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

Overview

Siman 227 Seif 2:

If the clouds did not dissipate one fulfills his obligation with a single beracha but if the clouds dissipate between one lightening and the next or one thunder and the next one must repeat the beracha.

- This is true only when the clouds cleared up altogether and then a new set of clouds formed bringing with it lightning and thunder. Yerushlami implies that this criterion applies on the same day but on the next day one repeats the beracha. (M.B. 8)

Siman 227 Seif 3:

If one was sitting in the bathroom and heard thunder or saw lightening, if he can go out and recite the beracha with k'dei dibbur he fulfills his obligation but if not, he does not go out.

- According to some even if one feels the urge to relieve himself but that feeling doesn't yet violate בל תשקצו, he may walk out of the bathroom to relieve himself. Other authorities are stringent and especially when one estimates that he will hear more thunder one should adopt the stringent position. (M.B. 10)
- Although in siman 4 the ruling is that one must wash his hands upon exiting a bathroom even if he did not relieve himself, in this case in order not to lose the opportunity to recite the beracha he need not wash his hands unless they are dirty. Alternatively, he may wash his hands or wipe them on a surface that will clean them before his recitation of the beracha because otherwise too much time will transpire. (M.B. 11)
- It is evident from this discussion that the time in which to recite the beracha is within k'dei dibbur of the lightning or thunder but if a longer period of time elapsed one does not recite the beracha. Therefore, if one washed his hands after relieving himself and heard thunder or saw lightning he should first recite the beracha on lightning or thunder and then אשר יצר. As long as one does not know his hands to be dirty he may recite this beracha. (M.B. 12)

Siman 228 Seif 1:

On seas, rivers, mountains, hills and deserts one recites: ברוך אתה ה' וכו' עושה מעשה בראשית. On the "Great Sea" which is the sea that one traverses to Eretz Yisroel and Egypt one recites: ברוך אתה ה' וכו' עושה ים הגדול.

- It is a praise of Hashem when today we can recognize something that was created during the six days of creation and still exists. (M.B. 1)
- It is called the "Great Sea" because of the importance of Eretz Yisroel. Many later authorities disagree and contend that the Atlantic Ocean is the "Great Sea" since it circumscribes the earth and deserves a unique beracha. The Mediterranean is no different than other seas and one recites upon seeing it the standard beracha. All of these berachos are recited only when thirty days passed since one last saw this creation. (M.B. 2)
- According to some Poskim the wording is שעשה את הים הגדול in the past tense. (M.B. 3)

Siman 228 Seif 2:

Halacha Highlight

Reciting the beracha on thunder and lightening

Shulchan Aruch Siman 227 Seif 3

אם יכול לצאת ולברך תוך כדי דיבור

If he can exit and recite the beracha within k'dei dibbur

Shulchan Aruch (סי' רכ"ז סע' ג') discusses one who finds himself in the bathroom when he hears thunder or sees lightening. He rules that if one could exit and recite the beracha within k'dei dibbur of the lightening or thunder he should do so, but if not he need not go out of the bathroom. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"ב) notes that Shulchan Aruch's ruling clearly demonstrates that the beracha on thunder or lightening must be recited within k'dei dibbur and if that time passed the beracha may no longer be recited until one sees other lightening or hears other thunder. For that reason, one who washed his hands after relieving himself and then sees lightening or hears thunder should first recite the beracha on the lightening or thunder and then recite אשר יצר. Being that one must recite the beracha within k'dei dibbur there is a dispute whether one who sees lightening or hears thunder during the recitation of shema interrupts to recite the beracha. Chaye Adam rules that one should not recite the beracha unless one sees the lightening or hears the thunder between paragraphs of shema (ע' לעיל סי' ס"ו ס"ק י"ט).

Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"א) notes that although one who enters a bathroom is obligated to wash his hands upon exiting even though he did not relieve himself, for the purpose of reciting the beracha on thunder or lightening it is unnecessary since if he had to wash his hands the time in which the beracha must be recited would pass. Below Mishnah Berurah adds (ס"ק י"ב) that as long as one does not know that his hands are dirty he may assume that they are clean for the purpose of reciting this beracha. For this reason, Poskim write that someone who woke up from the sound of thunder may recite the beracha as long as he is confident that he did not touch a covered part of the body or scratch his scalp while he was sleeping. In the event he is uncertain, it is sufficient to simply wipe his hands on a surface that will clean them (פסקי תשובות אות ח').

One does not recite the beracha on every river; rather it is recited only on the four rivers mentioned in the pesukim like Chidekel and Peras and this assumes that one sees it where its path has not been redirected by man.

- The same halacha applies to any large river that is known to have been around since creation and not those that came into existence afterwards. (M.B. 4)
- From that point where the river was redirected one does not recite the beracha. Elya Rabba contends that if one is uncertain he should not recite the beracha. (M.B. 5)
- If two seas were connected one does not recite the beracha at that place but there is no reason to suspect that this happened. (M.B. 6)

Siman 228 Seif 3:

One does not recite the beracha on every mountain and hill, it is recited only on a mountain or hill that is unusual and demonstrates Hashem's strength.