מב. הרוצה לשתות מים לצמאו בבית המרחץ, אינו רשאי להרהר הברכה ולשתות בחדר הפנימי. ואף בחדר האמצעי שמקצת בני אדם לבושים ומקצתם אינם לבושים, שמותר להרהר שם בדברי תורה, אינו יכול לשתות מים על ידי הרהור הברכה, אלא ימתין עד שילבש בגדיו ויצא לחוץ ויברך וישתה. ויש מקילים שקודם שיכנס למרחץ יברך שהכל על סוכר ויאכל מעט, ויכוין לפטור בברכתו מה שישתה בפנים. והסומך על זה לא הפסיד. [ילקו"י עמ' תנא, ע"פ יבי"א ח"ג סי' ד אות כו]

מג. הנמצא בתוך החדר הפנימי של בית המרחץ, אינו רשאי לומר "שלום" לחבירו, מפני ששמו של הקדוש ברוך הוא "שלום", שנאמר ויקרא לו ה' שלום. ומכל מקום מותר לקרוא לחבירו ששמו שלום, בבית המרחץ, ואין צריך להחמיר לקוראו בכינוי. וכן מותר לקרוא לחבירו ששמו עובדיה, או עזריה, כשנמצא בתוך החדר הפנימי שבבית המרחץ.
ובמקום הצורך מותר להרהר בצרכי מצוה, כגון בעניני צדקה, כשנמצא בתוך החדר הפנימי של בית המרחץ, אף על פי שאסור להרהר שם בדברי תורה. [הליכו"ע ח"א עמ' מג]

מד. הנכנס לחדר מקוה האר"י ז"ל בצפת, שלעולם המים שם צוננים, מותר לו לקרוא שם תהלים ולברך שם ברכות, אם אין שם באותה שעה בני אדם עירומים, וכן האומר עצמו מלובש בבגדים, שמאחר והמים

Day 46

Drinking water in a bathhouse

42) If someone is thirsty while in the inner chamber of a public bathhouse, he may not think the words of the blessing and drink water. In fact, he may not do so even in the outer chamber where people get dressed and undressed, although it is permissible to think about Torah topics while in the outer chamber. Instead, he should get dressed, go outside and recite the blessing verbally.

Some *Poskim* ruled that one may recite the blessing of *shehakol nihya bidvaro* over a candy before entering the bathhouse, having in mind that this blessing will cover water that one will drink while inside. It is permissible to rely on this leniency.

Saying Shalom in a bathhouse

43) While in the inner chamber of a public bathhouse, it is forbidden to greet people by saying, "Shalom" since this is one of God's Names, as we find in the verse (*Shofetim* 6:24), "וַיִּקְרָא לוֹ ה' שָׁלוֹם – He called Him God-Shalom." It is permissible to address someone named Shalom by his name, however. It is not necessary to distort his name [or to say, "Hey, you!]" Likewise, it is permissible to utter the names Ovadya or Azarya even while in the inner chamber of a public bathhouse.

Although it is forbidden to think about Torah topics while in the inner chamber of a public bathhouse, it is permissible when necessary to think about one's plans to perform a mitzvah. Therefore, one may think about matters pertaining to giving charity while there.

Status of the Arizal's mikveh

44) It is permissible to sit while wearing one's clothes in the compound constructed around the Arizal's mikveh in Safed and to read *Tehillim* or to recite blessings, as long as there are no naked people in sight. Since the water in the mikveh pool is always cold, the compound does not have the status of a bathhouse where such activities are forbidden. If there are naked people there, one may simply turn to face another direction and recite one's blessing or *Tehillim*.

שבמקוה לעולם הם צוננים, אין דין המקוה כדין בית מרחץ שאסרו לומר שם דברים שבקדושה. וכן הדין בכל מעיין של מים צוננין. ואם יש שם בני אדם עירומים יהפוך פניו לצד אחר ויברך.

והיוצא ממקוה האר״י ולא טבל שם, אין צריך ליטול ידיו בצאתו. ואם טבל שם, מסתמא נגע בגופו במקומות המכוסים, וכשיצא משם יטול ידיו כדין הנוגע בגופו. אבל בשאר המקוואות של מים חמים אסור לברך או לקרוא שם תהלים, אפילו אם אין שם בני אדם ערומים, וכמבואר בהלכה הקודמת. [ילקו״י עמ׳ תנה]

מה. מותר להכניס אוכלים ומשקים לחדר אמבטיה שאין שם בית כסא, ולהצניעם שם. והמחמיר תבא עליו ברכה. [יבי״א ח״ד סי׳ ה אות ג׳, ובתוכן ענינים שם]

מו. בבית המרחץ שדרכן של בני אדם לילך שם ערומים, ואי אפשר בענין אחר, אין בזה משום פריצות, ונתבאר לעיל בסימן ב׳ הלכה ג׳.

מז. מותר לשהות בגילוי הראש בבית המרחץ. ונתבאר לעיל בסימן ב׳ הלכה ל״א.

מח. היוצא מבית המרחץ לאחר שהתרחץ שם, צריך ליטול ידיו פעם אחת, ואם נכנס לבית המרחץ, ולא רחץ שם את גופו, אין צריך ליטול ידיו. ויתבאר לקמן בסימן ד׳ הלכה פ״ח והלאה.

Any person who entered the compound of the Arizal's mikveh but did not immerse in it does not need to wash hands upon exiting. If he did immerse in the mikveh, he must wash hands upon exiting since he almost certainly touched his body while there.

The same rules apply wherever there is a natural spring feeding a mikveh pool. Wherever there is a mikveh of heated water, however, it is forbidden to recite a blessing or recite *Tehillim* even if there are no naked people in sight, as explained in the previous halakha.

Storing food in a bathroom

45) It is permissible to store foodstuffs in a household bathroom that has no toilet facilities.[156] Anyone who refrains from doing this will receive a special blessing from Heaven.

Maintaining modesty in a bathhouse

46) Since it is not possible to avoid exposing one's nakedness to others while bathing in a public bathhouse, it is not considered immodest behavior. This was explained above in *Siman* 2:3.

Head covering in a bathhouse

47) It is permissible to walk about in a public bathhouse while bareheaded. This was explained above in *Siman* 2:31.

Washing hands after bathing

48) After bathing in a public bathhouse, one must wash hands upon exiting it. It is sufficient to rinse each hand one time. If someone entered a public bathhouse but he did not bathe, he does not have to wash his hands at all. This will be explained below in *Siman* 4:88.

156. This is the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. IV, #5:3). The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 450) deduced from his father's choice of words that one should not rely on this leniency unless there is some need for it. However, the wording that Maran the Rishon Letziyon used in the summary at the end of that volume of *Yabia Omer* implies that it is permissible without reservation.

Preface The Morning *Netillat Yadayim*

We find, among the writings of our Sages, four possible reasons for the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim* upon awakening in the morning:

Rabbenu Asher (*Berakhot* 9:23) explained that while a person sleeps, his hands remain active. It is almost certain that he touches unclean parts of his body while he sleeps. Therefore, he must wash his hands when he awakens before he can recite blessings or pray.

The Rashba (responsa Vol. I, #191) explained that when a person wakes up refreshed in the morning, it is like he was created anew. The verse states (*Ekha* 3:23): "חֲדָשִׁים לַבְּקָרִים רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתֶךָ – New [expressions of Your kindness] each morning, Your faithfulness is magnificent." Our Sages taught in the Midrash that this refers to God's kindness in restoring our souls to our bodies each morning. When someone deposits an item with a mortal for safekeeping, he gets it back worn and scratched. We deposit our souls with God when they are tired and worn out, and He returns them to us refreshed and renewed. We are obliged to thank Him for creating us for the purpose of honoring Him, worshipping Him and blessing His Name. This is the purpose of all the morning blessings that our Sages instituted for us to recite each morning. This being the case, we must purify and sanctify ourselves each morning before beginning these holy tasks, just as a *kohen* must sanctify his hands and feet by rinsing them with water from the *kiyor* (basin) in the *Bet Hamikdash* each morning before beginning the sacred services.

The *Halakha Berura* cited the Rashba and Rabbenu David Abudarham as offering two distinct reasons for *netillat yadayim*. This is incorrect. The latter simply copied the reason given by the Rashba.

The holy *Zohar* (*Bereshit* page 184b) teaches that when someone sleeps during the night, his sacred soul leaves his body and he tastes the flavor of death. When that happens, harmful spiritual forces, which the *Zohar* refers to as an "evil spirit,"[157] contaminate his body. When he wakes up in the

157. The term "evil spirit" implies that there is something alive – some sort of ghost – that possesses the surface of one's hands in the morning. As translator of this volume, I was uncomfortable to allow the readers to get this impression, although the Hebrew term is *ru'ah ra'a*. The word *ru'ah* often means spirit, but it also means

morning, the harmful forces depart his body but they remain attached to his hands. They can be removed by performing *netillat yadayim*.

The *Orhot Hayim* cited the Talmud (*Shabbat* 109a) teaching that harmful spiritual forces contaminate one's hands during the night and can be removed only through *netillat yadayim*. This is not identical to the *Zohar's* teaching. According to the Talmud, it is not being asleep that brings this harmful contamination; it is the night itself.

In the halakhot that follow, each of these reasons affects the rules in different ways. In practice, we rule stringently wherever any of these reasons make it warranted. Unless someone is obligated in *netillat yadayim* according to all these reasons, he does not recite the blessing of *al netillat yadayim*, based on the principle of *safek berakhot lehakel*.

If someone remained awake all night long: Maran explained in the *Bet Yosef* that this person would not have to perform *netillat yadayim* according to Rabbenu Asher since he was in control of his hands through the night. Since he remained awake, there is no difference between the day and the night. Likewise, the *Zohar's* reason would not apply in this case. The harmful contamination mentioned by the *Zohar* is the result of sleeping; if someone did not sleep at all, there is no such contamination and no reason for *netillat yadayim*.

One would assume that the Rashba would agree in this case that *netillat yadayim* is unnecessary since the person has not been renewed by a night's sleep. He has not deposited his soul with God, nor has God refreshed it for him. Nevertheless, Maran countered that one might be still obligated to perform *netillat yadayim* although one did not sleep. It could be, he explained, that once our Sages instituted the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim* in the morning, the mitzvah is incumbent on all people, whether or not they slept during the night. This is the Talmudic concept of *la pelug*, meaning that once our Sages instituted a halakha, the institution is universal whether or not its purpose is applicable in any particular situation.

According to Rabbenu Asher's reasoning, however, the principle of *la pelug* does not apply. He taught that *netillat yadayim* was instituted for a very practical reason – one's hands are dirty when one awakens from a night's sleep. When a person knows that his hands have remained clean, there is no basis for washing them.

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atmosphere or air. Our Sages likely were referring to some negative, harmful energy that radiates from a Jew's hands after sleeping. Although many books have been written about human energy and energy healing and they do not mention this, that is because it does not exist among non-Jews. I took the liberty to write "harmful forces" wherever the Hebrew text states *ru'ah ra'a*, although the literal translation would be "evil spirit." (MM)