**Yadayim, Chapter Four, Mishnah One**

**Introduction**

Yesterday's mishnah ended with the statement that the sages voted on whether to include Kohelet and Shir Hashirim in the canon. This is taken as referring to a vote that occurred in the academy in Yavneh on a momentous day in history. Today's mishnah continues with other momentous issues they voted on on that famous day.

**Mishnah One**

1. On that day the votes were counted and they decided that a footbath holding from two logs to nine kavs which was cracked could contract midras uncleanness.
2. Because Rabbi Akiva said a footbath [must be considered] according to its designation.

***Explanation***

**Section one**: You just have to love this transition. In yesterday's mishnah we hear of a vote over whether a book should be part of the Bible. It's hard to think of a more fateful issue than this—if the vote had turned the other way, these two books might have been lost, or at least cut out of the Jewish tradition.

The second issue was over the purity of a cracked footbath and whether it can still receive midras uncleanness. Since it can no longer hold liquids, it doesn't count as a vessel for bathing. But since people could still sit in it, it is still susceptible to "midras" uncleanness, the kind of impurity that is given to items that are meant to be sat or laid upon.

**Section two**: Rabbi Akiva holds that anything that is called "a footbath," even if it can hold more than nine kavs, is still susceptible to midras impurity.