ז. אם יש נפח על מקום הצפורן, ויש טיט או לכלוך תחת הצפורן, אך מחמת הנפיחות אינו יכול לחטט אחריו ולהוציאו, אם מקום הצפורן נפוח כל כך עד שאין הטיט שתחת הצפורן נראה, אינו חוצץ, שבודאי אינו מקפיד עליו. [ראה ש"ע יו"ד סי' קצח סי"ט, טהרת הבית ח"ג עמ' צב]

ח. צפורן שפירשה, בין במקצתה בין ברובה, אינה חוצצת. ומכל מקום נכון להחמיר כשפירשה מקצתה לקוץ אותה. [ראה בא"ח פ' קדושים הכ"ד, כה"ח סקי"ד, שו"ת דברי דוד ח"א סי' כג אות ז-ט]

Swollen fingertips

7) If someone's fingertip is infected and swollen, making it painful to dig out the dirt that is under the fingernail, then only the dirt that is visible when looking at the nail's underside is a *ḥatzitza*. Any dirt that is between the fingertip and the nail is not a *ḥatzitza* since no one minds leaving the dirt there in such a situation.[116]

Split fingernails

8) If a fingernail is partially split across its width so that part of the nail is separated from the rest of the nail, that portion of the nail is not a *ḥatzitza*, whether it is a small portion of the nail or a major portion of it. Even so, it is recommended to trim the nail and make it even whenever any part of it has become split in this manner.[117]

---

116. This is the ruling of the *Shulḥan Arukh* (*Y.D.* 198:19, cited in *Tahorat Habayit* Vol. III, page 92) regarding a woman who needs to immerse in a mikveh. Since it is not a *ḥatzitza* in that case it is certainly not a *ḥatzitza* regarding *netillat yadayim*.

When it is painful to clean underneath a fingernail

In such a case, a person would much rather leave the fingernail as is despite the soil underneath it. Therefore, it falls under the category of a case where the *ḥatzitza* covers less than half the area needed to be purified while the person does not mind leaving it as is. This can be compared to the halakha regarding someone who has a bandage on a small injury and it would be painful to remove the bandage. Below it will be explained that there is no fear that this person will remove the bandage while eating and he may perform *netillat yadayim* while ignoring the bandage. The same principle applies to this case as well.

117. Harav Zalman (161:4) ruled that if only a small portion of the nail has become separated it is necessary to trim it and make it even, since that portion is a *ḥatzitza*. This is likewise the ruling of the *Ben Ish Ḥai* (*parashat Kedoshim* halakha 24). Maran explained in the *Bet Yosef* (*Y.D.* 198) that if the nail has split across the majority of its width, the person is physically capable of removing the severed portion by hand without any tool. If the person chooses not to remove it, he or she obviously does not mind it remaining there. Therefore, this is a case of a *ḥatzitza* on a minor portion of the hand when the person does not mind it remaining there, and the person is not obligated to remove it to perform *netillat yadayim*. If the nail has split across only a minor portion of its width, there is reason to believe that the person would rather remove the severed portion but he has not done so since he is physically incapable of removing it with his bare hands. In this case, it is a *ḥatzitza* that the person does not wish to remain on his hand and it prevents him from performing *netillat yadayim*.

Maran suggested an alternative explanation of this halakha in the *Bet Yosef*, assuming that there is dirt attached to the severed portion of the nail. If only a small portion of the nail has become severed, that portion is still considered part of the person's hand and therefore the dirt attached to it is a *ḥatzitza*. If the nail has become split across most of its width, then the severed portion is considered separate from the hand, being that it will soon be removed. Therefore, even if there is dirt attached to it the dirt is not a *ḥatzitza*. After writing this, Maran emphasized that this is the correct interpretation of this halakha.

In light of that comment, the halakha concerning split fingernails in the *Shulḥan Arukh* (*Y.D.* 198:19) must be explained as a case where there is dirt attached to the severed portion of the nail. If so, Harav Zalman and the *Ben Ish Ḥai* ruled against the decision of Maran. According to Maran, as long as the nail is clean there is no *ḥatzitza*

ט. אשה המגדלת צפורניה וצובעת אותם לנוי, אינה צריכה להסיר הצבע מעליהן, כי אין בזה חציצה לנטילת ידים דהוי מיעוטו שאינו מקפיד, ומותרת ליטול את ידיה כך אף לכתחלה. [ראה ש"ע סי' קסא סוף ס"ב, וביבי"א ח"ב חיו"ד סי' יג ובאחרונ'] ואם ירד חלק מן הצבע שעל הצפורן, עליה להסיר הצבע כולו, או לחזור ולצבוע הצפרניים מחדש. [הליכו"ע ח"ה עמ' קסו]

Fingernail polish

9) If a woman grows long fingernails and applies fingernail polish to them, it is not at all necessary for her to remove the polish in order to perform the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*. The fingernail polish is not a *hatzitza* since it covers only a minor portion of her hand and she does not mind leaving it there permanently.[118]

This applies only when the fingernails are properly manicured and polished. If some of the polish has worn off and the nail is only partially covered, the remaining polish is a *hatzitza* since she would not wish to leave it in that condition permanently. She must remove all the polish from her fingernails or polish the damaged fingernail again.

---

regardless of what portion has been become split. Furthermore, according to Rambam there is no *hatzitza* even when a small portion of the nail has been split. The responsa *Divre David* Tehrani (Vol. I, *Y.D.* #23:7-10) pointed this out as well, and he presented the issue to Maran the Rishon Letziyon, who concurred with his findings. This is likewise the ruling of the *Halakha Berura* (page 229).

Nevertheless, in deference to Harav Zalman and the *Ben Ish Hai* it is recommended to cut the nail and make it straight before performing *netillat yadayim*. A number of the Sefardic *Poskim* (listed in the *Divre David*) ruled according to this stringency regarding a woman who needs to immerse in a mikveh. If someone's fingernail becomes split on Shabbat, however, when it is impossible to trim it, he can rely on Maran who ruled that the severed portion is not a *hatzitza* as long as it is clean. He can perform *netillat yadayim* and recite the blessing. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (161:14), following the ruling of the *Ben Ish Hai*, wrote that if someone's fingernail splits on Shabbat, he can perform *netillat yadayim* but he must recite the blessing without pronouncing God's Name. According to the principles taught by Maran the Rishon Letziyon, once we rule that one can perform the mitzvah in this manner one may also recite the blessing in full.

118. Although it is improper for a man or woman to grow long fingernails, especially according to the Kabbalah, long fingernails do not constitute a *hatzitza* in and of themselves as long as they are clean, as explained above in halakha 5. The Rashba (*Torat Habayit*) ruled unequivocably that if a woman applies polish to her nails it does not constitute a *hatzitza* for two reasons. One is that she wants the polish and would not want to remove it. Furthermore, this coloring [used in his times] does not form a layer covering the nails; it is absorbed by the nails instead. He testified that the Ramban concurred with this ruling.

According to the first reason offered, the Rashba would agree that it is not a *hatzitza* even if the substance does cover the nails. The *Perisha* (161:18) ruled that it is permissible only when both conditions are met – that she does not mind having it on her fingernails and that the substance does not cover the nails. If it covers the nails it is a *hatzitza* even though the woman does not mind it remaining there permanently. It is apparent from Maran in the *Shulhan Arukh* (161:2), however, that as long as she does not mind it, there is no *hatzitza* regardless of what kind of substance it is. This is the way the *Aharonim* explained the *Shulhan Arukh*. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. II, *Y.D.* #13:12) cited several *Aharonim* who ruled that fingernail polish does not constitute a *hatzitza* even though it covers the nails. A woman may immerse in a mikveh with polished nails, and she may certainly perform *netillat yadayim*.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon explained there that we permit women with long fingernails to immerse in a mikveh since they might cease performing the mitzvah of family purity altogether if the halachah insisted that she cut her nails short and remove her nail polish. In his *Tahorat Habayit* (Vol. III, page 101) he added that, after the woman has immersed in the mikveh, the attendant should explain to her calmly and gently that observant Jewish women cut their nails short traditionally before immersing in a mikveh.

י. נשים הנותנות צבע על ידיהם לנוי, אינו חוצץ, אפילו היה הצבע על רוב אצבעותיהן, כיון שמתכוונות לעשות כן ורוצות בזה, הרי הוא כגופן ממש ואינו חוצץ. [משנ"ב ס"ק יב]

יא. אשה שצבעה את ידיה בצבע הנקרא "חינה" שאין בו ממשות, אינו חוצץ לנטילת ידים, ואף לא לטבילה. [ראה הליכו"ע ח"ה עמ' קסז, אול"צ ח"ב עמ' ש]

טבעות

יב. אשה שיש לה טבעת על ידה, צריכה להסירה בשעת נטילת ידים, (אפילו טבעת רפויה וכמו שיבואר לקמן), משום שנחשבת לחציצה. ודוקא באשה שמקפדת להסיר הטבעת מעל ידה בשעת לישת הבצק ובשאר מלאכות, אבל אם אין דרכה להסיר הטבעת בשעת לישת הבצק, מותרת ליטול את ידיה עם הטבעת, אפילו כשהטבעת מהודקת באצבעה. [ש"ע סי' קסא ס"ג, משנ"ב ס"ק יט, באו"ח סו"פ קדושים]. ואם מנהג רוב העולם במקומה להסיר הטבעת ללישה, אף אם היא לא מקפידה, יש לה להסיר הטבעת לנטילה.

Cosmetics

10) If a woman applies makeup to her hands and fingers, it does not constitute a *hatzitza*. Even if the makeup covers most of the area of her fingers, it is considered as part of her hand since she uses it to beautify herself.

Henna

11) If a woman colored her hands with henna it is not a *hatzitza* regarding *netillat yadayim* or regarding immersing in a mikveh since the color penetrates the skin and dyes it. It is not a covering on the skin to constitute a *hatzitza*.[119]

Rings

Ring is usually *hatzitza*

12) Anyone who wears a ring on his or her finger must remove it in order to perform the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*, even if the rings fits loosely on the finger. Nevertheless, this applies only to people who, when engaging in activities such as kneading dough, remove their rings so that they will not become soiled. If the person does not care and keeps the ring on his or her finger regardless of the work in which he is engaged, it is not necessary to remove it for *netillat yadayim* even if the ring fits snugly on his finger. If most people in that community do remove their rings when involved in tasks that dirty the rings, then this person must remove his ring even though he personally does not mind leaving it on his finger while working.[120]

Day 68

---

119. A woman who has colored her hand with henna does not mind the color. Furthermore, it is generally applied to only one spot on the hand and the majority of the hand is not colored. For another thing, the henna does not cover the skin; its color penetrates the skin and dyes it. Even after scrubbing the hands clean, the henna color will remain. For all these reasons, it is not a *hatzitza*.

120. Maran in the *Bet Yosef* (161:3) cited Rabbenu Asher explaining in the name of Rabbenu Avraham ben David that since the person sometimes removes the ring when engaging in certain activities, it is considered a *hatzitza* on a minor portion of the hand that the person does not wish to remain there permanently. The rule is that if the person cares to remove it in some circumstances it is considered a