The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Fri, March 4, 2022 ■ א' אדר ב', תשפ"ב
סימן קס"ב סעיף ח'

Overview

Siman 162 Seif 8:

If one washed his hand and wiped it on his head (Meaning he intended to dry his hand and that is why it did not become *tamei* as opposed to *siman* 164:2 where he scratched his head) **or on the wall and then touched that water that came from his hand on his head or the wall it is *t'mei'ah*. The reason is that the *tamei* water went ahead and made his hand *tamei* again. Even though had he not touched the water his hand would be *tahor* as a result of rubbing the water off, now that he touched it he made it worse. We have already explained that one who pours a *revi'is* at once is not included in these *halachos* since there is no *tamei* water.**

- If one washes only the first washing with less than a *revi'is* that becomes *tamei* and then wiped his hand dry, his hands are *tahor* even without a second washing and it is only if one touches the water again that his hand becomes *tamei*. Biur Halacha explains that *l'chatchila* one should wash a second time even if he wiped his hands dry after the first washing. (M.B. 57)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to where he only washed the first time and with less than a *revi'is*. (M.B. 59)
- He must dry his hands and wash them again. (M.B. 61)

Halacha Highlight

Water absorbed in a towel

Shulchan Aruch Siman 162 Seif 8

נטל ידיו ושפשפה בראשו

If one washed his hands and then rubbed them on his head

Shulchan Aruch discusses the consequence of touching the water that was first poured on one's hands. The halacha is that if the first water poured on one's hands was less than a revi'is that water is *tamei* and it is necessary to wash a second time to make the *tamei* water that remains on one's hands *tahor* (מ"ב ס"ק נ"ז). An example of this is someone who washes his hands and rubs off that water on his hair or on the wall. In the event that he were to touch that water with his hands he would have made his hands *tamei* requiring him to dry his hands and begin the washing process again (מ"ב ס"ק ס"א). The reason is that the second pouring can only make the water on his hands *tahor* but if he made his hands *tamei* he must begin the process again.

Levush (סע' ח') expresses uncertainty about the status of first washing water that is absorbed in a towel. Is the water in the towel comparable to the water wiped on the wall that could make a person's hands *tamei* again or not? The basis for his uncertainty is that one could argue that if the water on the wall makes his hands *tamei* certainly the water in the towel will make his hands *tamei* since when using the towel it is common for the water to be rubbed on all parts of one's hand. Yet on the other hand the water on the wall is visible since it was not absorbed into the wall. In contrast the water in the towel was absorbed into the fabric and is not at all visible. As far as practical *halacha* is concerned his conclusion is that one may be lenient. His reasoning is that since the obligation to wash is only a Rabbinic enactment one may adopt the lenient position about matters subject to debate.

Stories to Share

A Necessary Stringency?

ש"ע קס"ב, ח': "וכבר נתבאר שהשופך רביעית כאחת אינו בכלל כל אלו"

In many yeshivos people are very careful to dry the handles of the washing cups before washing. So when one bochur learned the halachah brought on today's amud—that one who washes with a revi'is need not worry about such things—he was surprised. When he asked one of his maggidei shiur about this, he was told that the Chazon Ish was machmir, in agreement with those who argue against the position of the Shulchan Aruch.

"But must I keep this chumrah if I don't really hold like the stringencies of the Chazon Ish when he argues with the Mishnah Berurah in other areas?" he wondered.

When he asked a posek about this, he learned that it was possible that even the Mishnah Berurah would be stringent in this particular matter. "I believe that in yeshivos they are careful about this since many times ignorant people wash with less than a revi'is at a time. Since one is often unsure whether the person before him washed with a revi'is, it is better to make sure that the handles he touches are dry."

"But must I always dry off the handles of every washing cup even if I am unsure if someone washed before me?"

When this question reached Rav Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv, zt"l, he ruled that it was not necessary. "A washing cup or sink handle which is wet must only be dried if one knows for certain that another person washed before him. If he is unsure whether they became wet from a person who washed his hands for bread or the like, he need not dry them since one can assume the water is not from something which is problematic."

שו"ת אבני ישפה, ח"א, ס' ל"ב