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Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן רע"ז סעיף א'-ב'

Overview

Siman 277 Seif 1:

If a lamp is located behind a door it is prohibited to open the door (in the normal manner) **out of concern that one will extinguish the fire.** It is permitted to lock the door opposite the lamp. The same is true regarding a window which is opposite a lamp located on a table. **If it is affixed to the wall behind the door it is prohibited to open or lock the door out of concern that the door will strike the lamp and extinguish it; rather one must open and lock it slowly. If the lamp is affixed to the door so that opening and locking it will bring the oil closer or further, it is prohibited to open and lock the door.** If the candle is fueled with wax it is permitted to open or lock the door even though it is affixed to the door.

- There is no difference whether the lamp is fueled with oil, wax or fat. (M.B. 1)
- This restriction applies only when it is very close to the door so that when the door opens the wind may extinguish the fire. Magen Avrohom asserts that the word כדרכו was added in error. (M.B. 2)
- Some authorities are lenient when the wind is not blowing and it would seem that one could be lenient in a pressing circumstance to open the door slowly so that opening the door should not cause the wind to blow. (M.B. 3)
- The lamp is on the wall in a way that the door could open and hit the lamp. (M.B. 5)
- Later authorities write that locking the door is effective since it will not cause the fire to become extinguished. Pri Megadim suggests that Shulchan Aruch refers to a circumstance in which one locks the door with great strength so that the wall shakes thereby moving the oil from the lamp. (M.B. 6)
- It is possible that one may light or extinguish the fire. If one can open the door so that the melacha is not inevitable, it is permitted. (M.B. 7)
- When there is a concern that opening the door will extinguish the flame altogether it is prohibited even if the lamp is fueled with wax. (M.B. 8)

Siman 277 Seif 2:

It is prohibited to open a door opposite a bonfire that is close to a door even if it is only a common wind that is blowing but if the door is open it is permitted to close the door and in doing so one does not violate the prohibition against extinguishing a fire.

- The concern is that the blowing wind will cause the fire to burn stronger. (M.B. 9)
- Even though a common wind will not cause the fire to burn stronger, Chazal prohibited it out of concern that one would do so when an uncommon wind blows. If the wind is not blowing at all, it is permitted. (M.B. 10)
- Even though the wind was blowing on it, closing the door is not an act of extinguishing the fire, since one is merely stopping the wind from blowing on it and if the fire goes out, it goes out. (M.B. 11)

Halacha Highlight

Opening a door that has muktzah hanging from it

Shulchan Aruch Siman 277 Seif 1

ואם הוא קבוע בדלת עצמו

If it is attached to the door itself

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' א') addresses a lamp that is attached to a door that one wishes to open. He writes that it is prohibited to move such a door since inevitably one will cause the oil to move closer to the wick or further from the wick, thereby violating the prohibition against מבעיר or מכבה. Although one does not intend to move the oil closer of further from the wick, it is considered inevitable that it will happen and therefore prohibited. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ז) writes that if one opens or closes the door slowly so that the melachos are not inevitable it is permitted. He then raises the issue of the fact that since moving the door automatically moves the lamp it should constitute a violation of the prohibition against moving items that are muktzah. He answers that the door is not considered a base for the lamp since it serves the house and is subordinate to the house rather than subordinate to the lamp.

Poskim point to this halacha as a source to permit opening and closing any door or drawer that has muktzah items attached to it or contained inside of it. It is always assumed that door serves either the house, cabinet, dresser or desk rather than specifically the muktzah item. However, there are other Poskim who point to the Yerushalmi (שבת פ"ג ה"ז) that indicates that a door that has muktzah items hanging from it is considered to be a base for the muktzah and thus it would be prohibited to open and close the door. Biur Halacha (ד"ה אעפ"י) cites this Yerushalmi and does not conclude definitively that one may adopt a lenient position about this matter. For that reason one should make an effort to avoid hanging muktzah items on a door that one will open on Shabbos. It is only if there are also non-muktzah items on the door may one be lenient and open and close the door (פסקי תשובות אות ג').