The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תרל"ט סעיף ה'

Overview

Siman 639 Seif 5:

If rain falls one may enter his house. When is it permitted to enter into the house? When enough rain drops fall into the sukkah that if it were to fall into one's food, even cooked beans, it would become ruined. This is true even though there is no food in front of him. Someone who is not an expert in this barometer should determine whether he would leave his house if this amount of rain were to fall into his house and if so, he may leave the sukkah as well. This applies the other days and nights of Sukkos but on the first night he must eat an olive's volume in the sukkah even if rain is falling and he must recite kiddush in the sukkah so that he could recite she'hechiyanu.

- Bugs are also a reason to leave the sukkah, even if they are not bothering the people but are ruining the food. Similarly, if it is so cold that one's food is freezing he may go inside. Bikurei Yaakov writes that if one could easily arrange that the food should not freeze, e.g. placing it on a plate that contains hot water, one must make the effort rather than go inside. (M.B. 31)
- If the wind is blowing twigs or branches into one's food and one is sensitive so that this is disturbing, he may go inside. (M.B. 32)
- If the rain is not hitting him and his food, he should eat outside and he may even be obligated to recite the beracha. (M.B. 33)
- Beans ruin from even a small amount of water. (M.B. 34)
- Some authorities disagree with the application of this exposition and although out of doubt one must eat in the sukkah one does not recite the beracha on the sukkah in this circumstance. Later authorities also write that one should wait until chatzos for the rain to stop. Others write that one need not wait so long since this will make others suffer and one need not wait more than an hour or two. (M.B. 35)
- On the first night it is preferable to recite kiddush in the sukkah so that the she'hechiyanu will apply to the sukkah as well. After eating an olive's volume of bread one finishes the meal inside. If the rain stops, even after one recited birkas hamazon he must recite the beracha and eat slightly more the volume of an egg outside in the sukkah. On the second night he should recite kiddush and eat most of the meal inside and afterwards he should eat an olive's volume of bread in the sukkah without reciting the beracha. Preferably, even on the second night one should wait a bit for the rain to stop. (M.B. 36)

Halacha Highlight

Leaving the sukkah due to rain

Shulchan Aruch Siman 639 Seif 5
ירדו גשמים הרי זה נכנס לתוך ביתו
If rain falls he may enter his house

Shulchan Aruch writes that when it rains one may leave the sukkah to eat inside. However, one may leave the sukkah only when it is raining hard enough that if the rain were to fall into one's cooked food, even beans that ruin easily, the food would become ruined. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק ל"ג) writes in the name of Bikurei Yaakov that if rain is falling but not on the place where one is sitting, he must eat in the sukkah and may even be permitted to recite the beracha on the sukkah at that time. Teshuvas Shevet Halevi (ח"ז סי' קצ"א סק"ב) writes that even if the rain will enter the sukkah but hasn't yet due to the thickness of the schach he may recite the beracha on the sukkah if he will be able to eat before the rain begins to drip in the sukkah. Ritva (סוכה כ"ט) rules that if one sees that rain will begin to fall but has not yet started he is already exempt from sitting in the sukkah and may begin his meal in his home since he knows that he will experience distress in the middle of the meal. Teshuvas Shevet HaLevi (שם) notes that according to Bikurei Yaakov cited by Mishnah Berurah, it would seem that we do not accept Ritva's ruling since in the circumstance discussed by Bikurei Yaakov's the Ritva would rule that he is already exempt.

The degree of distress one must experience to be exempt from sitting in the sukkah is difficult to ascertain. Teshuvas Maharshag (ח"א סי' ל"ג אות ב') writes that it is not measured by the degree of distress that would compel a person to go to a friend's house; rather it is measured by the degree of distress necessary for one to move to move his bed and table to another room in his house. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (אשרי האיש ח"ג פכ"ו אות ל') wrote that one should determine whether in this circumstance he would move from his house to a place that will not provide him with such a comfortable dwelling.