focus.

Everyone else in the bunker worried about how to procure water to drink. But the rebbe's main concern was finding water to wash his hands—even at the expense of drinking water.

Once he had a question whether it was permitted to learn and daven in the bunker. He immediately wished to leave. When the others in the bunker pointed out that this was a very dangerous proposition, he responded with fiery commitment. "Why am I in this world? If I cannot do the Creator's will, if I am unable to daven, why am I alive?"

רשומים בשמך, ע' ש"ז

Rav Yaakov Yitzchak Neiman, the Rav of Belz in Montreal, recounted similar self-sacrifice that the rebbe had displayed in the camps, "The rebbe never did what the Nazis said if it meant that he must violate even a rabbinic prohibition. When I saw this I wondered how it was permitted, especially since whenever anyone asked the rebbe about whether he was permitted to do what the Nazis said to avoid being tortured or hit, the rebbe ruled leniently.

He concluded, "But then I learned the Nemukei Yosef which is brought in the Beis Yosef: 'If a person is an adam gadol who is a chossid and has profound yiras shamayim, he has permission to sanctify the name of heaven, even when others would be forbidden to do so."

שיחות קודש, ע' צ"ו

Halacha Highlight

Using filtered water to wash one's hands

Shulchan Aruch Siman 160 Seif 9

מים מלוחים או סרוחים

Water that is salty or smells bad

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ט') writes that water that is salty or foul or bitter to the degree that even a dog would not drink the water may not be used for washing before eating bread even though the water is usable for immersing in a mikvah. If the water is dirty from clay - if a dog would drink the liquid it may be used for washing and immersing but if a dog would not drink the liquid it may not be used for washing or immersion. Radvaz (מובא דבריו בשערי תשובה שם סק"ג) rules that sea water that is not fit to drink may not be used for washing before bread. However, if one would boil the water to separate out the salt so that a dog would drink it may be used and one need not be concerned that someone may mistakenly think that sea water may be used for washing even without boiling out the salt. Sha'arei Teshuvah (הנ"ל) cites this ruling of Radvaz but advises that rather than rely on this opinion one should wrap his hands in a cloth in order to avoid touching the bread as mentioned elsewhere in Shulchan Aruch (שו"ע או"ח סי' קס"ג סע' א').

Even though Poskim recognize the possibility of filtering water so that it should be usable for washing hands, sewage water that is filtered may not be used for washing hands even though it is now drinkable for an animal. The reason this water may not be utilized for washing hands is because in addition to being foul, it is water that was used and water that was already used for another purpose may not be reused for washing one's hands. The allowance to filter and restore water to a usable state applies only to water that became disqualified as a result of a substance that made it salty, bitter or foul. Filtering does not reverse the water's state of having been previously used (ע' שו"ת להורות נתן ח"י סי' כ"ג).