



A Kalal Resting on a Sheretz

The Stringency in Mei Chatat

A dead *sheretz* is a source (*av*) of *tumah* and can cause both people and utensils to become *tameh*. Recall that an earthenware utensil is unique in that it cannot attract *tumah* if the source of *tumah* makes contact with its outer side. With these two points in mind, it is not surprising when the *Mishnah* teaches that if an earthenware *kalal* (flagon) containing *mei chatat* comes into contact with a *sheretz*, the contents would remain *tahor* (10:3). However when the *Chachamim* rule that if the *kalal* is placed on top of the *sheretz* the contents are *tameh*, it is a cause for pause. A priori, one would feel more comfortable with the position of *R' Eliezer* that in this case as well the contents are *tahor*.

The *Mefarshim* explain that the argument is based on the following *pasuk*: “And the *tahor* man shall gather the ash of the cow and place it outside the camp in a pure place...” (*Bamidbar* 19:9).¹ Both *R' Eliezer* and the *Chachamim* agree that there appears to be a requirement that the *kalal* be placed in a *tahor* location. However *R' Eliezer* maintains in our case that since the contents would remain *tahor*, this satisfies the requirement. The *Chachamim* however argue that since the spot on which the *kalal* stands is *tameh*, it does not satisfy the requirement of being in a “*tahor* place”.

An interesting corollary of this explanation is presented by the *Rash* who cites the *Sifri*. If the *kalal* was placed on the *shet* it is not considered a *tahor* place. If however the *shet* was placed on top of the

kalal then the contents would remain *tahor*. The reason is that the spot on which the *kalal* is resting is *tahor*, thereby meeting the above stated requirements.

While *pesukim* have been brought in the above explanation, the *Rosh* explains that the rule is a rabbinic one. The *pesukim* are therefore not the source of the law but utilised as an association to the rabbinic decree. We therefore find another instance where *mei chatat* is treated stricter than anything else. Why?

The *Mishnah Achrona* asks this question in more detail. The *Mishnah* (10:1) had ruled that *tahor* items that were not kept *tahor* for the purpose of *mei chatat* would cause the person that is to engage in its preparation to be *tameh*. This is the case even if that item was kept *tahor* for the purpose of *kodesh* (*korbanot*, etc). Why should *mei chatat* be treated in a stricter manner than *kodesh*? Since the *Torah* refers to it as a “*chatar*” (sin offering) it can be granted as equal, but not harsher. True, there are *halachot* that apply to *mei chatat* that do not apply to *kodesh* (e.g. the *psul* of *melacha*). Nonetheless these cease after the *mei chatat* is prepared.

The *Mishnah Achrona* explains that the function of *mei chatat* is to purify people and items that are *tameh*. Consequently the purity of everything, including *trumah* and *kodesh*, depends on it. Consequently the severity and safeguards that are placed around *mei chatat* should really be no surprise.

Yisrael Yitzchak Bankier

¹ The *Kesef Mishnah* (Para 14:1) cites the *Sifri* as the source for this which the *Rambam* also provides.

Revision Questions

פרק ט' ז' – י"א: ז'

- What restrictions are applied on transporting *mei chatat* across water (and why)? (ט: ז')
- Do these restrictions also apply to water to be used for *mei chatat*? (ז': ט')
- What is the law regarding *eifer* for *mei chatat* that got mixed with regular ashes with respect to *tumah*? (ז': ט')
- Explain the debate regarding whether the mixture can be used for *kiddush mei chatat*. (ז': ט')
- What is the law regarding a case where invalid *mei chatat* came into contact with one's skin? With one's hand? (ח': ט')
- How does the law change in the previous question if the *mei chatat* was *tameh*? (ח': ט')
- What is the law regarding a case where *eifer chatat* was placed on regular water and then came into contact with one's skin? One's hand? (ט': ט')
- What is *tumat madaf*? (ט': י')
- Which items that are susceptible to *tumat midras* are considered *madaf* for *chatat*? (ט': י')
- Which people are considered *madaf* for *chatat*? (ט': י')
- Explain the debate regarding which items that are susceptible to *tumat met* are considered *madaf* for *chatat*? (ט': י')
- What is the law regarding a *tahor* (for *chatat*) that touched a *madaf*? (ט': ב')
- What is the law regarding a *tahor* person that touched food with his hands? With his feet? (ט': ב')
- Explain the debate regarding a *tahor* that was *meisit* food? (ט': ב')
- What is the law regarding a *kalal* that touches a dead *sherez*? (ט': ג')
- Explain the debate where the *kalal* was placed on top of the *sherez*? (ט': ג')
- What other case is debated in a similar manner? (ט': ג')
- Explain the debate regarding a case where one who was carrying *lagin* was standing on a *tanur*. (ט': ג')
- What other case is debated in a similar manner to the previous question? (ט': ג')
- What is the law regarding a case where *lagin* of *mei chatat* came into contact with *lagin* of *kodesh*? (ט': ג')
- What is the law regarding a case where a *tahor* was the two *lagin*, one in each hand? (Provide all four cases.) (ט': ג')
- What is the law one on touched both *lagin* that were resting on the floor? (ט': ג')
- What is the law regarding a case where one leaves a *zluchit* of *mei chatat* uncovered and finds it covered? What if it was the other way round? (ט': ג'ג')
- Does the law of *tzamid patil* apply to *mei chatat*? Does it apply to water collected for *mei chatat*? (ט': ג'ג')
- In what two ways are doubtful cases by *tumah* for *trumah* similar for *chatat*? (ט': ג'ג')
- What is the law regarding *refafot*? (ט': ג'ג')
- What is the law regarding one who eats *trumah* onto which *mei chatat* fell? (Provide both cases.) (ט': ג'ג')
- Who could one that is *tahor* for *mei chatat* cause the *mei chatat* to become *tameh*? (ט': ג'ג')
- What is the difference for one that is required to immerse in the *mikveh*, before and after immersing and what remains prohibited? (ט': ג'ג')

Local Shiurim

Sunday - Thursday

After maariv

Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before mincha

Beit Ha'Roeh

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קדש
6 th December י"ט כסלו	7 th December כ' כסלו	8 th December כ"א כסלו	9 th December כ"ב כסלו	10 th December כ"ג כסלו	11 th December כ"ד כסלו	12 th December כ"ה כסלו
Parah 11:5-6	Parah 11:7-8	Parah 11:9-12:1	Parah 12:2-3	Parah 12:4-5	Parah 12:6-7	Parah 12:8-9

