

THE STORY OF THE 9th OF ADAR TOLD THROUGH DISAGREEMENTS

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Introduction

The [9Adar Project: Jewish Week of Constructive Conflict](http://WWW.9ADAR.ORG) seeks to cultivate the culture of constructive conflict and healthy disagreement across personal, political, and religious divides. The project does this through promoting public awareness around the annual Jewish Week of Constructive Conflict which occurs from the 2nd through the 9th of the Hebrew month of Adar.

This document is an attempt to tell the story of the 9th of Adar directly through the sources. On virtually every aspect of the story, the sources themselves are full of disagreement, and this document addresses the sources through these various disagreements.

An understanding of disagreements for the sake of Heaven (*mahloket l'shem shamayim*/מחלוקת לשם שמים) is recommended. See the G-dCast video and sources for "[Disagreements for the Sake of Heaven](#)".



This document is not comprehensive nor is it meant to be a lesson plan or stand-alone lesson. It does, however, contain some guiding questions that can be used in an adult education setting. For more information, see www.9Adar.org.

The 9Adar Project is a project of the Pardes Center for Judaism and Conflict Resolution, part of the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies.

Disagreement #1:

What exactly happened on the 9th of Adar?

Perhaps the most authoritative source that mentions the 9th of Adar is Rabbi Yosef Karo's Shulchan Aruch. Read this source carefully. What is clear and unclear about this day?

<u>Shulchan Aruch, Laws of Fasts (580)</u> (Rabbi Yosef Karo, 1488–1575, Spain/Land of Israel) These are the days that tragedies befell our forefathers, and it is worthy to fast on them.... On the 9th (of Adar) Beit Shammai and Hillel disagreed.	<u>שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הל' תענית</u> <u>תקפ</u> אלו הימים שאירעו בהם צרות לאבותינו וראוי להתענות בהם... בט' בו (אדר) נחלקו בית שמאי ובית הלל.
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The commentaries on the Shulchan Aruch disagreed over what was the nature of the disagreement between Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel that day that would merit a fast day.

Explanation #1

Rabbi Mordechai Yaffe (1530 – 1612, Poland) in his commentary on the Shulchan Aruch, the Levush, writes the following:

<u>Levush, Orach Chayim, 580</u> (R. Mordechai Yaffe, 1530-1612, Poland) On the ninth [of Adar], Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel disagreed with one another, and since a <i>machloket</i> [disagreement] fell between the scholars of Israel, even though their disagreement was for the sake of heaven, nevertheless the Torah had become, G-d forbid, as if it was two Torahs, this one forbids and this one permits, this one declares a matter impure, and the other declares it pure, and no law is known completely. Behold this is like a tragic day and we fast on it.	<u>לבוש או"ח ס' תקפ</u> (ר' מרדכי יפה, 1530–1612, פולין) בט' בו (אדר) נחלקו בית שמאי ובית הלל זה על זה, והואיל ונפלה מחלוקת בין חכמי ישראל אע"פ שמחלוקתם לשם שמים היא, מ"מ נעשית התורה ח"ו (חס וחלילה) כשתי תורות (בבלי סנהדרין פח ע"ב) שזה אוסר וזה מתיר וזה מטמא וזה מטהר ואין יודעין שום דין על בוריו, הרי הוא כיום צרה ומתעניין בו.
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The following is the early rabbinic source which Rabbi Yaffe seems to be connecting to the events of the 9th of Adar. What is the nature of 'disagreement' (*machloket*) according to these sources?

<u>Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 88b</u> <u>(also Tosefta Sotah, 14:9)</u> Rabbi Yossi said: Originally there were not many disagreements in Israel, but one <i>Beit Din</i> of seventy – one members sat one at the entrance of the Temple Mount.... A question was then put before them. If they had a tradition thereon, they	<u>בבלי סנהדרין פח ע"ב</u> <u>(וכן בתוספתא סוטה יד:ט)</u> אמר רבי יוסי מתחילה לא היו מרבין מחלוקת בישראל, אלא בית דין של שבעים ואחד יושבין בלשכת הגזית נשאלה שאלה בפניהם, אם שמעו אמרו להם,
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stated it; if not, they took a vote. If the majority voted “unclean” they declared it so; if “clean” they ruled it so. But when the students of Shammai and Hillel, who insufficiently studied, the number of disagreements multiplied in Israel, and the Torah became as two Torahs.

ואם לאו עומדין למנין. רבו המטאמים טמאו, רבו המטהרין טהרו. משרבו תלמידי שמאי והלל שלא שמשו כל צרכן רבו מחלוקת בישראל, ונעשית תורה כשתי תורות.

Explanation #2

As mentioned, not all commentaries agreed with the Levush’s explanation as to the nature of the disagreement that took place on the 9th of Adar.

Eliyah Rabba, Orach Chayim 580:7

(Rabbi Eliyahu Shapiro (1660-1712, Prague)

On the (9th) of Adar they disagreed: And three thousand of the students died... And so I found it (written) in Megilat Ta’anit.¹

אליה רבה סימן תקפ"ז (ר' אליהו

שפירא, 1660 – 1712, פראג, פירוש על

הש"ע)

בט' בו נחלקו וכו'. ונהרגו ג' אלפים מהתלמידים... כך הוא במגילת תאנית, מצאתי כתוב.

Aruch HaShulchna, Orach Chayim, 580

On the 9th of it (Adar) Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel disagreed and the matter was difficult for Israel and they decreed a fast day on this.²

ערוך השולחן אורח חיים סימן תקפ

בז' באדר מת משה רבינו עליו השלום ובשנת העיבור הוא באדר ראשון [שם] בתשעה בו נחלקו ב"ש וב"ה והיה הדבר קשה לישראל וגזרו תענית על זה:

¹ Rabbi Shapiro’s source for “and three thousand of the students died” seems to be from his version of Megilat Ta’anit Batra. While these words do not appear in printed versions of this later, Gaonic, section of Megilat Ta’anit, they do appear in several of its manuscripts. See Neubauer, *Mediaeval Jewish Chronologies* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1895), 24 (Ms Bodleian Library: Mich. 260 [Catalogue, No. 902, beg.]). See also Shlomit Elitzur, *Lamah Tzamnū? Megilat Ta’anit Batra ve reshimat tzomot hakrovot lah*, Jerusalem, 2007, p. 200, n. 19 who cites several other manuscripts of Megilat Ta’anit Batra which add that “three thousand of their students” died that day.

² Rabbi Eliezer ben Yoel HaLevi (1140–1225, Germany) writes: “On the ninth [of Adar] they decreed a fast day because Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel disagreed, and that day was as difficult as the day the [golden] calf was made.”

Disagreement #2:

What exactly happened in the attic of Hezkiyah b. Gorion?

Study the following Mishnah (2nd century CE, Land of Israel). What is clear and unclear about this source?

<u>Mishnah Shabbat 1:4</u> And these are some of the regulations enacted in the attic of Hananiah b. Hezkiyah b. Gorion, when the rabbis came to visit him. They did a roll call and found that the disciples of Shammai were more numerous than those of Hillel, and they enforced eighteen regulations on that day.	<u>משנה שבת א:ד</u> ואלו מן ההלכות שאמרו בעליית חנניה בן חזקיה בן גוריון כשעלו לבקרו נמנו ורבו בית שמאי על בית הלל וי"ח (שמונה עשרה) דברים גזרו בו ביום.
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How did Beit Shammai succeed in enforcing the law in accordance with their opinion on that day, according to the Babylonian Talmud?

<u>Babylonian Talmud, 17a</u> They (Beit Shammai) thrust a sword into the study house and declared: "Whoever wants to enter may enter, but no one may leave!" And on that day Hillel sat in submission before Shammai, like one of the disciples, and it was as wretched for Israel as the day on which the [golden] calf was made.	<u>ב' שבת, יז ע"א</u> ואותו היום נעצו חרב בבית המדרש ואמרו: "הנכנס נכנס והיוצא אל יצא." ואותו היום היה הלל כפוף ויושב לפני שמאי כאחד מן התלמידים והיה הדבר קשה להם לישראל כיום שנעשה בו העגל.
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How did they do so according to the Jerusalem Talmud?

<u>Jerusalem Talmud, Shabbat 1:4 (3c)</u> That day was as wretched for Israel as the day on which the [golden] calf was made. It was taught in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua Oniya: The students of Beit Shammai stood below them and began to slaughter the students of Beit Hillel. It was taught: Six of them ascended and the others stood over them with swords and lances. Rav Avoon, Rav Judah in the name of Shmual: We read 'The eighteen (decrees) even a greater (Bet Din) cannot abrogate, because they were ready to give their lives for them.	<u>ירושלמי שבת א:ד (ג ע"ג)</u> אותו היום היה קשה לישראל כיום שנעשה בו העגל... תנא (שנה) רבי יהושע אונייא: תלמידי בית שמאי עמדו להן מלמטה והיו הורגין בתלמידי בית הלל. תני: ששה מהן עלו והשאר עמדו עליהן בחרבות וברמחים... רב אבון רב יהודה בשם שמואל: לא שנו (שבית דין יכול לבטל גזירה של בית דין אחר) אלא חוץ לי"ח, הא בתוך י"ח אפילו גדול אינו מבטל מפני שעמדה להן בנפשותיהן.
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How to understand the Jerusalem Talmud: What exactly did Beit Shammai do to Beit Hillel? The commentaries on the Jerusalem Talmud disagreed.

<u>Korban Edah, Jerusalem Talmud 1:4</u> Rabbi David ben Naftali Hirsch Frankel (1707–1762, Berlin) “And they began to slaughter the students of Beit Hillel” – Only if they (Beit Hillel) wanted to go up [to vote], however G-d forbid, they did not [actually] kill anyone, so it seems to me.	<u>קרבת עדה, ר' דוד פרנקל,</u> <u>1707 – 1762, ברלין</u> <u>פירוש על ירושלמי שבת</u> <u>א"ד (ג ע"ג)</u> והיו הורגין בתלמידי הלל" – אילו היו רוצין לעלות אבל חס ושלום לא הרגו אותן, נראה לי.
<u>Pney Moshe, Jerusalem Talmud 1:4</u> Rabbi Moshe Margalit (1710-1780, Lithuania) ‘That day’- ... because Beit Shammai killed students of Beit Hillel, as we will see further on.	<u>פני משה (ר' משה מרגלית, 1714 –</u> <u>1781, ליטא) פירוש על ירושלמי שבת</u> <u>פ' א</u> "אותו היום" וכו'. ... שהיו בית שמאי הורגין בתלמידי בית הלל כדלקמן.

Disagreement #3:

What were the 18 decrees they disagreed over?

There are many disagreements over what exactly were the 18 things Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai disagreed over. According to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (2nd century, Land of Israel)?³

Jerusalem Talmud, Shabbat, 1:4 (3C)⁴

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai taught: On that day they decreed - (1.) on their (non- Jews) bread, (2.) on their cheese, (3.) on their wine, (4.) on their vinegar, (5.) on their sauces, (6.) on their (cooking) salts, (7.) on their pickled food, (8.) on their boiled (foods), (9.) on their salts, (10.) on their spelt, (11.) on their ground foods, (12.) on their fish, (13.) on their language, (14.) on their testimony, (15.) on their gifts, (16.) on their sons, (17.) on their daughters, (18.) on their first (born).

ירושלמי שבת א"ד (ג ע"ג)

תני ר' שמעון בן יוחי בו ביום גזרו:
(1) על פיתן (2) ועל גבינתן (3)
ועל יינן (4) ועל חומצן (5) [ועל
צירן] (6) ועל מורייסן (7) על
כבושיהן (8) ועל שלוקיהן (9) ועל
מלוחיהון (10) ועל החילקה (11)
ועל השחיקה (12) ועל הטיסני
(13) [ועל לשונן] (14) ועל עדותן
(15) ועל מתנותיהן (16) על בניהן
(17) ועל בנותיהן (18) ועל
בכוריהן.

³ For alternative lists of the 18 matters see, Babylonian Talmud 13b-17b, and Kehati Commentary on Mishnah Shabbat 1:4. According to these alternative lists, the vast majority of the 18 relate to matters of purity, and only the last few relate to distancing Jews from non-Jews.

⁴ There are several disagreements amongst the commentaries regarding how to translate what each of these decrees refer to exactly.

Disagreement #4:

What may the 9th of Adar be likened to?

In the generation after the destruction of the Temple (70CE), there was a disagreement between **Rabbi Eliezer** (associated with Beit Shammai) and **Rabbi Joshua** (associated with Beit Hillel) regarding how to liken the day of the 18 decrees (the 9th of Adar). What are they arguing over?⁵

<u>Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 153b</u> (based on Soncino Translation)	<u>בבלי שבת קנג ע"ב</u>
It was taught, Rabbi Eliezer said: On that day ⁶ they overfilled the measure; ⁷ Rabbi Joshua said: On that day they made the measure deficient. ⁸ It was taught, As an illustration, what does Rabbi Eliezer's view resemble? A basket full of cucumbers and gourds: a man puts mustard [grain] therein and it holds it. ⁹ As an illustration, what does Rabbi Joshua's view resemble? A tub full of honey: if one puts pomegranates and nuts therein, it [the tub] overflows. ¹⁰	תניא רבי אליעזר אומר: בו ביום גדשו סאה. רבי יהושע אומר: בו ביום מחקו סאה. תניא משל דרבי אליעזר למה הדבר דומה? לקופה מלאה קישואין ודילועין- אדם נותן לתוכה חרדל והיא מחזקת. משל דרבי יהושע למה הדבר דומה? לעריבה מלאה דבש נותן לתוכה רימונים ואגוזים והיא מקיאה.

⁵ For recipes of how to cook the foods mentioning in this source, See David Berman, "[Cook/Eat \(se'udah\) for 9 Adar, the Jewish day of Constructive Conflict](#)", Time of Israel, February 16, 2014.

⁶ When they entered the upper chambers of Hezekiah b. Garon for the eighteen enactments, v. *supra* 13b.

⁷ They did well in enacting so many preventive laws, thereby safeguarding Israel from transgression.

⁸ Or, they just leveled the measure. I.e., they imposed so many prohibitions as to defeat their own object, for by a reaction Israel would be more likely to sin now than hitherto.

⁹ Though full it is still capable of receiving more.

¹⁰ Lit., 'it spews forth' — some of the honey itself.

Disagreement #5:

The Karaites and the Rabbis

How and why did Karaites and Rabbis in medieval times disagree over the possibility of a violent conflict between Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai?

<u>Solomon ben Yerucham</u> (10th cen. Karaite) And the Pitomi (R. Sa'adya Gaon, 892- 942, Babylonia) denied (this, claiming) that there was no war or killing of one another between Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel. And I brought the Talmud of the people of the Land of Israel, and opened up the laws where this incident is mentioned there.¹¹	<u>סלמון בן ירוחם</u> וכבר הכחיש הפיתומי (רב סעדיה גאון, 882, מצרים – 942, בבל) שלא היה בין בית שמי ובין בית הלל מלחמה או שהרגו קצתם לקצת. והבאתי תלמוד סדר מועד אשר לאנשי ארץ ישראל ופתחתיה ההלכות שזה (המעשה) נזכר בהן.
<u>Sahal, Tochachat Meguleh</u> (10th Cen. Karaite) And how is it acceptable to go on the path of the masses on all matters, and the Torah states “Do not go after the masses to do evil.” And also after the end of the time period of prophecy the hand of the leaders was firm and conflicts increased between Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai, and they killed each other until the nation was killed in accordance to their desires, and as it was good in their eyes.	<u>סהל, תוכחת מגולה</u> ואיך יכשר ללכת בדרך הרבים על כל אודות והתורה אומרת "לא תהיה אחרי רבים לרעות." וגם אחרי חתימת חזון ונביא קשתה יד המנהיגים וגברה המחלוקת בין בית שמאי ובין בית הלל, והרגו אלו לאלו עד אשר נהרגו העם כחפצם כאשר היה טוב בעיניהם.

How did the Rambam, portray the events of that day?

<u>Rambam, Commentary on Mishnah Shabbat 1:3</u> (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, 1135, Spain -1204, Egypt) And a great gathering of occurred there, of the students of Shammai and Hillel, and there was not left any one of that generation who was worthy of teaching that was not there. And they counted, and there was more of Beit Shammai....And Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel aligned their opinions on that day regarding the eighteen laws, and no disagreement fell between them not even on one of them..	<u>רמב"ם פירוש המשנה, שבת א:ג</u> נזדמן שם קיבוץ גדול מתלמידי שמאי והלל, ולא נשאר באותו הדור מי שראוי להוראה שלא נמצא שם; ונמנו, והיו בית שמאי יותר, ונאמר אחרי רבים להטות כמו שביארנו כלל זה בהקדמת חבורנו זה. ובית שמאי כולם הסכימו על אלו השמונה עשר גזירות באותו היום והוחלט כן, וגזרו שמונה עשר דבר. <u>והושוו בית שמאי ובית הלל באותו יום בשמונה עשר הלכות ולא נפלה ביניהם מחלוקת אפילו באחת מהן.</u> ונחלקו בשמונה עשר הלכות ולא נמנו בהן כדי שידעו לאן נוטה הרוב, שמא בית הלל רוב, לפי שאפשר שתלמיד מתלמידי בית שמאי יסבור כבית הלל או מתלמידי בית הלל יסבור כבית שמאי."
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¹¹ See B. Ratner, Ahavat Zion ve Yerushalim, J.T. Shabbat, Vilna, 1901, p. 24-25.

Disagreement #6:

When did the events of 9th of Adar take place?

Jewish historians disagreed over when exactly these events took place, and how can they be reconciled with the peaceful relationship of “Disagreements for the sake of Heaven” between Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai.

H. Graetz, History of the Jews Volume ii, chapter 9 (First published 1872 -1875, English edition, 1893), page 270

[Graetz dated the events to roughly the year 66CE, on the eve of the Great Revolt]. To cut off every link between them (Jews and non-Jews), the followers of the School of Shammai proposed erecting a barrier which should effectively prevent any communication, by prohibiting the Judeans in future from buying wine, oil, bread, or any other articles of food from their heathen neighbors. These regulations were known under the name of “The Eighteen Things.” Religious fervor and political zealotry, in those stormy times, always accompanied each other. The Hillelites, more moderate in their religious and political views, could not agree to such sharply defined exclusiveness, but when the Synod was called together to decide upon the laws before mentioned, the Zealots proved all-powerful. Eleazar ben Ananias, probably the leader of the Zealots, who was himself a teacher of the Law, invited the disciples of both schools to meet in his house. Armed soldiers were placed at the door and were directed to allow everyone to enter but no one to go out, and during the fiery discussions that were carried out there, many of the school of Hillel are said to have been killed. On account of these decrees of the school of Shammai were brought forward and agreed to, the 9th of Adar, was regarded as a day of misfortune.¹²

Zecharias Frankel Darcheh HaMishnah, 1859, pp. 55-56.

And behold, until the days of Hillel and Shammai disagreements of the law did not spread, and even Hillel and Shammai did not disagree except for on three or four matters.... And after the death of Shammai, disagreements increased and the flame of conflict was ignited, and anger and rage increased in the hearts of Beit Shammai. And this normally occurs when there is the inception of new opinions. And Beit Shammai went even further than Shammia himself who stood firmly against Hillel and they attempted to reject Beit Hillel (and even Hillel himself) from practicing (Jewish law) in accordance to their rulings. They also rose up upon them with swords and spears to

זכריה פרנקל, דרכי המשנה, עמ' 54-55

והנה עד ימי הלל ושמאי לא נתפשטה מחלוקת בהלכה, וגם הלל ושמאי לא נחלקו כי אם בג' או בד' דברים.... ואחרי מות שמאי נתרבו המחלוקות ונתלהבה אש המריבה והעלתה אף וחרון בלב תלמידי ב"ש. וזה לרוב דרך תולדות דעות חדשות, בימי התהוותן יעלו קנאה וחימה בלב מולידיהן נגד בעלי דעה אחרת. וב"ש הפריזו על מדת רבם אשר עמד בתוקף נגד הלל וביקשו לדחות ב"ה (וגם את הלל עצמו)

¹² Most historians today disagree with Frankel that originally Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai had a destructive disagreement and only later did it become more constructive, and agree with Gretz that until the Great Revolt against Rome (66 – 70 CE) when the events of the 9th of Adar took place, their relationship was very good. This disagreement reflected deep ideological and political divides between those who believed in making peace with Rome, Beit Hillel, and those who believed in revolting against Rome, Beit Shammai. For a complete summary of academic sources see Yisrael Ben-Shalom, Beit Shammai (Hebrew), Yad Ben Zvi, 1993, p. 253, n. 7.

eliminate the opposing opinion and to establish the law as seemed right in their eyes.... But over the course of time Beit Shammai returned from their rigid way, and returned to their hearts that not through force a person should be victorious when dealing with Torah for its own sake, rather through thoughtful negotiation. And permission is granted to anyone to research, teach and express his opinion. Then the peace between Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel was re-strengthened, and they treated themselves in brotherliness and friendship.

מלעשות על פי הלכתם, וגם קמו
בחרבות וברמחים להשבית דעת
החולקים ולהקים ההלכה הישרה
בעיניהם... וברבות השנים שבו ב"ש
מדעתם הקשה... והשיבו על לבם כי
לא בכח יגבר איש העוסק בתורה
לשמה כי אם במשא ומתן של בינה,
והרשות נתונה לכל חוקר לדרשות
ולחוות דעתו. אז נתחזק השלום בינם
ובין ב"ה, והיו נוהגין זה בזה אחוה
ורעות.

Isaac Hirsch Weiss, *Dor Dor VeDorshav I* 1871, pp. 175 – 176

The timing of these events (of valance between the two houses) was in the generation before the destruction (of the Temple), at a time that they no longer related to one another in peace and brotherhood, as it had been in the beginning. For in the beginning of the formation of the houses (of Hillel and Shammai), they treated each other in peace and friendship, and after some time their opinions became divided also in regards to their attitudes towards to government (of Rome). Beit Shammai were opposed to the government and their hand was with the zealots, and Beit Hillel held themselves from rebelling and succumbed to the Romans. And the disagreement over this brought forth enmity between them, and this enmity spread and also their disagreements over the law. And therefore we can understand the reason that brought about the rabbis of the two houses to rise up in anger upon against each other at that assembly (in the attic of Ben Gorion). And we know also close to when the assembly (the conflict over the 18 decrees) took place, for it was not long after Agrippa I (12 BCE – 44CE) passed away when the zealots became banned together in force against Rome. And even if we say that this assembly didn't take place in the time of Chaniniah ben Chizkiah rather in the days of his son, Elazar who was one of the leaders of the zealots (according to Graetz), in any event, it is clear that from the time that Beit Shammai joined with the zealots and their hand was with them, from that time the peace between them (Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai) was broken and it turned to enmity and strife all day.

יצחק הירש וייס, *דור דור ודורשיו*, עמ' 175 - 176

זמן המעשה הזה היה בדור האחרון
שלפני החורבן, בעת אשר לא נהגו
עוד בשלום ובאחוה זה עם זה
כבראשונה. שבתחלת ייסוד הבתים
נהגו אלה באלה בשלום וברעות,
ולאחר זמן נבדלו בדעותיהם גם
בבחינת מצבם לעמת הממשלה
שב"ש היו מנגדי הממשלה וידם עם
הקנאים, וב"ה השתמרו ממרידה
והכנעו לפני הרומיים וחילוק הדעות
בזה הוליד איבה ביניהם וזאת
האיבה התפשטה גם על
מחלקותיהם בדינים, וע"כ נבין
הסבה אשר התקוממו חכמי הבתים
בועד ההוא אלה נגד אלה בחרי אף.
ונדעה גם כן בקירוב את זמן הועד,
כי היה בעת לא כביר אחרי מות
אגריפס הראשון באשר התעצמו
הקנאים להתחבר ביתרון עז נגד
הרומיים. וגם אם נאמר שלא היה
זה הועד בימי חנניה בן חזקיה אלא
בימי בנו אלעזר שהוא היה אחד
מראשי הקנאים (גרעץ ח"ג הערה
26) בכל זאת מוחלט הוא שמן הזמן
אשר ב"ש היה נמשך אחרי הקנאים
ויהי ידם תכון עמם גם מאז הפרע
השלום ביניהם ויהפך לאיבה ומריבה
כל היום.

Disagreement #7:

What day is the “fast of Hillel and Shammai”?

Most traditional rabbinic sources say the fast of the Hillel and Shammai took place on the 9th of Adar, such as the following source accredited with being the earliest to mention this.

<u>Hilchot Gedolot, Laws of TishaB’Av</u> (Rabbi Shimon Kayyara, 9th Cen. Babylonia) These are the days that one fasts on from the Torah.... On the 9th of the month (Adar), they decreed a fast day because Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai had conflict with each other.	<u>הלכות גדולות, הל' תשעה באב (ר')</u> שמעון קיירא, מאה 9, בבל) אילו ימים שמתענין בהם מן התורה....בתשעה בו (אדר) גזרו תענית על שנחלקו בית שמאי ובית הילל זה עם זה.
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However other early rabbinic sources found in the Cairo Geniza, ‘disagree’, and mention other dates:¹³

<u>R. Pinchas HaCohen, Hymn for Sanctifying the Months, Adar</u> (mid. 8th century) Purim we do on it/ the fast of Hillel and Shammai on the third of it (Adar).	<u>רבי פנחס הכהן, פיוט קידוש ירחים (שורה 17), אדר (מאה 8)</u> פורים עושים ומגילה קורים בו/ צום הלל ושמאי בשלושה בו.
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<u>Fragment from Land of Israel Prayer Book</u> (pre-9th Century) On the fourth of Adar a dispute erupted between the students of Shammai and Hillel and many were killed.	<u>שרידי הלכה בסידור א"י (מאה 9)</u> בארבעה באדר נפלה מחלוקת בין תלמידי שמי והלל ואבד מהם הרבה.
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<u>Megilat Ta'anit mss Cambridge 8</u> And so on the 7th of the first Adar, our rabbis decreed a fast on the machloket of Hillel and Shammai. And three thousand of their students died, and fast.	<u>מגילתא תענית בתרא כ"י ק 8</u> וכן ז' באדר הראשון גזרו רבותינו תענית על מחלוקת הלל ושמאי ונהרגו שלשת אלפים מתלמידיהם וצומו.
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¹³ See Shlomit Elitzur, *Lamah Tzammu? Megilat Ta'anit Batra ve reshimat tzomot hakrovot lah*, Jerusalem, 2007, p. 201.

Prayer at the End of the Studying about the 9th of Adar

R. Yosef Karo notes the fast of the 9th of Adar was most likely never commemorated. Nevertheless, he deemed it important enough to mention, perhaps with the hope that one day we would learn something valuable from it.

<u>Rabbi Yosef Karo,</u> <u>Beit Yosef, Orach Chayim 580</u> All of these days (including the 9th of Adar) written in this section... I have never seen or heard of anyone whose custom it is to fast on them.	<u>בית יוסף אורח חיים סימן תקפ</u> כל הימים האלו הכתובים בסימן זה לא ראיתי מעולם ולא שמעתי מי שנהג להתענות בהם.
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All rabbinic sources that mention these fast days including the 9th of Adar conclude the section with the following as a hope for the future.

How is the 9th of Adar (as well as other fast days) described as being in the future?

<u>Hilchot Gedolot, Laws of TishaB'Av</u> (Rabbi Shimon Kayyara, 9th Cen. Babylonia) In the future, The Holy One Blessed Be He, will turn these days into days of rejoicing and happiness as it is said (Jeremiah 31:12) "for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow."	<u>הלכות גדולות, הלכות תשעה</u> <u>באב (ר' שמעון קיירא, מאה 9,</u> <u>בבל)</u>¹⁴ לעתיד לבוא עתיד הקב"ה להופכן לששון ולשמחה שנא' (ירמיה לא:יב) 'והפכתי אבלם לששון'.
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What can we do to help turn this day into a day of be done in order to turn this day into a day of rejoicing and happiness?

Join the 9Adar Project: Jewish Week of Constructive Conflict! See www.9Adar.org

¹⁴ הלכות גדולות, כרך א', מהדורת הילדיסהיימר, 1972, עמ' 398.