



HILCHOS MIKVAOS

SUMMARIES



Glossary: A brief explanation of the terms used in Hilchos Mikvaos

1. **Ma'ayan:** A natural spring. The status of a body of Ma'ayan water differs from the status of a body of rainwater.
2. **Mikvah:** A pool of water. This generally refers to a pool of water that is valid for Tevilah. To qualify, a pool must fulfill several criteria related to the volume of water, how the water was gathered, and the water's current state. Sometimes, the term refers to the pool cavity rather than the body of water. (Mikva'os: Plural for Mikvah).
3. **Tevilah:** The ritual immersion of a human or a Keili in a Mikvah or Ma'ayan. The entire body or Keili (vessel) must be simultaneously covered by water.
4. **Notfin:** Dripping water. This generally refers to rainwater which "drips" from the sky. Sometimes, it refers to disconnected droplets of water.
5. **Zochlin:** Flowing (literally "crawling") water. This term describes a pool of rainwater that is flowing (even slightly) from place to place. It also refers to Ma'ayan water (because Ma'ayan water is valid for Tevilah even while it is flowing).
6. **Ashboren:** A standing and pooled state. This is the required state for a Mikvah of rainwater. (There are different opinions whether this term refers to the pooled state of the water, or the cavity in which it's gathered).
7. **She'uvin:** Drawn water. This refers to water that was drawn or collected in a Keili. She'uvin water does not count towards the 40 Se'ah of a Mikvah and it can also disqualify other Mikvah waters.
8. **Hashakah:** "Kissing" waters. This refers to creating contact between two bodies of water (either to combine two Mikva'os into one Mikvah, or to connect an invalid body of water to a valid Mikvah or Ma'ayan thereby rendering all the waters valid).

9. **Hamshachah:** Dragging water across the ground. Hamshachah is a technique for revalidating water that was invalidated.
10. **Zriya:** Planting water. This refers to pouring water that was invalidated into a valid Mikvah or Ma'ayan thereby revalidating the water.
11. **Mareh:** Appearance. This refers to the coloration of the Mikvah or the waters added to a Mikvah.
12. **Gimmel (3) Lugin:**
A liquid measure of approximately 1 liter. This is the quantity of She'evin water which can invalidate an incomplete Mikvah.
13. **Mem (40) Se'ah:** A liquid measure of several hundred (332-816) liters. This is the minimum required quantity of water for a Mikvah to be valid.
14. **Iruv Mikva'os:** Mixing two Mikva'os. This term describes the merging of two bodies of water into one.
15. **Shfoferes HaNod:**
The diameter of the straw used to siphon water out of a water skin; approximately two fingerbreadths (38-50 mm). This is the minimum size for Iruv Mikva'os as well as for definitive Bittul Keili.
16. **Bitul Keili:** Inflicting significant damage on a Keili. Once damaged, the Keili is not Mekabel Tumah, is incapable of rendering its contents She'evin, and is suitable for containing a Mikvah.
17. **Haveyuso:** The process of creating a Mikvah. This refers to the actions taken and the Keilim used to direct water into a Mikvah.
"Haveyuso Biydei Shamayim" refers to a Mikvah created by natural means, without excessive artificial intervention.
"Haveyuso B'Tahara" refers to a Mikvah created by means that are not Mekabel Tumah. "Haveyuso B'Tumah" refers to a Mikvah created by means that are Mekabel Tumah.
18. **T'fisas Yedei Adam:**
Human interference in the process of creating a Mikvah.
19. **Katafres:** Water positioned on a sloped surface.

Introduction

The Juxtaposition of Hilchos Mikva'os to Hilchos Niddah

.....

The Shulchan Aruch concludes Hilchos Niddah by detailing everything a Niddah must do to become Tahor. The final step in this process is Tevilah in a Mikvah. The Halachos for preparing one's body for Tevilah and performing the Tevilah are included in Hilchos Niddah (Simanim #197-200). Once the laws of Tevilah are spelled out, the Mechaber turns to Hilchos Mikva'os (Siman #201), the laws of the body of water in which the Tevilah must take place.

Every town should have a Kosher and functioning Mikvah so that its residents do not need to travel in order to use a Mikvah. It is the responsibility of the entire community, even those who will not use the Mikvah, to build and maintain the Mikvah. The Chofetz Chaim writes in Sefer Taharas Yisroel that one may not live in a city that does not have a functioning Mikvah.

How Mikvah Works

.....

How does a Mikvah “wash away” Tumah? After all, a Mikvah is nothing more than a naturally occurring pool of water. There is nothing inherently holy or “purifying” about it. How then does it have the power to be Metaher (effect purity)?

The Rambam (Hilchos Mikva'os, 11:12) acknowledges that the Mikvah's ability to wash away Tumah is beyond human comprehension. He writes: “It is obvious and clear that the laws concerning Tumah and Taharah are Divine decrees and not things which the human mind can determine. So too, Tevilah to rid oneself from Tumah is included among the Chukim – the Divine statutes for which we have no reason. Tumah is not mud or filth that can be removed with water. Rather, it is a Divine decree...”

Nevertheless, the Rambam adds that there is an ethical lesson to be learned from the Mikvah: “Just as one who sets his mind on becoming Tahor becomes Tahor as soon as he has immersed, even though there is nothing new about his body, so too one who sets his mind on purifying himself from the spiritual defilements, the thoughts of wrongdoing and the evil attitudes, becomes clean as soon as he

makes up his mind to abstain from those suggestions, and brings his soul into the waters of pure reason”. In other words, the Mikvah is a testament to the power of Teshuvah. Superficially, it may look like nothing has changed, but in truth the person is cleansed and rejuvenated.

The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 175) shares a similar idea. He writes that the physical cleansing process serves to remind a person to engage in a spiritual cleansing process. Just as the water washes away the physical dirt and impurities, so too one should wash his character of sin and wrongdoing.

Whatever the reason for the Mikvah’s ability to be Metaher may be, it is clear that the Mikvah only obtains its powers once it conforms with all the Halachos for a valid Mikvah. Any other form of “washing”, “cleansing” or “purifying”, no matter how rigorous it may be, has no effect whatsoever when it comes to removing Tumah.

Mikvah and Tevilah

.....

How can Mikvah waters be Metaher a Tamei person who Tovels in them? Ordinarily, the Halachah is that water which comes into contact with a Tamei person contracts the person’s Tumah (Rambam, Avos HaTumah, 7:1)?

The Chasam Sofer (Sha’alos u’Teshuvos, Y.D., #213) answers that as the waters are connected to the ground, they are not Mekabel Tumah. Now that the person is not able to change the status of the water, it is possible for the water to change the status of the person.

The Rivash explains the significance of the 40 Se’ah required for a Kosher Mikvah. As the volume of a person’s body is 20 Se’ah, by entering a Mikvah of at least 40 Se’ah, one is outnumbered by a ratio of 1:2 –There are two parts of water to one part of a human. This ratio enables a person to become Batel (nullified) to the water, in line with the rule “MiDe’oraisa Chad Bitrei Batel – according to Torah law, one is nullified in two”. This idea is alluded to in the wording of Chazal. They describe the 40 Se’ah of the Mikvah as “Mayim shekol gufo *oleh* bahem – water which the entire body can enter ”, employing the identical term typically used when discussing Bitul (e.g., “Trumah *oleh* be’Echad u’Meah”; Mishnah, Terumos, 4:7).

Intuitively, the Tevilah takes effect and the person is purified upon becoming fully immersed in the water. However, the Kesef Mishnah (Hilchos Avos HaTumos, 6:16) suggests that in the Rambam’s view, a person is only purified upon leaving the Mikvah. Although the Poskim extensively debate this position, it is not mentioned in Shulchan Aruch.

The Key Principles of Hilchos Mikva'os

.....

Most of the laws of Mikva'os can be arranged under six key principles. The following system of categorization is based on the work of Rabbi Tzvi Dov Metzkin Z"l in his "Sefer Klalei Mikva'os":

1. Shiur (quantity of water)
 - a. How much water is required for a Mikvah?
 - b. How much water is required for a Ma'ayan?
 - c. When is the full quantity of water necessary?
 - d. How is the quantity calculated?
 - e. Which combinations can be used to fill up a Mikvah to its required quantity?

(These topics are discussed in Se'ifim 1; 62-65).
2. Haveyuso Biydei Shamayim (created by natural means)
 - a. The water may not be brought/drawn by hand.
 - b. The water may not be collected in a Keili.
 - c. How does one revalidate water bought by hand or collected in a Keili?
 - d. How much water brought by hand or collected in a Keili invalidates a Mikvah?

(These topics are discussed in Se'ifim 3; 8; 15-24; 34-38; 40-46; 52-60; 67-74.)
3. Ashboren (standing water)
 - a. Which types of water must be standing and which may be running?
 - b. What are the characteristics of "running" water?
 - c. How much of a body of water needs to be running in order for it to be invalidated?
 - d. For which purposes are running waters acceptable?

(These topics are discussed in Se'ifim 2; 5; 10-14; 47; 50-51; 60.)
4. Karka (ground)
 - a. The water must be in or on the ground.
 - b. What constitutes "not on the ground"?
 - c. How does one connect a Keili to the ground to form a Kosher Mikvah?

(These topics are discussed in Se'ifim 6-7; 9.)

5. Mayim (water)

- a. How much of the Mikvah must consist of water?
- b. Which other substances have the Halachic status of water?
- c. Under which conditions does water (H₂O) have the Halachic status of water?

(These topics are discussed in Se'ifim 25-33.)

6. Haveyuso B'Tahara (created by means that are not Mekabel Tumah)

- a. When is a Mikvah considered to have been created by means that are Mekabel Tumah?
- b. How can one revalidate such water?

(These topics are discussed in Se'ifim 39-40; 48-49; 66.)

Hilchos Mikva'os also includes a few other assorted topics that do not fit precisely into the six aforementioned categories. For instance: what to do when a Mikvah is of questionable validity (Se'ifim 67-74); who is trusted to testify that a Mikvah is Kosher (Se'if 4); how to increase the depth of a Mikvah (Se'if 66); and some outstanding laws regarding the act of Tevilah (Se'ifim 61;75).

"The Purity of The Nation" – Beyond the Letter of the Law

.....

All Mikva'os have the same Halachic requirements. Whether the Mikvah will function as a men's Mikvah, a women's Mikvah, or a Keilim Mikvah (for immersing utensils purchased from a non-Jew), it must be a "Mikvah" as defined here in Hilchos Mikva'os. Nonetheless, there are practical differences in the way these Mikva'os are constructed and maintained.

This is because there are many unresolved Halachic disagreements in Hilchos Mikva'os. In practice, the Poskim (Tashbatz, Vol. 1, #17; See Shach 198:45; Tzemach Tzedek, Y.D., 76:13) rule that one should ideally be stringent in every detail of the Halachah when building and maintaining a woman's Mikvah, but one may rely on various leniencies when building and maintaining a men's Mikvah and a Keilim Mikvah. The reason that we are more stringent with a woman's Mikvah is because "Taharasan Shel Yisro'el – the marital purity of the Jewish nation" depends on it. Contemporary women's Mikva'os are therefore built with many stringencies that are not necessary according to the Shulchan Aruch. These stringencies attempt to satisfy all Halachic opinions, including those that were ignored and even dismissed by the Shulchan Aruch.

It is important to note that stringencies should inform practice when building a Mikvah or choosing which Mikvah to use. However, if no other Mikva'os are available or if a woman has already Toveled in a less invested Mikvah, there are many leniencies which may be relied upon. In such an event, one should consult with a Rav rather than being unnecessarily stringent.

The Responsibility for Ensuring that a Mikvah is Kosher

.....

Every Mikvah must be built by an experienced professional under the watchful eye of someone who is well-versed in the relevant Halachos. Furthermore, even a Mikvah that was built to the highest Halachic standards requires periodic inspection to ensure that the Mikvah has not developed any issues which invalidate it, as many things can go wrong over time and invalidate even the most superior of Mikva'os.

In the past, it was assumed that whoever created, maintained, or testified to the validity of a Mikvah could be relied upon, as only competent people would involve themselves with such matters (see Se'if 4). However, the Poskim state (e.g., Shu"t Divrei Yo'el, 69:3) that nowadays we no longer rely on such assumptions. One cannot simply assume that a Mikvah has been formed and maintained to meet the Halachic requirements. One should make enquiries to verify that a competent and responsible party oversees the inspection, filling and maintenance of the Mikvah.

Section 1:

Overview of Se'ifim 1-5 – What constitutes a Kosher Mikvah

.....

1. Where one may Tovel.
2. The differences between a Mik'vah and a Ma'ayan.
3. The Halachic status of rivers and seas.
4. She'evin waters.
5. Who is trusted to testify about the status of a Mikvah.

Se'if 1

What is Tevilah?

.....

A woman who is a Niddah does not become Tahor until she completely immerses her body in a Mikvah or Ma'ayan. There is no alternative; even if she thoroughly washes her body by hand she remains a Niddah. Even if she stands under a shower while nine Kavim (12-22.5 liters) of water wash over her body, a procedure that sometimes purifies a Ba'al Keri, she remains a Niddah. One who has marital relations with her is as deserving of Kares as one who relations with a Niddah who has not washed herself at all.

Chazal learn from the Possuk, “Uva HaShemesh V'taher – And the sun will set and he (the person who immersed) becomes Tahor”, that for Tevilah to be effective, the body must be completely immersed in the water. Just as the sun completely disappears below the horizon, so too the body must be completely submerged beneath the water's surface.

Where may one perform Tevilah?

.....

There are two gatherings of water that are suitable for Tevilah: a Mikvah and a Ma'ayan. A Mikvah is a pool of rainwater that was gathered in a specific manner, the details of which are spelled out throughout Hilchos Mikvaos. A Ma'ayan is a “natural” spring. Even if human intervention is required to break open the surface of the earth to access the water, it is still considered “natural” as the water source occurs naturally.

For most purposes, Tevilah is valid in either a Mikvah or a Ma'ayan. The Zav (a man who has experienced an abnormal seminal discharge) is exceptional in that he must specifically Tovel in “Mayim Chaim” (the waters of an active spring). Although there is one opinion (quoted by Rashi) that also requires a Zavah to Tovel in Mayim Chayim, this opinion is rejected. Therefore, for a Zavah, a Mikvah is as good as a Ma'ayan. The practical advantage of a Ma'ayan over a Mikvah is that there are fewer ways that a Ma'ayan can be invalidated. Nonetheless, even where a Ma'ayan is available, it is acceptable Lechatchilah to use a supervised Mikvah of rainwater.

What is the minimum quantity of water for a Kosher Mikvah?

.....

A body of water must meet several conditions to be considered a Kosher Mikvah. This Se'if teaches the first of them: there is a minimum quantity of water that a Mikvah must hold – 40 Se'ah.

Chazal derive this quantity from the Pesukim, “ורחץ במים את כל בשרו” – And he should rinse his entire flesh in water” (Vayikra, 15:16) and “אך במי נדה יתחטא” – However he must cleanse himself in waters in which a Niddah can Tovel” (Bamidbar, 31:23). These Pesukim indicate that the body of water must be large enough to encompass a human body. Chazal estimated that the human body occupies a space with the external dimensions of one Amah (cubit; 48-60 cm) X one Amah X three Amos. They then converted this space into quantity, concluding that 40 Se'ah of water is required to fill such a space. This quantity is an essential feature of a Mikvah, and even a person with a small body who can immerse in less water must still find a Mikvah with at least 40 Se'ah. According to most Rishonim, this quantity is Min HaTorah.

As there is no leeway with the 40 Se'ah and a Mikvah missing one single drop is invalid, we ensure that our Mikvaos are filled with more than the bare minimum of 40 Se'ah.

The Pesukim which taught that Tevilah must take place in a body of water large enough to encompass a human body were discussing a Mikvah (a gathering of rainwater) were not discussing a Ma'ayan. Consequently, Chazal learned that any size of Ma'ayan is valid for Tevilah, as long as the object requiring Tevilah can be completely immersed in its waters. However, the Rishonim disagree whether this distinction between Mikvah and Ma'ayan applies exclusively to the Tevilah of Keilim or whether it applies to the Tevilah of people as well. The Halachah follows the stricter opinion that the leniency only applies to Keilim; a Ma'ayan too must hold 40 Se'ah of water in order to be suitable for the Tevilah of people. (In this discussion, the Tevilah of Keilim refers specifically to the purification of Tamei Keilim, which has little practical relevance nowadays [see Shach S”K 42]. It does NOT refer to the Tevilah of Keilim purchased from a non-Jew where 40 Se'ah is required for both a Mikvah and a Ma'ayan).

The 40 Se'ah of a Ma'ayan do not have to be pooled in one place. The Shach (quoting the Beis Yosef) rules that a Ma'ayan is suitable for Tevilah as long as (a) all 40 Se'ah are connected in some way and (b) the person can fully submerge their body in its waters.

The Poskim discuss whether one can add She'uvim water to a small quantity of Ma'ayan water to fill it up to the quantity of 40 Se'ah. This will be discussed in Se'ifim 15 and 40.

How is the quantity of water calculated?

.....

The Mechaber writes that the volume of 40 Se'ah of water is the size of 44,118½³ "Etzba'os" – fingerbreadths. Yet, the Beis Yosef writes that the volume is 41,472³ fingerbreadths! The Shach explains that both sums amount to the same thing; the Mechaber's calculations were conducted with a slightly smaller finger size.

There are different opinions about how much water 40 Se'ah amounts to in modern-day units of measurement. The smallest given quantity is 331.776 liters, based on the calculations of Harav A. C. Noeh. The largest given quantity is 816.3 liters, based on the calculations of the Chazon Ish. The Poskim (Shu"t Cheshev Ha'Eifod, Vol. 1, 150:2; Shu"t Divrei Yatziv, Y.D., 115) write that it is customary to fill a Mikvah with at least 1000 liters of water to ensure that the Mikvah always holds enough water.

How large must the Bor (pool cavity) be?

.....

A pool cavity that can only hold 40 Se'ah of water (and even a little more) is not large enough to function as a Mikvah. This is because the water level rises each time a person enters the water, and if the pool cavity is filled to (or almost to) its very top, some of the required 40 Se'ah will be pushed out of the cavity resulting in an undersized Mikvah. Therefore, the volume of the pool cavity must be large enough to hold 40 Se'ah of water and a human body.

Furthermore, even if the pool cavity can hold more than 40 Se'ah of water, some Poskim forbid filling it to (or almost) to its very top. They are concerned that its inability to contain all its waters while a person Tovels in them renders them Zochlin (flowing water; see Se'if 50).

The stated dimensions of 1 x 1 x 3 Amos are not mandatory, and as long as the Mikah contains at least 40 Se'ah of water, all shapes and sizes are valid. However, when building a wide and shallow Mikvah, it should ideally be deep enough for a person to comfortably immerse their entire body in the water without having to lie flat (see Se'if 66; methods for increasing the depth of the water are discussed in Se'ifim 15 and 66). It should also be noted that while all shapes of Mikvah are Halachically valid, the accepted custom is to build Mikva'os that are specifically square or rectangular (Lechem v'Simlah, 201, Simlah #3; Maharsham, Vol. 4, #114; Shela, Sha'ar Ha'Osiyos, #100).

POINTS TO DISCUSS:

- 1 The advantages of a Ma'ayan over a Mikvah.
- 2 How much water is actually necessary to completely cover the average human body? (Taz S"K 6)
- 3 The reason for the quantity of 40 Se'ah.
- 4 Is there a minimum depth for a Mikvah?
- 5 The status of a Mikvah whose waters exit the pool cavity when a person Tovels in the Mikvah but then return when the person emerges.

Se'if 2

In which state (still or flowing) is water valid for Tevilah?

.....

Water that is pooled and standing still, whether collected in a pit or blocked in by obstructions, is called “Ashboren”. Water that is flowing or running is called “Zochlin”.

Rainwater and melted snow are often referred to as Notfin. They are only valid for Tevilah when in the Ashboren state. Ma'ayan waters are often referred to as Zochlin (flowing waters) and are valid for Tevilah whether still or flowing (Zochlin) as long as they flow naturally (the details of which are discussed later in the Siman).

According to most Poskim, rainwaters that are Zochlin are invalid for Tevilah Min HaTorah.

Although one may not Tovel in a stream of rainwater flowing down a mountain, one may Tovel in a pit or cavity in which some of those waters pooled and became still. This is because water that is invalid due to Zochlin automatically becomes valid when it stops flowing. It need not stop flowing by natural means; it may even be stopped by human intervention. (More details on this can be found in Se'if 50).

What is the Halachic status of a mixture of rainwater and Ma'ayan water?

.....

When Ma'ayan waters mix with rainwater, a mixture is formed comprising some waters (Ma'ayan) that had the capacity to be used in a state of Zochlin and other waters (rainwater) that did not. In practice, once the waters are mixed together and inseparable, the status of the entire mixture is as follows: if the majority is composed of Ma'ayan water, all the waters are valid even while Zochlin; if the majority is composed of rainwater, all the waters are only valid in Ashboren. If there appears to be an equal amount of Ma'ayan waters and rainwater, there are different opinions (mentioned in the Beis Yosef) as to the status of the water. The Shach seems to side with the stricter view that such waters are only valid in Ashboren. (His view is based on multiple considerations, especially that this constitutes a Safek (doubt) Min HaTorah.)

The previous paragraph represents the view of the Mechaber, the Rama and most of the Poskim. However, the Taz fundamentally disagrees. In his view, in most situations, a flowing Ma'ayan grants the status of Ma'ayan to all the rainwaters that are mixed into it, even when they outnumber the Ma'ayan waters. (He compares this to the effects of Mikvah water on She'uvim water, as will be discussed later.) He only agrees with the conclusions of the other Poskim when the waters are specifically mixed in a river, due to a special Gzeira MiDerabanan (lest one confuse rainwaters streaming down the banks into the river with rainwaters already in the river).

Are all bodies made of Ma'ayan waters, or a majority of Ma'ayan waters, valid for Tevilah while Zochlin?

.....

This question is extensively debated by the Rishonim, and the Beis Yosef cites many opinions. At one extreme, there are those who rule that even a body of water composed entirely of Ma'ayan waters is only Metaher in a state of Zochlin within the original confines of the Ma'ayan (the natural course of the flowing spring waters). At the opposite extreme, there are those who hold that even a flowing body of water composed primarily of rainwater is valid in a state of Zochlin, and even beyond the confines of the original Ma'ayan, as long as it is connected to a flowing Ma'ayan spring. In the middle, there are those who ignore the location of the waters and determine their status solely by following their primary component (Ma'ayan water or rainwater). The Mechaber and the Rama who do not expressly differentiate between the different areas of a river seem to rule this way. The Shach however, in accordance with yet another view among the Rishonim, rules that one may only Tovel in Zochlin waters if it is known that flowing Ma'ayan waters preceded the flowing rainwaters in that specific location (e.g., in the section of a river that continues to flow throughout the dry season).

What is the status of a river which swells after it rains?

.....

With all the introductions in place, we are now ready to turn to the Halachic status of rivers, the main subject of this Se'if. There are various opinions in the Rishonim whether rivers have the Halachic status of Notfin or Zochlin. Their opinions center around two key issues: (1) what is the status of a body of rainwater mixed together with Ma'ayan waters (discussed in #3 above); (2) which type of water (rainwater of Ma'ayan water) are rivers primarily composed of?

Typically, a river originates from a Ma'ayan and becomes mixed with large quantities of rainwater and melted snow that pour into it as it winds its way through the

mountains. This ought to mean that the majority of the water in a large river is rainwater and snowmelt, and rivers should therefore have the status of Notfin which may only be used in Ashboren.

However, the Gemara states, "The main growth of a river is always from its underground source. Regardless of how much rain enters from above, there is always double that quantity coming up from below" (Ta'anis, 25b). Based on this Gemara, some Rishonim conclude that a river always contains a majority of Ma'ayan waters, even during the wet season after heavy rainfall. Therefore, they rule that a river has the status of Zochlin all year round and one may even Tovel in its flowing waters. (Of course, this view depends on the aforementioned opinion that flowing Ma'ayan waters retain their ability to be Metaher even after leaving the confines of the Ma'ayan. Furthermore, as mentioned above, perhaps only those sections of the river that were previously flowing with Ma'ayan water retain the ability to be Metaher with flowing waters). Other Rishonim agree in principle but are stringent in practice, out of concern that an uninformed onlooker may not realize that "the main growth is always from the source" and mistakenly conclude that a mixture with a majority of rainwater is valid for Tevilah even if it is flowing. A third view rejects the Halachic significance of the Gemara's statement altogether, as it was made in an Aggadah context. It therefore considers a river to be Notfin Min HaTorah.

In practice, one should only Tovel in a river (in countries with seasonal rainfall) during the dry season when it is certain that most of the water originates from a Ma'ayan and not from rain or snow. However, the Rama relates that it was common practice to rely on the lenient Rishonim and permit Tevilah in a river all year round in places that had no alternative Mikvah. He adds that they have upon whom to rely and one should not protest against their behavior.

The Rama adds that even those who permit Tevilah in a river all year round must ensure that the river has an underground source to which its growth can be attributed. If however the river dries up completely during the dry season, one must suspect that the river does not have an underground source, is entirely constituted of rainwater and snowmelt, and is therefore invalid for Tevilah while Zochlin.

POINTS TO DISCUSS:

- 1 Is the ability of rainwater to be Metaher while Zochlin the subject of disagreement between Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel (Mikva'os 5:6)?
- 2 What are the conditions for defining something as Zochlin or Ashboren?
- 3 Regarding which Halachos are Zochlin valid (Se'ifim 20 [Shach S"K 55]); 60)?
- 4 Why is rainwater invalid while flowing when a Ma'ayan is valid while standing?
- 5 The status of a Ma'ayan that stands still until rainwater enters it; the status of a Ma'ayan that does not flow.
- 6 Will She'uvim waters that undergo Hashaka while Zochlin become valid when they pool in an Ashboren?
- 7 The status of a Mikvah connected to a Ma'ayan or a river (Se'if 52).
