



Resurrecting Tumah

With the beginning of the eleventh *perek*, we transitioned from learning about *klei cheres* (earthenware utensils) and began the study of *klei matchot* (metalware). Much like *klei cheres*, when metalware that has become *tameh* breaks, it becomes *tahor*. A unique law applying to *klei matchot* is that if the broken *klei* is repaired or reconstructed then it is once again *tameh*, as if the previous *tumah* returns.

This law is rabbinic and the *Mishnah* records a debate between the *Chachamim* and *R' Shimon ben Gamliel* regarding its scope. While the *Chachamim* understand that it applies to all forms of *tumah*, *R' Shimon ben Gamliel* maintains that the *tumah* only returns if it was originally *tameh met* (due to *tumah* originating from a corpse).

The *Bartenura* explains that the *Chachamim*'s reason for the decree was to avoid a potential error that may arise. With other forms of *tumah*, once the *kli* is immersed in a *mikveh*, one needs to wait till nightfall for it to be used for *trumah* and *kodshim*. Once a *kli* however is broken, it is completely *tahor* and on a biblical level remains that way even if repaired. The *Chachamim* were concerned that one might see that latter case and wrongly deduce that once a *kli* is immersed in a *mikveh* it is also completely *tahor* right away. The *Chachamim* therefore effectively did away with the latter method of purification making the *tumah* return if the *kli* is repaired, thereby avoiding the potential for confusion.

Rashi however has a slightly different explanation. The concern is that one might see another that had a *tameh kli* and later that day see him using it for *trumah*. He will suspect that he immersed in a *mikveh* but did not wait until evening as required, not knowing that the *kli* was broken and repaired. Unlike the *Bartenura* who explains that the concern is flawed understandings of the laws of immersing *keilim*, *Rashi* explains that the issue is *chashad* – suspicion.

The *Mishnah Achrona* explains that the practical difference between these two explanations is if the broken *kli* is used to form a new and different *kli*. According to *Rashi* that *kli* should be *tahor*; the means employed to purify the *kli* is clear and there are no longer any ground for suspicion. According to the *Bartenura* however, the potential for confusing the laws of immersion and broken *keilim* still exists.

Returning to the *Mishnah*, how do we understand the position of *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* who differentiates between the types of *tumah*? The *Bartenura* explains that *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* had only one pressing concern. Something that becomes *tameh met* cannot be purified by simply immersing it in a *mikveh*; instead it involves a seven day purification processes. Since this lengthy process could be short cut be simply breaking the *kli*, there is a concern that when faced with that situation everyone will simply take the short cut and the seven day process will be quickly be lost and forgotten. The decree preventing the short cut was therefore necessary to preserve the *Torah* law.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* understands that the *Chachamim* also accept the *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel*'s concern and uses that fact to answer another question. According to the concern of the *Chachamim* as explained by either *Rashi* or the *Bartenura*, why should the item become *tameh* again? Surely it would be adequate for the repaired *kli* to be considered a *tevul yom* thereby requiring nightfall for it to be used for *trumah* or *kodshim*. The *Tifferet Yisrael* answers that such a *gezeira* would be inadequate since it would not cover the case where the *kli* was *tameh met*. In order to address *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel*'s concern a period of seven days would be required. That being the case, a single simple decree without distinctions (*lo plug*) was enacted that the *tumah* itself effectively returns.

Revision Questions

ה' יי סילכ-א: ב"ג

- In what case is an internal *tzamid patil* debated and explain the debate. ג' ה' (י' יי)
- When can branches be used to plug a barrel (*tzamid patil*)? ג' נ' (י' יי)
- How can planks of wood be used to (protectively) cover a *tanur*? ג' נ' (י' יי)
- What is the exception to requirements provided in the previous question? ג' נ' (י' יי)
- Explain the case of the old oven inside the new oven? ג' יי (ז' ז')
- Why and how does the law change when the new oven is inside the old oven? ג' יי (ז' ז')
- Explain the case of the three *lefasim*. ג' ח' (ז' ז')
- Are flat metal vessels susceptible to *tumah*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- What is the law regarding *tameh* metal utensils that were broken then fixed again? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- Explain the debate regarding the previous question. ג' א' (ז' ז')
- List the seven metal utensils that are not susceptible to *tumah* and explain. ג' ב' (ז' ז')
- What is the law regarding utensils made from boards of metal and what is the concern? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- What substance is the subject of debate when used to form utensils? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- What is the law regarding a utensil formed from metal from a mixture of *tameh* and *tahor* utensils? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- What are two laws regarding a *kluster*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- What are the two parts of the reins that are discussed? List the three opinions regarding their susceptibility to *tumah*. ג' א' (ז' ז')
- What is a *pika* and explain the debate regarding its susceptibility to *tumah*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- When is a flute containing metal not susceptible to *tumah*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- When is an animal horn susceptible to *tumah*? (Provide both cases.) ג' א' (ז' ז')
- Which battle armour is susceptible to *tumah*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- Are weapons susceptible to *tumah*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- Is jewellery susceptible to *tumah*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- Describe the *nezem* that if broken two parts are still susceptible to *tumah*? ג' א' (ז' ז')
- Which rings are susceptible to *tumah*? ג' ב' (ז' ז')
- Provide two cases when a chain is susceptible to *tumah*? ג' ב' (ז' ז')

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www.shemayisrael.com/mishnah/

Rav Meir Pogrow
613.org/mishnah.html

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שדוק תבש
28 th December י' תבט	29 th December ז' תבט	30 th December ח' תבט	31 st December תבט ט'	1 st January י'תבט	2 nd January תבט א"י	3 rd January תבט ב'י
Keilim 12:2-3	Keilim 12:4-5	Keilim 12:6-7	Keilim 12:8-13:1	Keilim 13:2-3	Keilim 13:4-5	Keilim 13:6-7

