

The Little Green Book

Volume II Chapter 13

On the Nature of Water

There are two kinds of water; pure water, and water that is “in solution,” such as, for instance, watermelon juice or attar of roses, or muddy water. Pure water is divided into five categories; stagnant water large enough in sufficient quantity; running water; rainwater; and well water.

Kor, or purifying water, is the quantity of water held in a container the length, width and depth of which each are $3\frac{1}{2}$ vadjabs [about 70 centimeters or 27 inches]. This quantity of water should weigh about 128 maunds less 20 miskals [about 390 kilograms or 858 pounds].

If the above-mentioned water changes in taste, odor, or color because of impure contacts, such as with blood or urine, it becomes impure; but if it indirectly changes in odor, color, or taste because of some impure matter, for example if its odor is changed because of the proximity of some decomposing matter, it remains pure.

Water which has been polluted by blood, urine, or other impurities, and has thereby been changed in odor, color, or taste, is purified by running water or by rainwater which falls directly into it, or rainwater driven into it by the wind, or carried to it by a drainpipe, and thereby regains its purifying properties.

That a quantity of water is enough to be purifying may be established in one of two ways: either through one's own personal conviction that it is, or by two trustworthy men affirming that it is.

The water used for washing the urinary orifice and the anus remains pure in the five cases: if it has neither the odor, the color, nor the taste of urine or feces; if no external impurity has touched it; if no other impure matter such as blood issued from the anus or the urinary orifice at the same time as the excrement or urine; if no particles of excrement or urine are visible in the water; if the excrement that touched the anus is not exceptionally abundant.

The Little Green Book

Running water, even though in lesser quantity than that of purifying water, remains pure and therefore drinkable if it contains excrement or urine, provided however that the admixture of these has not altered its odor, color, or taste.

If excrement, urine, or other impurities have polluted running water, only that part of it which has been changed in odor, color, or taste becomes impure; the rest remains pure.

If excrement, urine, or any other impurity should be on the roof of a house and be rained upon, the rainwater remains pure if it continues falling and running directly off the roof or down a gutter or drainpipe; but if the rain stops, the water that continues running off and which is known to have touched the impurities on the roof is impure.