



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

I NETILAT YADAYIM

A) The Importance of the Mitzva

תלמוד בבלי סוטה דף ד ע"ב

דרש רב עזריא זמנין אמר לה משמיה דרבי אמי וזמנין אמר לה משמיה דרבי אסי כל האוכל לחם בלא נטילת ידים כאילו בא על אשה זונה שנאמר (משלי ו, כו) כי בעד אשה זונה עד ככר לחם

Having quoted an allusion from the verse: "For on account of a harlot a man is brought to a loaf of bread" (Proverbs 6:26), the Gemara offers another interpretation of that verse. Rav Avira interpreted a verse homiletically; there were times he said this interpretation in the name of Rabbi Ami and there were times he said it in the name of Rabbi Asi: Concerning anyone who eats bread without washing his hands, it is as if he engaged in sexual intercourse with a prostitute, as it is stated: "For on account of a harlot a man is brought to a loaf of bread."

...א"ר זריקא אמר ר"א כל המזלזל בנטילת ידים נעקר מן

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.

תלמוד בבלי שבת דף סב ע"ב

אמר רבי אבהו, ואמרי לה במתניתא תנא: שלשה דברים מביאין את האדם לידי עניות, ואילו הן: המשתין מים בפני מטתו ערום, ומזלזל בנטילת ידים, ושאשתו מקללתו בפניו

On a related note, Rabbi Abbahu said, and some say it was taught in a baraita: Three matters **bring a person to a state of poverty** as a divine punishment from Heaven:

One who urinates before his bed while naked, **and one who demeans the ritual washing of the hands**, and one whose wife curses him in his presence.

משנה עדיות ה':

וְאֶת מִי נָדוּ, אֶלְיעֶזֶר בֶּן חֲנוּךְ, שֶׁפָּקַד בְּטַהֲרַת יָדַיִם. וְכִשְׁמַת, שָׁלְחוּ בֵּית דִּין וְהִנִּיחוּ
אֶבֶן עַל אָרוֹנוֹ. מִלְמַד שְׁכָל הַמִּתְנַדֵּה וּמֵת בְּנִדְיוֹ, סוֹקְלִין אֶת אָרוֹנוֹ

But whom did they excommunicate? Eliezer the son of Hanoch who cast doubt against the laws concerning the purifying of the hands. And when he died the court sent and laid a stone on his coffin. This teaches that whoever is excommunicated and dies while under excommunication, his coffin is stoned.

תלמוד בבלי עירובין דף כ"ב

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא שֶׁהָיָה חֲבוּשׁ בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִין, וְהָיָה רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ הַגָּרְסִי מִשְׁרָתוֹ.
בְּכָל יוֹם וַיּוֹם הָיוּ מְכַנְּסִין לוֹ מֵיִם בְּמִדָּה. יוֹם אֶחָד מָצְאוּ שׁוֹמֵר בֵּית הָאֲסוּרִין, אָמַר לוֹ: הַיּוֹם
מִימָךְ מְרֻבֵּין, שָׁמָּה לְחֹתוֹר בֵּית הָאֲסוּרִין אֶתָּה צָרִיךְ? שֶׁפָּךְ חֲצִיִּין וְנָתַן לוֹ חֲצִיִּין

Concerning the significance of observing the words of the Sages, the Gemara relates: The Sages taught in a baraita: It once happened that Rabbi Akiva was incarcerated in a prison, and Rabbi Yehoshua HaGarsi would come to the prison to attend to his needs. Every day his disciples would bring him water in a measured quantity. One day the prison guard met Rabbi Yehoshua HaGarsi and said to him: The amount of your water today is more than usual; perhaps you need it in order to soften the walls and thus undermine the prison. He then poured out half the water, and gave him the other half to take in to Rabbi Akiva.

כָּשָׁבָא אֶצֶל רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא, אָמַר לוֹ: יְהוֹשֻעַ, אֵין אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ שְׂדֵקָן אֲנִי וְחַיִּי תְלִיִין בְּחִיָּךְ?

When Rabbi Yehoshua came to Rabbi Akiva, and the latter saw the small amount of water he had brought, he said to him: Yehoshua, do you not know that I am old, and my life depends on your life? No one else brings me water, so if you bring me less than I need, my life is endangered.

יִסַּח לוֹ כָּל אוֹתוֹ הַמְּאוֹרֵעַ. אָמַר לוֹ: תֵּן לִי מֵיִם שְׂאֵטוֹל יָדַי, אָמַר לוֹ: לְשִׁתּוֹת אֵין מְגִיעִין, לִיטוֹל
יָדְךָ מְגִיעִין?! אָמַר לוֹ: מָה אַעֲשֶׂה שְׁחִיבִים עָלֶיךָ מִיתָה? מוֹטֵב אֲמוֹת מִיתַת עַצְמִי, וְלֹא
אֶעְבֹּר עַל דַּעַת חֲבִירִי!

After Rabbi Yehoshua related to him the entire incident, Rabbi Akiva said to him: Give me water so that I may wash my hands. Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: The water that I brought will not suffice for drinking; how will it suffice for washing your hands? He said to him: What can I do; for transgressing the words of the Sages and eating without first washing hands one is liable to receive the death penalty. And if so, it is better that I should die my own death by thirst, rather than transgress the opinion of my colleagues who enacted that one must wash hands before eating.

אָמְרוּ: לֹא טַעַם כְּלוּם עַד שֶׁהֵבִיא לוֹ מֵיִם וְנָטַל יָדָיו, כְּשֶׁשָּׁמְעוּ חֲכָמִים בְּדִבְרֵי, אָמְרוּ: מָה
בְּזָקְנוֹתוֹ כִּי, בִּילְדוּתוֹ עַל אַחַת כְּמָה וְכְמָה. וְמָה בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִין כִּי, שְׁלֹא בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִין עַל
אַחַת כְּמָה וְכְמָה

They said that he would not taste anything until Rabbi Yehoshua brought him water and he washed his hands. When the Sages heard about this, they said: If in his old age and weakened state he is still so meticulous in his observance of the mitzvot, how much more so must he have been in his youth. And if in prison he is so scrupulous in his behavior, how much more so must he have been when not in prison.

B) The Reasons for Netilat Yadayim

1)

תלמוד בבלי חולין קה ע"א-קו ע"א

אמר רב אידי בר אבין אמר רב יצחק בר אשיין מים ראשונים מצוה ואחרונים חובה

Having mentioned the manner of washing hands during a meal, the Gemara discusses another matter concerning washing hands. Rav Idi bar Avin says that Rav Yitzhak bar Ashyan says: The first waters, i.e., washing of the hands before eating bread, are a mitzva by rabbinic law, but the final waters, washing of the hands upon conclusion of the meal and before reciting Grace after Meals, are an obligation, a more stringent requirement.

.... אמר רב אידי בר אבין אמר רב יצחק בר אשיאן נטילת ידים לחולין מפני סרך תרומה

§ Rav Idi bar Avin says that Rav Yitzhak bar Ashiyan says: The obligation of washing hands before eating non-sacred food is due to an ancillary decree on account of teruma, the portion of produce designated for the priest, which must be consumed in a state of ritual purity. By rabbinic decree, one's hands are considered impure with second-degree ritual impurity, as they may have touched impure items. Therefore, they render teruma impure. Consequently, priests who partake of teruma are obligated to wash their hands first. The Sages therefore decreed that all must wash their hands even before eating non-sacred food, so that people not become accustomed to eating without washing their hands, which would in turn lead the priests to partake of teruma without washing their hands.

חולין קו ע"א

ועוד משום מצוה מאי מצוה אמר אביי מצוה לשמוע דברי חכמים רבא אמר מצוה לשמוע דברי ר"א בן ערך דכתיב (ויקרא טו, יא) וכל אשר יגע בו הזב וידיו לא שטף במים אמר ר"א בן ערך מכאן סמכו חכמים לנטילת ידים מן התורה

And the obligation is further due to its being a mitzva. The Gemara asks: What mitzva does it involve? Abaye says: It is a mitzva to listen to and obey the statements of the Sages, who instituted this washing of the hands. Rava says: It is a mitzva to listen to the statement of Rabbi Elazar ben Arakh, as it is written with regard to a man who experiences a gonorrhea-like discharge [zav]: "And whomever he that has the issue touches, without having rinsed his hands in water," he contracts ritual impurity (Leviticus 15:11), and Rabbi Elazar ben Arakh says: From here the Sages based washing of the hands upon a verse from the Torah.

אמר ליה רבא לרב נחמן מאי משמע דכתיב וידיו לא שטף במים הא שטף טהור הא טבילה בעי אלא הכי קאמר ואחר שלא שטף טמא

Rava said to Rav Nahman: From where is this inferred? How can this verse, which concerns a zav, be interpreted as referring to washing the hands before a meal? Rava explains: As it is written: "Without having rinsed his hands in water." Consequently, one could infer that if he rinsed his hands the zav becomes ritually pure. But this cannot be correct, as verses elsewhere prove that a zav requires the immersion of

his entire body. Rather, this is what the verse is saying: And there is another type of person who, if he has not rinsed his hands in water, is considered like one who is impure. The verse thereby serves as the basis for washing the hands.

תוספות ד"ה "מצוה"

מצוה לשמוע דברי חכמים - וא"ת והלא משום סרך תרומה תקנוה וא"כ מאי ועוד וי"ל דתקנו משום נקיות

In addition to the first reason of *serach teruma*, there may be a second reason for this *mitzva* to ensure the cleanliness of one's hands before eating bread.

תלמוד בבלי ברכות דף נג ע"ב

דָּאָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב וְאָמַרִי לֵה בְּמַתְנִיתָא תָּנָא: "וְהִתְקַדְּשְׁתָּם" אֵלּוּ מִים רִאשׁוֹנִים,
 "וְהִיִּיתֶם קְדָשִׁים" אֵלּוּ מִים אַחֲרוֹנִים, "כִּי קְדוֹשׁ" — זֶה שְׁמֹן, "אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם" — זֶה בְּרָכָה

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said, and some say that it was taught in a baraita: It is stated: "And you shall sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy, for holy am I, the Lord your God" (Leviticus 20:26). With regard to this verse, the Sages said: And you shall sanctify yourselves, **these are the first waters with which one washes his hands before the meal**; and you shall be holy, these are the final waters; for holy, this is oil which one spreads on his hands; am I, the Lord your God, this is the Grace after Meals blessing.

C)The Quantity of Bread That Requires *Netilat Yadayim*

תלמוד בבלי סוכה דף כו ע"ב- כז ע"א

מִתֵּנִי מַעֲשֵׂה וְהִבִּיאוּ לִי לֶרֶבֶן יוֹחֲנָן בֶּן זְכַאי לִטְעוֹם אֶת הַתְּבִשִּׁיל וּלְרֶבֶן גַּמְלִיאֵל שְׁנֵי כּוֹתְבוֹת וְדָלִי שֶׁל מִים וְאָמְרוּ הָעֵלּוּם לְסוּכָּה

MISHNA: Apropos eating in the sukka, which is discussed in the previous mishna, this mishna relates: An incident occurred where they brought a cooked dish to Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai for him to taste, and to Rabban Gamliel they brought two dates and a bucket of water. And they each said: Take them up to the sukka and we will eat them there.

וְכִשְׁנָתְנוּ לוֹ לְרַבִּי צְדוֹק אוֹכֵל פָּחוֹת מִכִּבִּיצָה נָטְלוּ בְּמִפָּה וְאָכְלוּ חוּץ לַסּוּכָה וְלֹא בִּירָה אַחֲרָיו

In contrast, the mishna relates: And when they gave Rabbi Tzadok less than an egg-bulk of food, he took the food in a cloth for cleanliness; he did not wash his hands because in his opinion, one is not required to wash his hands before eating less than an egg-bulk. And he ate it outside the sukkah and did not recite a blessing after eating it. He holds that one is not required to recite a blessing after eating less than an egg-bulk, as it is not satisfying, and it is written: "And you shall eat and be satisfied and bless the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 8:10). The Gemara will explain the halakhic rationale for each of these actions described.

וְכִשְׁנָתְנוּ לוֹ לִרְבִּי צְדוֹק אוֹכֵל פָּחוֹת מִכְּבִיצָה נִטְלוּ בַּמֶּפֶה וְאָכְלוּ חוּץ לַסּוּכָה וְלֹא בִּירָרָה

אַחֲרָיו הָא כְּבִיצָה בְּעֵי סוּכָה לִימָא תִּיהִי תִּיבְתִּיה דְּרַב יוֹסֵף וְאַבְיֵי דִּילמָא פְּחוּת

מְכַבֵּיצָה נְטִילָה וּבִרְכָּה לֹא בְּעִי הָא כְּבִיצָה בְּעִי נְטִילָה וּבִרְכָּה:

And when they gave Rabbi Tzadok less than an egg-bulk of food, he took the food in a cloth and he ate it outside the sukkah and did not recite a blessing

after eating it. The Gemara infers: Had they given him an egg-bulk of food, he would have been required to eat it in a sukka. Let us say that this is a conclusive refutation of the opinion of Rav Yosef and Abaye, who said that one is permitted to eat that measure in the context of a casual meal outside the sukka. The Gemara answers: No proof can be cited from here, because perhaps the reason the mishna emphasizes that **Rabbi Tzadok ate less than an egg-bulk of food is that eating less than an egg-bulk does not require washing hands and reciting a blessing after eating it**; however, eating an egg-bulk requires washing and reciting a blessing.

Rishonim :

- 1) **TOSFOT**: Since a quantity of food less than the size of a *ke-beitza* cannot be rendered impure, it seems reasonable that the Rabbis would not institute *netilat yadayim*, which was originally intended to protect *teruma* from impure hands, for a quantity less than a *ke-beitza* (see Beit Yosef 158). Others suggest that *netilat yadayim* is only required when one eats a quantify of bread that would obligate one to recite *Birkat Ha-Mazon*, and *mi-de'orayta*, one only recites *Birkat Ha-Mazon* after eating a *ke-beitza* of bread (*Berakhot* 49b).

- 2) **Beit Yosef** 158:1

כתב הרוקח אוכל פחות מכביצה יטול מספק ולא יברך ונראה שטעמו משום דכיון דפחות מכביצה אינו מקבל טומאת אוכלין איכא למימר דלא הצריכו בו חכמים נטילה ואיכא למימר דסתם הצריכו נטילה לאוכל פת ולא חילקו בין פחות מכביצה ליתר מכביצה הילכך יטול מספק ולא יברך

R. Eliezer of Worms (c. 1176-1238) **Sefer Rokei'ach (Hilkhot Seuda 328)** One who eats less than a *ke-beitza* of bread should wash *netilat yadayim*, but without reciting the blessing.

The Beit Yosef (158) explains that while the *gemarot* cited above may imply that the obligation of *netilat yadayim* is dependent upon the laws of *tum'at okhlin* or the Biblical obligation of *Birkat Ha-Mazon*, one might argue and maintain that the Rabbis instituted *netilat yadayim* for whenever one eats bread.

Vilna Gaon (*Biur Ha-Gra* 158:3) One who eats a *ke-zayit* of bread should wash and recite the blessing.

Eliya Rabba 158:3 (*Elijah Spira* (1660-1712) , *Lechem Chamudot* (1579-1654) cited by Magen Avraham 158:4) - *Netilat yadayim* might depend upon the blessing of *Ha-Motzi*. Therefore, even one who eats less than a *ke-zayit* should wash *netilat yadayim*!

הלכה למעשה: שולחן ערוך קנח:א-ב (דיני נט"י לסעודה ובו יג סעיפים)
כשיבא לאכול פת שמברכין עליו המוציא יטול ידיו אפי' אינו יודע להם שום טומאה ויברך על נטילת ידים אבל לפת שאין מברכין עליו המוציא כגון לחמניות (פירוש סטורט"י בלע"ז) דקות או פת הבאה בכסנין (פי' פת עשוי' עם צוקארו ושקדים ואגוזים) ואינו קובע סעודתו עליהם אין צריך נטילת ידים

When one comes to eat bread that we bless on it "HaMotzi", one should wash their hands, even if one does not know that [your hands] have any impurity, one

should bless: "al n'tilat yadayim"/"regarding washing of hands". But bread that we do not bless "HaMotzi" on it, for example, little rolls, (explanation: satorti in another language), or bread that comes as dumplings (explanation: bread that is made with sugar, almonds, and nuts), and one does not establish a meal with them, one does not need to wash their hands.

יש מי שאומר שאם אינו אוכל אלא פחות מכביצה יטול ידיו ולא יברך

Some say that if one is only eating an amount that's less than [the equivalent of] an egg, wash your hands and don't say a blessing.

משנה ברורה קנח:י

(י) פחות מכזית וכו' - דזה לא חשיבי אכילה אף לענין בהמ"ז והנה הט"ז פסק כן לדינא דא"צ נטילה וכן הוא דעת הב"ח וכן הסכים הגר"א והברכי יוסף והביא כן בשם הרשב"ץ ודעת הלחם חמודות והמ"א וא"ר ועוד אחרונים דאף בפחות מכזית דינו כפחות מכביצה ויטול ידיו ולא יברך וע"כ לכתחלה נכון להחמיר בזה. [ודע דשיעור כזית דצריך נטילה לכו"ע הוא אף אם היה מפירורין דקין מצטרפין ואם היה כביצה שלימה מהפירורין צריך לברך על הנטילה ג"כ]. אם אכל מעט פת למתק חריפות השתיה באופן המבואר לקמן סימן רי"ב דא"צ לברך המוציא משום שהוא טפל להשתיה י"א דגם נט"י א"צ אף אם יש בו כביצה וי"א דצריך עיין א"ר ובפחות מכזית נראה שבודאי יש לסמוך שלא להצריך נטילה בזה אף לכתחלה דבלא"ה יש מקילין וכנ"ל אך בכזית או כביצה יטול ידיו ולא יברך על הנטילה מחמת ספק

Therefore, one who intends to eat less than a *ke-beitza* of bread should not recite the blessing of *al netilat yadayim*. As for one who eats less than a *ke-zayit* of bread. Although many *Acharonim* (including the Bach, the Taz and the Gra) rule that one does not have to wash *netilat yadayim*, one should preferably follow the more stringent opinions and wash without a blessing even for bread less than the size of a *ke-zayit*.

ערוך השולחן קנח:ג

ולכן גם על פחות מכזית אינו צריך נטילת ידים, מפני שאין בזה ברכת המזון. ויש מי שאומר שגם על פחות מכביצה פת אינו צריך נטילת ידים, מטעם דכל טומאת אוכלין הוי בכביצה. ולכן יטול ידיו ולא יברך. אבל רוב רבתינו לא סבירא להו כן, דכיון דחייב בברכת המזון וב"המוציא" – לא פלוג רבנן, ויטול ידיו ויברך (כן משמע במגן אברהם סעיף קטן ג'). אבל יש אומרים דזהו רק בתרומה (הגר"א סעיף קטן ו'). וספק ברכות להקל. ויש מי שרוצה לומר שגם בפחות מכזית יטול בלא ברכה (אליה רבה סעיף קטן ד'), כיון דצריך לברך "המוציא". וכמדומה שהעולם לא תפסו כן, ועל פחות מכזית אין נטילת ידים. (וכמו שכתב המגן אברהם סעיף קטן ד', דכל סעיף ג בשולחן ערוך הוא מנוסחא מוטעת ואין חולק בזה)

...That was apparently not the custom

D) The Manner of Netilat Yadayim

1) *Netilat Yadayim* From a *Keli* (Vessel)

Netilat Yadayim may be performed from a vessel or by immersing one's hands in a valid *mikve*, river, lake, or sea.

תלמוד בבלי חולין קז ע"א

ואמר רבא כלי שאין בו רביעית אין נוטלין ממנו לידים איני והאמר רבא כלי שאין מחזיק רביעית אין נוטלין ממנו לידים הא מחזיק אע"ג דלית ביה

And Rava says: With regard to a vessel that does not have a quarter-log of water in it, one may not wash his hands with it. The Gemara asks: Is that so? But doesn't Rava say: With regard to a vessel that cannot contain a quarter-log of water, one may not wash his hands with it. It may be consequently inferred that as long as the vessel can contain a quarter-log, one may use it even if it does not currently have a quarter-log in it.

... As it is taught in a baraita: With a quarter-log of water, one may wash the hands of one individual, and even those of two....

איכא דאמרי הכי אמר ליה אמנא ואחזותא קפדינן אשיעורא לא קפדינן דתניא מי רביעית נוטלין לידים לאחד ואפי' לשנים

Some say that this is what Ameimar said to him: We are particular about the wholeness of the vessel and about the water's appearance, but we are not particular about the water's measure, as it is taught in a baraita: With a quarter-log of water one may wash the hands of one individual, and even those of two. The baraita indicates that there is no need for a quarter-log for each individual.

ואמר רבא מגופת חבית שתקנה נוטלין ממנה לידים תניא נמי הכי מגופת חבית שתקנה נוטלין ממנה לידים חמת וכפישה שתקנן נוטלין מהם לידים שק וקופה אע"פ שמקבלים אין נוטלין מהם לידים

And Rava says: If one prepared the stopper of a barrel for use as a vessel by hollowing it out until it contained a quarter-log, one may wash his hands with it, even though it was not originally designated for this function. This ruling is also taught in a baraita: If one prepared the stopper of a barrel for this purpose, one may wash his hands with it. Likewise, with regard to a *hemet* and a *kefisha*, types of leather wineskins, that one prepared for this purpose, one may wash his hands with them, as they were initially designed to hold liquids. But with regard to a sack and a basket, even if they can contain water, one may not wash his hands with them, as no sack or basket is designed to hold water, and most cannot.

Rashba (s.v. *megufat*) explains that the Rabbis required a vessel for *netilat yadayim* before eating bread, just as there is a requirement of a vessel for the "*mei chatat*" (the water sprinkled during the purification process involving the *para aduma*) and the "*kiddush yadayim ve-raglayim*," the ritual washing of the hands and feet performed by the *kohanim* in the *Beit Ha-Mikdash*.

- a) The vessel, often known as the “*natla*,” must contain at least a *revi'it* (86 ml; some require 150 ml) of water. A vessel which contains less than a *revi'it* of water cannot be used for *netilat yadayim*.

משנה ידיים א:ב

בְּכָל הַכֵּלִים נוֹתְנִין לַיָּדִים, אֶפְלוּ בְּכָלִי גָלִילִים, בְּכָלִי אֲבָנִים, בְּכָלִי אֲדָמָה. אֵין נוֹתְנִין לַיָּדִים, לֹא בְּדַפְנוֹת הַכֵּלִים, וְלֹא בְּשׁוּלֵי הַמַּחֵץ, וְלֹא בְּמַגּוּפַת הַחֲבִית. וְלֹא יִתֵּן לַחֲבֵרוֹ בְּחִפְנָיו, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁאֵין מִמְּלֵאֵין וְאֵין מְקַדְּשִׁין וְאֵין מְזִין מִי חֲטָאת וְאֵין נוֹתְנִים לַיָּדִים אֶלָּא בְּכָלִי. וְאֵין מְצִילִין בְּצִמִּיד פְּתִיל אֶלָּא כֵּלִים, שֶׁאֵין מְצִילִין מִיָּד כָּלִי חֶרֶשׁ אֶלָּא כֵּלִים

- b) Water may be poured over the hands out of any kind of vessel, even out of vessels made of animal dung, out of vessels made of stone or out of vessels made of clay. Water may not be poured from the sides of [broken] vessels or from the bottom of a ladle or from the stopper of a jar. Nor may one pour [water] over the hands of his fellow out of his cupped hands. Because one may not draw, nor sanctify, nor sprinkle the water of purification, nor pour water over the hands except in a vessel. And only vessels closely covered with a lid protect [their contents from uncleanness]. And only vessels protect [their contents from uncleanness] inside earthenware vessels.

Rash Mi-Shantz: Even vessels which are not susceptible to the laws of *tuma* are considered vessels for *netilat yadayim* (see also *Para* 5:5).

Tzitz Eliezer 12:23; Az Nidberu 6:48: One may even use a disposable plastic or paper cup for *netilat yadayim*.

- c) One should preferably use a vessel which has no cracks or holes. If there is a hole in the vessel that is “*kones mashkeh*” – that is, if water would enter the vessel through the hole were the vessel to be immersed in water – the vessel is invalid.

Mishna Berura (158:7) explains that if drops of water continuously leak from the hole when the vessel is filled with water, the vessel is considered to be “*kones mashkeh*” and is invalid.

If the hole is so large than one can pour water through it, if the vessel contains a *revi'it* of water under the hole, one may wash his hands by pouring water through the hole onto his hands.

שולחן ערוך סימן קנט, א-ג

א

באיזה כלי נוטלין הידי'. וכיצד יבואו המי' לידי' ובו כ"ס
אין נוטלים לידיים אלא בכלי וכל הכלים כשרי' ואפילו כלי גללים [פירוש כלים עשויים מרפת
בקר ועפר] וכלי אבנים וכלי אדמה וצריך שיהא מחזיק רביעית ואם ניקב בכונס משקה דהיינו
שאם ישימו אותו על משקים יכנסו בתוכו דרך הנקב והוא גדול מנקב שהמשקים שבתוך
הכלי יוצאים בו אז בטל מתורת כלי ואין נוטלים ממנו לידיים ואפילו אם הוא מחזיק רביעית מן
הנקב ולמטה

1 Which vessels can you wash your hands with and how to pour the water on your

hands. 26 parts: Only wash your hands with a vessel. All vessels are kosher for this, even galalim vessels [vessels made from cow feces and dust], stone vessels, and earthenware vessels. The vessel must be able to hold a reviis of liquid. If there is a hole/crack in the vessel [that is, if you put the vessel in liquid, the liquid will enter it through the crack and that crack is bigger than the spout that the liquid is supposed to exit through], then the vessel is no longer considered a vessel and you shouldn't use it to wash your hands. This is so even if the vessel could hold a reviis of liquid below the crack.

ב

והני מילי כשנוטל דרך פיו למעלה שמה שממנו מן הנקב ולמעלה אינו חשוב ככלי ונמצאו שאין המים באים על ידו מהכלי אבל אם נוטל דרך הנקב שרי כיון שמחזיק רביעית ממנו ולמטה

The above applies when you pour from the mouth of the vessel above the hole/crack, because water above the crack is not considered to be in a vessel, so the water isn't pouring onto your hands from a vessel. However, if you pour from the crack, it is permitted since the vessel can hold a reviis under the crack.

ג

כלי שמחזיק רביעית כשסומכים אותו ואם לא יסמכוהו ישפכו המים ולא ישאר בו רביעית אינו כלי הלכך מגופה של חבית שהיא חדה ואינה מקבלת רביעית שלא מסומכת אין נוטלים ממנה ואם הרחיבה למטה עד שמקבלת רביעית כשהיא יושבת שלא מסומכת נוטלים ממנה

A vessel that holds a reviis when it is propped up (by something else) and if it is not propped up will pour out the water so that not even a reviis of water remains in it is not a vessel. Therefore, the body of a (rounded) single piece barrel that doesn't hold a reviis when it is not supported should not be used to wash with. If it is wide enough on the bottom that it does hold a reviis while unsupported, you can wash with it.

Shulchan Arukh 159:5 A vessel which cannot stand on its own and can only contain a *revi'it* if it leans on another vessel or a wall may not be used for *netilat yadayim*. However, if the vessel was intentionally made this way, such as a ladle, it may be used for *netilat yadayim*

Mishna Berura 18 Leather canteens which collapse when emptied may not be used for *netilat yadayim*. Similarly, plastic bags may not be used for *netilat yadayim*.

Shulchan Arukh 159:4; Mishna Berura 20 A vessel which was not intended to hold liquids may not be used for *netilat yadayim*. Therefore, one may not wash one's hands from a hat or yarmulke.

Mishna Berura (15) cites a debate regarding whether one may wash his hands from a pot cover that is occasionally used to hold liquids.

One may wash his hands from a water bottle, as long as the water covers the entire hand. Preferably, there should be a continual (even if slow) flow of water.

2) Washing One's Hands in a *Ma'ayan* or *Mikve*

In order to purify one's hands before eating bread, one may also immerse them in a natural spring, river, sea, or a kosher *mikve*.

Mishna Berura (97) records that the *Acharonim* conclude that the blessing "*al netilat yadayim*" should always be said, even if one immerses his hands.

Mordekhai (Berakhot 202) - One who immerses his hands does not need to immerse the hands two times or raise his hands, and, based upon the Tosefta (*Yadayim* 2:1), does not need to dry his hands. (Shulchan Arukh (159:20) records this as well.)

3) 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 משתייה
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 משתיית הבהמה, בכלים, פסולים. ובקרקעות, כשרים. נפל לתוכן דיו, קומוס,
וקנקנתום ונשתנו מראיהן, פסולין. עשה בהם מלאכה או ששורה בהן פתו, פסולין. שמעון התמני
אומר, אפלו נתכנון 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 (Hilkhos 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*

4) Hot Water for *Netilat Yadayim*

תלמוד בבלי חולין ק"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: Hizkiyya 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, Hizkiyya 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*.

5) 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*.

6) 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.

7) 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 בתוך מותר וקשה לפירושו דהכא אמר אינו נוטל ממנו דלא אתי מכח גברא משמע דבעין כח גברא השופך ומיהו י"ל דבעין 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 דבעין 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 ידיים 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 דתן 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.

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

משנה ידיים א:ה

המים שהנחתום מטביל בהם את הגלסקין, פסולים. וכשהוא מדיח את ידיו בָּהֶן, כְּשֵׁרִים. הכל כְּשֵׁרִים לַתֵּן לַיָּדִים, אִפְּלוּ חֵרֶשׁ שׁוֹטֵה וְקֵטָן. מִנִּיחַ חֲבִית בֵּין בְּרַכּוֹ וְנוֹטֵל. מִטָּה חֲבִית עַל צִדָּהּ וְנוֹטֵל. וְהַקּוֹף נוֹטֵל לַיָּדִים. רַבִּי יוֹסִי פּוֹסֵל בְּשֵׁנֵי אֵלוֹ

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 cheresh, 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.”