וכל זה דוקא אם נגע באצבעות מי שלא נטל ידיו, דשם שורה הרוח רעה, אבל אם נגע בכף היד הסמוך לזרוע, אינו צריך ליטול ידיו שנית. [עצי היער שם עפ"ד היפ"ל]

נגיעה בגופו ובמאכלים קודם נטילה

לד. יש ליזהר לכתחילה שלא יגע בידיו בשום מאכל או משקה קודם נטילת ידים שחרית, שלא יטמאם בנגיעתו, משום רוח רעה השורה על הידים, ובנגיעתו היא שורה על האוכלים. ולכן יש להשגיח בעוז ובתעצומות ולעמוד על המשמר שגם הילדים הקטנים יטלו ידיהם לפני איזה נגיעה שהיא באוכלים או במשקים, שאף בילדים יש ליזהר בזה לכתחילה. [ילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' ח, עפמ"ש ביבי"א ח"ד סי' א]. וראה לקמן הלכה נ"ט, שיש לחנך את הקטנים להרגילם לקיים מצוה זו של נטילת ידים שחרית.

לה. מאכלים שידוע בבירור שנגעו בהם קודם נטילת ידים שחרית (כגון שאירע כן במקרה בתוך ביתו), אם הם דברים יבשים, כגון פירות וירקות שאפשר לרוחצם ולשוטפם במים, יש להדיחם ולשוטפם במים שלש פעמים, ואז יהיו מותרים לכל הדעות.

אבל במאכלים רכים שאי אפשר לשוטפם מבלי שיחדרו המים אל תוכם, כגון לחם וכיוצא בזה, וכן משקים שנגעו בהם קודם נטילת ידים שחרית, מן הדין יש להתירם בדיעבד, וכל שכן אם נגעו

person who had not yet performed *netillat yadayim*. If he touched only the person's palms but not his fingers, it is not necessary for him to repeat *netillat yadayim*.

Touching Food or One's Body Before Performing *Netillat Yadayim*

Touching food or beverages

34) One must take care not to touch any food or beverage before performing the morning *netillat yadayim*, so that one does not contaminate the food or beverage with the harmful forces resting on one's hands.

For this reason, it is imperative to make sure that one's little children perform *netillat yadayim* upon awakening in the morning before they touch any food or beverage. Below in halakha 59 it is explained that parents must train their children to fulfill the mitzvah of the morning *netillat yadayim*.

As above

35) If it happens that someone touched fruits or vegetables before performing the morning *netillat yadayim*, the foods should be rinsed with water three times and then all *Poskim* agree that they may be eaten. If someone touched food that would be ruined if it was rinsed with water, such as bread, it is permissible to eat that food even without any remedy. The same applies to beverages touched by someone who had not yet performed *netillat yadayim*. These are the rules even if the person who touched the food is an adult, and certainly if it was a child. Even so, when there is not a hefty loss

בהם ילדים קטנים שלא הגיעו למצות, שיש להקל בזה יותר. ומכל מקום המחמיר שלא לאוכלם תבוא עליו ברכה, כשאין הפסד מרובה בדבר. [ילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' ט, עפמ"ש ביבי"א ח"ד סי' א, ח"ה סי' א]

לו. מותר לקנות לחם ממאפיה של יהודים, אפילו אם הפועלים שם אינם מוחזקים בכשרות שיטלו ידיהם שחרית נטילת ידים כדת. וכן מותר לקנות צרכי מאכל מבעל חנות מכולת, אף על פי שהוא חילוני, שמסתמא אינו נוטל ידיו שחרית, ואין לחוש בדיעבד למגעו באוכלים בלי נטילת ידים שחרית.

[ילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' ט, עפמ"ש ביבי"א ח"ד סי' א]

involved, those who are stringent and avoid eating the food or drinking the beverage will receive a special blessing from Heaven.[183]

Bread in stores

36) It is permissible to purchase bread from a bakery operated by Jews even though the employees are not necessarily observant and might not perform the mitzvah of the morning *netillat yadayim* before they touch the products they bake. Likewise, one may purchase food from a grocery store operated by a nonobservant Jew. One need not be concerned that this person touched the food without performing *netillat yadayim*.[184]

183. The Talmud (*Hullin* 107b) states that one must perform *netillat yadayim* in the morning before one touches any food. Rashi (comment to *Ta'anit* 20b) stated that the demons are wont to harm someone who eats without performing the morning *netillat yadayim*. The *Shulhan Arukh* (4:5) states: "One must not touch a keg of beer [before performing *netillat yadayim*] lest his touch ruin the beer." The *Haye Adam* (2:2) ruled, based on this, that it is forbidden to drink beer that was touched by someone before *netillat yadayim*, but that all other foods and beverages may be consumed.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. IV, #1:4) demonstrated that according to Harav Eliyahu of Vilna and Harav HIDA, it is forbidden to eat any food that was touched by someone who did not perform *netillat yadayim*. This is likewise the position of the responsa *Lev Hayim* (Vol. I, #66) and the *Torat Hayim* Sofer (4:6). According to Maran in the *Bet Yosef*, however, the stringency about touching food applies only to beer since it is liable to be ruined. No food, however, becomes forbidden as a result of contamination by the harmful forces. This is likewise the position of the *Artzot Hahayim* (*Eretz Yehuda* 4:4). We must also take into account the opinion of Rambam that in modern times there is no such thing as an "evil spirit" or spiritual harmful forces. Thus, many *Poskim* (Harav Yaakov of Emden, the *Mishna Berura*, the *Mishmeret Shalom*, the *Arukh Hashulhan*, the *Arugat Habosem*, the *Misgeret Hashulhan*, the *Shulhan Melakhim*, the *Atze Haya'ar*) ruled leniently in this matter.

Practice of the pious

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. IV, #1:11) added that although the food is technically permissible, if someone refrains from consuming food or beverages that someone had touched without performing the morning *netillat yadayim*, he will receive a special blessing from Heaven. This is because the *Shene Luhot Haberit* (cited by the *Minhat Aharon* 1:12) stated that if someone eats such foods, they are liable to affect his intelligence adversely and they make him more susceptible to sin. Such a concept applies as well to the halakha concerning a non-Jewish wet nurse breastfeeding a Jewish child, as the Rama explained in *Yore De'a* 81:7.

184. This is the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. IV, #1), based on the fact that many *Poskim* ruled that it is always permissible to eat foods that were touched by someone who had not performed the morning *netillat yadayim*, as enumerated in the previous footnote. Besides, we can assume that the employee in the bakery or store does wash his hands in some manner every day, and this is enough to weaken the affect of the harmful forces on his hands so that they do not contaminate the food he touches.

The *Od Yosef Hai* (*parashat Toledot* halakha 8) cited the Arizal teaching that although it is necessary to wash each hand three times to rid it of the harmful forces completely, those forces are weakened from one's hands with each pouring. Maran the Rishon Letziyon supported this posi-

לז. בגוים אין לחוש אם נוגע באוכלים ומשקים בשחרית, אפילו בלי נטילת ידים, דאינו מעלה ומוריד להם נטילת ידים שחרית. ומותר לאכול ולשתות אוכלים ומשקים הללו בלי שום פקפוק. [ילקו"י עמ' עט, ובמהדו"ק עמ' ט. עפמ"ש ביבי"א ח"ד סו"ס א]. וראה לעיל הלכה כ"ב שאין ראוי ליטול ידיו מן הגוי בנטילת ידים שחרית.

Non-Jews touching food

37) If a non-Jew touches food it does not affect it at all even though the non-Jew does not perform *netillat yadayim*. It is perfectly permissible to eat food handled by non-Jews.[185] Above in halakha 22 it was explained that one should not have a non-Jew pour the water on one's hands for the mitzvah of the morning *netillat yadayim*.

tion by citing the Talmud (*Avoda Zara* 56b) stating that a Jew may tread on grapes to extract their juice and produce wine. According to the Arizal, cited in responsa *Rav Pe'alim* (Vol. II, #4), harmful forces rest on one's feet as well as on one's hands. Does this not contaminate the wine? Although it is not possible to rid the feet of these harmful forces completely, it must be that by washing them one weakens the harmful forces so that they do not render the wine forbidden.

Harav Yisrael Yaakov Fisher (responsa *Even Yisrael* Vol. VII) challenged the ruling of the *Yabia Omer*. The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 364) refuted his challenge.

Based on this premise, Maran the Rishon Letziyon ruled that it is permissible to purchase bread from a store even though it might have been handled by employees or other customers who do not perform the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*. The halakha might follow the lenient *Poskim*, and even if it does not, we can assume that the person who touched the bread had washed his hands in some manner that day. This is the same ruling as the *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, page 20).

The responsa *Teshuvot Vehanhagot* (Vol. II, #3) added that it is possible that those people who are totally nonobservant and desecrate the Shabbat with total abandon have the status of non-Jews. As such, no harmful forces bother to infect their hands when they go to sleep. This reasoning needs to be researched further.

Under the bed

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* Vol. VII, page 209) ruled that it is forbidden to store food or beverages under a bed while someone sleeps on it. If someone did this, some *Poskim* ruled that the food is now forbidden while most ruled that it is permitted, especially if the floor under the bed is paved with tiles or wood panels. The value of the food is not a determining factor. If the food was left on the bare ground under the bed, however, it can be permitted only if it has considerable value.

The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 373) pointed out that this ruling is a retraction from a previous ruling in responsa *Yabia Omer* (Vol. I, *Y.D.* #9) that even if the bed is on a floor, the food left under it may be permitted only if it has considerable value. See the *Yalkut Yosef Berakhot English Edition* Vol. I, footnote to 160:32.

If someone went to sleep with food in his pocket, the food remains permissible. The *Mizmor leDavid* explained that there is a problem only when the food is underneath the bed, but if it is underneath a mattress on top of the bed frame it is alright. If the food is in the person's pocket it is certainly alright. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. I, *Y.D.* 9:23) cited the same reasoning in the name of the kabbalist Harav Efrayim Hakohen, who testified that this is the ruling of Harav Yosef Hayim as well.

The *Kovetz Bet Hillel* (*Tevet*, 5761) and the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 378) discussed the issue of placing foodstuffs in the baggage compartment of a bus or the cargo area of an airplane even though people are sleeping above it. They found numerous arguments for leniency.

185. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. IV, #1) explained that the issue of someone touching food before performing *netillat yadayim* applies to Jews only, but there is no problem with a non-Jew touching food at any time. The *Peri Megadim* (*Mishbetzot Zahav* 4:7) stated that just as the body of a dead non-Jew does not emanate *tum'a* to his surroundings, a living non-Jew is not affected by the harmful forces that seek the holy environment of a Jew's body. Jews are affected for the very fact that their bodies are filled with a holy soul, but non-Jews do not possess such a thing. A similar explanation is offered by Harav Zalman and the responsa *Lev Hayim* (Vol. I, #68).

לח. הישן ביום שינת קבע, לכתחלה לא יגע באוכלים ומשקים קודם שיטול ידיו, אבל אם עבר ונגע במאכלים ומשקים, יש להתירם, ואין צריך להחמיר בזה. [ילקו"י עמ' שפ עפמ"ש ביבי"א ח"ד סי' א סוף אות ו, שכ"פ בבא"ח תולדות הט"ו, ובכה"ח ס"ק יח]

לט. לא יגע בידו קודם נטילה, בפה, ולא בחוטם, ולא באזנים, ולא בעינים. [ש"ע סעיף ג], מפני שהרוח רעה השורה על הידים, תוכל להזיק לאלו האיברים. [משנ"ב ס"ק יא] ודוקא באצבעותיו. אבל ע"י כך היד מותר. [יפ"ל ח"א אות ח]

After a daytime nap

38) If someone takes a nap during the day, he should avoid touching food upon awakening until he performs *netillat yadayim*. If he touched food or beverages before doing so, however, they remain permissible. It is not necessary to be stringent about consuming it.[186]

Day 57

Touching body openings

39) Before performing the morning *netillat yadayim*, it is forbidden to touch one's mouth, nostrils, ears or eyes. This is because the harmful forces contaminating one's hands might injure [or bring illness to] the person through those apertures.[187] This applies to touching those body parts with one's fingers. It is

186. Harav HIDA (*Birke Yosef* 4:6) stated that his great grandfather, Harav Avraham Azulai, cited Harav Hayim Vital teaching that harmful forces infect one's hands after a daytime nap as well. On the other hand, the *Tefilla leDavid* (page 4b) cited the Arizal teaching that a daytime nap does not instigate any harmful forces, and the responsa *Lev Hayim* (#69, page 88c) and the *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Toledot* halakha 15) concurred with this ruling. Based on these *Poskim*, Maran the Rishon Letziyon ruled that if someone touched food after taking a daytime nap but before he performed *netillat yadayim*, the food remains permissible. This is likewise the ruling of the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 380).

187. The Talmud teaches (*Shabbat* 108b): "If someone wishes to touch his eye with his hand, his hand should be cut off. If someone wishes to touch his nose with his hand, his hand should be cut off. If someone wishes to touch his mouth with his hand, his hand should be cut off. If someone wishes to touch his ear with his hand, his hand should be cut off." Rashi explained that all this refers to someone who has not yet performed *netillat yadayim* in the morning. He is better off having his hand severed rather than be blinded by the harmful forces infecting his eyes through his hand. This halakha appears in the *Shulhan Arukh* 4:3 and it is discussed at length in responsa *Yabia Omer* (Vol. IV, #1).

What is the harm?

The *Solet Belula* (4:3) explained that the danger in touching the body's apertures is not that the person might become blind or deaf physically. It applies, rather, to one's connection to Torah wisdom. The Talmud warns us that if someone is careless and touches these body parts before performing *netillat yadayim*, he will be "blind and deaf" in his Torah learning that day. He will not be able to understand what he reads or what he hears. The *Yafe Lalev* (Vol. I, 4:9) suggested that this punishment applies if the person is learned in Torah. If he is not, then his punishment will be physical blindness or deafness.

The *Minhat Aharon* (1:13) cited the *Solet Belula* and challenged the thesis. Why should a Torah scholar be more susceptible to spiritual blindness than an unlearned person? Furthermore, how would the author of *Solet Belula* explain the Talmud's statement that if a person touches his mouth before *netillat yadayim* he will develop bad breath, or that when someone touches his nose he develops an evil smell that emanates from it? These punishments do not seem to have anything to do with Torah wisdom. Therefore, the *Minhat Aharon* concluded that the Talmud is referring to physical ailments, as it seems from the plain reading of the text.

Furthermore, if the *Solet Belula's* interpretation is correct that the punishment is administered that very day, people would then argue that our Sages' warnings are unwarranted since these things do not happen to people. Instead, it is preferable to interpret the Talmud literally, and if someone sees that people are not punished as the Talmud warns, he can attribute it to God's patience and mercy. The blindness or deafness might not become a reality until the person's old age.