



Volume 6. Issue 70

Tumat Yadayim – Understanding D'Rabbanan

A debate ensues in our *masechet* (3:2) regarding which *tumah* can make hands *tameh*:

Anything that invalidates *trumah* [a *sheni l'tumah*] makes hands *sheni l'tumah*. One [*tameh*] hand can make the other *tameh*. These are the words of R' Yehoshua. The *Chachamim* say that a *sheni l'tumah* cannot make [another thing] *sheni l'tumah*. [R' Yehoshua] said to them, *kitvei kodesh* are *sheni l'tumah* and make hands *tameh*! [The *Chachamim*] responded... one cannot derive conclusions from one rabbinic law to another.

On a simple level, the debate is regarding whether a *sheni l'tumah* can make hands *tameh*. The problem with this understanding is that this *Mishnah* would be repeating the previous one (3:1). There R' Yehoshua and the *Chachamim* argue regarding whether food or *keilim* that became *sheni l'tumah* through contact with *tameh* liquids can make hands *tameh*. Why is this debate repeated?

The *Mishnah Achrona* explains that there are different reasons behind the eighteen cases of rabbinic *sheni l'tumah*. Some are due to *derara detumah* - concerns regarding the risk that *tumah* will arise. For example, the *gezeira* regarding contact with *tameh* liquids arising out of concern about contact with liquids from a *sheretz* or *zav*. Another reason is related to rabbinic prohibitions. For example one who immerses his head and a majority of his body in drawn water; the concern there is thinking that immersing in drawn water is valid. Similarly the *tumah* that applies to *kitvei kodesh* was born after people placed their *trumah* with the *sifrei kodesh* which attracted rodents that damaged the *sifrei kodesh*.

The *Mishnah Achrona* therefore explains that the previous *Mishnah* is referring to cases of *sheni l'tumah* connected to *derara detumah*; it discusses food that became *tameh* through *tameh* liquids. With respect to *derara detumah*, *Chachamim* accept that in some cases a *sheni* can make another item *sheni* when liquid is the intermediary. Consequently their response there is that they have a tradition that only items that became a *rishon l'tumah* can *metameh yadayim*. Our *Mishnah* does not refer *sheni le'tumah* that stem from *derara detumah*. Consequently the *Chachamim* argue differently that, where there is no *derara detumah*, we do find that a *sheni* makes a *sheni*.

Is there a difference between the types of *sheni l'tumah*? The *Mishnah Achrona*, citing the *Rash*, explains that the

second case in our *Mishnah*, relating to one hand causing the other to be *tameh*, is only with respect to *kodesh* and not *trumah*. In other words, R' Yehoshua and the *Chachamim* argue whether the second hand would be *tameh* for *kodesh*. The problem is that the *Mishnah* in *Chagigah* rules that one hand can *metameh* the other for *kodesh* recording no debate. The *Mishnah Achrona* explains that the case in *Chagigah* is one of *derara detumah*. There everyone agrees that with respect to *kodesh* it should be treated stricter. Our *Mishnah's* case of *yadayim* is with respect to *stam yadayim* (*Bartenura*) – normal hands. Since the concern is with dirt and cleanliness (*Tosfot Yom Tov* 2:2) it is debated. Consequently, we find the even though the “bottom line” *halacha* may appear to be the same, the driving force behind them can be very different thereby having other implications when looking at the finer details.

This lesson can perhaps shed light on another *Mishnah* (4:6). The *Tzedukim* criticised the *Chachamim* for making *sifrei kodesh* while leaving heretical texts *tahor*. R' Yochanan ben Zakkai responded that one could also be critical that a donkey's bones are *tahor* while the *kohen gadol* bone's are *tameh*. The *Tzedukim* responded that they understand that the reason that a human's bones are *tameh* is out of respect for the deceased preventing their offspring from crafting ladles from their bones. R' Yochanan ben Zakkai responded that the *Chachamim* too, out of dear respect from the *sifrei kodesh* also make them *tameh*. The *Tosefta* elaborates: R' Yochanan ben Zakkai explained that this was to prevent one from using the parchment of *sifrei kodesh* as a rug for their animals.

A question raised on that *Mishnah* is why R' Yochanan ben Zakkai did not provide them with the real reason. The *Tifferet Yisrael* answers that it is forbidden to teach such people the real reasons as they would mock it. The *Mishnah Achrona* however understands that they already knew the real reason, but questioned it nonetheless; calling *sifrei kodesh tameh* appeared degrading. R' Yochanan had to dispel that notion. Perhaps we can add that whether or not they knew the real reason, R' Yochanan had to teach them this important lesson. They lumped everything that the *Chachamim* made *sheni l'tumah* together. R' Yochanan cleverly demonstrated to them using their own logic (*Tosfot Yom Tov*) that even though the bottom line may be the same, the motivation behind this law was different and out of love and respect for *sifrei kodesh*.

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Revision Questions

ידיים ב' ד' – ד' ח':

- Explain the following rule providing examples for each: (ב' ד'): "ספק הידיים לטמא ולטמא נלטהר – טהור."
- Who argues with one of the previous cases and which one? (ד' ב')
- Explain the debate regarding one that places his hand (only) inside a *bait menuga*. (א' ג')
- Which other case is debated in the same manner? (א' ג')
- Explain the debate between the *Chachamim* and *R' Yehoshua* regarding the food that can cause make hands *tameh*. (א' ג')
- Complete the following rule: (ג' ב') "כָּל הַ... מְטַמֵּא אֶת הַיָּדַיִם לְהִזְוֹת _____."
- Can one hand cause the other to become *tameh*? (ג' ב')
- Can *tefillin* straps make hands *tameh*? (ג' א')
- Explain the debate regarding how much of the parchment of *sifrei kodesh* can make hands *tameh*. (ד' א')
- If the writing of a *sefer* becomes rubbed out, how much must remain in order that it can still make hands *tameh*? (ה' א')
- Which *sefarim* are debated regarding whether they are *metame yadayim*? (ה' א')
- What was decided *bo vayom* regarding (and explain each debate):
 - *Areivat ha'raglayim*? (ד' א')
 - *Korbanot* that were slaughtered for the purpose of a different *korban*? (ד' ב')
 - Produce in the *shmittah* year in the lands of *Amon* and *Moav*? (ג' א')
 - *Ger Amoni*? (ד' א')
- Is the *targum* in *Ezra* and *Daniel* *metameh yadaim*? (ד' א')
- What are the three prerequisites for *kitvei kodesh* to be *metameh yadayim*? (ד' א')
- Describe the exchange between the *Chachamim* and *Tzedukim* regarding the law:
 - That *kitvei kodesh* are *metameh yadayim*. (ד' א')
 - Of *Nitzuk* with respect to *tumah*. (ד' א')
 - The writing of a *get*. (ח' א')

TWO WEEK'S TILL THE SIYUM HA'SHAS

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday

After *ma'ariv*
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *mincha*
Beit Ha'Roeh

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
20 th June ח' תמוז	21 st June ט' תמוז	22 nd June י' תמוז	23 rd June יא' תמוז	24 th June י"ב תמוז	25 th June י"ג תמוז	26 th June יד' תמוז
Uktzim 1:1-2	Uktzim 1:3-4	Uktzim 1:5-6	Uktzim 2:1-2	Uktzim 2:3-4	Uktzim 2:5-6	Uktzim 2:7-8

