



Volume 6. Issue 15

Keilim - Inside and Out

The twenty-fifth *perek* begins as follows:

All utensils have outsides and inside, for example pillows, mattresses, sacks and leather bags.

With this we are introduced to the concept of *achoraim va'toch* (literally outsides and inside), which refers to the distinction between when a *tameh* liquid comes into contact with the inside or outside of a *kli*.

To explain, ordinarily liquids that came into contact with *tumah* cannot transfer this impurity to utensils. There are however some liquids which themselves are sources (*avot*) of *tumah* and can impart impurity to utensils, for example fluid that came for a *zav*. Often the difference between liquids is not readily discernable. Consequently the *Chachamim* found it necessary to enact a decree (*gezeirah*) deeming that any *tameh* liquids can transfer impurity to utensils.

In some cases however, it is important that one knows that the *tumah* is of rabbinic origin. Consequently part of the decree is the difference between where the *tameh* liquid made contact. If the *tumah* came into contact with the inside of the utensil, then the entire *kli* is *tameh* (albeit rabbinically). If however the *tameh* liquid came into contact with the outside of the *kli* then only the outside is *tameh*. This is not the case with those few liquids that are sources of *tumah* and hence the legal reminder that this *tumah* is rabbinic.

The first words of the *Mishnah* however require thought. Can the *Mishnah* really mean that "all" utensils have this unique decree of *achoraim va'toch*? The basis for this question is that if a source of *tumah*, even the liquid that came from a *zav*, came into contact with the outside of an earthenware utensil (*kli cheres*) it does not become *tameh*. Earthenware utensils are only susceptible to *tumah* if the source is placed inside it. Therefore it does not make sense that this decree, that if a *tameh* liquid came into contact with the outside that it alone would be *tameh*, should apply to *klei cheres* as well.

This indeed is the position of *Rashi* (*Bechorot* 38a s.v. "ve'lo") amongst others. Accordingly our *Mishnah* should not be understood literally. The *Mishnah Achrona* explains that the *Mishnah's* language supports this view. The *Mishnah* adds "for example pillows..." If it really referred

to all utensils it should have stated "even" as opposed to "for example". The term "for example" therefore appears to limit the scope of the initial statement.

The *Rambam* however rules that the decree also applies to *klei cheres* and that they become *tameh* if a *tameh* liquid touches its outside (*Hilchot Avot Ha'Tumah* 7:3). The *Raavad* questions the *Rambam* based on our initial question. If the liquid of a *zav* or *zava* cannot transfer *tumah* to a *kli cheres* if it touches its outside, why would the *gezeirah* of *tameh* liquids apply to such utensils?

The *Kesef Mishnah* answers that since liquids are more readily susceptible to becoming *tameh* (they do not require *hechsher* like other items) the *Chachamim* treated them stringently. Being able to make utensils *tameh* no matter how they contracted *tumah* (even if they themselves are a *sheni le'tumah* that cannot transfer *tumah* to regular food) is just one example. The other is that they can transfer *tumah* to the backs of *klei cheres*.

The *Yeshuat David* provides another explanation. How do we understand how a *kli cheres* is only *tameh* if the *tumah* is inside (even only in the space of) the *kli*? One understanding is that the utensil itself is only susceptible to *tumah* in its inside. In other words it is an issue with the utensil. *R' Chaim* (*Hilchot Metamei Mishkav U'Moshav* 8:4) however explains that the *Rambam* has a different understanding. The issue is not with the utensil, but with the object of *tumah*. It is a *gezeirat ha'katuv* (a decree by the *Torah*) that objects of *tumah* are only defined as sources of *tumah* for a *kli cheres* once they are placed inside the utensil.

Based on this explanation, the *Yeshuat David* explains that the issue for a *kli cheres* is not with the *kli* but with the object of *tumah*. Consequently once the *Chachamim* instituted the *gezeirah*, all *tameh* liquids have a status of sources of *tumah* even for *klei cheres*. Now that it has a status of a source of *tumah*, since there was never a problem with a *kli cheres'* ability to attract *tumah* at its outside, they too would be effected by this *gezeirah* and their outsides would also become *tameh* if in contact with *tameh* liquids.

Yisrael Yitzchak Bankier

Revision Questions

כלים כ"ד: ז' – כ"ה: ג'

- What are the three *pinksayot* and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: ז')
- What are the three beds and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: ח')
- What are the three *mashpelot* and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: ט')
- What are the three reed-mats and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: י')
- What are the three *chamatot* and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: י"א)
- What are the three hides and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: י"ב)
- What are the three sheets and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: י"ג)
- What are the three *mitpachot* and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: י"ד)
- What are the three leather gloves and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: ט"ו)
- What are the three *sevachot* and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: ט"ז)
- What are the three *kupot* and how do they differ from one another? (כ"ד: י"ז)
- Explain the debate regarding which utensils have an *achoraim va'toch*. (כ"ה: א')
- Which two utensils are explicitly debated? (כ"ה: א')
- In what context does the debate regarding the measures of four and seven arise? Explain. (כ"ה: ב')
- Explain the debate regarding oil and wine measures. (כ"ה: ג')
- What other utensils are included in this debate? (כ"ה: ג')

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday
Between mincha & ma'ariv
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat
10 minutes before mincha
Mizrachi Shul

Next Week's Mishnayot...

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | שבת קודש |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 31 st May ח' סיון | 1 st June ט' סיון | 2 nd June י' סיון | 3 rd June י"א סיון | 4 th June י"ב סיון | 5 th June י"ג סיון | 6 th June י"ד סיון |
| Keilim 25:4-5 | Keilim 25:6-7 | Keilim 25:8-9 | Keilim 26:1-2 | Keilim 26:3-4 | Keilim 26:5-6 | Keilim 26:7-8 |

