

The RYS Daily 10/24/06 Rights of Others

From The Mussar Movement Volume 1, part 2 page 219

On another occasion he (RYS) was the guest of his disciple R. Naftali Silberberg. In the morning he noticed that R. Naftali walked through the rooms of the other occupants who were still sleeping, in order to reach the water with which to wash his hands. R. Israel reprimanded him. He argued: "Ritual washing is, after all, a Rabbinic enactment, while robbing others of their sleep is prohibited by the Torah."

There was a private synagogue in Kovno. The owner had died and it had passed over to the heirs who were minor orphans. Whenever R. Israel attended services in that synagogue he would not wash his hands in the basin like everyone else, but merely let a few drops run down on his hands, which he would then rub together. He explained that water spilling from the pitcher would run down the wall and damage it "and orphans are not competent to renounce their rights."

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