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

Overview

Siman 232 Seif 1:

If time is pressing and there is not enough time to finish shemone esrei the tzibbur should daven silently and then the shaliach tzibbur should recite מחיה מגן, and then respond to kedusha concluding with הק-ל הקדוש. Some say that the shaliach tzibbur should daven out loud with the tzibbur and this is the custom, see above siman 124:2.

- In other words, there is not enough time for the tzibbur to daven the silent amidah and for the shaliach tzibbur to recite chazaras hashatz. (M.B. 1)
- Since the primary tefila is the silent shemone esrei it is preferred for the shaliach tzibbur to shorten his tefila and recite only the first three berachos so that people should be able to recite kedusha. (M.B. 2)
- In other words, the shaliach tzibbur begins his recitation out loud and the tzibbur says each word with him until after הק-ל הקדוש. It is preferred if there is at least one person to answer אמן. (M.B. 4)

Siman 232 Seif 2 (a):

One may not sit to have a haircut close to mincha time until he has davened nor may one enter a bathhouse or a בורסקי (The place where hides are treated) or to adjudicate or eat even a small meal close to mincha gedola. If one began one of these activities he need not interrupt even though it was prohibited to begin that activity as long as there will be enough time to daven after the meal or the activity but if there will not be time to daven afterwards one must interrupt immediately. When is the beginning of a haircut? Once the barber's sheet was placed on his lap, the beginning of bathing is when one removes his outer garment; the beginning of tanning is when one ties his garment between his shoulders in the style of tanners. The beginning of judgment, if they were already adjudicating, is when the litigants begin to present their claims. If they were not already sitting in judgment it is when the judges wrap their heads. For us it is when they sit to adjudicate a case and eating begins when one washes his hands.

- These halachos are derived from a Mishnah in Shabbos (9b) but the Mishnah does not specify whether it refers to mincha gedolah or mincha ketanah nor does it specify whether it is a large meal that is prohibited or even a small meal. The Gemara cites two different approaches although both assume the Mishnah refers to mincha gedolah and there is a disagreement amongst the Rishonim which answer should be followed. Shulchan Aruch follows one approach while Rema follows the second approach. (M.B. 5)
- סמוך למנחה refers to mincha gedolah and although there is a lot of time yet to daven, nevertheless there is a concern that the scissors will break and while he is looking for another one the time for mincha will pass. It is possible that if he has extra pairs the restriction does not apply. (M.B. 6)
- This means half an hour before mincha gedolah. It makes no difference whether the day is long or short. (M.B. 7)
- The implication is that the same is true for any activity that could take an extended period of time. Therefore, those who are engaged in buying and selling at a fair should not begin to work סמוך למנחה גדולה unless after they daven. (M.B. 9)

Halacha Highlight

Activities before davening mincha

Shulchan Aruch Siman 232 Seif 2 (a)

לא ישב אדם להסתפר

A person may not sit for a haircut

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ב') enumerates many activities from which one may not begin once it is close to the time for mincha. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ו) explains that Shulchan Aruch refers to mincha gedolah which is half an hour after halachic midday. Furthermore, he explains (סק"ז) that close to the time of mincha is half an hour before mincha time. This means that one must refrain from engaging in the enumerated activities from midday until he has davened mincha. Although there would seem to be plenty of time left in the day to finish the activity and then daven, nevertheless, Chazal were concerned that something would go wrong and would take more time than anticipated and one may miss davening. Mishnah Berurah also notes that this halacha applies in the summer just the same as during the winter even though the summer days are much longer.

Aruch HaShulchan (סע' ט"ו וט"ז) observed that common practice is that people are lenient about these matters and are not particular to daven mincha before engaging in these activities. In olden times there was room for leniency since each town had a shamash who would go around and call everyone to daven (See Rema). Nowadays, however, since we no longer have a shamash who goes around reminding everyone to daven, the question is why we are permitted to engage in these activities before davening mincha. One justification for the practice applies to those people who regularly daven with a minyan at a set time. For such people since it is part of their regular schedule to daven with a minyan it is as if one has someone to remind him to daven (שומר) which is a circumstance in which one is permitted to engage in these activities without fear that he will forget to daven. One who does not regularly daven mincha with a minyan may not engage in the listed activities unless he actually appoints someone to remind him to daven (פסקי תשובות אות ג').

- This refers to a regular meal (as opposed to a wedding or bris meal) out of concern that it will take longer than expected. The halacha of whether one may learn before davening mincha is the same as the halcha regarding learning before shacharis, see siman 89:6. (M.B. 11)
- Even if one started after the time for mincha gedolah arrived one need not interrupt as long as he did not start within half an hour of mincha ketana. If one started within half an hour of mincha ketana one msut stop when mincha ketana arrives even if there is time yet to daven. (M.B. 13)
- If there will not be enough time one must stop even though he started during a permitted time. (M.B. 15)
- If one knows that the activity could continue for an extended period of time he must stop immediately out of concern that he will forget and the time will pass entirely. (M.B. 16)
- One who is accustomed to loosen his belt before eating is considered to have begun his meal once he loosens his belt. (M.B. 20)