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

Overview

Siman 616 Seif 1:

Children are permitted in all of these things except for wearing shoes since there is no concern if they do not wear shoes. It is permitted to ask a gentile to wash or anoint a child but when it comes to feeding a child, one may do that even personally.

- One should not wash the entire body of a child in hot water even if it was heated before Shabbos. (M.B. 1)
- Whether one should protest if a child puts on leather shoes is discussed in siman 343. (M.B. 2)
- The child may be bathed by a gentile even in water that was heated on Yom Kippur since children are considered to be in danger without bathing. Authorities write that nowadays that we do not bathe children every day and refraining from bathing them does not cause them any distress they should not be bathed on Yom Kippur even by a gentile. (M.B. 3)

Siman 616 Seif 2:

A child (that is healthy) **who is 9 years old or a 10 year old should be trained to fast for a few hours. How is this done? If he normally eats two hours into the day he should be fed at three hours into the day, if he was accustomed to eat at three hours into the day he should be fed at four hours into the day. This time should be increased in accordance with the child's strength** (and the same is true concerning a healthy girl). **Rabbinically, an 11 year old, whether male or female completes the fast in order to train them to fulfill the mitzvah.** Some maintain that Rabbinically a child is not obligated to finish the fast at all and one may rely upon this position for a child that is weak and lacking the strength to fast. Any time a child is trained to fast he must also be trained to refrain from bathing and anointing. **A 12 year old girl and a 13 year old boy who produced two hairs are considered adults for all mitzvos and are Biblically obligated to complete the fast. If they did not produce two hairs, they remain children and are only Rabbinically obligated to complete the fast.** Even a child who is soft and weak must complete the fast out of concern that the hairs may have fallen out. **A child less than 9 years old should not be afflicted on Yom Kippur so that he should not be put in danger** and even if he wants to be stringent we protest the behavior.

- In other words we do not allow him to eat as he normally does during the week. The mitzvah of chinuch is the father's responsibility to the exclusion of everyone else and there is even a dispute whether a mother is obligated in the mitzvah of chinuch. Magen Avrohom rules that everyone is prohibited from giving a child something that is prohibited for consumption. (M.B. 5)
- But he is obligated to fast for a few hours as mentioned at the beginning of the seif. (M.B. 8)
- The reason we do not have any child in his 12th year fast is that nowadays people are weaker and we assume children are too weak unless we know that they are strong. Elya Rabba indicates that even in the 13th year a child should not fast unless he has passed his 13th birthday. (M.B. 9)
- Regarding fasts other than Yom Kippur, since they are Rabbinic enactments one need not fast unless he possesses two hairs. (M.B. 13)
- We do not even have them fast for a few hours. (M.B. 14)

Halacha Highlight

Putting leather shoes on children

Shulchan Aruch Siman 616 Seif 1
שאין חוששין כל כך אם לא ינעלו
There is not such a great concern if he does not wear them

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') rules that children are not included in the restrictions that apply to adults. In other words, not only may children bathe, anoint, eat and drink, but an adult may even provide or perform these activities for children (מ"ב סק"א). The reason is that Chazal determined that these activities are necessary for children's growth and development (מ"ב סק"ב) and thus there was never a decree that children should not experience these pleasures. The one exception to the rule is the restriction against wearing shoes. Since wearing shoes does not contribute to a child's growth and development, one should not put leather shoes on a child. Shulchan Aruch, Rema and Mishnah Berurah elaborate in the next seif the age at which a child begins to become accustomed to fasting. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) also notes in the name of later authorities that nowadays we no longer bathe or anoint children on Yom Kippur since it is no longer seen as necessary.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (מנחת שלמה ח"ב סי' ל"ה אות ה' ומהדו"ת סי' ס' סוף אות כ"א) wrote that nowadays the custom by many people is to put leather shoes on children since presently children generally do not walk around barefoot. Therefore, wearing shoes is considered something which is necessary for the child's growth and development and thus permitted as Chazal permitted the other restrictions for children. Sefer Chinuch HaBanim L'Mitzvos (סע' נ' והע' קצ"ה) cites Rav Auerbach as ruling that this leniency applies only when it is cold outside or there is a concern that the child will walk on something that will hurt his feet. Teshuvas Shevet HaLevi (ח"ז סי' ר"י"ח אות ב') rules that when a child is even two or three years old and will not be harmed by not wearing leather shoes, one should train him that it is prohibited to wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (אשרי האיש ח"ג פכ"ב אות ח') also ruled that children should be trained in this restriction, especially since it is easy to obtain shoes that are not made from leather.