

220105 - Ruling on doing wudoo' and ghusl with water that has been changed by the addition of something taahir (pure)

the question

What is the ruling on water that has been mixed with some pure substance: is it permissible to do wudoo' and ghusl with it?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If some pure substance is mixed with pure [taahir] water deliberately, then there are three scenarios:

First scenario:

If water that is pure is mixed with some pure substance, and its colour, taste and smell does not change, then it remains pure, because it is still called water.

Ibn Qudaamah said: We do not know of any difference of opinion among the scholars concerning the permissibility of doing wudoo' with water that is mixed with a pure substance that has not changed it.

End quote from al-Mughni (1/25).

If a small amount of herbs, hummus, flowers, saffron and the like falls into water, and leaves no taste, colour or smell, it is permissible to purify oneself with that water.

Similarly, if such things change the water only slightly, that does not matter.

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This is indicated by the hadith of Umm Haani', that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and Maymoonah did ghusl from a single vessel, a large bowl in which there were traces of dough. Narrated by an-Nasaa'i (240); classed as saheeh by an-Nawawi in Khulaasat al-Ahkaam (1/67) and by al-Albaani in al-Irwaa' (27).

At-Teebi said: What appears to be the case is that the traces of dough in that large bowl were not great.

End quote from Mirqaat al-Mafaateeh (2/457).

An-Nawawi said: If it is a small amount, such as if a small amount of saffron fell in it and it turned slightly yellow, or soap or flour fell in it and the water turned slightly white, such that it could not be called by a name other than water, then the correct view is that it is still pure, because the name remains the same.

End quote from al-Majmoo' Sharh al-Muhadhdhab (1/103). What is meant is that it is still called water.

Imam Ahmad said: If the water that is mixed with something is not called after that thing and is still called water, then there is nothing wrong with it.

End quote from al-Intisaar fi'l-Masaa'il al-Kibaar by Abu'l-Khattaab al-Kalwadhaani (1/122).

The second scenario:

If pure [taahir] water is mixed with a pure substance, so that it is no longer called water.

It is not valid to do wudoo' or ghusl with this [altered] water, according to scholarly consensus, such as if tea leaves are added to water, and changes its colour and taste, so that it is no longer called water, and is rather called tea, or if meat is cooked in water, and this water changes and becomes broth. It is not permissible to do wudoo' with it.

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Ibn Qudaamah said: With regard to water that is mixed with something pure to the extent that its name changes and that thing overwhelms the water, so that it is now called dye or ink or vinegar or broth, and so on, and what is cooked in it is pure, so it changes as a result, such as water in which herbs are boiled – with regard to all of these types, it is not permissible to do wudoo' or ghusl with it, and we do not know of any difference of scholarly opinion concerning that.

End quote from al-Mughni (1/20).

Imam Ahmad said: Do not do wudoo' with anything that is no longer called water.

End quote from al-Intisaar fi'l-Masaa'il al-Kibaar by Abu'l-Khattaab al-Kalwadhaani (1/122).

The third scenario:

If ordinary water is changed with the addition of any pure substance, but it is still called water – such as water that is mixed with soap and its colour changes, or hummus falls into water and changes its taste, or saffron falls into water and changes its fragrance, but it is still called water – there is a difference of scholarly opinion as to whether it can be used for purification.

The majority of scholars are of the view that water that has been changed by being mixed with pure substances is pure (taahir) water but cannot be used for purification, because it is no longer called water in the ordinary sense, so it cannot be called water in an unqualified sense.

See: al-Mughni (1/21); al-Kaafi by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (1/155); al-Majmoo' (1/103).

The view of Imam Abu Haneefah, and one view narrated from Imam Ahmad, is that it is pure (taahir) water and can be used for purification, because it is still water. This is also the view of Ibn Hazm, and was favoured by Ibn al-Mundhir and Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, and – among contemporary scholars – the Permanent Committee, Shaykh Ibn Baaz and Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen.

Ibn Hazm said: With regard to any water that is mixed with something pure and permissible, and

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the colour, smell or taste of that thing appears in the water, but it is still called water, it is permissible to do wudoo' with it, and according to the Hanbalis it is permissible to do ghusl for janaabah with it, whether what fell into it was musk, honey, saffron, or anything else.

End quote from al-Muhalla (1/200).

The reason for the difference of opinion was that the scholars agreed that it is permissible to purify oneself with water, without further qualification, but it is not permissible to do it with water that is further qualified, such as rosewater, vinegar water and so on.

As for water that is mixed with pure substances and changes as a result, that is a matter which falls in between the two categories mentioned above.

Ibn Qudaamah said: A number of Ahmad's companions narrated from him the view that it is permissible to do wudoo' with it, and this is the view of Abu Haneefah and his companions, because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): "And if you ... find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands [with it]" [an-Nisaa' 4:43]. This verse is general in meaning and applies to all kinds of water, because the word maa' [water] appears in the indefinite form in the context of negation, which in Arabic is general in meaning, so it is not permissible to do tayammum [dry ablution, wiping over the face and hands as mentioned in the verse] when such water is available... and this person can find water.

Also, the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and his companions used to travel, and most of their water skins were made of leather, which usually changes the water, but there is no report from them to indicate that they did tayammum when that water was available.

Moreover, it is pure and is mixed with something pure, which did not take away from it the name of water, or the softness or fluidity of water.

End quote from al-Mughni (1/21).

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Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said: So long as it is still called water, and is not overwhelmed by another substance, it is pure and may be used for purification, as is the view of Abu Haneefah and of Ahmad according to the other report from him. This is what was stated in many of [Ahmad's] answers.

This view is the correct one, because Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands [with it]”

[an-Nisaa' 4:43].

The phrase “And if you ... find no water” is indefinite in the context of negation, so [it is general in meaning and] applies to any water; there is no differentiation between one type and another.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa (21/26).

Then he said: Moreover, it is proven that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed that the pilgrim in ihram [who died during Hajj] be washed with water and lotus leaves, and he instructed that his daughter [after she died] be washed with water and lotus leaves, and he instructed that the one who becomes Muslim should do ghusl with water and lotus leaves. It is well-known that lotus leaves inevitably change the water, and if this change spoiled the water [i.e., made it invalid to use it for purification] he would not have given instructions to do that.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa (21/26).

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: Chlorine is added to drinking water, and it is a substance that changes the colour and taste of the water. Does this affect the validity of

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wudoo'?

He replied: Changing water by adding pure substances and treatments that are added to water to prevent harm to people – provided that the water is still called water – does not matter, even though some changes occur as a result of that.

End quote from Fataawa ash-Shaykh Ibn Baaz (19/10).

See also the answer to question no. [135281](#).

And Allah knows best.