

שיבת ליובאוויטש

שיבת ליובאוויטש מנשסתר

When does a parent begin to wash negel vasser with the baby? The answer to this question is closely related to the reason underlying the negel vasser procedure. During the night, the kedusha (holiness) of the soul leaves the body, ^{mark 1} ~~The rule~~ ^{page 5A} of nature is that unclean spirits are habitually attracted to those places where a holy spirit has been vested. As long as the Jewish body sleeps, it is occupied by the unclean spirit.

*מקום 1
הכלל
הטבעי
הוא שרוחות
הטובות נמשכות
אל המקומות
בהם נמצא רוח
קדוש*

*בגמרא
נמצא
שהוא
בגיל
שלוש
הוא
מתחיל
ללמוד
ומזה
מתחיל
ללכת
במנוחה*

Upon awakening, the unclean spirit departs, ^{the body} except for the fingers. This applies ~~to~~ only to one who has a neshoma, a Jewish soul. Although we acquire a neshoma at 12 (girls) or 13 (boys), the soul begins to be manifest at the age of chinuch, of education and training, to accustom the young by constant practice to the various mitzvos.

The various "customary" ages ^{considered as} as the proper time to begin to "accustom" children to different mitzvos, are a topic worthy of discussion on its own. The Bris Milah (circumcision) ~~is an obligation for the father, nevertheless,~~ ^{is the very first mitzvah in a boy's life.} Our Sages therefore commend as praiseworthy a parent who makes it a point to begin negel vasser from that age on. (Shulchan Aruch 4:2).

It is possible that not every parent is ready and able to make such a commitment at that early stage. To those we offer this practical insight: Food which is touched by any Jew that did not wash negel vasser should not be eaten; it has absorbed the tum'ah (impurity) from the fingers, a good rule of thumb then: When your baby begins to hold food in his/her hand, ^{is this} that is a good time to start incorporating negel vasser into the daily schedule. Another point worthy of mention--women who are most often in the kitchen, should be extra careful in washing their hands properly. There's more to those words of caution than meets the eye. As we grope for that pitcher ~~in our~~ ⁱⁿ our ~~groggy~~ ^{groggy} semi-awake state, we who have been washing negel vasser for many years may accidentally touch the water in the filled pitcher before we start to pour. That water is then rendered invalid for negel vasser.

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נ.ב. הגהות מכ"ק אדמו"ר נשי"ד על "דער אידישער היים".
תודתנו נתונה לזה שנתנו לנו ע"מ לפרסמם.