



Volume 6. Issue 6

Metalware – Resurrecting Tumah

This week we began the eleventh *perak* – the start of the second third of *masechet keilim*. With this milestone we made the transition from learning about earthenware utensils to metal utensils. In the first *Mishnah* we are introduced to some of the differences between these two types of utensils.

One of these differences is as follows. If a utensil became *tameh* and is broken it becomes *tahor*. Uniquely, with metal utensils, if the utensil is then mended, it recovers its original *tumah* (see *Mishnah Achronah*). This novelty is a result of a rabbinic decree (*Shabbat* 16b) and whether it applies to all source of *tumah* (*Chachamim*) or *tumat ha'met* alone (*R' Shimon ben Gamliel*) is a subject of debate. What was the reason for this decree?

The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 16b) cites two different reasons¹. *Abaye* explains that when “breaking” the utensil, one may do so by drilling a hole in its base. However we are concerned that one may not drill it large enough to be considered legally broken. *Rava*, on the other hand explains that when purifying a utensil, immersion in a *mikva* is not sufficient; one must also wait till evening. If a utensil is broken and mended this delay is not necessary. Consequently one might witness the latter process and confuse the two, thinking that the delay is also unnecessary by immersion.

What is the difference between these two opinions? The *Gemara* explains that *Abaye* and *Rava* would disagree in the case where the metal utensil was completely flattened before being reformed. The *Gemara* however does not explain how each of the opinions would rule.

The *Ran* cites two different explanations of this distinction. Some say that when the utensil is completely flattened, since it was not punctured, there is no longer a concern that it will be adequately punctured. The concern that one might become confused and think that delaying until night fall is

not required under normal circumstances is still however present. There are others however who explain in the reverse. If we allow flattening the *kli* one might think, what difference does it make how a *kli* is broken? Consequently the concern that one might not, at a later date, put a large enough hole in the utensil is still present. Yet, since a completely new *kli* has been fashioned and its old form is no longer recognisable, the concern that one might witness the event and think the delaying is not required after immersion is no longer present.

We find from the *Ran* that with these understandings of *Abaye* and *Rava*, the practical difference between these two opinions is not clear. The case provided by the *Gemara* can be understood as being problematic for both opinions.

The *Mishnah Achronah* provides a different explanation for the opinion of *Rava* that makes it easier to see how completely flattening the utensil differentiates between the opinions of *Abaye* and *Rava*. He explains *Rashi's* understanding of *Rava* as follows. The concern is not that a person will become confused between the laws of breaking a utensil and immersion. He is well aware of these laws. The concern is that the witness will see the same utensil he knew was *tameh* in the morning being used prior to nightfall and suspect that the person acted against *halacha*. This type of concern is referred as *chashad* and the motivation for a number of *gezeirot*.

With this understanding of the opinion of *Rava* the difference between the two opinions is clear. If the utensil is completely broken and reformed, *Rava's* concern of *chashad* is no longer, as it is clear that a new *kli* has been formed and was not immersed in the *mikvah*. However allowing one to do so, does not alleviate the concern of *Abaye* thinking any form of breaking is sufficient and may not puncture the *kli* with a large enough hole in the future.²

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¹ This article only deals with the opinion of the *Chachamim*. From a simple understanding of the *Gemara* the reason for the decree according to *R' Shimon ben Gamliel* is as follows. The process for purification as a result of *tumat ha'met* is lengthy (seven days). Recognising that the process would be shortened by breaking and subsequently mending the utensil, there is a real concern that no one would ever engage in the proper purification process and it will be forgotten. *Tosfot R' Akiva Eiger* however explains the flow of the *Gemara* differently and that the reasons given for the opinion of the *Chachamim* also apply to the *R' Shimon ben*

Gamliel. They argue whether the concerns of *Abaye* or *Rava* that follow apply to all forms of *tumah* or only to *tumat ha'met* which has the more involved purification process.

² More questions can be asked. Why does this *gezeira* apply only to metal utensils? All the above concerns seem to apply to other non-earthenware utensils. Also *Rava's* concern can be address instead by requiring the one that breaks and mends metal utensil wait until nightfall. Why was it necessary to resurrect *tumah* instead? These questions are addressed by the *mefarshim*. See, for example, *Tosfot Yom Tov* and *Tifferet Yisrael*.

Revision Questions

כלים טי' ה' – י"א: ב'

- What is the law regarding earthenware that had absorbed *tameh* liquids and fell into a *tanur*? (ט: ה')
- What other case brought is similar to the one in the previous question? What is the exception to the rule? (ט: ה')
- What is the law regarding *gefet* that was trodden on by someone *tameh* and then expelled liquid? (ט: ה')
- What is the law regarding a metal ring completely contained in a brick that: (ט: ה')
 - Was in an *ohel ha'met*?
 - Moved by a *zav*?
 - That was *tameh* and fell in a *tanur*?
- What are the maximum breaches regarding a *sridah* attached to a *tanur* such that it is still considered a *tzamid patil*? (Provide both measures.) (ט: ז')
- Regarding the previous question, what is the law regarding the breaches in the *ein ha'tanur*? (Provide all opinions.) (ט: ח')
- List some of the utensils to which the law of *tzamid patil* applies. (י: א')
- Which orientation of a *kli* is subject to debate and explain the debate. (י: א')
- Which of the *keilim* in the list is unique? (י: א')
- List some of the substances that can be used as a seal. (י: ב')
- List some of the substances that cannot be used and the reason provided in the *Mishnah*. (י: ב')
- Which substances should not ideally be used? (י: ב')
- Is a seal that is *mechulchelet* effective? (י: ג')
- Is a *beit etzbah* considered like the inside of the utensil? (י: ג')
- In what case can a ball be used as a protective covering? (י: ד')
- In what case is an internal *tzamid patil* debated and explain the debate. (י: ה')
- When can branches be used to plug a barrel (*tzamid patil*)? (י: ו')
- How can planks of wood be used to (protectively) cover a *tanur*? (י: ו')
- What is the exception to requirements provided in the previous question? (י: ז')
- Explain the case of the old oven inside the new oven? (י: ז')
- Why and how does the law change when the new oven is inside the old oven? (י: ז')
- Explain the case of the three *lefasim*. (י: ח')
- Are flat metal vessels susceptible to *tumah*? (י"א: א')
- What is the law regarding *tameh* metal utensils that were broken then fixed again? (י"א: א')
- Explain the debate regarding the previous question. (י"א: א')
- List the seven metal utensils that are not susceptible to *tumah* and explain. (י"א: ב')

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
29 nd March ד' ניסן	30 rd March ה' ניסן	31 th March ו' ניסן	1 st April ז' ניסן	2 th April ח' ניסן	3 th April ט' ניסן	4 th April י' ניסן
Keilim 11:3-4	Keilim 11:5-6	Keilim 11:7-8	Keilim 11:9-12:1	Keilim 12:2-3	Keilim 12:4-5	Keilim 12:6-7

