The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, Aug 12 2023 ■ כ"ה אב תשפ"ג
סימן רצ"ח סעיף ד'-ו'

Overview

Siman 298 Seif 4:

One may not recite the beracha until one benefits from the light, meaning that one should be close enough that he could distinguish between the coin of one country and the coin from another country.

- Even if one is outside of the house but may benefit from the light he may recite the beracha. (M.B. 12)
- If one is listening to another's recitation of havdala he should be close enough to the flame that he could satisfy this requirement in order to discharge his obligation in the recitation of this beracha. (M.B. 13)

Siman 298 Seif 5:

One does not recite the beracha on a flame that did not refrain from "transgression" as opposed to a flame that was kindled for a woman giving birth or someone ill upon which one may recite the beracha since their kindling did not involve a transgression. If a gentile kindled a flame on Shabbos it does not satisfy the requirement that it should refrain from "transgression" since if it had been kindled by a Jew a transgression would have been committed. We do not recite the beracha on a flame of idolatry.

- One does not fulfill his obligation even b'dieved. (M.B. 14)
- If the patient was in danger, the flame must have been kindled by a gentile and if the person was in danger it may have even been kindled by a Jew. (M.B. 16)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to where he kindled the flame for himself. (M.B. 17)
- Even if we are not certain it is assumed that it was kindled on Shabbos. (M.B. 18)
- This applies when the flame is attached to something, e.g. a coal, but if a Jew kindled a light from a candle of idolatry it is acceptable to recite the beracha since one only has the flame which has no substance to it. Pri Megadim concludes that one should refrain from kindling a candle from an idolatrous candle but b'dieved if it was done the beracha may be recited. (M.B. 19)

Siman 298 Seif 6:

If an idolater kindled a flame on motzai Shabbos from a Jew or if a Jew kindled a flame from an idolater, one may recite the beracha on the second flame. If an idolater kindled a flame from an idolater one may not recite the beracha on the second flame. On motzai Yom HaKippurim one may not recite the beracha on a light a Jew kindled from an idolater. (See below siman 624:5)

- We do not refer to where the flame was obtained from a party since it is assumed that their party was idolatrous and one would not be permitted to recite the beracha on such a flame. (M.B. 20)
- Even if the gentile kindled the flame on Shabbos it is permitted since when the Jew kindles a new flame he adds a permitted flame and he may recite the beracha on that additional permitted flame. (M.B. 21)
- Magen Avrohom writes that b'dieved if one recited the beracha on such a flame it is not necessary to repeat the beracha on another flame. (M.B. 22)
- If a gentile kindled a new flame on motzai Shabbos with wood or stones one may recite the beracha on that flame but if the gentile kindled a flame from such a new fire one should be stringent to avoid confusion with a flame that did not rest from transgression. (M.B. 23)

Halacha Highlight

Is it necessary to turn off the lights for havdala?

Shulchan Aruch Siman 298 Seif 4
בכדי שיוכל להכיר
So that one is able to distinguish

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ד') rules that one may not recite the beracha until one benefits from the light. In other words, one must be close enough to the light that he is able to distinguish between the coins of one country and the coins from another country. Therefore, Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"ג) writes that one who is listening to another person recite havdala and wishes to also satisfy his obligation to recite בורא מאורי האש must move himself close enough to the fire so that he could benefit from the light to this degree so that he fulfills his obligation. As long as a person is close enough that he could benefit from the light he fulfills his obligation even if the light is inside and he is outside of the house.

Although Shulchan Aruch initially writes that one must benefit from the light in order to recite the beracha, when he further elaborates on the degree of benefit that is necessary he explains that one must be close enough that he would be able to distinguish between coins. Based on this wording there are Poskim who maintain that as long as the flame is bright enough that one could benefit from the light he may recite the beracha even though he is not benefitting at all from the light. Therefore, it is not necessary to turn off the light in the room when one recites havdala as long as the flame is bright enough that one would be able to benefit from the light of the candle. Rav Chaim Kanievski (ספר שבת לישראל שאלה י"ב עמ' ת"ע) reports that the Chazon Ish did not turn off the lights in the room when he recited havdala. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auebach (שמירת שבת כהלכתה פס"ב הע' כ"א) rules that even those people who are generally particular to turn off the lights for the recitation of havdala may recite the beracha when Yom Tov falls on motzai Shabbos and it is not possible to turn off the lights.