שיעור המים לנטילת ידים

לו. בשעה שבא ליטול ידיו צריך שיהא במים שיעור "רביעית", שמונים ואחד סמ"ק. [ש"ע סי' קס סי"ג]. שכן תיקנו חכמים לנטילת ידים. [משנ"ב שם]. ושיעור זה הוא בין אם נוטל שתי ידיו כאחת, בין אם נוטל ידיו אחת אחת, לעולם סגי ברביעית אחת לשתי ידיו. [משנ"ב ס"ק סז]

וכל זה במקום שאין מים מצויים, אבל במקום שמים מצויים, טוב שיטול ידיו בשפע, וכמבואר לעיל סימן קנ"ח הלכה כ'. [משנ"ב ס"ק סו]

Amount of Water Required

Revi'it

36) Our Sages instituted that, to perform the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*, one must have a container filled with at least *revi'it* of water (81 cc).[106] Whether one pours the water onto both hands at once or onto one after the other, all that is needed is *revi'it* of water. If more water is available, however, it is commendable to use plenty of water for *netillat yadayim* as explained above in *Siman* 158:20.

argument, the *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, footnote on page 300) ruled that cola or coffee may be used only when no water is available, and even then one must not recite the blessing.

The *Hamad Moshe* and the *Saba Kadisha* explained the Rama's ruling permitting beer in a different way, unlike that of the *Magen Avraham*. Since the beer is cooked, the water absorbs the substance of the barley and hops, giving it the status of "juice of the grain" rather than colored water. Therefore, it is like all natural fruit juices. A beverage made by soaking fruits in water, on the other hand, would be disqualified for the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*.

According to this, all soft drinks that are water with added flavorings and colors are disqualified as well. The *Halakha Berura* (page 45) added that according to this opinion, tea and coffee are disqualified likewise. We may assume that he was not discussing brewed coffee or tea, which should have the same status as beer.

The *Halakha Berura* (page 210) concluded that if someone has no other beverage other than these colored soft drinks, he may use them but he must not recite the blessing. If someone performed *netillat yadayim* with these beverages and then water became available to him while he was still eating, he should defile his hands and then perform *netillat yadayim* in the proper manner and recite the blessing.

Club soda and transparent soft drinks

According to the above rules, it would seem that it is permissible to use a lemon-lime soft drink for *netillat yadayim* and recite the blessing over it, since it is as transparent as the original water. The carbonation does not present a problem whatsoever halakhically, nor do the flavorings or sweeteners. This is the ruling of the *Or Letziyon* (page 300).

Oil, milk, honey

Harav Zalman (160:15) ruled that one may not perform *netillat yadayim* with oil or honey since they do not cleanse the hands. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (160:71) cited this and added that the same applies to any liquid that does not cleanse the hands. Even when no water is available, such liquids are not an option. The *Otzerot Yosef* (page 43) ruled that one must not use milk either since Harav Eliyahu of Vilna and the *Tehilla leDavid* ruled that milk is not included in the category of fruit juices.

106. The *Nahalat Tzevi* (160:20) and the *Eliya Rabba* (160:28, cited in the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 160:73) explained that our Sages required *revi'it* of water since this amount of rain water can be considered a kosher mikveh to purify small utensils such as pins and needles. This is the halakha as it was given to Moshe Rabbenu at Mount Sinai (*halakha leMoshe miSinai*), but our Sages later instituted a stringency requiring forty *se'a* of water for purifying utensils, as the Tosafot taught in *Pesahim* 17b. Using a container holding *revi'it* of water to purify one's hands is reminiscent of the small mikveh that has the ability to purify that which is *tame*.

לז. צריך שיהא רביעית מכונס במקום אחד, שאם נטל משמינית, וחזר ומילא הכלי נטל משמינית ידיו טמאות כשהיו. [שם ס"ד]. ואפילו נטל משתיהן בבת אחת, כגון ששפך לו אדם אחד על שתי ידיו משני כלים, שכל כלי אינו מחזיק אלא שמינית והקלוח מתערב, ידיו טמאות כמו שהיו. [גר"ז סי' קס ס"ח, משנ"ב ס"ק פא, כה"ח סופר ס"ק פב]

לח. אם לא היה בכלי רביעית ושפכם על ידו, וחזר והביא מים והשלים, ידיו טמאות, ואין לו תקנה אלא עד שינגבם תחילה, ואז יחזור ויטיל עליהם מכלי שיש בו רביעית מים. וצריך שכל אדם ישים דעתו בדבר זה, כי הוא מצוי ושכיח שהאדם לפי תומו לוקח הכלי ושופך על ידיו בחשבו שיש בו יותר מרביעית מים, ואחר ששפך ידע שהוא חסר מרביעית, דאז יזהר לנגב תחילה, ואחר כך יטול ממים שיביא מחדש, שיש בהם שיעור. [בן איש חי פ' שמיני הלכה יא, כה"ח סופר ס"ק פב]

לט. אפילו אינו רוצה ליטול רק יד אחת כגון דהיה ידו אחת טהורה מכבר, גם כן אין לפחות משיעור רביעית [משנ"ב ס"ק סז, כה"ח סופר ס"ק עד, בשם התוספתא]

In one container

37) It is necessary for this *revi'it* of water to be held in a single container. One may not fill a container with half of *revi'it*, pour it on his hand and then fill it with another half *revi'it*. If someone has two containers, each holding half of *revi'it*, he cannot perform the mitzvah by pouring the water of both containers simultaneously, even if the waters combine in midair. If he does this, his hands remain unfit for eating bread as they had been before he poured the water on them.

***Revi'it* in halves**

38) If there is less than *revi'it* of water in the container and someone poured it on his hand, refilled the container and poured it on his hand a second time, his hand has not been purified even though the combined waters equal *revi'it* or more. Furthermore, he cannot simply pick up a container with *revi'it* of water at this time and pour it on his hand. He must first dry his hands from the water he poured on them before and only then can he pour from the container holding *revi'it* of water to fulfill the mitzvah.

Harav Yosef Hayim (*Ben Ish Hai*) wrote that it is common for someone to pick up a container holding less than *revi'it* of water, realizing it only after he has spilled it onto his hand. If this happens, he emphasized, it is necessary to dry his hand before continuing to perform *netillat yadayim* properly with *revi'it* of water.

On one hand

39) If someone needs to perform *netillat yadayim* on only one hand (e.g. he had already performed *netillat yadayim* properly but now one hand became defiled) he still must pour the water from a container holding at least *revi'it* of water.

מ. רביעית שאמרו בין לידיו של גדול בין לידיו של קטן. [ש"ע סי' קס סט"ו]

מא. שנים שבאים ליטול ידיהן, ואין להם אלא שיעור רביעית, יש להם להניח ידיהם זה מתחת לזה בסמיכות ממש [משנ"ב ס"ק עב], ויתכוונו שניהם מתחילה ליטול ביחד [משנ"ב ס"ק סח], ואדם אחר יצוק מים על ידי שניהם, באופן שיבואו המים על ידי הראשון, וירדו מידי הראשון על ידי השני, הכל בקלוח אחד. ויזהרו שיגיעו המים על ידיהם סביב כל שעור הנטילה שבידו. [משנ"ב ס"ק סט]. ובזה יהיו ידי שניהם טהורות אע"פ שפיחת שיעור הרביעית כשהם מגיעים לידיו של שני ידיו טהורות מפני שהם באים משיורי טהרה. [ש"ע סי' קס ס"ג]. וכשנוטלים בדרך זו יכולים אף לברך על נטילת ידים.

Small hands

40) Whether one has large hands or small hands[107] he must use a container holding *revi'it* of water to perform *netillat yadayim*.

Two people, one *revi'it*

41) If two people need to perform *netillat yadayim* but they have only *revi'it* of water, it is possible for them to use it together. One person should hold his two hands directly underneath those of his friend with very little space between them,[108] both intending to fulfill this mitzvah.[109] A third[110] person then pours the water on their hands so that the water runs over the fingers of the top hand and cascades onto the fingers of the bottom hand. Each of them must make sure that the entire surface area of his fingers has been wetted by the stream of water, so that he will have fulfilled the mitzvah. Although less than *revi'it* of water reaches the hands of the second person, being that some remains on the hands of the first person, he nevertheless fulfills the mitzvah since this water was poured from a container that was originally holding *revi'it* of water. Both people must recite the blessing of *al netillat yadayim*.

107. The *Mishna Berura* (160:82) interpreted this as an adult with small hands. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (160:84) argued that if this is what the halakha means, it need not have been written. We already know that even if someone needs to pour the water on one hand only, he still needs an entire *revi'it* of water for the mitzvah. Therefore, it is self-understood that one needs an entire *revi'it* of water regardless of the area on which it needs to be poured. The *Kaf Hahayim* offered an alternative explanation for this halakha – that it means "a large person or a small person" – an adult or a child, that a father must train his child to perform this mitzvah using *revi'it* of water.

Despite his argument, the interpretation of the *Mishna Berura* seems more plausible.

108. The *Mishna Berura* (160:72) explained that if there is a noticeable distance between one person's hands and the other's, it will be as if the water reaching the lower hands is already "used water" and is disqualified for the mitzvah. See above in halakha 20.

109. The *Mishna Berura* (160:68) explained that if one person pours the water on his hands, and a second person notices this and thrusts his hands underneath those of the first person so that the water falls on his hands as well, the second person has not fulfilled the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*. Since they did not have this in mind at the moment that the water was being poured, the second person has performed the mitzvah with "used water" and his *netillat yadayim* is not valid. He must dry his hands and perform the mitzvah a second time.

110. When a third person is not available

If two people are alone and they have only *revi'it* of water, it is still possible for both of them to perform *netillat yadayim*. One person should perform the mitzvah using approximately half the water, and then the second person can perform the mitzvah with the remaining water. Even though there is less than *revi'it* in the container when the second person uses it, it is a valid act of *netillat yadayim* since there originally was *revi'it* of water in it and the two