The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, June 25 2022 ■ כ"ו סיון, תשפ"ב
סימן קפ"א סעיף ז'-י'

Overview

Siman 181 Seif 7:

There is no beracha to recite on mayim acharonim.

Siman 181 Seif 8:

Some maintain that it is unnecessary for one to dry his hands after mayim acharonim but according to Rambam one must dry his hands and then recite birkas hamazon.

- The purpose is to clean one's hands and drying one's hands is not necessary for them to be clean. (M.B. 18)
- L'chatchila one should dry his hands to satisfy all opinions. There is no minimum amount of water necessary other than the quantity necessary to clean one's hands. Ma'aseh Rav maintains that one should use a revi'is. (M.B. 19)

Siman 181 Seif 9:

One may use any liquid for mayim acharonim.

- If one has water available one should use water. (M.B. 20)
- One should not use wine due to its importance. (M.B. 21)
- Waters that are unfit for mayim rishonim may be used for mayim acharonim. Additionally, a utensil and koach gavra are unnecessary, there are no issues of interposition and it is sufficient to wash one time. (M.B. 21)

Siman 181 Seif 10:

Some do not have the custom to wash mayim acharonim. Even those who have that custom if one is delicate and accustomed to wash his hands after a meal so that he considers his hands filthy, he must wash his hands before birkas hamazon.

- Gra maintains that even nowadays it is required to wash mayim acharonim. Magen Avrohom cites the same ruling in the name of Mekubalim. (M.B. 22)
- Later authorities write that one who wants to recite a beracha on wine or fruit during a meal should first wipe his hands since they are dirty and he is delicate. (M.B. 23)
- One must be careful not to interrupt between washing and birkas hamazon even for divrei Torah. (M.B. 24)

Halacha Highlight

Women washing mayim acharonim

Shulchan Aruch Siman 181 Seif 10

יש שאין נוהגים לטל מים אחרונים

Some are not accustomed to washing mayim acharonim

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' י) mentions that there are those who are not accustomed to washing mayim acharonim. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ק כ"ב) explains that according to this opinion since Sedom salt is not longer used the concern for danger is no longer relevant. As far as one's hands being dirty is concerned, since people are not particular to wash their hands when they have food on them it is not considered dirty that would require one to wash. Mishnah Berurah then references Vilna Gaon and Magen Avrohom who maintain that even in the absence of Sedom salt it is still obligatory to wash mayim acharonim.

Mor U'Ketzia writes that women are not accustomed to wash mayim acharonim. The reason is that they are delicate and do not touch their food with their hands. Since they do not touch their food with their hands there is no reason to wash mayim acharonim. However, those that are not particular to use a fork or spoon are obligated to wash mayim acharonim the same as men. Rav Yosef Sholom Elyashiv (ספר וזאת הברכה פי"ד) rules that women are obligated to wash mayim acharonim. Rav Moshe Sternbuch (שו"ת תשובות והנהגות חלק א סימן קעד) writes that he did not find a definitive source that should differentiate between men and women concerning this obligation. The one justification that he suggests is if we accept Tosafos's assertion that in the absence of Sedom salt there is no obligation to wash mayim acharonim. Accordingly the only reason to wash is for Kabbalistic reasons and one could argue that women did not accept upon themselves customs that are rooted in kabbalah. He notes, however, that he has observed by righteous and pious families that even the women wash mayim acharonim. Therefore, one who chooses to be stringent will certainly be rewarded as long as it is not done in a haughty manner.

Stories to Share

A Table of Torah

מ"ב ס' קפ"א, ס"ק כ"א: "אפילו בד"ת..."

Our sages tell us that people who sit together and do not speak in Torah are likened to those who sat and partook of food from an idolatrous sacrifice. But sometimes one forgets to speak Torah. One must be very vigilant to make sure that he speaks at least a little Torah.

Some people were in the middle of a meal in a place where the Vilna Gaon was staying. One of those sitting there mentioned that they should really speak in learning, since without this, their meal would be from sacrifices to idolatry.

The Vilna Gaon commented. "Just saying so is enough to fulfill your obligation in this."

Many people habitually say, "מים אחרונים חובה" so as not to miss saying at least a few words of Torah.

But what is one to do who forgot to speak in learning and only recalls after he already washed mayim achronim?

When someone asked Rav Avigdor Neventzal, shlit"a, this question he replied that it was too late to rectify this. "One must immediately recite birchas hamazon. As we find in Berachos 42: 'One should bentch immediately after washing mayim achronim.'"

תשובות אביגדור הלוי, ע' ר"ג

But when this question reached Rav Yehudah Shapiro he ruled differently. "It depends. If one sometimes doesn't say divrei Torah at his table he may not interrupt. But if he always says a devar Torah he can say one before bentching."

דעת יהודה, ע' נ"ה