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Brachos Daf 52

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Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o"n

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Kiddush vs. Havdalah

The Gemora says that Bais Shamai's position in the Mishna, that one starts with the blessing of *kiddush*, implies that they consider a blessing about the day to be more important than the other blessings that accompany it.

The Gemora challenges this from a braisa about making *havdalah*. The braisa says that when one arrives home after Shabbos, he should make the blessing on wine, candle, and spices, and then the blessing of *havdalah*, separating Shabbos from the weekdays. If he only has one cup, he should leave all of the blessings for after his meal, and use that cup for *havdalah* and the birkas hamazon. The Gemora assumes that this braisa follows Bais Shamai, yet it places *havdalah* - the blessing about the day - at the end.

The Gemora explains that the braisa must be Bais Shamai, since they are the ones who say the blessing on the candle precedes the one on spices. To support this, the Gemora cites a braisa in which Rabbi Yehuda says that Bais Shamai and Bais Hillel agree that the first blessing is on the wine after birkas hamazon, and the last one is on *havdalah*. Their dispute is about the blessings on the candle and the spice, with Bais Shamai saying the candle comes first, and Bais Hillel saying the spice comes first.

The Gemora challenges this, as perhaps this braisa follows Rabbi Meir's version of the dispute (as cited in the

Mishna), in which Bais Hillel also place the candle's blessing before the spice blessing.

The Gemora rejects this option, as this braisa says that if one has only one cup, he leaves all the blessings for after birkas hamazon, which follows Rabbi Yehuda's position.

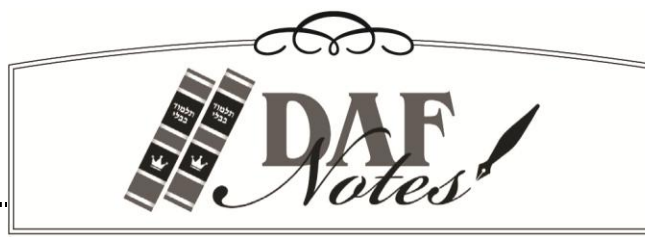
The Gemora resolves this by distinguishing between *Kiddush*, which starts the day, and *havdalah*, which ends the day. Bais Shamai prefers starting the day earlier, and ending the day later, to show that the day is not a burden on us.

A cup before or after birkas hamazon

The Gemora raises another inconsistency between this braisa and the Mishna. The braisa says that he should leave the one cup for after birkas hamazon, implying that he drinks the wine afterwards, while the Mishna says that Bais Shamai says that one should say the blessing on the wine before birkas hamazon.

The Gemora suggests that Bais Shamai's statement in the Mishna means that he makes the blessing, but actually drinks it afterwards, but rejects this, as one who says a blessing on food must immediately taste some of it.

The Gemora suggests that he may taste some of it. Although tasting from a cup makes it invalid for a further formal blessing, he may taste it in his mouth. Although



the braisa says he only has one cup, he may have more than one cupful, but not two cups full.

The Gemora finally rejects this option from Rabbi Chiya, who taught that Bais Shamai says that he makes the blessing on the wine, drinks it, and then says birkas hamazon.

The Gemora therefore concludes that these are two different versions of Bais Shamai's position.

Washing hands and pouring a cup

The Mishna stated that Bais Shamai says that one first washes his hands, and then pours the cup of wine, while Bais Hillel says that one first pours the cup, and then washes his hands.

The Gemora cites a braisa explaining both positions. Bais Shamai says that if one pours the cup first, we are concerned that liquids that fall on the outside of the cup will become impure on contact with his impure hands, and then make the cup impure. Without the liquid, impure hands wouldn't make the cup impure, as they are only second level impure, which cannot make something not sanctified and not teruma into a third level. However, liquids touched by such hands become first level impure, which can make the cup impure. Bais Hillel says that if one washes his hands first, we are concerned that water remaining on his hands will become impure on contact with an impure cup, and then make his hands impure. Without the water, the cup itself wouldn't make his hands impure, as an impure vessel cannot make a person impure. Furthermore, the liquids inside the cup do not become impure, as they are referring to a cup whose outside came in contact with impure liquids, making only the outside impure, as the Mishna teaches that a vessel whose outside became impure is only impure outside, but if it became impure on the inside, it is all impure. The Gemora explains that the core of their dispute is whether one may use a vessel whose outside is impure. Bais

Shamai says that one may not, as we are concerned that liquid may splash from inside to the outside, and then make one's hands impure. They therefore try to avoid causing such impurity, and are not concerned about a situation that would arise only with such a vessel. Bais Hillel says that one may not, as splashes are uncommon, and we therefore must deal with a situation when one is using such a vessel. The braisa then states that another reason offered by Bais Hillel is that one should wash immediately before eating.

The Gemora explains that Bais Hillel is telling Bais Shamai that even though they are concerned about the possibility of making the vessel impure, they still should prefer washing after pouring, to wash immediately before eating.

Where to put the napkin

The Mishna stated that Bais Shamai says that one should wipe his hands during the meal with a cloth, and leave it on the table, while Bais Hillel says that he should leave it on the chair.

The Gemora cites a braisa which explains the reasoning behind each of their positions. Bais Shamai say that if he leaves it on the chair, the liquid on it may become impure on contact with the chair, and then make his hands impure when they touch the liquid. Without the liquid, the chair wouldn't make the cloth impure, nor would the cloth make his hands impure, as a vessel does not make a vessel or person directly impure at this level. Bais Hillel says that if one leaves it on the table, the liquid on it may become impure on contact with an impure table, and then make the food on the table impure.

The Gemora explains that we are concerned about a table at second level impurity which does not make food impure, but can make liquids impure at first level impurity, which can then make food impure.



The Gemora explains that the core of their dispute is whether one may use a table which is second level impure. Bais Shamai says one may not, lest a kohen eating teruma eat at such a table, which would make his teruma impure and unfit. Bais Hillel says that one may, and we are not concerned about a kohen, since kohanim are very vigilant to avoid impurity.

The Braisa continues to state another argument offered by Bais Hillel – that there is no requirement from the Torah for one to wash hands before eating non-teruma food.

The Gemora explains that Bais Hillel is saying to Bais Shamai that if we have to choose between a concern about food becoming impure and hands becoming impure, we should be more concerned about the food, since there is a concept of impure food in the Torah, but not of impure hands.

When to sweep and wash after the meal

The Mishna stated that Bais Shamai says that one sweeps the leftover food, and then washes his hands for birkas hamazon, while Bais Hillel says that the order is reversed.

The Gemora cites a braisa which explains the reasoning behind their positions. Bais Shamai says that if one would wash their hands before sweeping, the water will drip on the leftovers, making them disgusting, effectively wasting food. Bais Hillel says that if the waiter is knowledgeable, he will first remove leftovers that are usable (i.e., a kazayis or bigger), and only leave small pieces, which are insignificant.

The Gemora says that this supports Rabbi Yochanan, who says that one may destroy crumbs smaller than a kazayis.

The Gemora says that the core of their dispute is whether one may use a waiter who is not knowledgeable.

Rabbi Yossi bar Chanina quotes Rav Huna saying that we rule like Bais Hillel in all the cases in this chapter besides this one.

Rabbi Oshaya learned this dispute reversing their positions, and then ruled like Bais Hillel even in this one.

Order of havdalah blessings

The Gemora discusses the dispute of Bais Shamai and Bais Hillel about the order of blessings in *havdalah*. Rav Huna bar Yehuda went to Rava's house, and saw him saying the blessing on spice first. He asked him why he did so, as both Bais Shamai and Bais Hillel agree that the candle comes before the spices, as stated in a braisa that Rav Huna cited. Rava responded by saying that this is Rabbi Meir's position, but Rabbi Yehuda says that they agree that the blessing on wine is first, and the blessing on *havdalah* is last, but they dispute the order of candle and spice. Bais Shamai says that the candle comes first, while Bais Hillel says the spice comes first, and Rabbi Yochanan says that the accepted practice is to follow Bais Hillel, as cited by Rabbi Yehuda.

The blessing on the candle

The Mishna stated that Bais Shamai says that the blessing on the candle is *shebara me'or ha'esh* – *Who created the light of the fire*, while Bais Hillel says that it is *boreh me'orai ha'esh* – *Who creates the lights of the fire*.

Rava says that both agree that bara implies past tense, but they dispute what boreh implies. Bais Shamai says that it only implies future tense, while Bais Hillel says that it implies past tense.



Rav Yosef challenges this, from many verses which use boreh to refer to past creations (of darkness, wind, and the sky), and therefore says that they both agree that both bara and boreh imply past. Their dispute is about the word for the light. Bais Shamai says that there is one light in a fire, and therefore use the singular me'or. Bais Hillel says that there are many lights (i.e. colors) in a fire, and therefore use the plural me'orai.

The Gemora supports this with a braisa, in which Bais Hillel say to Bais Shamai that there are many lights that exist in a fire.

Candle or spice of a non-Jew

The Mishna says that one may not make the blessing on a candle or spices of a non-Jew.

The Gemora understands that one may not make it on his candle, as it was used over Shabbos, and therefore did not refrain from prohibited work. However, why may one may not use his spices?

Rav says that the Mishna refers to spices from a party of non-Jews, as these parties are assumed to be for idolatry, making their spices designated for idolatry.

The Gemora challenges this, as the Mishna later lists spices used for idolatry explicitly, but Rabbi Chanina misura explains that the latter part of the Mishna is explaining why one may not use spices from a party of non-Jews.

Candle which rested

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that one may only make the blessing on a candle which rested.

The Gemora explains that it must only have rested from prohibited work, as the braisa says that one may use a candle lit for someone sick or a woman in labor.

Rather, Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak says that it only means that the candle must have rested from prohibited work.

The Gemora supports this with a braisa, which says that if a lamp was burning throughout Shabbos, one may use it for the blessing in *havdalah*.