The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תקע"ה סעיף א'-ה'

Overview

Siman 574 Seif 1:

One who travels from a place they are fasting to a place they are not fasting and his intent is to return to his hometown, he must observe all the fasts they committed to observe.

- Shulchan Aruch refers to where he was present when the residents of his home town committed to fast because if he was not present he would not be obligated to fast. This also applies only when the fast is to promote repentance but if it was to commemorate a past tragedy it is unnecessary to commit to fast and is automatically binding. (M.B. 1)

Siman 574 Seif 2:

One who travels from a place where they are not fasting to a place where they are fasting must fast with them even though his intent is to return home. However, since he did not commit to fast if he leaves the city and goes beyond the *techum* he is permitted to eat and does not have to make up the fast. This applies when he arrives on the day they are fasting but if he arrives the day before the fast he must commit to fast with them and must complete the fast as well.

- Even though he ate that day before he arrived in the city, nevertheless, he completes the fast with them and does not eat. (M.B. 2)
- He must join the *tzibbur* in their distress and it is prohibited to eat even in private. When they are fasting for a trouble that has passed it is possible that he may eat in private but Elya Rabba adopts a stringent position. (M.B. 3)
- If he does not intend to return he may not eat since he becomes a resident of that place and their practices become binding upon him. (M.B. 4)
- Taz writes that he need not verbally commit to fast provided that he is present when the *tzibbur* commits to fast and then may not eat, even if he travels beyond the *techum*. (M.B. 5)

Siman 574 Seif 3:

If one forgot and ate, he may not display to others that he ate and nor is he permitted to indulge by rationalizing that once he ate a little he may eat a lot (and even when not in their presence it is prohibited to indulge).

- One must interrupt immediately when he realizes, even within that meal, even though he did not commit to fast. (M.B. 6)
- Even though he may eat outside of the *techum* he should not indulge so that if he returns he should not appear well-fed. Others explain that he should not indulge regarding other matters. (M.B. 7)

Siman 574 Seif 4:

It is a *mitzvah* for one to starve himself during a period of hunger and marital relations are prohibited other than the night of immersion and for those who do not have children, it is permitted.

- Meaning he should eat minimal amounts. (M.B. 8)
- Magen Avrohom is stringent even regarding the night of immersion but others are lenient and one may follow the lenient position especially when the fast is for other distressing circumstances. (M.B. 11)
- It is permitted until she is pregnant. (M.B. 12)

Siman 574 Seif 5:

Whoever separates from the *tzibbur* will not see their consolation and one who shares in their distress will merit to see their consolation.

- This refers to those things that one could contribute, e.g., prayers, fasting or monetarily. (M.B. 13)

Halacha Highlight

Additional restrictions during a period of famine

Shulchan Aruch Siman 574 Seif 4

מצוה להרעיב אדם עצמו בשנת רעבון

It is a *mitzvah* for a person to starve himself during a year of famine

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ד') rules that during a period of famine there is a *mitzvah* for a person to starve himself. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ח) explains that this is not meant literally that he should not eat altogether, rather it means that he should eat limited amounts and may not eat more than necessary. Sha'arei Teshuvah cites Birkei Yosef who explains that a famine is defined by lack of food; however, if food is available but is expensive, even if the price has doubled, it is not considered a famine. Another restriction that applies during a period of famine is marital relations. The exception to this rule is the night a woman immerses and a couple who does not have children. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"א) notes that Magen Avrohom prohibits marital relations even on the night a woman immerses but other authorities reject his position and write that one may rely upon Shulchan Aruch's lenient position. And certainly if they are facing another tragedy other than a famine one may adopt the lenient position concerning martial relations on the night a woman immerses.

Poskim point out that nowadays it is rare to have a famine that prohibits marital relations. However, even concerning other tragedies, e.g., war which presents a significant danger or other tragedy that may befall a community the same restrictions apply. However, if someone is concerned that stringency concerning this matter will arouse his evil inclination he should not be stringent. Similarly, if the war or other tragedy will continue for an extended period of time there should not be a decree against marital relations since such a decree can lead to many transgressions. Furthermore, when issuing such a decree it is limited to the city or region that is directly affected but not throughout the country. Furthermore, such a decree is issued only when people's lives are at risk but not when the tragedy is something financial.