



Small Patches and Tumat Negaim

In the eleventh *perek* we learn about *negaim* of fabrics – wool, linen, and leather. Like other forms of *negaim*, there are indications that require the garment be quarantined (*begeg musgar*) and further developments that render the garment *muchlat* and require burning (*begeg muchlat*). One of the laws taught in the last *Mishnah* of the *perek* (11:12) is that if a *begeg musgar* was cut into small pieces, then the pieces are *tahor*. This contrasts with a *begeg muchlat*, that even if cut into small pieces, since the *begeg* was already rendered *tameh*, the small pieces would continue to be so.

The *Bartenura* explains that the case of the *begeg musgar* is where it was cut into small pieces, smaller than three-by-three *etzbaot* (finger's width), but not completely separated from one another. The requirement of less than three-by-three *etzbaot* is understood since it makes it too small to be susceptible to *negaim*. The addition that the pieces are not fully separated however is puzzling. The *Mishnah Achrona* notes that if they were fully separated, then it would be more of a reason for the pieces to be *tahor*. He therefore suggests that the *Bartenura* was motivated by the *Mishnah's* language of "*tahor*", which is singular, implying we are dealing with a single *begeg*, with the pieces somewhat connected.

The *Rashash* notes that this is also the explanation of the *Rash*. He however continues that it is important for the *Rash* who understands our *Mishnah* based on the *Tosefta*. The case is where after cutting up the *begeg musgar*, the *nega* returned to one of the pieces. If it is larger than three-by-three, the *Chachamim* maintain that it alone requires burning. If the patches were smaller than three-by-three and detached, the position of the *Chachamim* appears obvious. The small patches are *tahor* since they are too small to become *tameh*. The *Rashash* stresses that the novelty of the *Tosefta* is only appreciated if they patches were still loosely connected. The *Chachamim* still maintain that if that patch is three-by-three, then it alone requires burning.

Perhaps the novelty of this *Mishnah* can be better understood considering another law. While a garment is only susceptible to *negaim* if it is white, the *Mishnah* (11:7) teaches that if a garment is made of white and coloured strips, it is still susceptible. This would still be the case even if there was only one white strip on the garment.

The *Rambam* (*Tumat Tzaraat* 12:13) rules that even if the strip was the size of a *gris* (half-bean), the minimum size of a *nega*, it could still become *tameh*. Two important points must be stressed. Firstly, the *begeg* is *tameh* even though the white region is only a *gris* and there is nowhere for it to spread. This is because if the *nega* remains after two weeks of quarantine, the *begeg* would require burning. The second point is a *gris* is less than three-by-three *etzbaot*. In other words, that strip on its own would not be susceptible to *negaim*. Nevertheless, it combines with the rest of the coloured part such that it is defined as a garment large enough to become *tameh*. The *Chasdei David* adds that if it remained after two weeks, since it is one garment, it would all require burning, and not just the white section.

The *Chazon Nachum* however asks why the also *Rambam* needed to teach the first case of multiple strips. It would have been sufficient to teach the final case of a single strip. In both instances the *Rambam* explains that if the *nega* remained for two weeks that garment is burnt.

In the previous *halacha* the *Rambam* however taught that a garment made of small patches, less than three-by-three is considered a single garment. A garment sewn together is no different to a single woven garment. One can suggest that the next *halacha* is therefore required to teach that this is also the case where the small patches are different colours. One might have thought that small patches combine for *negaim*, when the patches are a colour that, if they were large enough, could become *tameh*. The *Rambam* therefore teaches two laws. The first, that the small patches can combine, irrespective of colour. The second law is that a small patch that is the size of a *gris* can combine with other (coloured) patches enabling the *begeg* to be susceptible to *tumah*.

In light of the *Rambam*, the importance of the *Rash* is magnified. In our case, the *begeg* has been cut into pieces less than three-by-three (and possibly larger than a *gris*) and are still loosely connected. We have seen that a white patch does not need to be three-by-three, if it can combine with the rest of the material to be considered a single garment, even if that other material could never on its own be susceptible to *tumat negaim*. Consequently, the *Rash's* comment in necessary to teach that a *begeg* cut in this fashion, despite the pieces still being connected (loosely), is not considered a single *begeg* and is *tahor*.

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Revision Questions

נגעים י"א – י"ב ב'

- What clothing can be affected by *negaim*? (א: י"א)
- What is the law regarding clothing purchased from *goyim* that contain a *nega*? (א: י"א)
- At what point can clothes made from skin from sea creatures become able to be *tameh* from *negaim*? (א: י"א)
- What is the law regarding clothing made from a blend of camel hair and wool with respect to *negaim*? (ב: י"א)
- Explain the debate regarding whether naturally coloured clothing can become *tameh* from *negaim*. (ג: י"א)
- Does the law change if the clothing is leather? (ג: י"א)
- Is the law the same for houses that are coloured? (ג: י"א)
- What is the law regarding clothing that only the warp of the fabric is coloured? (ד: י"א)
- What colours of *nega* are indications of *tumah* for clothing? Do these colours combine for spreading? (ד: י"א)
- Explain the debate regarding the cases where the colour of the *nega* changed prior to spreading. (ד: י"א)
- What is the law regarding clothing with a *nega* that: (ה: י"א)
 - Does not change after a week?
 - Does not change after two weeks?
 - Become lighter after inspection but prior to *hesger*?
- When is a *matlit* required? (ה: י"א)
- What is the difference if a *nega* returns to the *begged* or to the *matlit*? (ו: י"א)
- What is the law if a patch was taken from clothing that was *musgar b'tahor* and placed on another garment, and a *nega* returned to the original garment? A *nega* returned to the patch? (ו: י"א)
- What is the law regarding a striped white garment across which a *nega* spread? (ז: י"א)
- What is the law regarding a garment that has a single white stripe completely covered with a *nega*? (ז: י"א)
- When is the measure of spread a *gris* and when is it less? (ז: י"א)
- When can warp and wool threads become *tameh* from *negaim*? (ח: י"א)
- What is the law if thread is being transferred from one spindle to the next and a *nega* is on one of them? (ט: י"א)
- What is the law regarding the woven section if a *nega* is seen on the "standing" warp threads? (י: י"א)
- What is the law regarding the threads at the edge of a sheet if a *nega* is on the sheet itself? Is it different if it is the other way around? (י: י"א)
- Can sandal straps become *tameh* through *negaim*? (י"א: י"א)
- What is the law regarding a case where a *begged musgar* is mixed with other garments? Is the law different if the *begged* was *muchlat*? (י"א: י"ב)
- What is the law regarding a house purchased from a *goi* that already had a *nega*? (י"ב: י"א)
- Can a round house become *tameh* through *negaim*? (י"ב: י"א)
- Can a houseboat become *tameh* through *negaim*? (י"ב: י"א)
- Can a house whose walls are covered with marble become *tameh* through *negaim*? (י"ב: י"ב)
- What the three materials must a house be made from in order to become *tameh* through *negaim*? (י"ב: י"ב)

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha Mizrachi Shul*
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha Mizrachi Shul*
Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

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

ONLINE SHIURIM

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Rabbi Chaim Brown
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Rabbi C. Brown
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SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
4 April כ"ב ניסן	5 April כ"ג ניסן	6 April כ"ד ניסן	7 April כ"ה ניסן	8 April כ"ו ניסן	9 April כ"ז ניסן	10 April כ"ח ניסן
Negaim 12:3-4	Negaim 12:5-6	Negaim 12:7-13:1	Negaim 13:2-3	Negaim 13:4-5	Negaim 13:6-7	Negaim 13:8-9

