The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן רי"ח סעיף ז'-ט'

Overview

Siman 218 Seif 7:

On a miracle that occurred to a well-known person, e.g. Yoav ben Tzeruyah and his friends, or regarding a miracle that caused a sanctification of Hashem's Name one recites the beracha. Therefore, one who sees the lion's den of Daniel or the fiery furnace of Chananya, Mishael and Azaryah recites: שעשה נס לצדיקים במקום הזה.

- The sanctification of Hashem's Name elevates the miracle making it obligatory for everyone to recite the beracha. (M.B. 24)
- If it was a regular person one recites: שעשה נס לפלוני במקום הזה and one specifies that person's name. (M.B. 25)

Siman 218 Seif 8:

When one sees Lot's wife one recites two berachos, regarding her one recites: ברוך אתה ה' וגו' דין האמת and regarding Lot one recites: ברוך אתה ה' וגו' זוכר הצדיקים.

- One recites the beracha even though he does not see Lot's grave. (M.B. 27)
- When one sees Lot's wife who turned into a pillar of salt which was obviously a place and time of justice and nevertheless, Hashem recalled Avrohom and saved Lot on his account it is cause for thanks to Hashem. (M.B. 28)

Siman 218 Seif 9:

According to some authorities one recites this beracha only when the miracle went against nature but a miracle that could be explained by nature and its derivatives, for example, dangerous thieves attacked and he was saved, one does not recite the beracha. Others disagree and one should recite the beracha without mentioning Hashem's Name or His Kingdom.

- An example is mentioned in the Gemara Berachos (54a) where a person was in the desert and was about to die from thirst and a spring miraculously appeared. (M.B. 29)
- For example, the potential victim screamed for help or other people passed by and scared away the thieves. (M.B. 30)
- When the miracle occurs one recites הגומל since the standards for הגומל are not as strict as the standards for this beracha as will be discussed in siman 219. (M.B. 31)
- If a stone fell on someone or if he was run over by a wagon and should have died but miraculously was saved from death one recites the beracha when revisiting that place. If the rock almost hit him or he was almost run over by the wagon, according to the first opinion one does not recite the beracha whereas according to the second opinion it is possible that he does, therefore he should recite the beracha without mentioning Hashem's Name or His Kingdom. (M.B. 32)
- Later authorities write that one who experienced a miracle should give money to support Torah scholars according to his means and should state that it should be considered as though he offered a Korban Todah. He should also read parshas todah. Additionally, he should donate funds for communal needs and every year he should consider Hashem's kindness, rejoice and relate His praises. (M.B. 32)

Halacha Highlight

What is a miracle?

Shulchan Aruch Siman 218 Seif 9
בנס שהוא יוצא ממנהג העולם
A miracle that goes outside of nature

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ט') presents a dispute regarding the type of miracle necessary for one to recite the beracha for experiencing a miracle. According to the first opinion, it must be a miracle that goes against nature. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק ל"ב) cites as an example one who was hit on the head with a rock that should have killed him but in some inexplicable manner he survived. If the miracle does not defy nature he does not recite the beracha. Thus one who was attacked by dangerous thieves but was not harmed because other people walked by at that moment and frightened off the thieves the beracha is not recited. The second opinion maintains that even if the salvation is not the result of something miraculous going on, as long as one would have been in danger had the salvation not occurred one recites the beracha. Being that the matter is subject to debate, Shulchan Aruch advises one to recite the beracha without mentioning Hashem's Name or His Kingdom.

Poskim delineate two categories of miraculous salvations that warrant not only reciting the beracha when one sees the place where the miracle occur, but one also recites הגומל for being saved from danger. The first category is the one mentioned in the Gemara Berachos (54a) where someone was travelling the in the desert and was about to die of thirst. Right before he died a spring was created and he was able to hydrate himself and survive. The creation of a spring in the middle of the desert is certainly a miraculous occurrence and warrants the recitation of the two berachos. A second category is where a person was in a circumstance in which if one were to ask experts whether someone should have survived that circumstance the answer would be no, e.g. a terrible car accident. Somehow this person survived. Even though nothing was miraculously created, since there is no reason the person should have survived it is categorized as a miracle and one recites the two berachos (פסקי תשובות אות י').