The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן קפ"ה סעיף ה'

Overview

Siman 185 Seif 5:

If one recited birkas hamazon and it turns out there was human waste present or if one was drunk (meaning completely) **Tosafos and Rosh are uncertain whether one is required to repeat birkas hamazon. If there was urine it is obvious that he need not repeat birkas hamazon.**

- Regarding shemone esrei it is clear from siman 76 that one must daven again and Tosafos and Rosh are uncertain whether the same halacha applies for birkas hamazon. (M.B. 5)
- In other words, he became so drunk that he would not be able to speak in front of the king and the uncertainty is whether he must repeat birkas hamazon when he sobers up and the food was not yet digested. Shulchan Aruch is not referring to someone who became as drunk as Lot. The final conclusion is that one should recite birkas hamazon in this case but it is better to recite birkas hamazon before one reaches that state of mind. (M.B. 6)
- L'chatchila one should not recite any beracha or study Torah in the presence of human waste. Olas Tamid and Elya Rabba maintain that one who finds waste within his four amos must repeat birkas hamazon if the food has not been digested. (M.B. 7)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to one who recited birkas hamazon and then discovered the urine. (M.B. 8)

Stories to Share

Learning from a Story

מ"ב ס' קפ"ה, ס"ק ו': "ואפ"ה מתיר הירושלמי..."

On today's amud we find that some authorities permit one to bentch when he is too drunk to speak before a king, unlike the halachah regarding shemonah esrei. This is certainly remarkable since birchas hamazon is d'oraisah if one ate enough to be satiated, while tefilah is d'rabanan. The Maggid of Mezeritch even said that one must focus more on the words of bentching than on shemonah esrei. "One should work to have even more kavanah when bentching—which is d'oraisah—than while davening shemonah esrei—which is only rabbinic."

One of the ways in which we inculcate proper gravity during bentching is by only doing so while wearing a hat and jacket.

When someone heard that the Chazon Ish was often seen bentching without a hat and jacket on he was astounded. After all, for tefillah the Chazon Ish was always exceedingly careful. How could it be that for bentching he was not? But then he thought of what seemed to him a good reason why this story proves nothing halachically. He did not want to rely on his own understanding about this, however, so he asked his rebbe, Rav Yehudah Shapiro, a close student of the gadol and Rosh Kollel of Kollel Chazon Ish about this.

The avreich asked Rav Shapiro, "It is well known that the Chazon Ish would bentch without a hat and jacket. But perhaps we cannot extrapolate from this story to us since the Chazon Ish was often weak? It seems plausible that all the times he did not get his hat and jacket, it was only because he was too weak physically to do so."

Rav Shapiro agreed with his reasoning. "You are correct that one cannot learn from such stories about the Chazon Ish, both for the reason you mentioned and for many other reasons!"

דעת יהודה, ע' נ"ו

Halacha Highlight

Reciting birkas hamazon with a catheter

Shulchan Aruch Siman 185 Seif 5

ומשום מי רגלים פשיטא שאינו חוזר לברך

It is obvious that if it was urine there is no obligation to repeat birkas hamazon

Shulchan Aruch expresses uncertainty whether one who recited birkas hamazon when there was human waste within his four amos is required to repeat birkas hamazon. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ה) explains that when it comes to davening, the halacha is that if there was reason to suspect that there may be human waste nearby and one did not confirm that the area was clean before he began to daven he is required to daven again. Tosafos and Rosh are uncertain whether the same applies for birkas hamazon. The reason to think that birkas hamazon may be treated differently is based on the precedent that one may recite birkas hamazon even when drunk which is not allowed for davening.

Concerning urine, Shulchan Aruch writes that it is obvious that it is unnecessary for one to repeat birkas hamazon. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ח) explains that Shulchan Aruch refers to where one discovered urine in one's presence after he finished birkas hamazon. The reason this ruling is obvious is that the prohibition against davening in the presence of urine is only Rabbinic, and Chazal did not prohibit davening when one is not certain that urine is present. The implication is that it is prohibited to daven or recite birkas hamazon when one is aware of the presence of urine.

If one has a catheter for the collection of urine, there is a disagreement amongst the Poskim whether it must be covered. Rav Moshe Feinstein (שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"א סי' כ"ז) writes that as long as it is covered one may recite berachos. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (נשמת אברהם ח"א סי' פ"ז) maintains that it is unnecessary for the bag or the tube to be covered since they are not categorized as a receptacle for waste (עביט). Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (אשי ישראל פנ"ב סע' י"א) differentiates between a catheter made from plastic and a catheter made from rubber. If it is made from rubber it must be covered, but if it is made from plastic it is unnecessary for it to be covered.