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

Overview

Siman 688 Seif 3:

Villages, large cities and cities that were not walled in the time of Yehoshua ben Nun read on the 14th.

- Someone who should read on the 15th may not read on the 14th and vice versa. Pri Megadim writes that b'dieved if someone from a walled city read on the 14th he fulfilled his obligation. (M.B. 8)

Siman 688 Seif 4:

If it is uncertain whether a city had a wall from the time of Yehoshua they should read on the 14th and 15th as well as both nights but the beracha is recited only on the 14th since that is the time that most people recite the beracha.

- Tiberias reads on the 14th and 15th since it is uncertain whether the sea is considered a wall. In these countries there is no uncertainty since they are north and it is known that they were not inhabited at the time of Yehoshua bin Nun. (M.B. 9)
- Rejoicing and gifts to the poor are observed on both days. (M.B. 10)
- The reason they recite the beracha on the 14th is that it is the time when most people read the megilla and even if the city was surrounded by a wall from the time of Yehoshua, b'dieved if they read on the 14th the mitzvah is fulfilled. (M.B. 11)

Siman 688 Seif 5:

If a city person traveled to a walled city or a resident of a walled city traveled to a city, if his intent was to return to his place for the reading and became delayed and did not return, he should read at the time of the place where he lives. If he did not intend to return until after the time for reading he should read together with the people where he is currently. If he was in the wilderness or on a boat he reads on the 14th like the majority of the world.

- One must be aware of three things: 1) One who is associated with a non-walled city even for a day is considered a resident of a non-walled city and reads on the 14th. Similarly, if he is a resident of a walled city for the day he reads on the 15th. 2) The primary time for reading is during the day and if one is in a non-walled city on the 14th one reads on the 14th and the same is true regarding a walled city. 3) The time for reading mentioned in Shulchan Aruch is the time where he is currently rather than the place where he is from. (M.B. 12)
- Rejoicing and gifts to the poor are observed on both days. (M.B. 10)
- A city person who went to a walled city and his intent was to return to his non-walled city before the morning of the 15th, even if it turns out that he will be in the walled city on the morning of the 15th, he nevertheless reads on the 14th even though he is in the walled city. If his intent was to remain in the walled city through the morning of the 15th he is considered a walled city resident and reads with them on the 15th even if afterwards he returns to the non-walled city. (M.B. 12)
- If a walled city resident went to a non-walled city and his intent was to return home before the morning of the 14th, even if he ends up staying there he reads on the 15th. If his intent was to be in the non-walled city on the morning of the 14th he must read with the non-walled city residents. Taz asserts that this applies if he was in the city in the morning but if he returned to the walled city before daybreak his intent is irrelevant. (M.B. 12)
- This is true even if he is a resident of a walled city. (M.B. 13)

Halacha Highlight

Cities that are uncertain which day to read megilla

Shulchan Aruch Siman 688 Seif 4

כרך שהוא ספק אם הקף ביני יהושע אם לאו

A walled city about which there is a doubt whether it was walled from the time of Yehoshua or not

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ד') writes that if there is a city about which it is uncertain whether it was surrounded by a wall from the time of Yehoshua, the residents should read the megilla on both the 14th and 15th. However, they should only recite the beracha on the reading that is done on the 14th. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"א) explains that since reciting a beracha even on a Biblical mitzvah fulfills only a Rabbinic obligation if there is an uncertainty whether the beracha should be recited, it is categorized a safek d'rabanan and one does not recite the beracha. Therefore, certainly regarding megilla reading where the obligation is only Rabbinic, a beracha would not be recited in a circumstance of uncertainty. The reason why the beracha is recited on the 14th is that this is the time that most people read the megilla and even if a walled city resident read the megilla on the 14th he fulfills his obligation, so there is no risk that the beracha would be in vain.

Mishnah Berurah (סק"י) also mentions that the mitzvah of rejoicing and giving matanos la'evyonim applies on both days. Biur Halacha (סי' תרצ"ה סע' ד' ד"ה או של) in the name of Pri Chadash rules that when there is a city about which it is uncertain whether it had a wall from the time of Yehoshua they should send mishloach manos on the 14th since that is the day the mitzvah is observed by most people. Although Biur Halacha does not mention it, Pri Chadash also rules that the seudah should also be held on the 14th. Pri Megadim (שם צ"ז סק"ה) disagrees and asserts that these mitzvos should be treated the same as the mitzvah of megilla reading and should be observed on both days. The custom is in accordance with Pri Megadim (פסקי תשובות אות ו'). Regarding על הניסים, Mishnah Berurah (תרצ"ג סק"ו) rules that it should be recited on both days.