The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תקס"ב סעיף ג'-ה'

Overview

Siman 562 Seif 3:

If an individual commits to fast on *erev* Shabbos he must fast until *tzais hakochavim* unless he specified when he committed to fast that he was fasting until the *tzibbur* finished *davening* (see above *siman* 249).

- Meaning he did not specify anything when he committed to fast. (M.B. 17)

Siman 562 Seif 4:

When fasting for a dream one must fast until *tzeis hakochavim* even when fasting on *erev* Shabbos (See above *siman* 249:2).

Siman 562 Seif 5:

If a person did not commit to fast while it was yet day, it is not considered a fast as far as reciting עננו and if he was obligated to fast and did so without a prior commitment he did not fulfill his vow. However, there are authorities who maintain that he should *daven* עננו and this position seems correct when observing a private fast. According to all opinions when fasting because of a dream one recites עננו even though he did not make a prior commitment.

- This is in contrast to a communal fast which does not require a commitment. (M.B. 21)
- The implication is that even if that night he committed to fast the next day it is ineffective. Even if he completed the fast until *tzeis hakochavim* it is not considered a fast since the *pasuk* (יואל א:יי"ד) implies that one must commit to fast beforehand. (M.B. 22)
- Nevertheless, once he began to fast on that day he must fulfill his vow and complete the fast even though he did not commit to fast during the day and it will atone for his sin. Other authorities contend that since he thought it would fulfill his vow his acceptance was in error and as such he may retract and even eat on that day. (M.B. 23)
- This opinion maintains that the Gemara's declaration that it is not considered a fast is limited to the fact that he does not fulfill his vow. (M.B. 24)
- Rema's ruling may be limited to where he did not commit beforehand to fast but intends to complete the fast but if he also does not intend to complete the fast it may not even be considered a fast to recite עננו. In such a circumstance it is best to skip the words צום תעניתנו and replace them with the words ביום זה. (M.B. 25)
- In such a case one may for sure recite the words צום תעניתנו even though he did not commit beforehand to fast. (M.B. 26)

Halacha Highlight

Committing to fast

Shulchan Aruch Siman 562 Seif 5

כל תענית שלא קבלו עליו היחיד מבעוד יום

If one did not commit to fast while it was yet day

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ה') declares that if an individual fasts without committing to do so the day before he fasted, it is not considered a fast. Rema explains that Shulchan Aruch's intent is that without a prior commitment even though the person fasts he does not add the paragraph of עננו, and if he was obligated to fast, this fast does not satisfy that obligation. He then notes that there are authorities who maintain that he may add עננו and then contends that when it comes to a private fast it is logical that one could subscribe to that position. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק כ"ד) explains that the dispute relates to the intent of the Gemara when it states that it is not considered a fast if one did not commit to fast the day before. According to the first opinion it does not have any of the characteristics of a fast whereas according to the second opinion the intent is just that one does not fulfill his obligation to fast but he may nevertheless add עננוsince he is fasting.

Levush offers the following explanation why it is necessary for a person to commit to fast the day before rather than just wake up and refrain from eating. Fasting is similar to offering a *korban* in that one is offering his fat and blood. Therefore, just like a *korban* requires the owner to designate and sanctify the animal before it is offered as a *korban* and the *korban* is invalid if it is offered without first sanctifying it, so too one who fasts without first committing to fast does not fulfill his obligation. The Leshem is cited (ספר הזכרון תפארת רפאל עמ' קל"ט) as explaining that the principle behind formally committing to fast is that before engaging in any sacred activity one must first prepare himself for that activity and this commitment satisfies this obligation. This is also the reason that we make a *zimun* before the recitation of *birkas hamazon* and recite the sentence of נקדש before actually declaring קדוש קדוש קדוש.