



Lechi Close to the Wall

Masechet Eiruvim opens by discussing the methods of “fixing” a *mavoi*. A *mavoi* is an alleyway onto which shared courtyards open and through which one accesses the public domain. One is not allowed to carry in a dead-end *mavoi* unless a *shituf mavoi* is performed. This involves the residents of each *chatzer* joining together by contributing food to be placed in one of the *chatzerot*. Prior to the *shituf* working we have learnt that either a *lechi* (sidepost) or *korah* (crossbeam) must be placed at the entrance of the *mavoi*.¹ In this article we will focus on the *lechi*.

The *Mishnah* (1:6) taught that the *lechi* must be at least ten *tephachim* tall, whereas there is no minimum dimension regarding its width or thickness. *R' Yossi* however argues that it must be at least three *tephachim* wide. The *Bartenura* explains that since the *lechi* is functioning as a *mechitzah* (legal partition, closing off the open end of the *mavoi*) its width must be substantial.

In the *Gemara* (14b) *Rava* adds that if the *lechi* is raised from the ground by three *tephachim* or is three *tephachim* from the wall, then the *lechi* would be invalid. *R' Yehonatan* (3a Rif, s.v. *R' Eliezer*) explains that if the *lechi* was three *tephachim* from the wall, then since there is more airspace on either side of the *lechi* it would be considered annulled.² *R' Yehonatan* (4a Rif, s.v. *R' Yossi*) also explains that it is for this reason that *R' Yossi* requires that the *lechi* be three *tephachim* wide in our *Mishnah*. That is so that if the *lechi* was three *tephachim* from the wall it would still be valid.

The *Magen Avraham* (363:5) explains that based on this reasoning, if one did have a *lechi* that was three *tephachim* wide then it could be at three *tephachim* from the wall. The *Magen Avraham* however cites the *Tosfot* that disagree. In other words, the issue is simply that the *lechi* must be close to the wall.

The *Shaar HaTzion* explains that the issue is that if it is at a great distance, it becomes a “*mechitzah* that a kid can penetrate” and under those circumstances such a *mechitzah* is invalid.³

The *Chazon Ish* (OC, *Eiruvim* 69:11) however explains that we only say that the airspace on either side of a narrow partition annulled it when we need the space to be sealed, i.e. we need more standing wall than spaces. In the case of a *lechi* however other than the *lechi* itself, the side is open. The requirement for a *lechi* is that it is recognisable to those standing inside of the *mavoi*. Consequently, the *Chazon Ish* explains that once it is far from the wall it does not satisfy this requirement.

The *Machatzit HaShekel* however provides a different approach not related to the laws of partitions per se. He explains that even though the *lechi* functions as a *machitza*, it must still function as a *heiker* (reminder) that one is reaching the end of the permissible area to carry. The issue here is that if the *lechi* is too far from the wall it will not serve that purpose.

Yisrael Bankier

¹ See “Introduction to *Mavoi*”, volume 8, issue 11, for a discussion on the status of the *mavoi* before and after the *lechi* or *korah* has been placed at the entrance.

² Note that at a distance of less than three *tephachim* the gap between the *lechi* and the wall would be considered filled based on the principle of *lavud* (see volume 1, issue 16).

³ See the *Shut R' Akiva Eiger* (18) where he rejects this approach.

⁴ The source for this article were gleaned from *Yalkut Biurim*, *Eiruvim* 11b, *Metivta*.

Revision Questions

שבת כ"ד: ד'-ה'

- Explain the debate regarding cutting up an animal carcass for dog food on *Shabbat*? (כ"ד: ד')
- When is one allowed to ask a *chacham* to annul a vow on *Shabbat*? (כ"ד: ה')
- What were the three activities permitted for the sake of a *mitzvah* mentioned at the end of the *masechet*? (כ"ד: ה')

עירובין א' - א' - ב' - ב'

- According to the *Chachamim* what are the dimensions (height and width) of a *mavoi* that is fixed with a *korah*? (א': א')
- When can the entrance to a *mavoi* be wider than the above described dimension, yet still allow a person to carry inside it? (א': א')
- List the three opinions regarding the required *tikkun* for a *mavoi* so that one may carry inside it? (ב': א')
- How wide must a *korah* be? (ג': א')
- Explain the debate regarding how strong a *korah* should be? (ד': א')
- Can one use a pipe for a *korah*? Explain. (ה': א')
- What are the minimal dimensions of a *lechi*? (ו': א')
- Explain the debate regarding whether one can use an animal as a *lechi*? (ז': א')
- What other two debates are listed in the same *Mishnah* regarding the status of animals? (ח': א')
- What are the two criteria listed in the *Mishnah* regarding an ad-hoc fence constructed by travellers enabling the fenced area to be considered a private domain? (ט': א')
- What is the maximum size of a breach in a fence the does not render the entire partition invalid? (י': א')
- How can one construct a valid partition using rope strung in a horizontal manner? (יא': א')
- How can one construct a valid partition using reeds placed in a vertical manner? (יב': א')
- What restriction does *R' Yehuda* place on the solution to the previous question? (יג': א')
- Which *Tana* does not agree with the reed or rope solutions? (יד': א')
- Which four things were permitted to an army camp? (טו': א')
- Describe the type of partition that was specifically permitted to be used by water-holes – include both opinions. (טז': א')
- What are the dimensions (height, width and thickness) of the planks of wood used for this partition? (יז': א')
- How close can this partition be placed to the water-hole? (יח': א')

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Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
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Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
7 May י"א אייר	8 May י"ב אייר	9 May י"ג אייר	10 May י"ד אייר	11 May ט"ו אייר	12 May ט"ז אייר	13 May י"ז אייר
Eruvin 2:3-4	Eruvin 2:5-6	Eruvin 3:1-2	Eruvin 3:3-4	Eruvin 3:5-6	Eruvin 3:7-8	Eruvin 3:9-4:1

