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

Overview

Siman 162 Seif 5:

From what was written it should be clear that the capacity for one hand to make another *tamei* by rubbing them together is limited to where one washes one hand and then rubs his two hands together but if one wants to wash both hands together he may do so since both hands would be counted as one and would not make one another *tamei*. Even if four or five people put theirs hands next to one another or on top of one another they are considered a single hand and do not make one another *tamei*.

Siman 162 Seif 6:

If one washed each of his hands independently and then decided to wash them the second time together and his two hands touched, his hands are *tamei* since they touched one another as they were brought together for the second washing being that the water that was on one hand made the water on the other hand *tamei* and when water was poured the second time the first water did not become *tahor* since it was *tamei* from the other hand. The opposite, in fact, occurred and the second water also becomes *tamei* and one must dry his hands and wash both hands again. One must certainly be cautious not to touch his hand that he washed once with his hand that he washed twice.

- The first waters, if less than a *revi'is*, are *tamei* and could make other water *tamei*. (M.B. 52)
- The language implies that even in this case the *halacha* is that if one's hands touched one another in this circumstance he must dry his hands and wash again. (M.B. 54)

Siman 162 Seif 7:

If one rubs his hands together he must be careful not to touch a part of the hand that was not washed since that part will make the washed part *tamei*.

- If one touches a part of his hand beyond where he washed it becomes *tamei*. (M.B. 55)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to where one only washed to the ends of his fingers so the part of his hand that was not washed is *tamei* but if one washed his entire hand one need not be concerned with contact above his hand since that part does not impart *tumah*. (M.B. 56)
- All these restrictions apply only until one dries his hands but after one dries his hands there is no need for caution. (M.B. 56)

Halacha Highlight

Rubbing one's hands together after washing

Shulchan Aruch Siman 131 Seif 7
אם שפשף ידיו זו בזו
If one rubbed his hands together

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ז) warns that one must be careful after washing that he should not touch a part of his hands that is beyond where he washed. The reason is that the part of the hand that was not washed can make one's wet hands *tamei* and this would require him to dry his hands and wash them again. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק נ"ה) emphasizes that this ruling is true even if he washed his hands with a full *revi'is* or if he washed his hands twice already so that the water on his hands is not *tamei*. The difficulty with this ruling is that once one effectively washed his hands how could rubbing his *tahor* hands cause them to become *tamei*? Mishnah Berurah (מ"ב ס"ק נ"ו) explains that this ruling applies only according to the opinion that maintains that it is sufficient for one to wash to the end of his fingers. According to that opinion, washing to the end of one's fingers is sufficient for one's hand to be considered *tahor* that one may eat bread but the palm of his hands remains *tamei* and if his *tahor* fingers touch his *tamei* palm he made his fingers *tamei* and must dry his hands and wash again. According to the opinion that requires a person to wash his hands until the wrist, there is no concern because after washing properly, his hands and the water on his hands are *tahor* and there is no place to touch that would make his hands *tamei* since the part of his arm above his wrist is not *tamei*.

Biur Halacha (ד"ה אם שפשף) notes that according to Rosh not only is it not necessary for one to wash the palm of his hand, but the palm of his hand is not even a part of the hand that becomes *tamei*. Accordingly, there is no concern that after washing his fingers properly that they would become *tamei* again. Shulchan Aruch's ruling is limited to the Rashba who maintains that even though one need not wash his palms they are still an area of *tumah*.

Stories to Share

Rav Zalman's Practice

ש"ע קס"ב, ה': "מתוך מה שכתבנו יתבאר..."

Today's amud continues to discuss the complexities of the halachos of netilas yadayim.

Rav Zalman of Volozhin was known for the astounding breadth and depth of his learning. His brother, the illustrious Rav Chaim of Volozhin once said of him that he would have been considered unusually learned even in the times of the Tanaim.

When Rav Chaim was discussing the greatness of the Vilna Gaon, someone once asked him about his brother. "But how was the Vilna Gaon greater than Rav Zalmel'eh? Didn't Rav Zalman know everything by heart and in depth?"

Rav Chaim explained. "It is true that Rav Zelmeleh knew everything by heart in depth, but even if he had lived a thousand years he would never have reached the greatness of the Vilna Gaon."

When he noticed that his listeners were astounded by this, he explained. "You know ashrei by heart, right?"

When they affirmed this, he said, "So let's hear you recite it by heart, backwards."

When the person tried and saw that he could not, Rav Chaim said, "My brother knew the entire Torah by heart, but the Gaon knew the entire Torah by heart and backwards!"

Rav Zalman would recite all the halachos of anything he did before doing it. For example, before every meal, he would recite all of the complex halachos of netilas yadayim and only then wash his hands.

Eventually Rav Zalman stopped this practice since he found it too difficult to always delay doing everything until he had reviewed every detail of its halachos.

כן שמעתי מדודי, רב שמחה גולשבסקי, ז"ל