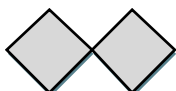




Volume 12. Issue 27

The Limits of Transferring Tumah Between Planks

The *Mishnah* (15:2) discusses the case where two square planks of wood, raised off the ground a *tephach*, are in contact only by their corners as follows:



The *Mishnah* rules that if *tumat ha'met* is underneath one of the planks then the *tumah* spreads underneath that plank, but the area underneath the second one remains *tahor*. This first point should not be surprising. Since the two planks are only in contact at their corners, the requirement of a *tephach* overlap for *tumah* to spread between two *ohalot* is not satisfied.

The *Mishnah* however continues that if someone touched the second plank they would be *tameh sheva* - they would be *tameh* like one who touched a corpse. Why?

The *Bartenura* notes that we learnt in the beginning of *masechet Keilim* that a *kli* that was in contact with a *met* and a second *kli* comes into contact with the first, both *keilim* are *tameh sheva*. Someone who touches the second *kli* however is only a *rishon le'tumah* – immersing in a *mikveh* and waiting till nightfall is enough. In this case one would think that one who touches the second plank is equivalent to one who touches the second *kli* and should only be a *rishon*. The *Bartenura* however explains that since the first plank is acting as an *ohel* it is not included in the calculations (as learnt previously). Consequently touching the second *kli* is equivalent to touch a *kli* that is contact with a corpse.

The *Tosfot Yom Tov* addresses a separate issue. We learn in *Bame Madlikin* (*Shabbat* 2:3) that wood does not become *tameh* when acting as an *ohel*. Consequently, both planks should be *tahor*. He explains that the *Mishnah* in *Shabbat*

only refers to when the *tumat ha'met* has been removed. In our case, the *met* is still under the first plank.¹

For the person to be defined as *tameh sheva*, the second plank needs to be defined as an *avi avot ha'tumah* – equivalent to the *met* itself. According to the *Rambam* and *Bartenura* this is not an issue. They maintain that any *kli* that comes into contact with the corpse becomes *tameh* on the same level. Since we have explained that since the first plank is acting as an *ohel*, it is as if the second plank is in direct contact, we can understand how the second plank becomes an *avi avot ha'tumah*.

Other *Rishonim* however understand that this unique law of “*cherev ke'chala*” only applies to metalware. Consequently a wooden plank that was in contact with a *met* should be an *av ha'tumah* and one who touches it would be a *rishon le'tumah*. We therefore must understand that the person is *tameh sheva* based on *tumah be'chiburin*. In other words, since it is as if the second plank is in contact with the *met* and the person touches the plank while the *met* is still there, it is as if he touched the *met*.

The *Eliya Raba* presents a different approach. We will learn in the next *perek* that *metaltelin* (movable objects) can bring *tumah* onto themselves despite being the narrowest width. He therefore differentiates between the *shiur* (measure) required for a *kli* to draw the *tumah* onto itself as opposed to those items beneath it. In other words, since the second plank is in contact with the first, it is as if it is covering the *met* itself but only for the purposes of making itself *tameh*. Consequently, the person who touches the second plank becomes *tameh sheva* in the same way as if he touched the first. However, those items beneath the second plank remain *tahor*. This is because a *tephach*'s width is required for the *tumah* to transfer beneath it.²

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¹ The *Mishnah Achrona* understands that this distinction according to the *Tosfot Yom Tov* applies to anything wooden. He argues that if a wooden *kli* in an *ohel ha'met* retains its *tumah* after the *met* is removed, one would certainly expect the plank to retain its *tumah* as well. He therefore understands differently, citing the *Tosfot*. The *pasuk* (and *Mishnah*) that teaches that a wooden *ohel* is only *tameh* when it is covering a *met* refers to a wooden

ohel that is not susceptible to *tumah* (e.g. it is attached to the ground).

² See the *Tifferet Yisrael* that analyses this position in more detail.

Revision Questions

ג: ד"י תולהא – י: ט' ר"י

- Explain the debate regarding the difference between a *kaneh* and a *ziz*. (ג: ד"י)
- What is the law regarding the utensils under a *ziz*, only overlapping the doorway a width of three *etzba'ot* wide and that completely surrounds a house in which *tumah* is found? (ג: ד"י)
- Explain the debate regarding the previous question where the *tumah* is instead found under the *ziz*. (ג: ד"י)
- What is the law regarding two *zizim*, each a *tephach* wide, one on top of the other where *tumah* is found underneath them? Between them? Above them? (ג: ד"י)
- How does the ruling referred to in the previous question change if the upper *ziz* is wider?
- How does the ruling change if the gap between them is less than a *tephach*? (ג: ד"י)
- How does the ruling change if they are both less than a *tephach* wide? (ג: ד"י)
- Can a solid stack of wooden boards transfer *tumah* (as an *ohel*)? (א: ר"י)
- What other case brought has a similar ruling to the previous question? (א: ר"י)
- If boards, a *tephach* from the ground, are set up in the following configuration:



- What is the law if *tumah* is found beneath the first board and:
 - A person touches the second?
 - *Keilim* are found beneath the second? (ב: ר"י)
- What are the minimum dimensions of a *shulchan* for it to act as an *ohel* to spread *tumah*? (ב: ר"י)
- What is the law regarding rows of earthenware barrels where *tumah* is found under one? (ג: ר"י)
- How does the ruling in the previous question change if they were already *tameh*? What other case shares the same ruling? (ג: ר"י)
- What is the law if *tumah* is found behind a false wall in a house? (ד: ר"י)
- What is the law regarding *keilim* behind a false wall if *tumah* is found in the house? (ד: ר"י)
- When would the *keilim* behind a false wall be *tahor* even though *tumah* is also found there? (ד: ר"י)
- Regarding the previous three questions what is the law if the questions related to the space below the floorboards rather than behind a false wall? (ה: ר"י)
- Concerning a house that is filled with straw what is the law regarding the *keilim* inside the straw if *tumah* was found inside the straw? Inside the entrance of the house? (ז: ר"י)
- How does the law in the previous question change if the house was not filled to the ceiling (leaving a *tephach* space)? (ז: ר"י)
- How is the law different if the house was filled with dirt instead? (ז: ר"י)
- Explain the debate regarding one who stands in a *chatzer ha'kever*? (ח: ר"י)
- If a beam is used as a *golel* for a *kever*, when is it partially *tameh*, only four *tephachim* thick *tameh* and completely *tameh*? (ח: ר"י)
- If an earthenware, sealed barrel full of liquid is used as a *golel*, what is the law regarding one who touches it? What is the law regarding liquid? (ט: ר"י)
- Explain the debate regarding an animal that was used as a *golel*. (ט: ר"י)

Local Shiurim

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday
10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat
10 minutes before *Mincha*
Beit Ha'Roeh
Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel *Shiur in English*

Sunday -Thursday
Rabbi Mordechai Scharf
9:00am
Kollel Magen Avraham
Reemon Neighbourhood

ONLINE SHIURIM

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rav Meir Pogrow
613.org/mishnah.html

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
Rabbi C. Brown
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendars/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
In US dial: 718 906 6400
Then select: 1 – 2 – 4

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שדוק תבש
17 th May ח"כ רי"א	18 th May ט"כ רי"א	19 th May ו"א	20 th May ז' א	21 st May ח' א	22 nd May ט' א	23 rd May י' א
Ohalot 15:10-16:1	Ohalot 16:2-3	Ohalot 16:4-5	Ohalot 17:1-2	Ohalot 17:3-4	Ohalot 17:5-18:1	Ohalot 18:2-3

