The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Tues, July 29, 2025 ■ ד' אב, תשפ"ה
סימן תקנ"א סעיף י"א-ט"ו

Overview

Siman 551 Seif 11:

A person who eats meat in a place where the custom is to prohibit it has "breached the fence" and will be "bit by a snake." (It is permitted to drink all varieties of beer even if made from honey called מע"ד).

Siman 551 Seif 12:

Regarding haircutting during this week, the prohibition includes the hair on one's head as well as any other hair.

- Both men and women are prohibited to cut their hair but it may be permissible for women to shave the hair by their temples. (M.B. 79)

Siman 551 Seif 13:

Regarding one's beard, any hair that gets in the way of eating may be removed.

Siman 551 Seif 14:

Adults may not cut the hair of children or wash their clothing during the week in which Tisha B'Av falls. However, clothing that children make filthy when they relieve themselves may be laundered and even regarding the clothing of other children the custom is to be lenient.

- Chaye Adam writes that for the needs of children one need not be stringent, even according to our custom, any more than during the week of Tisha B'Av. (M.B. 82)

Siman 551 Seif 15:

Someone whose mourning for a deceased relative and this week overlap and as a result his hair has become heavy may thin it out with a razor but not with a scissors and he may launder his garments in water but not with *nesser* or sand.

- In other words, one's *sheloshim* finished during the week in which Tisha B'Av occurs. (M.B. 85)
- This is true only if the end of *sheloshim* occurs during the week of Tisha B'Av but if it occurs before that week the mourner may cut his hair or launder even though we are generally stringent about these matters. Elya Rabba, however, disagrees and asserts that one should not be lenient unless the end of *sheloshim* occurs before Rosh Chodesh. Later authorities agree with this position. (M.B. 87)

Halacha Highlight

Washing children's garments during the nine days

Shulchan Aruch Siman 551 Seif 14

אסור לגדולים לספר לקטנים ולכבס כסותם

It is prohibited for adults to cut the hair or launder the garments of children

Shulchan Aruch (סע' י"ד) writes that adults may not cut the hair of children or wash their garments in the week in which Tisha B'Av occurs. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק פ"א) cites two reasons for the restriction. The first reason is that generally restrictions apply to children who have reached the age of *chinuch*. The second reason is that not cutting the hair or laundering the garments of children is a source of grief for the parents. Sha'ar HaTzion (ס"ק צ"א) notes that a practical difference between these two explanations is a child who is below the age of *chinuch*. According to the first explanation it should be permitted to cut his hair and launder his garments but according to the second reason it does not matter that the child does not understand since not cutting the hair or laundering the garments of even a young child will be a source of grief for the parents. Chaye Adam (מובא במ"ב ס"ק פ"ב) maintains that when it comes to laundering the clothing of children, one may be lenient after Rosh Chodesh and wash their clothing until the week in which Tisha B'Av occurs, even according to the general Ashkenazi custom that restricts laundering from Rosh Chodesh.

Rema adds that the clothing of children that become filthy after they relieve themselves may be laundered. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק פ"ד) in the name of Levush explains that washing these garments is not a cause for joy so it is not inconsistent with the correct mood for this period of time. Pri Megadim (א"א ס"ק ל"ח) infers from the Bais Yosef and Darkei Moshe that the allowance to launder the garments of children includes any child until the age of *bar/bas-mitzvah*. Many authorities reject Pri Megadim's leniency; however, when necessary one may rely upon his ruling. When laundering the clothing of children in a washing machine it is permitted to wash many garments together but it is not permitted to add garments that belong to adults (פסקי תשובות אות מ"ה).

Stories to Share

The Guardians of the King

ש"ע תקנ"א, י"א: "פורץ גדר הוא וינשכנו נחש..."

Rav Yonasan Eibeshitz, zt"l, was known as the champion of the Jews in his region. Time again he defended the statements of chazal and foiled the plans of the church authorities who always seemed to be seeking a pretext to exile the Jews from Vienna.

One time the ruler of the city asked Rav Yonasan, "I am told that the Talmud writes that the punishment for a rabbinic transgression is death. Most Torah prohibitions are merely punishable by lashes, if that. Why are rabbinic laws be so much more stringent than what is written in the actual Bible?"

"Simple," replied the gadol immediately. "Let's take your Excellency as an example. As ruler of this city your word is law. If you were to ask me to leave the room and I were to refuse, I would be liable to severe punishment. But if you were to kill me for this you would be prosecuted, since this is not an appropriate punishment merely for refusing to leave a room. Also, there may have been extenuating circumstances prompting my refusal. I might have to sit in a dungeon to await a hearing or you could demand that I state why I refused to obey.

"But if someone would attempt to walk through the open castle doors and a guard was to command that he halt and he disregarded the guard's command, the stranger would be shot. And the guard will get a commendation for doing a good job! The reason for this discrepancy is obvious. If the guard is not empowered to kill intruders, the castle will be flooded with people who do not belong there at all. If this is not checked, then every nobleman will be endangered, since access to the great would be open to anyone at all.

Rav Yonasan continued, "Your Excellency's eminence is enough of a safeguard; there is no need for extreme retribution in most cases. But, by the same token, rabbinic decrees are the "guards" of the Torah—they lay the boundary that cannot be crossed and that is why they are punishable by death."

מובא בקול יעקב, ס' ל"ז, אות יוד