



Volume 12. Issue 8

Repurposing Nails

Ordinarily, nails are not susceptible to *tumah*. The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that since they are generally designed to be driven into walls and walls are fixed in the ground, they are not susceptible to *tumah*. The *Mishnah* (12:5) teaches that if one modifies (*hitkin*) a nail to be used for locking and unlocking, then it is not susceptible to *tumah*. The *Bartenura* explains that the person either bent or sharpened the nail for this purpose. The question that needs addressing is if no physical modifications are required, is setting it aside for that purpose enough to make the nail susceptible to *tumah*.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* notes that we learn later (25:9) that all utensils can become susceptible to *tumah* by mental designation alone – a physical change is not required. Nevertheless, citing the *Tosfot* (*Bava Metzia* 52b), he explains that if the *kli* requires a modification, then mental designation alone does not suffice. Consequently, we must understand that according to the *Bartenura*, the bending and/or sharpening is necessary to make the nail functional.

The *Mishnah Achrona* however notes that there is a debate between *R' Akiva* and the *Chachamim* regarding a nail that has been set aside for opening barrels. *R' Akiva* understands that the designation is enough to make this nail a *kli* whereas the *Chachamim* maintain it must be fired first, an action must be taken, for the nail to become susceptible to *tumah*. One would expect that they would be arguing in both cases, yet the *Mishnah* only records the debate regarding the latter.

One possible answer is that the difference between the two cases is that in the latter, the nail could already be used to open the barrel if really necessary. Consequently the debate is only regarding cases where the *kli* could just be used, albeit in a substandard manner, without modification. In the early case however, the nail unmodified cannot function as the key at all.

Yet the *Mishnah Achrona* finds this fine distinction very difficult to accept. Furthermore the language of

“*hitkinu*” in the first case is understood to mean it involved modification, while in the second case, the word is associated with the opinion of *R' Akiva* and is understood as meaning the nail is simply designated for that purpose without and physical change. The *Mishnah Achrona* therefore understands that the word *hitkinu* in both cases must mean that the nail has been set aside without any modifications. He finds support for this understanding in the *Rambam* where he codifies the law in this *Mishnah*.

We do find however the word *hitkinu* used twice in the later *Mishnah* (12:7). There it is regarding a coin that has become invalid. The *Mishnah* explains that if it reused as a necklace or weight then it susceptible to *tumah*. The *Mishnah Achrona* notes that the *Tosfot* cited previously understands that the *hitkinu* here means that the coin is punctured so it could be used as a necklace. The *Tifferet Yisrael* however notes that the second reference, with respect to using the coin as a weight, does not mean that a physical change is necessary and designation alone would suffice to make it susceptible to *tumah*. Consequently, according to the *Tifferet Yisrael* the change in meaning of *hitkinu* is acceptable and should not present a difficulty in understanding our *Mishnah*.

The *Mishnah Achrona* however draws a difference between that *Mishnah* and ours. He explains citing another *Tosfot* (*Shabbat* 49) that designation alone is only enough if we are dealing with a *kli* that is not susceptible to *tumah*. For example, an animal's ring that is going to now be used for human. If however object is not a *kli* at all, then a physical change is required. He understands that these coins are such a case. Consequently a physical change would be required for the coin whether it will be used as a necklace or weight. (The *Mishnah Achrona* raises this *Tosfot* from *Shabbat* as question on the *Tosfot* in *Bava Metzia* who does not apply this logic to the case of the coins.) The term *hitkinu* is therefore consistent in that *Mishnah*. However we are still left with the question that, according to the *Mishnah Achrona* the term means different things in *Mishnah* 5 and 7.

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Revision Questions

סילכ יב: ב"י – ז': ג"י

- When is a *kane moznaim* of *ba'alei batim tameh*? (ב"י)
- What is the general rule provided regarding the susceptibility to *tumah* of *uklayot*? (List some of the cases.) (ב"י)
- Explain the debate regarding a metal covering of a *teni*. (ב"י)
- Regarding the previous question, what case is not the subject of debate? (ב"י)
- What case is similar to the one in the previous question? (ב"י)
- Is a picture frame hook susceptible to *tumah*? (ב"י)
- Is the nail in a sundial susceptible to *tumah*? (ב"י)
- What are the other five cases involving a nail and what is the law? (ב"י – י')
- What are the four cases where *Rabban Gamliel* rules *tameh* and the *Chachamim* rule *tahor*? (ב"י)
- What are the two ways an expired coin can become susceptible to *tumah*? (ב"י)
- Is there any restriction in keeping expired coins? (ב"י)
- Is a ruler susceptible to *tumah*? (ב"י)
- Which *golmei kli eitz* are not susceptible to *tumah*? (ב"י)
- What are the two opinions regarding the susceptibility to *tumah* of knives? (א"ג)
- Explain the debate regarding whether scissors that come apart are susceptible to *tumah*. (א"ג)
- What is a *koligrifon* and explain the law discussed regarding it? (ג"י)
- What other utensil is discussed in a similar manner? (ב"י)
- What are the three ways a needle can no longer be susceptible to *tumah*? (ג"י)
- Regarding the previous question: (ג"י)
 - What two cases are the exceptions?
 - How can it become *tameh* again?
- Explain the case of a utensil where the "wood serves the metal" and another utensil where "the metal serves the wood" and what is the law? (ג"י)
- What is a *kadum* and when is it susceptible to *tumah*? (ג"י)
- Regarding what did *R' Yehoshua* say: (ג"י)

"בישא המ יל ויאזו סירפוס ושדיח שודיח רבדי"

Local Shiurim

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Beit Ha'Roeh
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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

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שדוק תבש
4 th January ג"י תבט	5 th January ד"י תבט	6 th January ו"ט תבט	7 th January ז"ט תבט	8 th January ז"י תבט	9 th January ח"י תבט	10 th January ט"י תבט
Keilim 13:8-14:1	Keilim 14:2-3	Keilim 14:4-5	Keilim 14:6-7	Keilim 14:8-15:1	Keilim 15:2-3	Keilim 15:4-5

