

Notes: November 30 2024

Start: 10 AM

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Three Schools of Thought - Beit Yeshua vs. Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai

What is a "School of Thought?"

1. A point of view held by a particular group.
2. An [opinion subscribed](#) to by some [connected](#) or [arbitrary group](#).
3. A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school.

I am establishing these definitions because within the New Covenant are schools and thus schools of thought.

In the past we examined who Sha'ul was and in relation to another Rabbi – Yochanan ben Zakkai, I touched on a major and distinct influence at the time of Yeshua and beyond.

Sha'ul conveyed the following...

Gal 1:13 For you have heard about my former way of life in *[traditional]* Judaism — how I did my best to persecute God's Messianic Community and destroy it;

Gal 1:14 and how, since I was more of a zealot for the traditions handed down by my forefathers than most Jews my age, I advanced in *[traditional]* Judaism more rapidly than they did.

He identifies himself as a zealot for the traditions. Such an admission conveys that he was more leaning towards Beit Shammai than Beit Hillel, for whom his mentor was Gamel'iel, the leader of Beit Hillel.

Hillel and Shammai...

Hillel and Shammai were two leading sages of the last century BCE and the early 1st century CE who founded opposing schools of Jewish thought, known as the House of Hillel and House of Shammai. The debate between these schools on matters of ritual practice, ethics, and theology was critical for the shaping of the Oral Law and Judaism as it is today.

Within the P'rushim there were two distinct views, leading to the observation...

“the Torah become as two Torahs” (Sanhedrin 88B)

This statement from the Talmud refers to Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai.

The house / school of Hillel vs. the house / school of Shammai.

Last week, I shared with you that Beit Shammai was stricter while Beit Hillel was more moderate. Yet, they differences were quite significant. So much so

So polarizing, this statement was made...

“What is a dispute for the sake of Heaven? The disputes between Hillel and Shammai.” (Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) 5:17).

Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel disputed on many subjects during the time both schools existed (~30 BCE until shortly after the fall of the Temple in 70 CE). One notable, but little appreciated or discussed dispute, was the different position each held related to Gentile salvation. According to Beit Hillel, Gentiles could merit a place in the World to Come through obedience to the Noahide laws. A “righteous Gentile”, one living to a higher standard than the Noahide laws, could also obtain additional rewards. On the other hand, Beit Shammai held that only Jews would enter the World to Come. Even proselytes who converted to Judaism would not merit a place in the World to Come.

- **Admission to Torah study:** *The House of Shammai believed only worthy students should be admitted to study Torah. The House of Hillel believed that Torah may be taught to anyone, in the expectation that they will repent and become worthy. [5]*

Yet, this very issue was conveyed throughout the Prophets – Yonah, Isaiah to name two.

To Yonah, go and preach a message of redemption to the Assyrians in Ninveh.

To Isaiah – Ya'akov is to be a light to the nations.

Early in the first century, while Hillel was still alive, Shammai is said to have authored “eighteen measures” (Shabbat 13B) to create a greater separation between the Jewish people and the Gentile world. From one measure, came the requirement of washing hands prior to eating, a topic address by Jesus in the gospel accounts, (Matt 15:2). The Talmud tells us that an unspecified number from the Beit Hillel were killed over the dispute surrounding the adoption of the eighteen measures, (Shabbat 1:4). “Both Talmuds and the Tosefta state that the day was as troublesome for Israel as the day the Golden Calf was built in Moses’ time.” [8] The eighteen measures were passed by the majority of Beit Shammai, firmly establishing Beit Shammai as the governing school of Pharisaic thought, and the authority over the Sanhedrin.

Yet, Yeshua said...

Joh 10:16 Also I have other sheep which are not from this pen; I need to bring them, and they will hear my voice; and there will be one flock, one shepherd.

And Kefa would be the first to go to the Goy...in spite of the Halakah of the P'rushim, lead by Beit Shammai...

Act 10:28 He said to them, "You are well aware that for a man who is a Jew to have close association with someone who belongs to another people, or to come and visit him, is something that just isn't done. But God has shown me not to call any person common or unclean;

And Sha'ul...

Gal 2:7 On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the Good News for the Uncircumcised, just as Kefa had been for the Circumcised;

Gal 2:8 since the One working in Kefa to make him an emissary to the Circumcised had worked in me to make me an emissary to the Gentiles.

Rom 11:13 However, to those of you who are Gentiles I say this: since I myself am an emissary sent to the Gentiles, I make known the importance of my work

Rom 11:14 in the hope that somehow I may provoke some of my own people to jealousy and save some of them!

Within the P'rushim existed what Sha'ul referenced in his letter to the Galatians as Judaizers. Those who held a strict position regarding Gentiles. As I had conveyed earlier, the most strict of Shammai was that no Gentile could be redeemed. Yet, a more moderate, yet strict group within Shammai conveyed that they could be circumcised and become Jewish. You have heard of Judaizers many times before, now you have a much better understanding regarding the origin of their thoughts and beliefs.

In the record of the Talmud alone, there are 316 issues on which they debated; [1] the large number of their disputations led to the saying the one law has become two. [2][3][4] The matters they debated included:

- **White lies**: *Whether one should tell an ugly bride that she is beautiful. Shammai said it was wrong to lie, and Hillel said that all brides are beautiful on their wedding day. [6]*
- **Divorce**. *The House of Shammai held that a man may only divorce his wife for a serious transgression, but the House of Hillel allowed divorce for even trivial offenses, such as burning a meal. [7]*

In general, the House of Shammai's positions were stricter than those of the House of Hillel.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillel_and_Shammai

Stricter in what sense?

Stricter in the sense of Torah?

Or

Stricter in the sense of adhering to tradition?

Some would say, they are one in the same. Yet Yeshua conveys differently.

We joke about this with our minds bring the image of Tovia from Fiddler on the Roof. Yet, this was a foundational view with the intent of protecting and maintaining a life that many believed was not only of God but from God. That is until Yeshua poured water in the P'rushim's gas tank.

Many of Yeshua's encounters with the P'rushim center around traditions that have been attached to Torah, whereby the tradition has become more important than Torah itself.

Even though the debate between Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai is grounded in Torah, in that it is the origin of debate, the matters and rulings do not always address Torah.

We see this influence throughout the Brith Hadoshah. Many of Yeshua's confrontations with the P'rushim involved not matters of Torah directly, but matters pertaining to traditions.

Mar 7:4 Also, when they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they have rinsed their hands up to the wrist; and they adhere to many other traditions, such as washing cups, pots and bronze vessels.)

Mar 7:5 The P'rushim and the Torah-teachers asked him, "Why don't your talmidim live in accordance with the Tradition of the Elders, but instead eat with ritually unclean hands?"

Mar 7:6 Yeshua answered them, "Yesha`yahu was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites — as it is written, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from me.

Mar 7:7 Their worship of me is useless, because they teach man-made rules as if they were doctrines.'

The influence of Beit Shammai is prominent here. What is viewed as a command, yet not found anywhere in Torah is presented in equal standing as Torah. To where Yeshua's final response speaks volumes to the cultural climate at the time of Yeshua...

Mar 7:8 "You depart from God's command and hold onto human tradition.

When matters did involve Torah directly, such as Shabbat, the direction of the conversation by the P'rushim was influenced not by Torah, but by tradition.

The biblical concept of a weekly day for resting from workaday purposes has no close parallel in the ancient world. The fourth commandment ([Exo 20:8-11](#), [Deu 5:12-14](#)) connects Shabbat with the fact that God rested after the six days of creation ([Gen 2:1-3](#)); makes it a day of equality in which all, high and low alike, are entitled to rest; and sets it aside as a day which is holy, on which God is to be honored.

Yet this simple, yet basic gift from Adonai became the center of much debate. Yeshua was confronted with many questions posed by the P'rushim regarding Shabbat. They were most certainly testing Him. Which side will He support – Beit Shammai strict) or Beit Hillel (moderate).

Mat 12:1 One Shabbat during that time, Yeshua was walking through some wheat fields. His talmidim were hungry, so they began picking heads of grain and eating them.

Mat 12:2 On seeing this, the P'rushim said to him, "Look! Your talmidim are violating Shabbat!"

Mat 12:3 But he said to them, "Haven't you ever read what David did when he and those with him were hungry?

Mat 12:4 He entered the House of God and ate the Bread of the Presence!" — which was prohibited, both to him and to his companions; — it is permitted only to the cohanim.

Mat 12:5 "Or haven't you read in the Torah that on Shabbat the cohanim profane Shabbat and yet are blameless?

Mat 12:6 I tell you, there is in this place something greater than the Temple!

Mat 12:7 If you knew what 'I want compassion rather than animal-sacrifice' meant, you would not condemn the innocent.

The argument was not over whether it was permitted to pick grain by hand from someone else's field, for that is expressly allowed by [Deu_23:26](#) ([Deu_23:25](#)), but whether it could be done on *Shabbat*.

At issue behind this seemingly minor matter is whether the Pharisaic tradition—which evolved into what rabbinic Judaism calls the Oral *Torah*, later committed to writing in the Mishna, Gemara and other works—is God's revelation to man and binding on all Jews. The question is explored further at 18:18-20 and [Mar_7:5-13](#).

According to the Oral *Torah* as we have it now in the Mishna (Shabbat 7:2) thirty-nine categories of *m'lakhah* (work) are prohibited on *Shabbat*, namely, those prohibited on *Shabbat* while the Tabernacle was being built. One of these was reaping, another threshing.

At [Mat_12:1](#) we are told the *talmidim* were reaping while in the parallel passage at [Luk_6:1](#) they were also rubbing the heads of grain together in their hands, which would be defined as threshing. This is the content of the accusation the *P'rushim* were making against them and by implication against Yeshua, responsible as their teacher for their behavior.

To where Yeshua concludes this segment by stating the following:

Mat 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of Shabbat!"

This passage from the Talmud conveys the same message as v. 27 :

"Rabbi Yonatan ben-Yosef said: 'For it [*Shabbat*] is holy unto you' ([Exo_31:14](#)). That is, it is committed into your hands, not you into its hands!" (Yoma 85b)

A similar passage appears in the Mekhilta, Shabbata I:1 on [Exo_31:12-17](#), where the saying is attributed to Rabbi Shim'on Ben-Menasya.

It may be, therefore, that Yeshua's comment in [Mar_2:28](#), that **the Son of Man is Lord of *Shabbat***, does not refer only to himself but to everyone, since Hebrew *ben-adam* (literally, "son of man") can mean simply "man, person," with no Messianic overtone: "people control *Shabbat*" and not the other way round.

Mat 12:9 Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue.

Mat 12:10 A man there had a shriveled hand. Looking for a reason to accuse him of something, they asked him, "Is healing permitted on Shabbat?"

Mat 12:11 But he answered, "If you have a sheep that falls in a pit on Shabbat, which of you won't take hold of it and lift it out?"

Mat 12:12 How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore, what is permitted on Shabbat is to do good."

Mat 12:13 Then to the man he said, "Hold out your hand." As he held it out, it became restored, as sound as the other one.

What is permitted on *Shabbat*? [Mat_12:10](#) reports the question as:

This is the question posed to Yeshua by the P'rushim.

"Is healing permitted on *Shabbat*?" The answer of modern *halakhah for today* is threefold:

The word "halakhah" is usually translated as "Jewish Law," although a more literal (and more appropriate) translation might be "the path that one walks." And is ultimately the interpretation of Torah, where Torah is vague or silent.

(1) On *Shabbat*, healing to save life is not only permitted but a duty.

(2) Caring for the seriously ill (e.g., those with a high fever or pain affecting the whole body) is allowed, within certain constraints.

(3) Treating minor ailments is prohibited by *g'zerah* (rabbinical decree)-the reason being that most treatments require grinding to prepare medicine, and grinding is a prohibited form of work (see [Luk_12:2](#)).

Since a shriveled hand is neither life-threatening nor "serious," this healing, on the face of it, violates today's *halakhah* concerning *Shabbat*.

Presumably the Mishna reflects the halakhic situation among the P'rushim. It prohibits healing on *Shabbat* through medical means but allows healing which comes as a byproduct of some other activity:

"They may not set a fracture. If someone's hand or foot is dislocated, he may not pour cold water over it; but he may wash it in the usual way; and if it heals, it heals." (Shabbat 22:5)

In [Luk_6:10](#) the man holds out his shriveled hand, and it is restored to soundness. This is in no sense a medical cure, but clearly he held out his hand in response to Yeshua's instruction for no other reason than to be healed, so that by the logic implicit in the Mishna the cure was not a byproduct and was therefore a violation of *Shabbat*.

Actually, Yeshua brings five arguments against the way in which the P'rushim use their *halakhah*:

(1) In the parallel passage at [Mat_12:11-12](#) Yeshua attacks the premise underlying the Oral *Torah* as understood by the P'rushim with an argument about priorities: "doing good deeds" is more important than observing the details of the *Shabbat* work rules. Determination of priorities is a legitimate form of halakhic ruling (see [Joh_7:22-23](#)).

(2) He strengthens his case with a *kal v'chomer* argument (see [Mat_6:30](#)): if it is permitted to rescue a sheep on *Shabbat*, how much more is it permitted to heal a man on *Shabbat*!

I have included a link to a sermon from three years ago on kal v'chomer – light and heavy for further understanding of this Jewish concept.

http://www.shalommaine.com/sermon_notes_pdf/Kal_Vahomer%E2%80%93Light_and_Heavy.pdf

(3) In the parallel passage in Mark he adds that "*Shabbat* was made for man, not man for *Shabbat*"-which is to say that God's rules are to serve man and enable him better to glorify God, not to enslave man and require him to glorify the rules (see [Mar_2:27](#)).

(4) At [Joh_5:17-18](#) he says, "My Father has been working until now, and I too am working," which his hearers correctly interpreted as Yeshua's claim to divinity and thus his need and right to work on *Shabbat*.

(5) Finally, at [Joh_7:22-23](#), where he has just healed a man on *Shabbat*, he brings another *kal v'chomer* argument: if his opponents allow circumcision on *Shabbat*, how much more should they allow healing (see [Joh_7:22-23](#)).

The common thread in these five arguments is that the rules of the *P'rushim* for *Shabbat* are generally good guides to behavior, but they must not be allowed to become oppressive-there are circumstances when one should break them in order to obey God's will and be an active participant in his Kingdom (for more, see [Act_4:19](#), [Gal_2:11-20](#)). "Breaking the rules" for the right reasons is an essential element in Messianic *halakhah*!

So, let me ask you a question...What is Beit Yeshua?

A term that is part of the title, but I have yet to even mention it once.

What is Beit Yeshua?

In relation to Hillel and Shammai it is most certainly a school of thought. Yeshua taught just as Hillel and Shammai taught. There were times when Yeshua leaned more towards Hillel than Shammai, yet His teachings were so much more.

So, Beit Yeshua is more than just a school of thought, but has far greater significance and understanding.

The Beit of Yeshua is more than just a house, but rather houses.

Consider this statement by Yeshua, in relation to the primary influence of the P'rushim being Beit Shammai, the ones who were strict in relation to tradition.

Mat 23:13 "But woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P'rushim! For you are shutting the Kingdom of Heaven in people's faces, neither entering yourselves nor allowing those who wish to enter to do so.

Beit Yeshua is the Kingdom of Adonai.

<http://dustydisciples.blogspot.com/2016/12/the-disputes-between-jesus-and-beit.html>