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Digest
Mishna Berura
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סימן קס"ב סעיף א'

Halacha Highlight

Lifting and rubbing one's hands after washing

Shulchan Aruch Siman 162 Seif 1

צריך להגביה ידיו

He must lift his hand

Shulchan Aruch discusses the caution necessary to assure that as one is washing the water should not become *tamei* again. The concern is that one will wash his hands and, although the water makes his hands *tahor,* the water is *tamei*. For that reason we wash a second time to make that water *tahor* as well. The concern is that some of the water that one poured on his hand the first time will drip down to his wrist and will not become *tahor* with the second washing and will then drip down onto his hand making it *tamei* again. One of the suggestions to avoid this issue is to hold one's fingers upwards so that the water cannot drip from beyond one's wrist back onto his hand. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ט) notes that according to Kabbalah and the Gemara in Sotah (4b) it also seems that one should have his hands lifted while he washes. He then notes that many people do not seem to be particular about this matter and the rationale is that we use a full *revi'is* and we wash our hand all the way to the wrist. He concludes by emphasizing that it is essential for one to wash his entire hand in contrast to what many people do which is to simply pour water on the side of their hands.

Pri Megadim (מ"ז סק"ז) writes that a regular person must consider the possibility that he never properly washed his hands properly since without careful attention the water will not reach one's entire hand. Therefore, after washing one should rub his hands together with emphasis on rubbing the water between his fingers and other places where the water may not reach in the normal course of washing. However, *l'chatchila* one should not rely on this rubbing and one should be more careful to pour water on his entire hand (פסקי תשובות אות ג').

Stories to Share

A Living Example

מ"ב קס"ב, ס"ק א': "אקדים הקדמה קצרה..."

Rav Dovid Baharan was a great Torah scholar. Rav Chaim Kanievsky, shlit"a, said of him, "I knew him; he was one of the gedolei hador."

Once when Rav Dovid was already older, he attended the sheva brochos of his beloved grandson. He needed to wash his hands but he was too frail to go to the water, so they brought water, a washing cup and a basin so he could wash for bread. As he was about to wash, someone told the young scholars that if they want to know exactly how one should wash for bread, they should watch Rav Dovid while he washed. Naturally, most of them drew closer to get a good look. They watched carefully as Rav Dovid washed.

Rav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz—one of those who watched carefully—recalled. "We saw with our own eyes how Rav Dovid washed in a manner calculated to fulfill the requirements of every Magen Avraham and every Mishnah Berurah. Although it is many years since I was present that day, the experience is indelibly etched on my mind."

On another occasion, Rav Michel Yehudah said. "Every motion, every action of Rav Dovid Baharan was carefully calculated to follow the halachah. I once attended a simchah with him. Just from being there and observing Rav Dovid we learned a great deal of Shulchan Aruch hilchos seudah."

ארח לדוד, ע' מ"א

Overview

Siman 162 Seif 1:

One who washes must lift his hands (meaning the tops of his fingers) **up so that the water does not drip beyond his wrist and then return back to his hands making them *tamei*.** One may also have his hands pointed downwards from the time he begins to wash until he is finished; the main thing is to be careful not to start with his hands facing upwards and then lower them since this will cause the water to drip past his wrist and make his hands *tamei* when they return. **The restriction applies when one does not wash his hand to the wrist but one who washes his hand to the wrist does not have to lift his hands** (some authorities disagree about this)**. Similarly, if one poured a full *revi'is* on both hands at once since there is no *tamei* water he does not have to lift his hands. One who immerses his hands is also not required to lift his hands.** (Some maintain that one who pours water on his hands three times is not required to be cautious about this matter and the custom is in accordance with his position.)

- *B'dieved* if one did not lift his hands he is not required to wash again unless he saw water drip past his wrist and then return. (M.B. 2)
- One's hands should be lifted after he washes the second time until his hands are dry out of concern that water from the first washing will drip back from beyond his wrist. It is preferable for one to have his hands up even while washing the first time. This is possible only if someone else is washing one's hands. If someone else is not available one should pour a *revi'is* on each hand. If one has a limited supply of water he should have his hands sloped downwards the entire time he is washing. (M.B. 3)
- Rema follows the *Poskim* who maintain that it is sufficient to wash until the end of one's fingers but according to those that require washing one's entire hand one is required to wash his entire hand. According to some, Rema is merely describing the manner in which one should lift his hands. (M.B. 4)
- One's hands must be lifted only until he washes a second time but after that there is no requirement. (M.B. 7)
- Some authorities question the suggestion of sloping one's hands down out of concern that water may not reach the end of one's fingers, therefore, one should lift his hands when washing the first time. (M.B. 9)
- Nowadays people are not particular about these matters and the reason is that we wash with a full *revi'is* and all the way to the wrist. One must be cautious that water touches every part of one's hands. (M.B. 9)
- Elya Rabba asserts that *halacha* follows the dissenting opinion but in a pressing circumstance and one cannot lift his hands he may rely on the first opinion. (M.B. 11)
- The requirement to lift one's hands out of concern that one's hands are *tamei* is limited to one who washes with less than a *revi'is*. (M.B. 14)
- The most preferable approach is to pour a *revi'is* or more on each hand. (M.B. 16)