The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן ש"א סעיף כ"ה-כ"ו

Overview

Siman 301 Seif 25 (b):

This is true only when both are confirmed simultaneously but if the person is confirmed first and then composed an amulet that healed three times we do not attribute it to the amulet being confirmed, it is due to the writer's confirmation. **If one wrote three amulets for one person and he was healed all three times neither the writer nor the amulet are confirmed. It is permitted to go out with a confirmed amulet, whether written or whether comprised of herbs, irrespective of whether the person is dangerously ill or not. It may be transported not only for someone who is already epileptic but even one who does not suffer from that condition but is from a family of those who are epileptic and will transport it so that he will not be afflicted by it. He may tie and untie it in the public domain as long as he does not tie it to a necklace or a ring and go out into the public domain since people will think he is wearing it as an adornment and that would be prohibited since it is not an adornment.**

- For example, he wrote a letter for Reuven and it healed him three times, a letter for Shimon and it healed him three times and then another letter for Shimon for whom it has only healed him two times and then the third letter heals Levi. It turns out that the writer and the amulet are confirmed simultaneously. (M.B. 96)
- This will be significant if the writer becomes unconfirmed, e.g. he writes three letters that are ineffective and then even an amulet that he already wrote which healed three times may not be transported. (M.B. 97)
- In other words three letters that contain the same incantation. (M.B. 98)
- There is a disagreement whether the person who was healed three times with this letter may go out on Shabbos with that letter being that it is as of yet unconfirmed. (M.B. 99)
- An amulet is not confirmed unless the letter heals three times. (M.B. 100)
- If it is kisvei hakodesh one may not go out into the public domain unless it is covered out of concern that one will have to remove it if he needs to go to the bathroom. (M.B. 101)

Siman 301 Seif 26:

A doctor is believed to declare that he is an expert.

- He is also trustworthy to identify an amulet as confirmed. (M.B. 103)

Halacha Highlight

Wearing an unconfirmed amulet

Shulchan Aruch Siman 301 Seif 25 (b)
לא איתמחי לא גברא ולא קמע
Neither the person nor the amulet are confirmed

After Shulchan Aruch explains how to confirm an amulet as well as an amulet writer he presents the following halacha. If someone wrote three different amulets, even if each one contains the same incantation (מ"ב ס"ק צ"ח) for a single person and the patient was healed three times, neither the person nor the amulet has been confirmed as reliable. The origin of this ruling is the Gemara Shabbos (61b) which relates that Rav Pappa was uncertain in this case whether the writer has been confirmed as reliable. Although the Gemara does not arrive at a definitive conclusion, Poskim adopt a stringent position and rule that neither the writer nor the amulet have been confirmed. The obvious question is that if a person's life is at risk – ספק פקוח נפש—we should rule leniently in favor of providing the patient with a treatment that may cure him. Why then do the Poskim adopt a stringent position? Teshuvas Be'er Yitzchok (או"ח סי' ט"ז) explains that treatments that are segulah based rather than medically based are difficult to explain since logically they should not be effective to heal someone who is ill. Therefore, we do not allow segulah treatments to be administered when they involve desecrating Shabbos unless it has been confirmed that the segulah is effective. Accordingly, until a writer or amulet have been confirmed they do not override Shabbos prohibitions.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (אג"מ או"ח ח"ה סי' י"ח על סע' כ"ה) suggests that the question of whether one may go out with an amulet or not is not related to preserving the life of the patient since he could wear the amulet inside rather than go outside wearing it. The question of going outside relates to whether an amulet is considered an adornment for someone who is ill and regarding this matter halacha differentiates between a confirmed amulet and one that is not yet confirmed and if the matter is in doubt we adopt a stringent position, as we would with any Shabbos related matter.