## צבעים ובעלי מלאכה

**יח.** בעלי מלאכה שרגילות שידיהם מלוכלכות תמיד, וכגון צבעי שרגיל שידיו מלוכלכות בצבע, אין הצבע שעל ידיו חציצה, ואפילו יש בו ממשות, כיון שאין דרכם להקפיד על כך. [ש"ע סי' קסא ס"ב].

והוא הדין למי שכותב תדיר, וכגון סופר סת"ם, אפילו יש ממשות של דיו יבש על אצבעותיו, אינו חוצץ, שהרי אין דרכו להקפיד על זה. [משנ"ב ס"ק יד ואחרון]. ובכלל זה, שוחטים, קצבים, מוהלים, מכונאים, מוסכניקים, ושאר בעלי מלאכה.

**וכל** זה דוקא שהחציצה נמצאת על מיעוט אצבעותיו, שאז דינו כ"מיעוט שאינו מקפיד", אבל אם הצבע מכסה את רוב אצבעותיו יש להחמיר, שאף שאינו מקפיד, הרי הדין הוא ש"רובו שאין מקפיד" חוצץ. [משנ"ב ס"ק יב, וביאוה"ל שם, כה"ח סופר ס"ק כה]

## Painters and Other Workers

**Hands stained with paint, blood, ink**

**18)** Laborers such as housepainters invariably have paint or other substances on their hands all the time. Since it can be difficult or time-consuming to remove the substances completely, these people simply go about their days without bothering to clean these substances off their hands. This being the case, for these people the paint or other substance on the hands does not constitute a *ḥatzitza* even if it forms a layer on the skin.

Likewise, a scribe who spends hours each day writing tefillin or mezuzah parchments or Torah scrolls is almost certain to have his scribal ink staining his fingers. Since it is difficult to remove it completely he is used to having stained fingers and the ink does not constitute a *ḥatzitza* even if it forms a layer on his skin.

This halakha applies as well to a *shoḥet*, a *mohel*, a butcher, a mechanic, and other such professionals. However, it applies only when the substance covers less than half the surface of his fingers so that it can be considered a case of a *ḥatzitza* that covers only a minor portion of the person's hand and he does not mind it remaining there permanently. If it covers more than half the surface area of his fingers, even these people must remove it in order to perform the mitzvah of *netillat yadayim*. In this case, even though he does not mind having the substance there permanently, it constitutes a *ḥatzitza* since it covers a majority of the fingers.[125]

**125.** The source for this ruling is Harav Zalman, cited in the *Bi'ur Halakha*. The *Ḥaye Adam*, however, ruled that regarding these workers the substance does not constitute a *ḥatzitza* even if covers the entire surface of the fingers. The *Bi'ur Halakha* remarked that there does not appear to be a reliable source for such a leniency, but he offered some justification for it. Perhaps one can argue that our Sages would permit this type of *ḥatzitza*. Normally, if a substance covers the majority of the surface, our Sages ruled that it must be considered a *ḥatzitza* even if the person does not mind it remaining there permanently, so that people will not come to permit a case when the person does mind it remaining. In this case, however, no person in this profession would mind the substance remaining on his fingers and there is no reason to fear this occurrence. Alternatively, it is possible to suggest that for these professionals the substance on their fingers is part of themselves and it does not even begin to fit into the category of *ḥatzitza*.

Despite these suggestions, the *Bi'ur Halakha* concluded that the *Ḥaye Adam's* ruling is his own invention; there is nothing in the writings of the *Poskim* on which to base it. Therefore, in the *Mishna Berura* he cited the ruling of Harav Zalman only. This is likewise the ruling of the *Kaf Haḥayim* Sofer (161:25).

**יט.** יש שכתבו שבזמן הזה, שמצויים מים וסבון, דרך רוב בעלי האומנויות להקפיד להתנקות בסוף עבודתם, וממילא אף אם אוכל תוך כדי עבודתו שידיו מלוכלכות יש לו להסיר החציצה מעל ידיו, מכיון שיש זמן בכל יום בו הם מקפידים להסיר החציצה מידיהם. ואם לאחר שינקו ידיהם ישאר מעט מן המעט מהלכלוך לית לן בה, אם הדרך שאין הם מקפידים על לכלוך כזה. [ראה תשובות והנהגות ח"ב סי' קיז, פסקי תשובות עמ' שפז]

**כ.** צבע שאין בו ממשות, אינו חוצץ, אפילו בשאר אנשים שאינם בעלי מלאכה. והטעם שכל שהוא חזותא של צבע בעלמא אין שייך בו חציצה. [משנ"ב ס"ק יד]. ובכלל זה יוד רפואי על גבי מכה אינו חוצץ, דאין כאן אלא חזותא בעלמא ואין בו ממש. [שו"ת הר צבי יו"ד סי' קסג]. והוא הדין קשקוש של עט שאינו חוצץ. [שערי הברכה עמ' ח]

**Modern cleaning agents**

**19)** Some *Poskim* suggested that in our times even the professionals listed in the previous halakha do care to clean their hands thoroughly of the paint, ink, blood or grease staining them. In our times we have cleaning agents that can remove these substances fairly easily, changing the situation from what it once was. Even though he might not care to take the time to cleanse his hands thoroughly for his lunch break, he does care to do so after work in the evening. Therefore, he must remove the substances from his hands before performing *netillat yadayim* even during his lunch break. If a tiny amount of the substance remains on his hands even after a thorough cleansing and he usually leaves it like that, that bit of substance is not considered a *hatzitza*.

**Dye that penetrates skin**

**20)** Dye that penetrates into the skin and does not form a layer on its surface is not a *hatzitza* at all,[126] whether it is on the hands of a professional who uses such dyes or someone else's hands. The fact that one's hands are discolored or dyed does not mean that there is a *hatzitza* on them. For example, if someone applied iodine to a wound and it colors the skin around it, it does not constitute a *hatzitza* since it does not form a layer on the skin's surface. Likewise, pen ink is not a *hatzitza*.

**126. Sticky syrups**

The *Piske Teshuvot* (page 389) ruled that if someone's fingers are sticky with sugar or honey, it is a *hatzitza*, and even if it is on a small area of the fingers' surface. This is considered a case where a person does not want the substance to remain on his fingers permanently. He cited testimony that the *Hazon Ish*, after reciting kiddush for Shabbat, would wash his hands from the drops of wine that spilled on them before performing *netillat yadayim*, since the wine sometimes became sticky on his fingers.

**Hand cream**

The responsa *Shevet Hakehati* (Vol. I, #85) ruled that if someone's hands are greasy he may not perform *netillat yadayim*. He qualified this ruling, however, stating that this applies only if there is tangible grease on the fingers. If the grease is absorbed into the skin it no longer constitutes a *hatzitza*. Based on this, he ruled that any thick cream on the hand constitutes a *hatzitza* making it impossible to perform *netillat yadayim*.

One might argue that a hand cream that has the purpose of beautifying the skin should not be considered a *hatzitza* whatsoever. If this is so, then even a thick layer of hand cream on the entire hand would not constitute a *hatzitza*, based on the rule that any substance used for beautifying does not constitute a *hatzitza*. On the other hand, it may be that this rule applies only if the person would want the substance to remain in its place permanently, whereas no one would want a layer of hand cream covering his skin permanently. This matter needs more research. In practice, one should clean any such cream from the hands before performing this mitzvah. See the *Piske Teshuvot* (page 388) and the *sefer Sha'are Berakha* (page 8).