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Washing Hands

This week we began the new *masechet* of *Yadayim*. Hands alone can become *tameh*, albeit a low level of *tumah* – *sheni le'tumah*. One example is if one touched *tameh* food. Furthermore, the *Chachamim* decreed that *stam yadayim*, hands in general, are a *sheni le'tumah* due to the fact that people handle things during the day and are not always conscious of what they touch.¹

In order to purify one's hands they need to wash them, much like we do nowadays prior to eating bread. The *Mishnah* first teaches that any utensil can be used for this purpose, even if it is made from a substance that would mean they would not be susceptible to *tumah*. In other words, despite the fact that they may not be considered a *kli* (utensil) for *tumah*, they are for washing hands. If however the utensil was broken, then it may not be used for washing hands.

The *Mishnah* continues by explaining that one may not cup his hands to collect water and wash another's hands. The reason provided is that for washing hands a *kli* is required. One might have thought, that even if there was no requirement that a *kli* be used, another hands may not be used to cup the water, since the other's hands would cause the water itself to become *tameh*. The *Mishnah Achrona* however explains that since the sole reason provided is that a *kli* is required means that this is not a concern. Why?

The *Mishnah Achrona* cites the *Beit Yosef* (O.C. 160:12) who cites the *Terumat HaDeshen* who explains that they only made the *gezeira* that *tameh* hands can cause water to become invalid when they are washed for eating. If however it is not in the context of eating, then the water would not become *tameh* or invalid for use. This further supports why the *Mishnah* did not also include the case of one cupping water for himself. In that case it would be invalid due the water itself being *tameh* and not due to the fact that a *kli* is required, which is the focus of our *Mishnah*.

The difficulty however with this approach is the *Mishnah* in *Taharot* (2:6) amongst other sources. We learnt that anything

that invalidates *terumah*, i.e. a *sheni le'tumah*, that comes into contact with liquid, causes it to become a *rishon le'tumah*. While the case of *tuval yom* is raised as an exception, the *Mishnah* however does not differentiate with respect to hands whether it is at the time of eating or not.

The *Mishnah Achrona* however provides another distinction which solves this problem. He explains that there is a difference whether we are dealing with *stam yadayim* or hands that touch something *tameh*. Hands that touched something *tameh* then touch liquid causes it to become a *rishon le'tumah*. This is true even of *chulin* (regular) liquids. *Stam yadayim* however only make *trumah* liquid *tameh*.²

The *Mishnah Achrona* however brings another reason to differentiate. He explains that there is another reason why *stam yadayim* are *tameh*. We had explained that this is because people may unknowingly handle *tameh* items. *Rashi* (*Shabbat* 14a) however is not satisfied with that answer. He asks, why should the hands alone be *tameh*? We should also be concerned that he touched an *av ha'tumeh* and require full immersion. Instead, he explains that since one touches their body and other unclean places, it is disgusting (*mi'us*) to the handle *terumah* with such hands when eating. That *gezeira* therefore applies only when eating.

Returning to our questions, he explains that *tameh* liquid is only invalid for washing hands if the person requires it for *terumah*. The *gezeira* expanded to *chulin* as a result of *srach tumah*, to engender the practice of washing hands covering the situation of those eating *terumah* as well. Consider that nowadays most people are *tameh met*. Also, a *nidah* and *yoledet* always washed hands if though they were *tamah*. In such cases since there is no other option, *tameh* liquid could be used for washing. Nevertheless, the other reason stated by *Rashi* still stands. In other words, even though the *gezeira* against washing hands with *tameh* liquids at any time is lifted, the *gezeira* of *mi'us* when eating is still in force, requiring them to nevertheless be washed with valid liquid when in the context of eating.

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¹ Last cycle (6:70) we looked at one difference between the reasons why the hands become *sheni le'tumah*.

² He cites the *Rambam*'s introduction to this *Masechet* as support.

Revision Questions

טבול יום ג' - ב' - ד': ז'

- Explain the debate regarding a case where a *tevul yom* touched scrambled eggs that were resting on a *trumah* vegetable. (ג': ב')
- When does the law in the previous question change? (ג': ב')
- Explain the debate regarding whether the congealed eggs on a pot can be consider a *chibur* for *tevul yom*. (ג': ג')
- Which two cases, involving dough into which *trumah* is mixed, are debated whether a *tevul yom* can invalidate them? (ד': ג')
- Explain the debate regarding dough that was kneaded with fruit juice? (ד': ג')
- Explain the debate regarding a case where a *tevul yom* touched vegetables that were cooked with *trumah* oil. (ה': ג')
- If one was eating food and it fell from his mouth and landed on *trumah* when would the *trumah* be susceptible to *tumah*? (ו': ג')
- Explain the debate regarding whether the law is different if the case involved a *tevul yom*. (ו': ג')
- What is the law if a *tevul yom* or *stam yadayim* touched *ma'aser rishon* before *trumot ma'aser* had been separated? (ז': ד')
- How can one knead dough and then separate *challah* if:
 - They are a *tevul yom*? (ז': ב')
 - The kneading trough is *tevul yom*? (ז': ג')
- If one filled a *lagin* that was *tevul yom* with wine, what is the law if he said: (ז': ד')
 - It shall be *trumah* at night fall?
 - It shall be *trumah* at night fall and be used for an *eiruv techumim*?
- What is the law, in the previous question, if the barrel then broke? If the *lagin* broke? (ז': ד')
- What law is mentioned in the *Mishnah* that changed with respect to *ma'aser sheni* and *demai*? *Gittin*? (ח': ד')
- When would a broken *kadum* be susceptible to *tumah*? (ו': ג')
- When would a wooden *mizreh* be susceptible to *tumah*? (ו': ג')
- Explain the debate regarding one that draws wine from a large cistern and says "This is *trumah* if it comes out *b'shalom*." (ז': ד')
- Regarding the previous question, when is it considered *b'shalom*? (ז': ד')

ידיים א' - א' - ב'

- How many people can wash their hands with a *revi'it*? Half *log*? Full *log*? (א': א')
- Explain the following phrase: (א': א')
"מוסיפין על השנינים, ואין מוסיפין על הראשונים"
- Can one use a stone utensil to wash their hands? (ב': א')
- Can one wash their friend's hands by cupping water for them? (ב': א')
- What other water-related laws share the same ruling in this *Mishnah*? (ב': א')

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Beit Ha'Roeh
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Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf
9:00am
Kollel Magen Avraham
Reemon Neighbourhood

ONLINE SHIURIM

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
Rabbi C. Brown
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendars/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
6 March כ"ו אדר	7 March כ"ז אדר	8 March כ"ח אדר	9 March כ"ט אדר	10 March ל' אדר	11 March א' אדר	12 March ב' אדר
Yadayim 1:3-4	Yadayim 1:5-2:1	Yadayim 2:2-3	Yadayim 2:4-3:1	Yadayim 3:2-3	Yadayim 3:4-5	Yadayim 4:1-2

