The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן שי"א סעיף ו'-ז'

Overview

Siman 311 Seif 6:

If the deceased is in the sun and there is no place where to move it or if they do not want to move it from its location, two people may come and sit on the sides of the corpse. When it becomes hot beneath them each one may bring a bed to sit upon. When they feel heat above them each one may bring a mat to spread over themselves. Each one may then stand up his bed and slip away and what will be left behind is a partition since the ends of the two mats rest upon one another and the other two ends will be on the ground on the two sides of the corpse.

- The reason this complicated procedure must be followed is to demonstrate that one's intent for spreading out the mats was to provide the people with protection from the heat rather than specifically for the corpse. (M.B. 19)
- The mats are stiff so they could remain in place covering the corpse. Magen Avrohom writes that if one is concerned that the corpse will smell and thereby force them to have to leave, it is permitted to spread a mat over the corpse as long as one avoids creating an *ohel*. (M.B. 20)

Siman 311 Seif 7:

It is permitted to anoint a corpse and to rinse it or to remove a pillow from beneath it so that it should not smell as long as one does not move a limb. If its mouth was opening it is permitted to tie his jaw in place so that it should not open any further but one may not close the jaw even partially since that would involve moving a limb. For this reason it is also prohibited to close the eyes of the deceased on Shabbos.

- The reason these activities are permitted is that they involve touching the corpse rather than moving it. (M.B. 21)
- People often lift a corpse off pillows using bread even when there is no concern that the corpse will smell and one should protest the practice and all that is permitted is to remove the pillows from beneath the corpse. (M.B. 22)
- It is permitted to sprinkle vinegar on the deceased's clothing so that it will not smell bad after Shabbos so people could perform the *taharah*. (M.B. 23)
- If the deceased was filthy to the point that it is repulsive, it is permitted to move it using bread or a child in order to wash it with water. (M.B. 24)

Halacha Highlight

Caring for a corpse

Shulchan Aruch Siman 311 Seif 7
ובלבד שלא יזיז בו שום אבר
As long as one does not move any limbs

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ז') rules that it is permitted to anoint, rinse or remove a pillow from beneath a corpse so that it should not produce a foul odor as long as one is careful not to move a limb. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק כ"א) explains that these activities are permitted since they involve only touching the body rather than moving it. Tiferes Yisroel (שבת פכ"ג יכין אות ל"ה) questions this allowance for although it is not necessary to move a limb, inevitably one will end up moving some of the flesh of the deceased. He answers that the only prohibition is moving a limb and moving just the flesh of the deceased is not an issue. Rav Nissim Karelitz (חוט שני ח"ג פמ"ח סק"א) suggests that Shulchan Aruch refers to where one will not move any flesh or any hair of the deceased. For example, there is oil on the body and one merely pushes the oil in different directions. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (שולחן שלמה סק"ח) writes that if one does not intend to move the limb but part of it happens to move in the course of anointing or rinsing the corpse that slight movement is not considered moving *muktzah* and thus is permitted.

Kaf HaChaim (ס"ק נ"ח) cites authorities who permit removing clothing from a corpse even in the winter since in most instances leaving clothing on a corpse will cause it to smell. Rav Shmuel HaLevi Wosner (שבט הליו ח"ד סי' ל') writes that it is mistaken for people to follow this custom which runs counter to the *halacha*. His reasoning is that it is impossible to remove clothing from a corpse without moving one of its limbs. He then reports that the Chazon Ish died on Shabbos night and rather than remove his clothing they only removed the pillow from beneath his head and covered him with a sheet (פסקי תשובות אות ב' והע' 8).