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A Vessel, a Mikveh and the purpose of Shabbat

The *Mishnah* (*Beitzah* 2:2) brings an argument between *Beit Hillel* and *Beit Shammai* regarding the *tevilah* of a person on *Yom Tov*. They do agree however that one is not allowed to *tovel* a utensil that has become *tameh* on *Yom Tov*.

Why is *toveling* a utensil problematic? The *Gemara* (*Beitzah* 18a) brings four different opinions regarding this action and its halachic problems. *Rav Yosef* and *Raba* both argue that in essence there is no problem with this action. The issue that brought *Chachamim* to institute a prohibition is the fact that when taking the utensil to the *mikveh* one might come to transgress a few halachic prohibitions. *Rav Yosef* argued that it could be the squeezing of the utensil (obviously this is with vessels that are different to what we have today). On the other hand *Raba* argued that a person might come to take the vessel and walk with it for a distance of four *amot* in a public area (*reshut ha'rabim*) thus transgressing a halachic prohibition.

Rav Bibi also argues that the problem is not with the action itself but rather with what such an action can lead to. *Rav Bibi* understands that if *Chachamim* were to allow one to *tovel* a utensil on a *Yom Tov*, people would not *tovel* their utensil when they got it but rather wait until the next *Yom Tov*, where they will have time to go to the *mikveh* and take all their vessels with them at that time. The problem that can arise with such a situation is that people will come to use their utensil even before they took it to the *mikveh* thus transgressing an *issur*.

Rava is the only Rabbi who argues that there is an inherent problem with *toveling* a utensil on a *Yom Tov*. *Rava* argues that this case is like one who has a vessel that is almost ready to be used, but there is only one last thing that needs to be fixed before the vessel can be properly used. Doing this action, that will make the vessel usable, qualifies a biblical prohibition. This action, known as *ma'ke be'patish*, is similar to this case, where one takes a vessel that may not be used because of problems that have to do with *tum'ah* and *taharah* and solves these problems.

It is very interesting to see the way that the *Rambam* deals with this quadruple argument. In the *Halachot* of

Shabbat (23:8) *Rambam* says that one may not *tovel* a utensil as it is a sort of *ma'ke be'patish*. It is interesting to see that many of the other *Rishonim* perceived this issue as a problem that it **looks** like making a utensil useable. Therefore a few of the *Rishonim* quoted the *Yerushalmi* (*Terumot* 2:1) that argues that there is no halachic issue with *toveling* small utensils and the problem is only with large ones. One of the commentators on this *Yerushalmi* explains that this is exactly the point - if it doesn't look like you are doing something only in order to make it useable then there is no problem in doing it. *Rambam* does not agree with this approach. According to *Rambam* the problem is not that it **seems** like an *issur* - it **is** *assur*.

How surprising it is to find out that when it comes to the *halachot* of *Yom Tov*, *Rambam* takes a different approach. This time (*Hilchot Yom Tov* 4:17) *Rambam* understands that there is no inherent *Halachic* problem with dipping the utensil but rather it is only a rabbinic decree to restrain a person from transgressing another *issur*. *Rambam* quotes *Rav Bibi's* explanation that the problem is that a person will not *tovel* the vessel until *Yom Tov* and he will come to use it without having taken it to the *Mikveh*. What is the reason for this distinction?

Rav Levi Ben Chaviv (the *MaharIba"ch*) says that the reason is very simple and has to do with the basic *halachot* of *Yom Tov*. It is known that on *Yom Tov* one may do any action in order to prepare food for the day. Therefore it will make perfect sense that one may *tovel* a vessel that he needs for a *Yom Tov* meal. This is true, as the original prohibition of dipping a vessel is only a rabbinic one and not from the Torah (as it seems from most of the *Rishonim*). This explains why the *Rambam* had to give a different reason as to why this halachic decree still exists on *Yom Tov*.

Both of these reasons convey one very simple yet deep spiritual message. In order to gain the most out of a *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov* one must prepare all his needs before the day. This is the only way to make *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov* a day that is not just the time to do the things that we do not get to do during the week.

Asher Shafrir

Revision Questions

ביצה א': י' – ג': ג'

- Can one send *kilayim* garments to another on *Yom Tov* and why? (ג': א')
- Complete the following phrase: (ג': א')
"זה הכלל: _____ - ביום טוב משלחין אותו."
- Other than making an *eiruv tavshilin*, how can one effectively cook on *Yom Tov* for *Shabbat*? (ב': א')
- What is required to make an *eiruv tavshilin*? (ב': א')
- Can one cook on *Yom Tov* for *Shabbat* if they ate their *eiruv tavshilin*? (ב': א')
- List the opinions of *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* regarding *tevilah* for *Yom Tov* when it falls on a Sunday. (ב': ב')
- Which form of *tevilat keilim* is permitted on *Yom Tov*? (ב': ג')
- Explain the debate regarding which *korbanot* can be brought on *Yom Tov*? (ב': ד')
- What is different about the way *Beit Shammai* maintains that a *korban shlamim* is brought on *Yom Tov*? (ב': ד')
- Is one allowed to heat water on *Yom Tov* for the purpose of washing his feet? (ב': ה')
- In which three cases (relating to *Yom Tov*) does *Rabban Gamliel* rule stringently according to *Beit Shammai*? (ב': ו')
- In which three cases does *Rabban Gamliel* rule leniently compared to the *Chachamim*? (ב': ז')
- In which three cases does *R' Elazar ben Azarya* permit and the *Chachamim* prohibit? (ב': ח')
- In which of those three cases does *R' Yehuda* take an intermediate position? (ב': ח')
- Why can the three components of a pepper grinder each *mekabel tum'ah*? (Be specific) (ב': ט')
- Can a child walker be used on *Yom Tov* and why? (ב': י')
- Can one feed fish on *Yom Tov*? (ג': א')
- When can one "hunt" animals on *Yom Tov*? (ג': א')
- Can one take animals to slaughter that are found in hunting traps on *Yom Tov*? (ג': ב')
- What is the debate regarding slaughtering a gravely sick animal on *Yom Tov*? (ג': ג')

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday
Between mincha & ma'ariv
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat
10 minutes before mincha
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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
14 th May ט"ז אייר ל"א לעומר Beitzah 3:4-5	15 th May י"ז אייר ל"ב לעומר Beitzah 3:6-7	16 th May י"ח אייר ל"ג לעומר Beitzah 3:8-4:1	17 th May י"ט אייר ל"ד לעומר Beitzah 4:2-3	18 th May כ' אייר ל"ה לעומר Beitzah 4:4-5	19 th May כ"א אייר ל"ו לעומר Beitzah 4:6-7	20 th May כ"ב אייר ל"ז לעומר Beitzah 5:1-2

