**Yadayim, Chapter Three, Mishnah One**

**Mishnah One**

1. If a person puts his hands inside a house with scale disease, his hands have first degree uncleanness, the words of Rabbi Akiba.
   1. But the sages say: his hands have second degree uncleanness.
2. Whoever defiles garments: at the time when he touches [the uncleanness], he defiles hands so that they have first degree uncleanness, the words of Rabbi Akiba.
   1. But the sages say: such that they have second degree of uncleanness.
3. They said to Rabbi Akiba: where do we find anywhere that hands have first degree uncleanness?
   1. He said to them: but how is it possible for them to become unclean with first degree uncleanness without his whole body becoming unclean? Only in these cases [can they have first degree uncleanness].
4. Foods and vessels which have been defiled by liquids convey second degree of uncleanness to the hands, the words of Rabbi Joshua.
   1. But the sages say: that which has been defiled by a father of uncleanness conveys uncleanness to the hands, but that which has been defiled by an offspring of uncleanness does not defiled the hands.
5. Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel said: it happened that a certain woman came before my father and said to him, "My hands went into the air-space inside an earthenware vessel." He said to her: "My daughter, what was the cause of its uncleanness?" But I did not hear what she said to him.
   1. The sages said: the matter is clear—that which has been defiled by a father of uncleanness conveys uncleanness to the hands, but that which has been rendered unclean by an offspring of uncleanness does not defiled the hands.

***Explanation***

**Section one**: In Tractate Negaim we learned about the house that has some sort of scale disease. Rabbi Akiva says that if someone puts just his hands into such a house, the hands have first degree uncleanness. The other sages say that his hands only have second degree uncleanness.

**Second two**: There is a similar dispute concerning a person who defiles garments. This is a about whom the Torah says that he must wash his clothes: for instance one who touches a zav or one who touches something a zav lied upon, or who touches a zavah or a menstruant. According to Rabbi Akiva when such a person is touching the source of uncleanness, another person who touches him will get first degree uncleanness in his hands. The other sages say that he will get second degree uncleanness.

**Section three**: The other sages now argue with Rabbi Akiva, asking him where we find that hands can have first degree impurity.

Rabbi Akiva responds that in essence they are right. Hands can only have first degree impurity if the whole body also has first degree impurity. However, these cases in sections one and two are exceptions for in these cases the body wasn't defiled at all. Only in these cases can someone's hands have first degree impurity while the rest of his body remains pure.

**Section four**: We find a similar dispute regarding foods and vessels which have been defiled by liquids. These foods now have second degree impurity (see Zavim 5:12). According to Rabbi Joshua they defile hands such that the hands have second degree impurity. The other rabbis say that only foods or vessels that were defiled by a father of uncleanness and thereby have first degree impurity can defile hands. But if foods have only second degree impurity, they don't defile hands at all.

**Section five**: Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel now cites a story about a woman who came in front of Rabban Gamaliel, his father. The woman's hands had gone into the air-space of an impure earthenware vessel. Such vessels convey impurity through their air-space. Rabban Gamaliel asks her if the vessel had received its impurity from contact with a father of uncleanness or whether the vessel was defiled by something with first degree uncleanness? Unfortunately, Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel never heard the response (those kids, they're never listening!).

The sages say that their halakhah from section four is applicable here. If the earthenware vessel had received impurity from a father of uncleanness then her hands would have second degree uncleanness. But if the vessel had been defiled by something with first degree uncleanness, her hands would be pure.