סימן קסא

דיני חציצה

א. צריך ליזהר מחציצה שכל דבר שחוצץ בטבילה חוצץ בנטילה. [ש"ע סי' קסא ס"א]. ולכן אף היה הדבר החוצץ דבר שמקפיד עליו אף שהוא במיעוט היד, או שהיה הדבר החוצץ על רוב היד אף שאינו מקפיד עליו להסירו, הרי זה חוצץ. [ראה משנ"ב ס"ק א וס"ק ח, כה"ח סק"י]

אבל אם היה הדבר החוצץ על מיעוט היד, וגם אינו מקפיד עליו להסירו, אינו חוצץ. [ראה ש"ע שם]. ואפילו לכתחילה אינו צריך להסירו. [ראה רמ"א ס"א]

Siman 161

Hatzitza

Day 65

General rules

1) When performing the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*, one must make sure that there is nothing constituting a *hatzitza* on the hands. Anything that would constitute a *hatzitza* to disqualify the act of immersing in a mikveh disqualifies the act of *netillat yadayim* as well.

Therefore, if any substance constitutes a *hatzitza* on someone's hands and he does not wish that it remain there permanently, it prevents him from performing *netillat yadayim* even if it covers a very small portion of his hand. Likewise, if the substance covers most of the surface area of his hand, it prevents him from performing the mitzvah even if he does not mind it remaining there permanently.

If the substance covers less than half of the surface area of the hand and he does not mind it remaining there permanently, it does not constitute a halakhic *hatzitza* and he is not obligated to remove it at all.[111]

111. The Rama (gloss to *Y.D.* 198:1) cited the *Sha're Dura* ruling that even in a case when a woman has a *hatzitza* covering a minor portion of her body and she does not mind it being there permanently, she still should remove it before immersing in a mikveh so that she will not immerse another time with a genuine *hatzitza* on her body. Maran did not bring this opinion in the *Shulhan Arukh*, however, and it appears that he did not agree with it. Although the responsa *Shema Shelomo* (Vol. III, page 106) wrote that Maran agreed with the ruling of Rama, Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Tahorat Habayit* Vol. III, page 5) refuted his position and stated that Maran ruled against the *Sha'are Dura*.

This being the case, certainly the halakha is to be lenient regarding this matter when fulfilling the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*. It is likely that even Rama would agree to this; he ruled stringently regarding a woman immersing in a mikveh since that is a Torah law. The *sefer Hateruma* (cited in the *Bet Yosef* here) ruled that even though the custom is to remove everything from the body when immersing in a mikveh, that is a stringency and it is not necessary when performing *netillat yadayim*. The Rama himself commented (gloss to 161:1) that it is not necessary to clean out the dirt that is lodged underneath the fingernails in order to perform *netillat yadayim* since it covers only a small portion of the hand and no one minds it being there.

ב. "רוב היד" לענין זה, נחשב כשיש דבר החוצץ על רוב האצבעות, אף שהחציצה היא על מיעוט כל היד עד הקנה של זרוע, מכל מקום יש להחמיר להסיר החציצה. [כה"ח סופר ס"ק כה]

ג. גדר "מקפיד" לענין זה, אם רוב העולם דרכם להקפיד על כך, אף שהוא עצמו אינו מקפיד, הרי זה חוצץ. [משנ"ב סק"ז, כה"ח ס"ק יט]. ואף היכא שרק אותו אדם מקפיד על חציצה זו, ראוי להחמיר להחשיבו חציצה ולהסירו קודם הנטילה, אף שרוב העולם אינם מקפידים על כך. [משנ"ב ס"ק י, כה"ח ס"ק יח]

Where *hatzitza* matters

2) By the words "surface area of the hand," we actually mean the fingers alone. When calculating the "majority of the surface," we mean the majority of the surface of the fingers. If a *hatzitza* covers the majority of the surface of the fingers but less than half of the hand's surface up to the wrist, one nevertheless must remove this *hatzitza*.[112]

What most people mind

3) As explained above, the status of a *hatzitza* often depends on whether the person minds having it on his skin. This is not necessarily determined by that person's personal feelings. If most people would mind having this substance permanently attached to their skin, then it constitutes a *hatzitza* even if this particular individual would not mind it remaining there permanently.[113]

If most people would not mind this substance remaining attached to their skin permanently, but one individual does mind it, it is highly recommended that he remove it before performing *netillat yadayim*.[114]

---

112. The *Poskim* debated how much of the hand must be rinsed when performing *netillat yadayim*, as explained above (*Siman* 158:16). Some ruled that it is the entire hand up to the wrist while others ruled that it is only the fingers up to where they join the palm. It is recommended to follow the first opinion but technically the halakha follows the second opinion. As explained in *Siman* 158:18, if someone performed *netillat yadayim* on his fingers only and has no more water, he has fulfilled the mitzvah and he must recite the blessing. Regarding the halakhot of *hatzitza*, one should remove any *hatzitza* on the hands up to the wrists, but when it comes to measuring what is considered the majority portion of the pertinent surface, one may count only the surface area of the fingers.

113. Maran in the *Bet Yosef* (*Y.D.* 198) wrote that it is unclear from the words of Rambam whether we are to determine the status of *hatzitza* substances according to the person's individual feelings about it or according to how the majority of people feel about it. Regarding a woman immersing in a mikveh, Maran ruled that if most people consider it a *hatzitza*, it must be removed even if this woman does not mind it remaining on her permanently. He cited several *Rishonim* who ruled thus. This is likewise the ruling in the *Shulhan Arukh* (*Y.D.* 198:1). Regarding the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*, the *Mishna Berura* (*Sha'ar Hatziyun* 161:9) cited the *Nehar Shalom* who deduced from Rama that the individual may follow his own feelings and disregard those of most people. The *Magen Avraham* (161:5), however, ruled that we follow the feelings of the majority and consider it a *hatzitza* in this case as well. The *Ma'amar Mordekhai* (161:10) deduced the same from the *Bet Yosef*. Based on this, the *Mishna Berura* (161:7) and the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (161:19) both ruled stringently in this matter. See the *Halakha Berura* (pages 221-223).

114. Maran in the *Bet Yosef* (*Y.D.* 198) explained that according to Rambam, if a woman has a substance on her body and does not want it to remain there permanently, she must remove it from her skin even though most women would not mind it remaining on their bodies permanently. According to the Rashba, however, she may rely on the feelings of the majority of women. Several *Aharonim*, including the *Sifte Kohen* (*Y.D.* 198:2), ruled stringently in this matter.

Regarding the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*, Maran wrote at first that we follow the individual's feelings and consider it to be a *hatzitza* that must be removed, but then he reconsidered and did not come to a clear conclusion.

היה דרכו של זה להקפיד וזה אין דרכו להקפיד, למי שדרכו להקפיד חוצץ, למי שאין דרכו להקפיד אינו חוצץ. ולכן צבעי שרגיל שידיו מלוכלכות תמיד בצבע, אין הצבע שעל ידיו חוצץ. [ש"ע סי' קסא ס"ב], ויתבאר לקמן הלכה י"ח.

צפרניים

ד. צפרניים נקיות, אפילו שהן גדולות ועודפות על הבשר, אינן חוצצות. ואף שלענין טבילה נהגו הנשים להחמיר ליטול צפורניהם בשעת טבילה, דשמא יש שם צואה הנדבקת (ראה יבי"א ח"ב חיו"ד סי' יג), מכל מקום לענין נטילה לא שייך האי חומרא ליטול צפרניו בכל נטילה ונטילה. [ש"ך יו"ד סי' קצח ס"ק כב

In a case where one group of people feel one way about having a substance on their skin and another goup feels another way, the halakha is determined by each individual's feeling. Someone who minds having the substance attached to him permanently must consider it to be a *hatzitza* whereas someone who does not mind it may ignore it and perform *netillat yadayim* without removing it from his skin.

For example, a painter or artist whose hands are constantly spotted with paint can perform *netillat yadayim* without cleaning the paint from his hands. Another person with similar spots of paint on his hands must consider the paint to be a *hatzitza*. This will be explained below in halakha 18.

Day 66

Fingernails

Long fingernails

4) Even if someone's fingernails are overgrown, they do not constitute a *hatzitza* for the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim* as long as they are clean. Regarding a woman immersing in a mikveh, the custom is to make sure that the fingernails and toenails are cut short for fear that there might be some dirt stuck underneath a nail. For the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*, however, there is no such custom. It would be highly impractical to have to trim one's fingernails daily in order to fulfill the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*.

Rabbenu Shlomo Luria wrote that there is no question that the individual must remove the substance since he does not want it to remain on his hands permanently, and this is clearly the opinion of Rama (gloss to 161:1) since he ruled that the dirt under the fingernails is not a *hatzitza* since no one minds it remaining there, *but if someone does mind it he must remove the dirt from under the nails*. The *Magen Avraham* (161:6) deduced from this that we must take the individual's feelings into consideration. Nevertheless, the *Magen Avraham* cited the *sefer Pene Yitzhak* ruling that since the Rashba considered this to be a doubt in the halakha we may rule leniently. This is likewise the ruling of Harav Zalman (161:3).

In practice, it is proper to be stringent in such a case since Maran remained undecided about it. This is the ruling of the *Mishna Berura* (161:10) and the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (161:18). The *Mishna Berura* added, however, that if the dirt under the fingernails is moist or if it is loose, it is not necessary to be stringent about it. This is especially so if this individual did not mind leaving the dirt there all day long until he decided to perform *netillat yadayim*.