



## **SITTING DOWN TO YOUR MEAL, HALACHICALLY: AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF HILCHOT SE'UDAH**

### **I NETILAT YADAYIM**

#### **1) Water Which May be Used for *Netilat Yadayim***

**רמב"ם, הלכות ברכות פ"ו ה"ז**

ארבעה דברים פוסלין את המים. שנוי מראה. וגלוי. ועשית מלאכה בהן. והפסד שמונע את הבהמה מלשתות מהן. כיצד. מים שנשתנו מראיתן בין בכלים בין בקרקעות בין מחמת דבר שנפל לתוכן בין מחמת מקומן הרי אלו פסולין. וכן אם נתגלו גלוי האוסר אותן משתיה נפסלו לנטילת ידים:

Four circumstances render water unfit for washing the hands,—change in color, exposure, previous use, and deterioration to an extent that would prevent cattle drinking of it. If water has changed in color, whether it is contained in a vessel or kept in the ground and whether the change was caused by a substance dropped into the water, or is due to its situation, it is unfit for washing the hands. So also, if it has been subjected to such an exposure as would prohibit its being used for drinking, it is unfit for washing the hands.

**משנה ידים א:ג**

המים שנפסלו משתית הבהמה, בכלים, פסולים. ובקרקעות, כשרים. נפל לתוכן דיו, קומוס, וקנקנתום ונשתנו מראיהן, פסולין. עשה בהם מלאכה או ששרה בהן פתו, פסולין. שמעון התמני אומר, אפלו נתכנו לשרות בזה ונפל לשני, כשרים

Water which had become so unfit that it could not be drunk by a beast: If it was in a vessel it is invalid, But if it was in the ground it is valid. If there fell into [the water], dye, or gum or sulphate of copper and its color changed, it is invalid. If a person did any work with it or soaked his bread in it, it is invalid. Shimon of Teman says: even if he intended to soak his bread in one water and it fell into another water the water is valid.

#### **Rif (*Pesachim* 41a)**

1) the *mishna* refers to water that is so salty that it is unfit for canine consumption.

2) the *mishna* refers to water that is cloudy, similar to mud.

**Rambam (*Hilkhot Berakhot* 6:10)** - water which is not fit to be drunk by an animal, including water that is either bitter or muddy, may not be used for *netilat yadayim*

**Rosh (*Chullin* 8:19; *Peirush Ha-Rosh, Yadayim* 1:3)** - the *mishna* must refer to water that is spoiled and therefore unfit for consumption, but not to muddy water.

**Shulchan Arukh (160:9)** disqualifies water that is either too bitter or salty for consumption, as well as water that is too dirty for consumption.

**Shulchan Arukh (160:1)** Water whose appearance has changed cannot be used for *netilat yadayim*.

**Mishna Berura** :If the water is simply clouded by dirt, then it may be used

**Shulchan Arukh (160:2)** Water with which a *melakha* was performed, within which one dipped bread, or which one used for washing dishes may not be used for *netilat yadayim*. Similarly, one may not use water that was used to heat a bottle or food.

**Piskei Teshuvot 160:5** - Water that condensed from an air conditioner may be used for *netilat yadayim*

## 2) Hot Water for *Netilat Yadayim*

### תלמוד בבלי חולין ק"ע"א

איתמר חמי האור חזקיה אמר אין נוטלים מהן לידיים ורבי יוחנן אמר נוטלין מהם לידיים אמר רבי יוחנן שאלתי את רבן גמליאל בנו של רבי ואוכל טהרות ואמר לי כל גדולי גליל עושין כן

A disagreement was stated with regard to water heated by fire: Ḥizkiyya says that one may not wash his hands with such water, and Rabbi Yoḥanan says that one may wash his hands with it. Rabbi Yoḥanan said: I asked Rabban Gamliel, son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, about this halakha, and he was one who would eat only in a state of ritual purity and was therefore careful about washing his hands; and he said to me that all the great men of the Galilee would do so, i.e., wash their hands in heated water.

חמי טבריא חזקיה אמר אין נוטלין מהם לידיים אבל מטבילין בהן הידיים ורבי יוחנן אמר כל גופו טובל בהן אבל לא פניו ידיו ורגליו

Likewise, with regard to the hot springs of Tiberias, Ḥizkiyya says that one may not wash his hands with water from them before eating, but if there are forty se'a, the requisite size of a ritual bath, then one may immerse the hands directly in them, and this is effective for the ritual of washing the hands before a meal. And Rabbi Yoḥanan says that an impure person may immerse his entire body in such water to become pure, but one may still not use it for the immersion of part of his body, such as his face, hands, and feet, as this immersion is not considered equivalent to washing the hands.

**Rosh, *Chullin* 8:6; Rashba, *Chullin* 106a; Mordekhai, *Berakhot* 193)**

One may even wash one's hands with water whose temperature is above *yad soledet bo*.

**Semag, *Asin* 17; Semak 181** - One may not wash with water hotter than *yad soledet bo*.

**Shulchan Arukh** (160:6) One may wash his hands with hot water.

**Mishna Berura (27)**, One allow hot water to cool down before using it for *netilat yadayim*, out of concern for those opinions which prohibit washing in water hotter than *yad soledet bo*.

### 3) Using Other Liquids for *Netilat Yadayim*

**Rosh (*Berakhot* 7:31), Raavad (cited by the Rosh):** Only water may be used for *netilat yadayim*. Even water whose appearance has changed cannot be used for *netilat yadayim*.

**Rashba (*Torat Ha-Bayit, Bayit 6, Sha'ar 6*) :** One may use wine for *netilat yadayim*. (He concludes that practically one should not use wine, as it would be perceived as disrespectful to use such an important beverage. )

**Rashi (*Berakhot* 50b):** One may wash one's hands with fruit juice. (Apparently while water whose appearance has changed may not be used for *netilat yadayim*, as long as the fruit juice's natural appearance has not changed, it may be used.)

**Hagahot Asheri (*Berakhot* 2:11) cites the Or Zaru'a (1:60):** One may wash his hands with beer or cooked honey in extenuating circumstances.

**Shulchan Arukh** (160:12) cites these three opinions

- a) the view which limits *netilat yadayim* to water,
- b) the opinion which permits using wine for *netilat yadayim* (the **Rema** limits this to white wine)
- c) the view which permits using all juices in extenuating circumstances. The **Rema** adds that even beer or cooked honey may be used, if necessary. The **Mishna Berura (63)** rules that one should be strict regarding wine, but one may use fruit juice "*bi-she'at ha-dechak*." **R. Moshe Stern writes in his Be'er Moshe (5:40)** that one may use coffee or tea as well for *netilat yadayim*.

### 4) How Much of One's Hand Must One Wash

**Rosh (*Chullin* 8:11) cites the Rif:** One must wash the entire hand until the wrist. The Rosh describes this view as an "unnecessary stringency" (*chumra yeteira*), and records that the custom is not in accordance with this opinion. Rather, he rules that one need only wash his fingers until the knuckles, where the fingers meet the hands.

**Beit Yosef (161):** Since washing one's entire hand is somewhat effortless, one should preferably wash his entire hand, in the spirit of R. Chisda's statement, "I washed with full handfuls of water and was granted full handfuls of prosperity." **Shulchan Arukh (161:4)** - Cites both opinions, and concludes that it is appropriate to act in accordance with the stricter opinion.

**Bi'ur Halakha (s.v. ve-ra'ui linhog):** Some *Acharonim* understand that the *halakha* is actually in accordance with the lenient opinion and that washing one's entire hand is to be considered a stringency. However, he insists, many *Rishonim* maintain that one must wash one's entire hand, and therefore one should really only be lenient in extenuating circumstances.

**Shulchan Arukh 613:2** - On Yom Kippur, when one is not permitted to wash oneself, one should only wash until the top of his fingers upon waking in the morning. However, *kohanim* wash their entire hands before the *Birkat Kohanim*, as the *kohanim* in the *Beit Ha-Mikdash* would wash their entire hands (*Chullin* 106b). Furthermore, one who cannot wash his upper hand due to an injury or bandage should wash until the tops of his fingers.

## 5) Ko'ach Gavra

### תלמוד בבלי חולין קז ע"א

אמר רב פפא האי אריתא דדלאי אין נוטלין ממנו לידיים דלא אתו מכח גברא ואי מיקרב לגבי דולא דקאתו מכח גברא נוטלין ממנו לידיים

Rav Pappa said: With regard to this irrigation channel [*arita dedalla'ei*], into which water is poured from a river using buckets, and which then transports the water to the fields, one may not wash his hands in it. The reason is that this water does not come from a person's force, i.e., it is not poured on the hands by a direct act, as it moves by force of the current in the channel. But if one draws his hands near the bucket itself, in such a manner that the water poured on his hands comes from a person's force before it begins to flow in the channel, then one may wash his hands with it.

- 1) the water must be poured directly from a human act (*ko'ach gavra*)
- 2) one may wash his hand in a dike close to where the water is poured, as that water at that stage is moving due to *ko'ach gavra*, and not due to gravity or inertia.

**Beit Yosef (259) , Hagahot Maimoniyot:** The requirement of *ko'ach gavra* is learned from the verse "And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean" (*Bamidbar* 19:10).

### תוספות

דלא אתו מכח גברא - פירש בהלכות גדולות שמותר להטביל ידיים בתוך הכלי דחשיבא נטילה והביא ראיה מפ"ב דזבחים (דף כא.) דאיבעיא להו מהו לקדש ידיו ורגליו בכיור ממנו אמר רחמנא ולא לתוכו משמע דבקיודש ידיים מבעי ליה משום דכתיב ממנו אבל בנטילת ידיים אפילו בתוכן מותר וקשה לפירושו דהכא אמר אינו נוטל ממנו דלא אתי מכח גברא משמע דבעינן כח גברא השופך ומיהו י"ל דבעינן נטילה מן הכלי בין טובל ידיו בתוך הכלי ובין שופך מן הכלי על ידיו יש כאן נטילה מן הכלי אבל הכא ידיו חוץ לכלי הן וכבר פסק כח הכלי כשהמים באים עליו הלכך אין כאן נטילה מן הכלי וגם טבילה אין כאן שהן שאובין והא דנקט דלא אתו מכח גברא לאו דוקא מכח גברא אלא משום דלא אתו מכח כלי דבעינן נטילה מן הכלי א"נ משום דתנן במס' ידיים בפ"ק (מ"ה) הכל כשרין ליתן מים לידיים אפילו חרש שוטה וקטן ומניח חבית בין ברכיו ונוטל ומניח חבית על צדו ונוטל הקוף נותן לידיים רבי יוסי פוסל בשניהם פירוש בקוף ובחבית נוטה על צדו והמים נשפכים מאליהן דבעי רבי יוסי מכח גברא ות"ק לא בעי אלא שיהא כח כלי והשתא

שמעתא דנקט כח גברא אתי כרבי יוסי אבל ההלכות גדולות אי אפשר להעמיד אלא כרבנן וצריך להחמיר כיון דסוגיא דשמעתין כרבי יוסי ואם אדם נוטל ידו אחת וחוזר ומשפשף בחברתה צריך לחזור וליטול כדאמרין בפרק שני דידיים (מ"ג) נטל ידו אחת ושפשף בחברתה טמאה ואם שרה פתו במים או הדיח בהן את הכלים פסולים לנטילה ואם הדיח בהן ידיו כשרין דהכי תנן במסכת ידים וצריך לשפוך מים על ידיו ג' פעמים פעם ראשונה כדי להעביר טיט ודבר החוצץ מעל ידיו ופעם שניה לטהר ידיו ופעם שלישית לטהר אותן מים וכן מוכח בכמה דוכתין במסכת ידים שצריך מים ראשונים ושניים ומיהו אם בפעם אחת שופך מים הרבה כשיעור רביעית ידיו טהורות דתנן במסכת ידים (פ"ב מ"א) ידו אחת בשטיפה אחת ידו טהורה שתי ידיו משטיפה אחת ר"מ מטמא עד שיטול מי רביעית פירוש ואפילו באין משירי טהרה דלא בעו רביעית כשנוטל בשתי שטיפות והשתא דליכא אלא שטיפה אחת צריך רביעית בשטיפה זו אבל בנוטל ידו אחת לא צריך רביעית כי אתו משירי טהרה אלא שתהא אותה שטיפה מרובה כשתים :

**Tosafot cites the Behag**, who maintains that immersing one's hands in a vessel is considered a valid form of netilat yadayim. Ko'ach gavra, he argues, is only required when one washes his hands outside of a vessel; when one washes his hands inside of a vessel, ko'ach gavra is not necessary.

**Shulchan Arukh (159:8)** :One may rely upon Tosfot it in extenuating circumstances. However, if afterwards one is able to wash his hands from a vessel, he should wash again without a blessing.

**Mishna Berura (55)** offers an example of such extenuating circumstances, such as a case in which the vessel is too heavy to lift and one can only immerse his hands in the water. )

**Taz (11) cites R. Shlomo Luria (Yam Shel Shlomo, Chullin 8:23)**: One should not rely upon the position of the Behag even in extenuating circumstances.

**Chayei Adam (38:3)** - One who must immerse his hands into a vessel should not recite the blessing and should wrap his hands in a cloth before eating, and the Mishna Berura concurs.

***When one does not have a vessel, may he wash his hands from a faucet?***

**Rosh, Chullin 8:14; Mordekhai, Berakhot 200-201** - If one opens the spigot of a bucket filled with water and it pours onto one's hands, that is considered to be ko'ach gavra.

**Shulchan Arukh (159:9)** codifies this ruling, but writes that one must open the spigot repeatedly, for each flow of water. Apparently, water that flows from the bucket after the initial burst is not considered as resulting from ko'ach gavra (**Bi'ur Halacha, s.v. be-khol shefikha**).

**Chayei Adam (ibid.; )**, **Mishna Berura (159:47)** - If one pumps water from a river to a basin, while the water is being pumped, the water in the basin is considered to be connected to the river, and one may therefore immerse his hands in the basin. However, once the flow of water is interrupted, one may not immerse his hands in the basin. Furthermore, one may not wash his hands under the stream of water from the pump, as the pump is not considered to be a vessel.

Acharonim write that one may not open the faucet over a basin and immerse his hands in the basin, as one cannot assume that the water from the faucet is “connected” to a body of water. However, **may one open the faucet over his hands and assume that the initial water released is considered to be “ko’ach gavra”?**

**Zekan Aharon 2:1; Tzitz Elizer 8:7; Yaskil Avdi OC (5:26)** discuss whether one can consider the “dud” (boiler) located on one’s roof and the pipe which brings the water to the faucet to be a vessel.

**Tzitz Eliezer** - permits one to wash from a faucet by opening and closing the tap in extenuating circumstances. Nowadays, cold water is not stored in boilers on rooftops, and hot water, depending upon how it is heated, is often not stored in a separate boiler. Accordingly, one should not wash his hands from a faucet. We will discuss what one should do if he is unable to wash netilat yadayim in a future shiur.

## 6) Who may pour the water over one’s hands?

### משנה ידיים א:ה

המים שהנחתום מטביל בהם את הגלסקין, פסולים. וכשהוא מדיח את ידיו בקן, כשרים. הכל כשרים לתן לידיים, אפלו חרש שוטה וקטן. מניח חבית בין ברכיו ונוטל. מטה חבית על צדה ונוטל. והקוף נוטל לידיים. רבי יוסי פוסל בשני אלו

Water in which the baker dips his loaves is invalid; But if he moistened his hands in the water it is valid. All are fit to pour water over the hands, even a deaf-mute, an imbecile, or a minor. A person may place the jug between his knees and pour out the water Or he may turn the jug on its side and pour it out. A monkey may pour water over the hands. Rabbi Yose declares these [latter] two cases invalid.

**Shulchan Arukh (159:11-12)** :Anyone can pour water over one’s hands, including a cheres, shoteh, and a katan. Regarding an ape, he cites two views and indicates that he accepts the lenient position.

**Rema** - rules that one should be stringent regarding an ape, and also comments that a child under six years old is no different than an ape regarding this halakha.

**Shulchan Arukh 159:12** - Although it may seem rather uncommon to have an ape pour water over one’s hands for netilat yadayim, this case is relevant in determining whether the act of pouring the water must be done as a deliberate act and what suffices as “intention.”

## E) How the Hands Should be Washed

### Tumat Yadayim – Stam Yadayim Temei'ot

#### תלמוד בבלי שבת דף יד ע"ב- טו ע"א

יְדֵימֵי תַלְמִידֵי שַׁמַּי וְהִלֵּל גָּזְרוּ? שַׁמַּי וְהִלֵּל גָּזְרוּ! דִּתְנַבְּא: יוֹסִי בֶן יוֹעֶזֶר אִישׁ צְרִידָה וְיוֹסִי בֶן יוֹחָנָן אִישׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם גָּזְרוּ טוּמְאָה עַל אֶרֶץ הָעַמִּים וְעַל כְּלֵי זָכוּכִית. שָׁמְעוּן בֶּן שֹׁטַח תִּיקֵן כְּתוּבָה לְאִשָּׁה, וְגָזְרוּ טוּמְאָה עַל כְּלֵי מִתְכוֹת. שַׁמַּי וְהִלֵּל גָּזְרוּ טוּמְאָה עַל הַיָּדִים

Among the list of items in the mishna with regard to which the disciples of Shammai and Hillel instituted decrees, were the hands of any person who did not purify himself for the sake of purity of teruma. If he came into contact with teruma, the Sages decreed it impure. The Gemara asks: And with regard to hands, was it the disciples of Shammai and Hillel who issued the decree of impurity? Shammai and Hillel themselves issued the decree. As it was taught in a baraita: Yosei ben Yo'ezer of Tzereida and Yosei ben Yoḥanan of Jerusalem decreed impurity on the land of the nations, that the land outside Eretz Yisrael transmits impurity; and they decreed impurity on glass vessels, even though glass is not listed in the Torah among the vessels that can become impure. Shimon ben Shataḥ instituted the formula of a woman's marriage contract and also decreed special impurity on metal vessels. Shammai and Hillel decreed impurity on the hands.

וְכִי תִימָא שַׁמַּי וְסִיעֵתוֹ וְהִלֵּל וְסִיעֵתוֹ, וְהָאֵמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: שְׁמִנָּה עֶשֶׂר דְּבַר גָּזְרוּ, וּבִשְׁמִנָּה עֶשֶׂר נִחְלְקוּ. וְאֵילוּ הִלֵּל וְשַׁמַּי לֹא נִחְלְקוּ אֶלָּא בְּשִׁלְשָׁה מְקוֹמוֹת, דָּאֵמַר רַב הוֹנָא: בְּשִׁלְשָׁה מְקוֹמוֹת נִחְלְקוּ וְתוֹ לֹא. וְכִי תִימָא: אֲתוּ אֵינְהוּ גָזְרוּ לְתַלְמוֹת, וְאֲתוּ תַלְמִידֵיהוּ וְגָזְרוּ לְשׂוּרְפָא. וְהָאֵמַר אֵילְפָא: יְדֵימֵי תַחֲלַת גְּזִירְתֵּן לְשִׁרְיָפָה! אֶלָּא אֲתוּ אֵינְהוּ גָזְרוּ וְלֹא קִבְלוּ מִיְנֵיהוּ, וְאֲתוּ תַלְמִידֵיהוּ גָזְרוּ וְקִבְלוּ מִיְנֵיהוּ.

And if you say that the baraita is referring to Shammai and his faction and Hillel and his faction, didn't Rav Yehuda say that Shmuel said: With regard to eighteen matters they issued decrees that day, and with regard to those eighteen matters they disagreed prior to that? The eighteen disputes were only between the disciples of Shammai and Hillel, whereas Hillel and Shammai themselves argued only in three places. Clearly, they were neither party to the disputes nor the decrees. As Rav Huna said: Shammai and Hillel disagreed in only three places and no more. And if you say that Hillel and Shammai came and decreed that teruma that came into contact with hands would be in abeyance, and their students came and decreed to burn teruma that came into contact with hands, then the following difficulty arises. Didn't Ilfa, one of the Sages, say: With regard to hands, from the beginning their decree was that teruma that comes into contact with them is to be burned? According to Ilfa, there is no uncertainty. Teruma that came into contact with definite impurity is burned. Teruma that is in abeyance may not be destroyed. One must wait until it becomes definitely impure or decomposes on its own. Rather, the explanation is that they came and issued a decree and the people did not accept the decree from them, and their disciples came and issued a decree and they accepted it from them.

וְאֶכְתִּי, שְׁלֵמָה גָזְרוּ! דָּאֵמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: בְּשַׁעֲהַ שְׁתִּיקֵן שְׁלֵמָה עִירוּבִין וְנִטְלִית יְדֵימֵי, יְצִתָּה בֵּת קוֹל וְאֶמְרָה: "בְּנֵי אִם חֲכָם לְבָרַךְ יְשִׁמַּח לְבִי גַם אֲנִי", "חֲכָם בְּנֵי וְשִׁמַּח לְבִי וְאֲשִׁיבָה חוֹרְפֵי דְבַר!" — אֶתָּא

The Gemara asks further: Still, the matter is not clear, as the decree of hands was issued by King Solomon. As Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: At the time that Solomon instituted the ordinances of eiruv and of washing hands to purify them from their impurity, a Divine Voice emerged and said in his praise: "My son, if your heart is wise my heart will be glad, even mine" (Proverbs 23:15), and so too: "My son, be wise and make my heart glad, that I may respond to those who taunt me" (Proverbs 27: 11). The Gemara responds: Came

שְׁלֵמָה גָזַר לְקַדְּשִׁים, וְאֵתוֹ אֵינְהוּ וְגִזּוֹר אֵף לְתְרוּמָה

Solomon and decreed impurity on hands to prohibit contact with consecrated items, and Shammai, Hillel, and their disciples came and decreed impurity on hands even to prohibit contact with teruma.

רש"י שבת דף יד ע"א

עסקניות הן - ונוגעין בבשרו ובמקום טנופת וגנאי לתרומה בכך ונמאס לאוכלין כשנוגע בה בידים מסואבות ורבותינו מפרשים חיישינן שמא נגעו [ידין] בטומאה [ונטמא] וקשיא לי אם כן ניחוש שמא נגע באב הטומאה ונמצא ראשון ויטמאנה ועוד מאי שנא ידים לחודייהו בכל גופו נגזר לפסול תרומה שמא נגעו ידיו בטומאה ונטמא כל גופו ועוד לא תסגי להו בנטילה אלא בטבילה

## 1) Raising One's Hands During Netilat Yadayim

משנה ידים פ"ב מ"ג

היָדִים מְטַמְאוֹת וּמְטַהְרוֹת עַד הַפֶּרֶק. כִּי־צַד. נֹטֵל אֶת הָרְאשׁוֹנִים עַד הַפֶּרֶק, וְאֶת הַשְּׁנָיִים חוּץ לַפֶּרֶק, וְחִזְרוּ לַיָּד, טְהוֹרָה. נֹטֵל אֶת הָרְאשׁוֹנִים וְאֶת הַשְּׁנָיִים חוּץ לַפֶּרֶק וְחִזְרוּ לַיָּד, טְמֵאָה. נֹטֵל אֶת הָרְאשׁוֹנִים לַיָּדוֹ אַחַת וְנִמְלַךְ וְנֹטֵל אֶת הַשְּׁנָיִים לַשְּׁתֵי יָדָיו, טְמֵאוֹת. נֹטֵל אֶת הָרְאשׁוֹנִים לַשְּׁתֵי יָדָיו וְנִמְלַךְ וְנֹטֵל אֶת הַשְּׁנָיִים לַיָּדוֹ אַחַת, יָדוֹ טְהוֹרָה. נֹטֵל לַיָּדוֹ אַחַת וְשִׁפְשַׁפָּה בְּחִבְרָתָהּ, טְמֵאָה. בְּרֵאשׁוֹ אוֹ בְּכַתְלֵהּ, טְהוֹרָה. נוֹטֵל אֶת אַרְבָּעָה וְחֲמֵשָׁה זֶה בְּצַד זֶה אוֹ זֶה עַל גְּבִי זֶה, וְגַלְבַּד שִׁירְפוֹ שִׁיבְאוּ בָהֶם הַמַּיִם

Hands become unclean and are made clean as far as the joint. How so? If he poured the first water over the hands as far as the joint and poured the second water over the hands beyond the joint and the latter flowed back to the hands, the hands are clean. **If he poured the first and the second water over the hands beyond the joint and they flowed back to the hands, the hands remain unclean. If he poured the first water over one of his hands and then changed his mind and poured the second water over both his hands, they are unclean. If he poured the first water over both his hands and then changed his mind and poured the second water over one of his hands, his one hand becomes clean.** If he poured water over one of his hands and rubbed it on the other hand it remains unclean. If he rubbed it on his head or on the wall it is clean. Water may be poured over the hands of four or five persons, each hand being by the side of the other, or being one above the other, provided that the hands are held loosely so that the water flows between them.

R. Abbahu teaches: "Whoever eats bread without first wiping his hands is as though he eats unclean food." The mishna describes how one should wash his hands a second time in order to remove the impure water from one's hands. Most Rishonim maintain that if one pours a revi'it of water over both hands together or over each hand separately, the water remaining on the hands is tahor and a



second washing is not necessary. The **Ra'avad** disagrees and mandates that a second washing be performed in any case.

### תלמוד בבלי סוטה דף ד ע"ב

א"ר זריקא אמר ר"א כל המזלזל בנטילת ידים נעקר מן העולם אמר רב חייא בר אשי אמר רב מים ראשונים צריך שיגביה ידיו למעלה מים אחרונים צריך שישפיל ידיו למטה תניא נמי הכי הנוטל ידיו צריך שיגביה ידיו למעלה שמא יצאו המים חוץ לפרק ויחזרו ויטמאו את הידים

The Gemara continues its discussion of washing hands. Rabbi Zerika says that Rabbi Elazar says: Anyone who treats the ritual of washing hands with contempt is uprooted from the world. Rav Ḥiyya bar Ashi says that Rav says: **With regard to the first water, i.e., the water used when washing one's hands before a meal, one must raise his hands upward after washing.** With regard to the last water, i.e., the water used when washing one's hands at the conclusion of the meal before reciting Grace after Meals, one must lower his hands downward. This distinction is also taught in a baraita (Tosefta, Yadayim 2:2): One who washes his hands before a meal must raise his hands upward after washing, lest the water advance past the joint onto the part of the hands that he was not required to wash, becoming impure, and then return to the area he had washed, rendering his hands ritually impure.

אמר רבי אבהו כל האוכל פת בלא ניגוב ידים כאילו אוכל לחם טמא שנאמר (יחזקאל ד, יג) ויאמר ה' ככה יאכלו בני ישראל את לחמם טמא וגו'

Rabbi Abbahu says: Anyone who eats bread without wiping his hands dry after washing them causes the bread to become repulsive and is considered as if he were eating impure bread, since the verse refers to repulsive bread as impure bread, as it is stated: "And the Lord said: Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their bread unclean among the nations where I will drive them" (Ezekiel 4:13). Eating bread with wet hands causes the bread to become repulsive. The verse deems eating in an uncouth manner, as did the gentiles among whom the Jewish people were exiled, as akin to eating ritually impure bread.

**Rosh, Chullin 8:18 and Teshuvot 48:11; Semag, Asin 24, Hilkhot Netilat Yadayim; Rash, Yadayim 2:3:** The Rabbinic decree of tumat yadayim applies only to the hands until the wrist. Furthermore, only water poured on the hand below the wrist has the ability to purify the mayim teme'im from the first pouring. Therefore, they explain, Rav is concerned that after washing one's hands, if he does not keep his hands raised until they are dried, the impure water which flowed above the wrist may flow back down onto one's hand after the second washing and be metamei his hand again. Therefore, one should keep his hands elevated until the hands are dried.

**Rashi (Sota 4b, s.v. shema) :** The second washing can purify the impure water which flowed above the wrist. However, if the second washing only reached the wrist and did not reach the water which flowed above the wrist, then the water above the wrist will return to the hands and render them impure.

**Rashba (Teshuvot 3:260) :** The passage in Sota in which Rav rules that one who washes should raise his hands assumes that one must only wash until one's knuckles. However, water which is poured above the knuckles, until the wrist, also

becomes tamei. Therefore, Rav fears that that impure water may return to the fingers and render them impure. However, since the halakha is not accordance with that passage, but one must rather wash until one's wrist, there is no reason why one should raise one's hands, as the Rashba maintains that water which flows above the wrist does not return and render the hand impure.

### שולחן ערוך או"ח קסב,א

הנוטל צריך להגביה ידיו (דהיינו ראשי אצבעותיו) למעל" שלא יצאו מים חוץ לפרק ויחזרו ויטמאו את הידים הגה וה"ה אם משפילן מתחלת הנטילה עד סופה דשפיר דמי רק שיזהר שלא יגביה תחלה ראשי אצבעותיו ואח"כ ישפילם דאז יצאו המים חוץ לפרק ויחזרו ויטמאו הידים (ב"י בשם מהר"י בן חביב) והיינו כשאנו נוטל כל היד עד מקום חבור היד עם הזרוע אבל אם נוטל עד שם א"צ להגביה ידיו (ויש חולקים בזה) וכן אם שפך על שתי ידיו רביעית בפעם אחת כיון דאין שם מים טמאים כלל א"צ להגביה ידיו וכן המטביל ידיו א"צ להגביה ידיו (וי"א דאם שופך על ידיו ג"פ אין צריך ליזהר בכל זה וכן נהגו להקל: (אגור בשם א"ז והגהות אשרי פכ"ה

**Shulchan Arukh (162:1)** - One who performs netilat yadayim should raise his hands in order that water should not flow above his wrists and then return and render his hands impure. However, while one who does not wash his hands until the wrist must raise his hands, one who washes his hands until the wrist need not raise his hands. **Rema** - some disagree with this leniency

**Mishna Berura** : Majority of the Rishonim do not distinguish between one who washes until one's knuckles and one who washes until one's wrist.

## 2) How Many Times Water Is Poured Over the Hands

**Tosafot, Chullin 107a, s.v. de-lo; Rosh, Chullin 8:18; see also Yadayim 2:1**  
-One who pours a revi'it over both hands or a revi'it over each hand separately does not need to pour water over his hands a second time, as the water from the first pouring is not tamei.

**Beit Yosef (162)** :The Rabbis treated one who pours a revi'it over his hands as akin to one who immerses in a mikveh, in which case he would not be required to remove the impure water. Therefore, one who pours a revi'it over both hands, or a revi'it over each hand separately does not need to raise his hands, and the water left of the hands is not impure. Similarly, as we learned previously, one who immerses his hands in a river or lake does not need to dip his hands twice into the body of water.

**Mishna Berura (9)** :Nowadays, it is not customary to raise one's hands while performing netilat yadayim. He suggests that this is because one generally pours a revi'it of water over each hand. However, he warns that one should be careful to wash one's entire hand, ensuring that the water reaches even the tips of one's fingers, and not merely the sides of one's hands.

**Bi'ur Halakha (162:8 s.v. metuharim be-shifshuf)** cites Rishonim, including the **Rash (Yadayim 2:2)**, who maintain that one may remove the mayim teme'im through niguv, drying one's hands, and washing a second time is not necessary. The

**Bi'ur Halakha** insists that the halakhically preferred method is to wash one's hands twice, once to purify the hands and again to remove the mayim teme'im, unless one pours a revi'it of water over each hand.

**Ra'avad** : Even one who washes with a revi'it of water must pour water twice over each hand.

**Tosafot, Chullin 107a s.v. de-lo, Smag Asin 27; see Tur 162** One should actually wash one's hands three times. The first washing cleans one's hands, the second purifies the hands, and the third washing removes the impure water.

**Shulchan Arukh (162:2)** cites this view, adding that the water for the first washing may be taken from the revi'it used for the netilat yadayim.

**Levush (162)** - Although a minimum of a revi'it of water is required for netilat yadayim, since this preparatory washing is considered to be part of the mitzva of netilat yadayim one may use some of the revi'it for this washing.

**Bi'ur Halakha (162:2 s.v. ketzat)** disagrees and rules that one who must clean his hands before netilat yadayim and has only a revi'it of water should clean his hands in another manner before performing netilat yadayim.

**Kaf Ha-chayim (162)** - According to the mystical tradition, one should pour water three times over each hand. Despite these views, it is customary to pour water only twice over each hand.

**Shulchan Arukh** - When pouring a revi'it of water over each hand one need not pour more than once

**Cha'yei Adam 40; see Mishna Berura 162:21** - One should still preferably pour twice over each hand, fulfilling the **Ra'avad's** view as well.

### 3) Shifshuf Yadayim – Rubbing One's Hands Together

**Tosefta (Yadayim 1:2)** : “upon washing one's hands he should rub them together (le-shafshef et yadav).”

**Rash, Yadayim 2:2** - The phrase “le-shafshef yadav” refers to drying one's hands. However, most commentators understand the Tosefta as referring to rubbing one's hands together.

**Magen Avraham (162:24)** One rubs one's hands together simply in order to remove dirt from the hands. Furthermore, although preferably one should rub one's hands together, one who does not do so has certainly fulfilled the mitzva.

**Pri Megadim (Mishbetzot Zahav 162:7)** One rubs his hands together in order to ensure that the water has reached the entire hand. Of course, this understanding is somewhat novel, in that it assumes that when one rubs water over a part of the hand onto which the water wasn't poured, the water doesn't become tamei; rather, the rubbing is viewed as a continuation of the pouring of the water.

**Rema (162:2) - Bach:** Although it is not necessary to rub one's hands

together, it is customary to do so.

**Kaf Ha-chayim 162** - attribute mystical significance to the shifshuf yadayim.  
**Siddur Ha-Rav (R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi)** : “the mitzvat chakhamim – commandment of the Rabbis – is to rub one’s hands together well, for extra purity (tahara yeteira), and since this rubbing is considered to be part of the mitzva of netilat yadayim, the blessing “al netilat yadayim” is recited before this rubbing in order that the berakha may be recited upon the performance of the mitzva.”

#### 4) When an Unwashed Hand Touches the Washed Hand

**Mishna (Yadayim 2:3; see also Rosh, Chullin 8:18)** - “if he poured water over one of his hands and rubbed it on the other hand it remains impure.”

**Rosh (Chullin 8:18; see also Shulchan Arukh 162:4)** - Another person pour a revi’it of water over both of his hands, or that he himself pour a revi’it over each hand and then rub them together. In both cases, the hands have been completely purified before he rubs them together. Alternatively, he also suggests that one somehow balance the vessel on the tips of his fingers, and pour the revi’it of water over both of his hands.

**Mishna Berura 162:48** - disagrees as to whether in this case, in which one’s tamei hand touches the other washed, but still wet, hand, one must dry the hands before washing them again.

R. Shlomo Luria, **Yam Shel Shlomo** (Chullin 8:33; see also Magen Avraham 162:10) - Once a hand has been properly purified, even if it has been touched by the other hand, one may simply pour water over the hand in order to remove the mayim teme’im.

**Arukh Ha-shulchan (162:22)** Although this view is not found in the Rishonim, it may be relied upon.

**Chazon Ish (Hilkhos Netilat Yadayim 24:23; see also Mishna Berura 162:45)** Questions why one should not have to dry one’s hands and then wash them again.

**Mishna Berura 162:49** : Therefore, one should preferably pour a revi’it over one’s right hand, or pour less than a revi’it twice over the hand, thereby removing the mayim teme’im, and then pass the vessel to his left hand, without touching the hand, and repeat the washing. If one washes the right hand only once, with less than a revi’it, then when he touches the vessel he will leave mayim teme’im on the handle, which one might then touch with one’s left hand, in which case the left hand must then be dried, and the entire process must be repeated

**Hagahot Maimoni'ot (Hilkhos Berakhot chapter 6, note 8)** :  
Even if another person touches his hands after they are washed, but still wet (bedam mukhsharot be-mayim), they must be washed again.

**Shulchan Arukh (162:4)** - One must be careful after washing one's hands to dry them before touching another person's hands. Hands are considered to be dry when they are no longer "tofei'ach al menat le-hatpi'ach" – wet enough that someone who touches the hand can then transfer the wetness to another surface.

**Mishna Berura 262:49 and Sha'ar Ha-tziyun , Chayei Adam**

Even if one had already poured a revi'it of water over his hands, which completely purifies the hands and does not leave behind any mayim teme'im, and recited the blessing al netilat yadayim, one should wash netilat again, but not recited the blessing.

**Piskei Teshuvot 162:1 and 11 –**

After one has properly washed and dried one's hands, even if his hands touch the wet hands of a person performing netilat yadayim, his hands remain tahor and there is no need to re-wash them. "God-fearing people who are meticulous in mitzvot" are stringent in this matter.

**a) The Custom of not Touching a Wet Handle of a Vessel during Netilat Yadayim**

**Sha'ar Ha-tziyun (162:41) cites the Pitchei Teshuva** - One should preferably dry the handle of the washing vessel. If it is wet, then when he touches the handle with his left hand, in order to pour the water over his right hand, he renders the water on the handle impure. Consequently, when he then places his right hand on the handle, the mayim teme'im which was left by the left hand renders the right hand impure. Some therefore dry the handles of the vessel so as not to risk the presence of mayim teme'im on the handles of the vessel which may then render the hands of those who touch the handles impure. The Sha'ar Ha-tziyun himself notes that this stringency may be incorrect, as before the hand is washed it cannot render the water on the handle impure.

**R. Aryeh Tzvi Frumer (1884 – 1943), Responsa Eretz Tzvi (35)** - One should dry the handles of a vessel in a public place before picking it up to wash, in case a person washed one of his hands with less than a revi'it, and then picked up the vessel, thereby leaving impure water on the handle of the vessel.

***Should one be concerned that the towels absorbed water from people who improperly washed their hands (tofei'ach al menat le-hatpi'ach)?***

**Shulchan Arukh (162:8)** : After washing one hand, if one touches a wall, and then later touches the wall again with his second hand, the second hand is rendered impure and it must be dried before repeating the netilat yadayim.

**Taz (162:7)** - Since the water is absorbed into a towel, it can no longer render something else impure.

**Magen Avraham (162:16)** - One should be concerned with water absorbed in the towels. Therefore, one should be careful regarding this question and preferably not use very wet towels for drying one's hands after netilat yadayim.

***Should one dry his hands before washing netilat yadayim?***

**Bi'ur Halakha (162:2 s.v. ha-notel)** One may wash netilat yadayim even if one's hands are already wet, as one's hands do not render water tamei before the process of netilat yadayim.

**Chazon Ish** (OC 24:30; see also Siddur Shulkhan Arukh Ha-rav) Insists that when one touches the water on the vessel is become tamei.

**F) Niguv Ha-yadayim**

**Sota 4b** : "R. Abbahu says, 'Whoever eats bread without first drying his hands is as if he eats lechem tamei (unclean bread).'"

**Rashi (Sota 4b s.v. kol)** - Eating bread with wet hands is simply "ma'us" (disgusting), and therefore one must dry one's hands after washing.

**Or Zaru'a 79** - By eating with wet hands, one will transfer the tum'a from one's hands to the bread, and he will therefore, quite literally, eat "lechem tamei."

**Chazon Ish, OC 25:10** (Shulchan Arukh Ha-Rav 158:17)- Even one who pours less than a revi'it over his hands removes the impure water after pouring water over his hands a second time. Therefore, why would one still need to dry his hands? Seemingly, the Rabbis instituted that one should completely remove the impure water through drying one's hands as well.

**Shulchan Arukh (158:13)** - One who immerses his hands, and one who pours a revi'it of water over his hands, may eat bread without drying his hands.

**R. Shlomo Luria (Maharshal)**, Yam Shel Shlomo (Chullin 8:39) - adopts Rashi's explanation of the Gemara and therefore always requires one to dry his hands before eating bread so as to avoid the problem of "mi'us."

**Mishna Berura (159:46: cites the Bach(& Maharshal)** - such is the consensus of the Acharonim and that such is common practice

**R. Shimshon b. Tzadok, Tashbetz Ha-katan (287)**, - One should not wipe his hands on his garment (chaluko), nor should one put one's clothes under one's head, as it may cause forgetfulness. It is not clear whether this practice is Kabbalistic or symbolic in nature. (Horayot (13b lists things which cause one to forget one's studies, including putting clothes under one's head (for sleeping) and drinking "mayim mi-shiyurei rechitza" (water remaining from washing one's hands).

**Magen Avraham 158:17; Mishna Berura 158:44, Arukh Ha-shulchan 158:17)** cite this stringency.

**May one allow one's hands to dry on their own?**

## **May one dry one's hands under a hot air dryer?**

**Chazon Ish (OC 25:10)** One may also wait until the hands dry by themselves. He explains that since the reason for drying the hands is to ensure that one does not eat with wet hands or that the tum'a on one's hands is removed, even if the water dries on its own neither of these issues poses a problem

**Shulchan Arukh Ha-Rav 158:17** - One should preferably dry one's hands, unless one immersed his hands in a mikveh.

**R. Betzalel Stern (1911 - 1989 Responsa Be-tzel Ha-chokhma (4:141):** One who poured a revi'it of water over his hands may certainly let one's hands dry, or dry one's hands in an electric air dryer; however, one who poured less than a revi'it of water over each hand should preferably dry one's hands properly.

## **G) The Blessing of Al Netilat Yadayim**

**Rambam (Hilkhhot Berakhot 11:7)** All blessings recited upon performing mitzvot are said prior to the mitzva, except for tevilat ha-ger, the immersion of a convert, who cannot recite the blessing until emerging from the water, at which point he is considered to be Jewish.

**Pesachim 7b** "one ... immerses and then arises [from the mikveh] and upon rising says the blessing asher kiddeshanu ... al ha-tevila."

**Tosafot (Pesachim 7b s.v. al ha-tevila, Berakhot 51a s.v. mei-ikara; see also Rosh, Berakhot 7:34)** - 1) This applies to netilat yadayim as well, as one's hands may be dirty, and therefore one should preferably wait until they have been washed. 2) Reciting the blessing before drying them is actually still considered to be oevir la-assiyatan, as if one is reciting the blessing before the performance of the mitzva; the Gemara, cited above, teaches that "whoever eats bread without first drying his hands is as if he eats lechem tamei (unclean bread)."

According to 2) one should recite the blessing before drying the hands, while according to 1) one can recite the blessing even later, possibly until one says the blessing before eating bread (ha-motzi).

**Shulchan Arukh (158:11)** : One should recite the blessing before washing his hands...it is customary to say the berakha after washing, "as sometimes one's hands are not clean, and therefore we recite the blessing after rubbing the hands together, at which point the hands are already clean, before pouring water over them a second time." (1)

**Rema**: "one can also recite the blessing before drying the hands, as the drying is also part of the mitzva, and it is considered to be oevir la-assiyatan." (2)

### **What if one forgot to recite the blessing before drying his hands?**

**Rema** : "and if he forgot to recite the blessing until after he has already dried his hands, he may recite the blessing afterwards."

**Taz (158:12) cites Maharshal (Yam Shel Shlomo, Chullin 39)** : One may recite the

blessing until one says ha-motzi before eating the bread. The Taz (see also Chayei Adam 40:4) disagrees and argues that one should not recite the blessing after drying his hands.

**Kaf Ha-chayim 158:86 and Pri Megadim 158, Mishbetzot Zahav 12)** suggest scratching one's head or touching one's shoes, thereby creating a new obligation to wash one's hands, at which point one may recite the blessing in the proper manner. **Mishna Berura (158:44)**, - The Acharonim agree with the Rema, and be-di'avad (post facto) one may recite the blessing until he says ha-motzi.

**R. Ovadia Yosef (Yalkut Yosef 158:10)** disagrees, and rules that in this case one should not recite the blessing after drying his hands. He also objects to the advice offered by the Acharonim cited above, lest this lead one to recite an unnecessary blessing (see Shulchan Arukh 162:4).

**R. Yechezkel Landau (1713 – 1793), Derushei Ha-Tzelach (Derush 4:22)** observes that many, even Torah scholars, are more careful to avoid speaking in between the blessings of al netilat yadayim and ha-motzi than in between washing one's hands and the blessing recited before niguv. He insists that although not interrupting between al netilat yadayim and ha-motzi is a "zehirut be-alma" (merely a precautionary measure), interrupting after washing one's hands is an actual hefsek (interruption) and one may have to wash one's hands again!

**R. Ovadia Yosef (Yalkut Yosef, 158 fn. 11)** - One who speaks in between washing and the berakha does not need to wash again, although he should certainly be more careful the next time.

## H) The Laws of Chatzitza for Netilat Yadayim

### 1) Washing One's Hands at Once

תלמוד בבלי גטין דף טו ע"ב  
בעי אילפא ידים טהורות לחצאין או אין טהורות לחצאין היכי דמי אילימא דקא משו בי תרי  
מרביעית והא תנן מרביעית נוטלין לידיים לאחד ואפי' לשנים

The Gemara cites another case that is based on the same principle. Ilfa raised a dilemma: With regard to ritual washing, can one's hands be ritually pure in halves, or can they not be ritually pure in halves? The Gemara asks: What are the circumstances of this case? If we say that two people wash with the requisite one quarter-log of water, and therefore in actuality each one of them washes with only half of a quarter-log, but didn't we learn explicitly in a mishna (Yadayim 1:1): With the amount of a quarter-log one can wash the hands of one person and even of two? A quarter-log of water suffices for one person to wash his hands before eating bread, and even two may wash their hands simultaneously with this amount, if they do so in the correct manner.

ואלא דקא משי חדא חדא ידיה והתנן הנוטל ידו אחת בנטילה ואחת בשטיפה ידיו טהורות  
But rather, Ilfa is referring to a case where one washed his two hands one by one, not both hands at the same time. The Gemara asks: But didn't we learn in a mishna (Yadayim 2:1): With regard to one who purifies one hand by washing with a vessel and one hand by immersing it in a river, his hands are ritually pure? This mishna



indicates that there is no need for both hands to be washed simultaneously.

ואלא דקא משי פלגא פלגא דידיה והאמרי דבי ר' ינאי ידים אין טהורות לחצאין לא צריכא  
דאיכא משקה טופח

But rather, Ilfa's dilemma refers to a case where he washes his hand in two halves, i.e., he first washes one half of his hand and next washes the second half of that same hand. The Gemara asks: But didn't the Sages from the school of Rabbi Yannai say: **Hands cannot be rendered ritually pure in halves?** If so, one who washes half of his hand and pauses before washing the second half has not performed the act of washing the hands at all. The Gemara answers: No, Ilfa's question is necessary only for a case where there is liquid that is still moist on his hand. When one washes the second half of his hand, some moisture remains on the portion of his hand that he already washed, and therefore one might think that this liquid joins with the water with which he washes the second half of his hand.

**Rambam (Hilkhot Mikva'ot 11:7)** If one washed a portion of his hand and then washed the rest of his hand, his hand is impure as it was originally. If there is enough water to impart moisture to another substance on the portion of the hand washed first while the other part was being washed, [the hand] is pure.

**The Ra'avad** - One may not wash the hands part by part even if they are still wet.

**Shulchan Arukh (162:3)** rules in accordance with the Rambam.

**Magen Avraham 162:5** - preferably one should not do this, and others (**Taz 162:5**) insist that even be-di'avad this may not suffice.

**Mishna Berura 162:27** - If one washed only part of his hand, and that part then dries, one must then wash the entire hand, and not just the part which wasn't initially washed.

**Mishna Berura (162:30)** When washing from a bottle with a narrow spout, similar to today's soda bottles, one should be careful that a steady flow of water leaves the bottle when flowing over one's hands. .

**Rosh (8:18)** Although one may not wash only part of one's hand, if one has a bandage, "it is similar to one whose hand was cut off." In other words, that area of the hand is completely exempt from netilat yadayim. However, one should be sure that water does not reach that area and then return to the rest of the hand, thereby bringing ritual impurity to the entire hand.

## 2) Chatzitza

תלמוד בבלי חולין קו ע"ב

עד הפרק קידוש ידים ורגלים במקדש עד הפרק וכל דבר שחוצץ בטבילה בגוף חוצץ  
בנטילת ידים לחולין ובקידוש ידים ורגלים במקדש

He must pour on the area extending until the joint. In sanctifying the hands and feet in the Temple before the service, he must pour the water until another joint, where the palm meets the wrist. **And any item that is considered to interpose between one's skin and the water with regard to immersion of the body in a ritual bath, disqualifying the immersion, likewise interposes with regard to washing the hands for eating non-sacred food and with regard to sanctification of the hands and feet in the Temple.**

תלמוד בבלי עירובין ד ע"א

אמר רבי חייה בר אשי אמר רב: שיעורין חציצין ומחיצין, הלכה למשה מסיני

Since the Gemara discussed measurements, it proceeds to cite that which Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Ashi said that Rav said: The measures relating to mitzvot in the Torah, and the halakhot governing interpositions that invalidate ritual immersions, and the halakhot of partitions are all halakhot transmitted to Moses from Sinai. These halakhot have no basis in the Written Torah, but according to tradition they were orally transmitted by God to Moses together with the Written Torah.

חציצין, דאורייתא ניהו! דכתיב: "ורחץ את כל בשרו (במים)", שלא יהא דבר חוצץ בין בשרו למים. "במים" — במי מקוה. "כל בשרו" — מים שכל גופו עולה בהן, וכמה הן — כמה על אמה ברום שלש אמות. ושיערו חכמים מי מקוה ארבעים סאה

Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Ashi said above that Rav said that the laws governing interpositions that invalidate ritual immersion are halakhot transmitted to Moses from Sinai. The Gemara challenges this assertion: These, too, are written in the Torah, as it is written: "And he shall bathe all his flesh in the water" (Leviticus 15:16), and the Sages derived that nothing should intervene between his flesh and the water. The definite article in the phrase "in the water" indicates that this bathing is performed in water mentioned elsewhere, i.e., specifically in the water of a ritual bath, and not in just any water. And the phrase "all his flesh" indicates that it must be in water into which all of his body can enter, i.e., in which a person can immerse his entire body at once. And how much water is that? It is a cubit by a cubit by the height of three cubits. And the Sages calculated the volume of a ritual bath of this size and determined that the waters of a ritual bath measure forty se'a. As this is derived from the Written Torah, what need is there for a halakha transmitted to Moses from Sinai?

The Gemara concludes in accordance with R. Yitzchak, that while the verse indeed teaches that there must not be a chatzitza between the water and one's skin, the halakha le-Moshe mi-Sinai further defines this halakha: **only a chatzitza which covers the majority (rubo) and regarding which one objects (makpid) is considered to be a chatzitza.** The Gemara continues and relates that the rabbis prohibited a case in which the chatzitza covers a majority even though one does not object (rubo ve-eino makpid), and a case in which the chatzitza covers only a minority, however the person does object (mi'ut ve-makpid). The Gemara says that

the rabbis did not prohibit a case in which the chatzitza is a minority and regarding which one does not object (mi'ut ve-eino makpid), as "we [do not] go so far as to institute a preventive measure against another preventive measure."

**Shulchan Arukh (YD 198:2)** ( Tosafot - )A chatzitza which is mi'ut ve-eino makpid does not invalidate the immersion.

**Magen Avraham (OC 161:3)** - In the context of netilat yadayim, "rubo" refers to the majority of one's hand.

### How does one define "makpid" regarding the laws of chatzitza?

What if this particular person is makpid, even though most people are not makpid?

**Rambam (Hilkhos Mikva'ot 2:15)** - if a woman is particular about a single hair which is knotted, even if most women are not makpid, the knot is considered to be a chatzitza.

**Rashba (Torat Ha-Bayit 32b)**, disagrees and rules that we are concerned with whether most women are makpid, and not whether this specific woman objects.

**Rema (161:1)** rules that we are only concerned with the opinion of the individual, **Magen Avraham (161:5; see Mishna Berura 161:7)** insists that we should follow the opinion of most people.

Regarding the opposite case, in which most people are makpid even if he personally is not makpid, the **Rashba (Torat Ha-bayit Ha-katzar, bayit 7 sha'ar 7)** rules that this is considered to be a chatzitza.

**Beit Yosef** - the Rambam, cited above, must maintain that it is not a chatzitza.

**Magen Avraham (161:5)** rules that we follow the opinion of the majority of people, while others are lenient.

**Shulchan Arukh (161:2)** - if a painter's hands have paint on them, since the painter is not generally makpid, the paint is not considered to be a chatzitza. However, for others, paint is considered to be a chatzitza, unless the paint cannot be felt upon the skin (ein bo mamashut). Therefore, if one's hands are stamped, or if one's hands have ink on them, one may still wash his hands. The Shulchan Arukh adds that regarding "women who are accustomed to paint their hands, for decoration (noy), that paint is not considered to be a chatzitza." However, when one's nail polish begins to chip it may be considered to be a chatzitza, as the woman would most likely want to remove the nail polish in order to paint her nails again.

The Rosh (Hilkhos Mikva'ot 26) cites the Tosefta (Mikva'ot 6:4), which states that rings which are loose are not a chatzitza, while those which are tight are a chatzitza. Regarding netilat yadayim, the **Hagahos Ashri (Berakhot 2:11)** writes that one should remove one's rings before washing his hands. Although one might wonder why a tightly fit ring is not considered to be a mi'ut ve-eino makpid, a chatzitza found on a small part of one's body regarding which one does not object, the **Rosh cites the Ra'avad** who asserts that a woman is careful to remove the ring when kneading bread, and it is therefore considered to be a chatzitza.

**Beit Yosef (161)** One should remove even a loosely fitting ring before washing one's hands, either because we are unable to determine the difference between a loose and tight fitting ring, or lest we come to permit washing one's hands while wearing a tightly fit ring.

**Shulchan Arukh (161:3)** - One should remove his ring before washing his hands.

**Rema** - One should even remove a loosely fitting ring, and even if one does not ordinarily remove the ring before washing, since one removes the ring before doing labor (i.e. kneading bread), the ring should be removed. He concludes by adding that although some are lenient not to remove loosely fitting rings, one should preferably be strict and remove such rings, as it is difficult to distinguish between those rings which are considered to be loosely fitting, and those which are tightly fit.

**R. Ben Tzion Abba Sha'ul (1924 - 1998), Or Le-Tzion (2:11):** Nowadays, when many women are not accustomed to remove their rings even when kneading bread, women do not need to remove their rings before netilat yadayim. He notes that although the **Kaf Ha-chayim (parashat Acharei Mot)** distinguishes between a ring with an expensive stone, which is a ring that must be removed before washing, and a simple ring, which need not be removed, R. Abba Sha'ul concludes that a person who does not remove rings before kneading bread does not need to remove even rings with stones for netilat yadayim. He concludes that it is still customary to remove one's rings before immersing in the mikveh.