

The Mystical Mikvah

The Source for Mikvah

- a. "However the spring and the part which holds the mikvah water should be pure." (Vayikra 11:36)
- b. "You are fortunate, Israel, before whom you are purifying yourselves, and who purifies you - your Father in Heaven." (Yona 88a)
- c. "G-d is the hope (mikvah) of Israel - just as mikvah purifies the tameh soul, so does HaKodesh Baruch Hu purify Israel." (Yirmiyahu 17)

Examples from History

- a. Avraham - "Let there please be taken a little water, and wash your feet" (Beraishis 18:4)
- b. Sara's tent - "To the tent of Sara" (Beraishis 25:67)
- c. Pharaoh's daughter - "and Pharaoh's daughter went down to wash by the river" (Shmos 2:5)
- d. Jewish women in Egypt - "Why did G-d bring the plague of blood upon the Egyptians?
Measure for measure because they did not permit the daughters of Israel to immerse themselves, so that they would not be able to bear children. Consequently, their water was transformed into blood." (Shmos Rabba 9:10)
- e. Before giving of the Torah - "let them even immerse their clothing" (Shmos 19:10)
- f. Paroches of Mishkan - "they used to make two each year, and 300 Kohanim would immerse it and spread it out to dry outside" (Rashi Tamid 29)
- g. High Priest's service on Yom Kippur - "No one was permitted to enter the Azara to perform the Avoda even if he was ritually pure, until he immersed himself" (Yoma 3:3)
- h. Regular Priest's service
- i. Temple entry
- j. Masada
- k. Under Russian Rule
- l. Holocaust

What is a Mikvah?

- a. Mitzvah is a "chok"
- b. Root word is "hope", "yearn"
- c. Water from natural means, rain water
- d. 40 seah, 200 gallons
- e. first building a community needs to build

Water - "And the spirit of G-d hovered over the waters" (Beraishis 1:2)

- a. Weightless, no self-importance
- b. "tevillah" = "habital"
- c. life giving
- d. life cycle
- e. rebirth, growth
- f. compared to Torah

Forty - "a son forty (years) has understanding" (Avos 5:25)

- a. 40 levels in creation
- b. 40 as shift in state
- c. 40 as cleansing

Uses

- a. dishes
- b. "conversions"
- c. in a Jewish marriage
- d. before Temple entry
- e. before Temple service
- f. after contact with something Tameh
- g. after child-birth
- h. higher levels of purity