



THE שבוע MATTERS

לע"נ ברוך בענדיט וברכה גרוס ע"ה
by Mr. & Mrs. Duvy Gross

שבת קודש פרשת ויקרא

מסכת חגיגה דף י"ט

לרפ"ש אחינו בני ישראל

Insights from our Chaburos

Raise your hands!

By Rabbi Yoni Posnick, Agudas Yisroel of Long Island, Far Rockaway, NY

This week's Gemara continues focusing on the topic of washing our hands on a regular basis and yet we've never really thought about it. The Gemara in Sotah (4b) speaks about the unusual importance Chazal attached to נטילת ידים, foreboding harsh punishments to one who is not careful with this washing and great rewards and riches for one who is. Furthermore, we know that 2 out of the 15 simanim (more than 10%) of the Seder are washing the hands. Clearly, this is a meaningful and significant activity. This is perhaps, therefore, a fitting time to pay more attention to this lofty mitzvah. Let's ask just one question: Does one need to have kavana for a regular נטילת ידים for the bread that we eat all the time? We know already from the Mishna that one who is toivel and does not have in mind the Maaser, Terumah, or Kodshim he will eat later, the tevillah is insufficient and he must toivel again. It sounds like from our Gemara that kavana is not needed for regular bread. Nevertheless, the Mechaber (159:13) paskens (based on a Rashba) that one should in fact ideally have kavana that one is preparing his hands to eat when washing נטילת ידים – נטילה – נטילה. "לכתחילה יכון הנוטל נטילה – נטילה ידים לאכילה". (In fact the Magen Avraham paskens this way even b'dieved). Therefore, the ביאור rules that one who did not have kavana should make his hands tamei and wash again, even making a new bracha. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"tl writes that if one never uses a kli when washing his hands (except for davening and eating bread) than we can rely on the חיי אדם who rules that even without kavana one is yotzei, since his actions prove his intentions (similar to Kriyas Shema recited during davening).

Stories of the Daf

Washing one's hands

”...ואם בשביל שיודחו ידיו טהורות והפירות הרי הן בכי יותן...”

On this week's daf, the Gemara explains that fruits only become susceptible to contract ritual impurity if they first become wet and the person has an interest in the water itself coming upon the fruit. The person's desire to benefit from the water determines the status of the fruit. The same concept to positions of leadership if one's intention when “grabbing hold of the fruit” of Rabbonus is for the sake of heaven, i.e., the fruits themselves, his community will remain pure. By contrast, if the Rav has ulterior motives, i.e., to also partake in the secondary “water” of honor or money, then he will not have the siyata d'shmaya to keep the community pure.

When Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, zt"l, was serving as Chief Rabbi and parliamentary representative of Bohemia and Moravia, he was approached by Frankfurt representatives, asking him to leave his prestigious position and lead their harried and unimpressive community. German Reform was so influential at the time that Shechitah had been outlawed as cruel, and the only chance for Torah-true Judaism to survive would be a strong and persuasive leader who could successfully re-establish the Orthodox community. Rav Hirsch heard about all of the problems facing the community, and nevertheless acquiesced to become Rav. The community was joyous and the only thing to negotiate was the new Rabbi's salary. The representatives asked, “Rabbi, tell us what your salary expectations are?” Rav Hirsch replied, “In my house, I am in charge of the spiritual matters and my wife is in charge of worldly concerns. Why don't you speak this issue over with her?” Rav Shlomo Wolbe, zt"l, would cite this story and say, “If you want to succeed in something for the klal you must forgo all thought of money and honor just like Rav Hirsch. He went to a small community instead of a big one and didn't think about money at all. His sole intention was for Hashem.”

Review & Remember

1. Why is it not acceptable to immerse in the arches of waves?
2. What is the basis for R' Yehudah's lenient ruling concerning two people immersing in a mikveh that contains exactly forty seah?
3. Explain who applies the phrase גוד אסיק to a mikveh?
4. What is the dispute between Rabanan and R' Meir regarding chullin and maser sheni?

Parsha Connection

In this week's daf we find the following: “אמר רבי יהודה אם היו רגליו של ראשון נוגעות במים אף השני טהור”. If the first person's legs are touching the water, the second person is also טהור. There is an unintended connection between these 2 people who used the same Mikva. We find a similar concept in this week's parsha. The passuk says “אדם כי יקריב מכם” One would bring a sacrifice from you. It should have said If one of you brings a sacrifice, or just say if one brings a sacrifice without “from you”? One of the answers given by the Alshich Hakodosh is as follows: If one person sins it reflects on many others who could have prevented his sin. It is therefore viewed as a community sin even though only one person actually sinned. We are all part of one large family! This timeless message is incredibly relevant right now, and heeding it will help all of us get through it IYH, ASAP.

CONTINUED

Halacha Highlight

Immersing in snow

דתניה מטבילין בראשין ואין מבילין בכיפין לפי שאין מטבילין באויר

As was taught in a Beraisa: We immerse in the heads [of detached waves] but we do not immerse in the arches because we do not immerse in midair

Rabbeinu Mordechai ben Hillel¹, the Mordechai, cites the analysis of Rabbeinu Simcha concerning the question of whether immersing in frozen snow is an effective immersion. Rabbeinu Simcha initially ruled, based on a Mishnah in Mikvaos², that it is an effective immersion. The Mishnah there states that snow and hail contribute to the volume of the mikvah and do not disqualify the mikvah. Obviously the Mishnah is addressing the case of frozen snow because if it was addressing melted snow there is no reason to think that melted snow is any different than rainwater. Rabbeinu Eliezer disputes Rabbeinu Simcha's conclusion and explains that the novelty of the Mishnah ruling that melted snow increases the volume of the mikvah is that one may have thought that it should be disqualified as drawn water (מים שאובין). In the end of his analysis, Rabbeinu Simcha concluded that immersing in frozen snow is not effective and one of the reasons that led him to this conclusion is that our Gemara declares that one may not immerse in the arch of a wave. Rav Yosef Karo³, the Bais Yosef, questions the relevance of our Gemara to the question at hand. The reason we do not immerse in the arch of a wave is that it is completely detached from the ground as opposed to snow which is in contact with the ground; therefore, immersing in snow should be valid the same as it is valid to immerse in deep waters even though the water rises well above the ground below. Rav Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky⁴, the Steipler, explains the intent of Rabbeinu Simcha in light of a Gemara in Niddah⁵. The Gemara there relates that if part of a pile of snow becomes tamei the entire pile is not tamei as opposed to water where the entire collection of water becomes tamei. The reason for the distinction is that the droplets of water fuse together to form one mass whereas each snowflake remains independent and does not fuse together with the others. Consequently, the snowflakes on the top of the pile are not considered connected with the snowflakes at the bottom of the pile and as a result they are similar to the arch of the wave that is completely detached from the ground.

1. מרדכי שבת פד סי' שלב.
2. מקואות פ"ז מא.
3. בית יוסף יוד סי' ר"א דה כתב מרדכי.
4. קהלות יעקב מקואות סי' ד' אות ב'.
5. גמ' נדה יז.

Mussar from the Daf

Put your mind to it

The Gemorah tells us if a person is tovel kaylim without intent, the tevilah can still work, however if a person is tovel himself without intent (i.e., wave fell on the person), the gemroah tells us that the tevilah does not work. What is the difference between the two cases?

In general, Tumah and Tahara are not physical, but rather spiritual concepts, as Rambam writes in his conclusion of Sefer Tahrah (Yad, Mikvaot 11:12): "Matters of ritual purity and impurity are Divine decrees... Nevertheless, the laws of tevilah provide a lesson that just as where a person intends to purify himself he becomes pure from a tevillah even though there has been no physical change so too if a person set his mind on going about purifying his soul from those matters that make it impure, these being evil thoughts and views, as soon as the person agrees to disengage from those paths and immerses his soul in the waters of knowledge, he becomes pure."

Rav Reuven Lurie writes that the tumah on a person is quintessentially different from tumah on a vessel. A person has to go through a spiritual change in their inner world when they are tovel, while a vessel obviously is not part of that process and hence intent is not miakev. Rav Wolbe (Chelek 1, page 16) explains that the Churban Bayis Sheni was worse than the Churban Bayis Rishon because it was a destruction of the inner world (primarily driven by sinas chinam). While people learned Torah and performed chesed, the actions were purely external and were lacking the proper middos.

When doing a mitzvah, a person should strive to bring his feelings and thoughts in congruence with the actions he is performing. For example, if we are performing chesed, we should try and put ourselves in the shoes of the recipient. When learning Torah, we should think that this is an opportunity to see what Hashem wants in the world.

Point To Ponder

The גמרא says that if someone had in mind that his going to the mikva will purify him for one reason, he can still change his mind, as long as he still has one foot in the water. The gemara brings a proof to this concept from a mishna in Mikvaos שנמדד מקוה היא דתנן מוקה שנמדד. In case a mikva has exactly 40 se'ah and one person immersed themselves in it and came out, it is no longer kosher for use by another, since it lost some water when it stayed on the person's body. However if the first person's leg is still touching the mikva, a second may use it according to רבי יהודה. The reason for this is due to the fact that the water on the first person's body is considered connected to the Mikva. How does this compare to our original case of intent? This is merely a case of viewing water as connected? (Answer to appear next week)

Response to last week's point to ponder

According to Reb Yonatan kal v'chomer that suggests that the intermediate days are even holier than the first and seventh, shouldn't they be prohibited from doing ANY work just like the first and seventh? We have two separate sources for not doing work on חוהמ, Sukkot and Pesach when it says אינו צריך and brings a וחומר, קל, it is referring only to פסח. We still have the drasha for Sukkot and therefore have a source that some work is permitted on the intermediate days. (see טורי אבן).

For more points to ponder by Rabbi Yechiel Grunhaus, or insights by Rabbi Gutterman, please visit our website, dafaweek.org, or download the app

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The shavua matters is published by the Daf a week program under the rabbinical guidance of Harav Meir Stern shlita and Harav Shmuel Kamenetsky shlita

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