



## The Back of a Kli Cheres

The first section of *Keilim* discusses the susceptibility to *tumah* of earthenware – *klei cheres*. We learn (2:1), that unlike other *keilim*, *klei cheres* can become *tameh* if the source of *tumah* is placed inside its containing space, even if the *tumah* is not in direct contact with the *kli*. If however the *tumah* touches the outside of the *kli* then it does not become *tameh*.

As we continue, we learn that *klei cheres* are only susceptible to *tumah* if they can act as a container – they have a *toch* (inside). More specifically, even if they do, they can only become *tameh* if it was designed to contain (2:3). That *Mishnah* ends however with the following statement: “This is the general rule, all *klei cheres* that do not have a *toch*, have no outside.” What does this mean?

The *Bartenura* explains that the rule relates a rabbinic decree. Liquid that came into contact with a source of *tumah* is defined as a *rishon le'tumah*. Ordinarily, a *rishon le'tumah* cannot transmit *tumah* to people or utensils; they can only make food *tameh*. The *Chachamim* however were considered about other liquids (from a *zav*) that were themselves sources of *tumah* and the potential error that might occur as a result of confusing the two. Consequently they decreed that any *tameh* liquid could make *keilim tameh*. Part of the decree however was that if the *tameh* liquids touch the outside of the *kli*, then only the outside would be *tameh* and not the entire *kli*. Our *Mishnah* teaches that for *klei cheres*, this rule that the outside can become *tameh* from liquids would only apply to those that have a containing inside. This is also the explanation of the *Rambam*.

The *Raavad* however cannot accept this explanation. The very reason for the decree was out of concern for liquids that were an *av ha'tumah*. However, as we

stated above, even if an *av ha'tumah* touched the outside of a *kli cheres* it does not become *tameh*. Why then should the decree apply to *klei cheres* at all?

The *Tosfot R' Akiva Eiger* suggests that the *Bartenura* is referring to a *kli cheres* that has a hollow at its base. In other words, if the *kli* was turned over, its base could act as a container. The *Bartenura* explained earlier (2:1) that if *tumah* was in that space of a *kli cheres*, it would be *tameh*. The *Mishnah* is then teaching that the only if there is a *toch* would the outside hollow be susceptible to *tumah*. He cites the *Rash* (27) who presents this ruling. The difficulty he raises however, is that it would be unnecessary for the *Bartenura* to have incorporate *tumat mashkin* into the discussion as the rule applies to all types of *tumah*. The *Mishnah Achrona* finds the ruling itself difficult since even though in a case where the main surface does not have a *toch*, since the base does, the *kli* should be considered as if it has a *toch* and be susceptible to *tumah*.

The *Rash* explains our *Mishnah* based on the *Gemara* in *Bechorot* that explains that a utensil that does not have a *toch* for *klei cheres* does not have an back (*achorayim*) for *klei shetef* – meaning that there is no distinction between an inside and outside for *keilim* made from other materials. The *Mishnah Achrona* finds this explanation difficult since the topic of the *Mishnah* is *klei cheres* and not *klei shetef*.

The *Mishnah Achrona* finally suggests a simple explanation. What the *Mishnah* means is that if the *kli cheres* does not have an inside, then it has nothing. It does not have an inside or outside – it is not a *kli*. The *Mishnah* teaches that it completely *tahor* even from any rabbinic forms of *tumah*.

## Revision Questions

ד: א' סילכ – ח: יב

- Which is more a more severe level source of *tumah* – a *zav* or *zava* – and why? ד: א' (
- Which person is a source of *tumah* more severe than both of them? ד: א' (
- What are the most and second most severe source of *tumah* and why? ד: א' (
- What are the ten levels of *tumah* that can apply to a person and how do they differ? ה: א' (
- (Regarding the ten levels of *kedusha*:) In what way is *Eretz Yisrael* more *kadosh* than other lands? ו: א' (
- How are walled cities more *kadosh* than the rest of *Eretz Yisrael*? ז: א' (
- How is inside *Yerushalaim* more *kadosh* than other walled cities? ח: א' (
- How is *Har Ha'bait* even more *kadosh*? ט: א' (
- Explain how the following areas increase in *kedusha*?
  - The *cheil*.
  - The *Ezrat Nashim*.
  - The *Ezrat Yisrael*.
  - The *Ezrat Kohanim*. י: א' (
  - Between the *Ulam* and *Mizbeach*.
  - The *Heichal*.
  - The *Kodesh HaKodashim*. יא: א' (
- According to *R' Yosi* in what five ways is the area between the *Ulam* and *Mizbeach* the same as the *Heichal*? יב: א' (
- What four utensils are: "י'סיאמט והילבקמו סירוהט והיטושפ" יב: א' (
- What is the law if one of these utensils that were *tameh* broke and was then reformed? יג: א' (
- How do *klei cheres* (earthenware vessels) become *tameh*? יד: א' (
- How do *klei cheres* transfer *tumah*? יד: א' (
- How can one remove the *tumah* from *klei cheres*? יד: א' (
- How small can *klei cheres* (or parts of *klei cheres*) still be defined as utensils? (Provide all three opinions.) יז: א' (
- What is the rule regarding *klei cheres* that cannot become *tameh*? List some of the examples brought in the *Mishnah*. יז: א' (
- When are lanterns susceptible to *tumah*? יח: א' (
- What are the explanations why a peddler's funnel is susceptible *tameh*? יח: א' (
- When are covers of wine jars susceptible to *tumah*? יח: א' (
- What are the two reasons why stew pot covers are (generally) susceptible to *tumah*? יח: א' (
- What is a *gistra* and when is it susceptible to *tumah*? יח: א' (
- What is the law if one of the compartments in a spice container becomes *tameh*? יח: א' (
- Explain the debate regarding a *masrek shel tzirtzur*. יח: א' (

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## Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שדוק תבש
23 <sup>rd</sup> November א' ולסכ	24 <sup>th</sup> November ב' ולסכ	25 <sup>th</sup> November ג' ולסכ	26 <sup>th</sup> November ד' ולסכ	27 <sup>th</sup> November ה' ולסכ	28 <sup>th</sup> November ו' ולסכ	29 <sup>th</sup> November ז' ולסכ
Keilim 3:1-2	Keilim 3:3-4	Keilim 3:5-6	Keilim 3:7-8	Keilim 4:1-2	Keilim 4:3-4	Keilim 5:1-2

