



The Bed Belt

The beginning of the nineteenth *perek* discusses *tumah* as it relates to beds and their various attachments and accessories. One attachment is the *mizran*. The *mizran* is a strap that is placed tightly around the bed frame to provide support.

The fifth *Mishnah* discusses a bed that was an *av ha'tumah* – a source of *tumah* – specifically one that is *tameh midras*. One example of this would be if a *zav* sat or lay on that bed. The *Mishnah* teaches that if the *mizran* was then added to the bed, the *mizran* would also be a *tameh midras* – also an *av ha'tumah* – since it is now part of the bed. If the *mizran* was subsequently removed, its status changes. Having had been in contact with an *av ha'tumah*, the *mizran* is now treated as an object that has come into contact with something that is *tameh midras* – a *maga midras* – and is therefore a *rishon le'tumah*.

The *Mishnah Achrona* questions the necessity of this *Mishnah*. This is especially puzzling considering that in the previous *perek* (18:7) we learnt the more novel case, of a bed leg that was *tameh midras* and how it affects a bed if it was attached to the bed and then detached after. Note that a bed leg is a small part of the bed. Nevertheless, when it is attached it makes the entire bed *tameh midras*. Consequently, it should be obvious that if one connects the *mizran* to a bed that is *tameh midras*, it will also become *tameh midras*.

The *Mishnah Achrona* answers that this *Mishnah* is needed to teach that even if the *mizran* was attached when the *zav* sat on the bed, if the *mizran* was then removed it becomes a *maga midras*. This understanding is derived from the fact that the next *Mishnah* (19:6) discusses where the bed became *tameh* while the *mizran* was attached. The *tumah* discussed in that *Mishnah* is *tumah* that originated from a *sheretz*

or corpse. In those cases, when the *mizran* is removed, it continues to share the same level of *tumah* as the bed. *Tumat midras* however is not discussed in that *Mishnah*, implying that the law is different. Why?

The *Mishnah Achrona* explains that the *mizran* itself is a belt that is narrower than three *tephachim*. Consequently it is not, in and of itself, fit for sitting or lying upon. That being the case it is not fit for *tumat midras*¹. When removed from the bed, the *tumat midras* would disappear leaving the *mizran* at the level of *maga midras*, since it was in contact with the bed.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* has a different explanation of why the *mizran* is treated differently. He explains that the *mizran* had many uses. The use as a bed belt was not one of the primary uses. Consequently, once removed, it would have the same status as other *keilim* that, whilst one could sit on it, if someone were to sit on it, they would be told to stand up, since the *kli* is needed for some other use. Therefore it is not susceptible to *tumat midras*.

From a different comment of the *Tifferet Yisrael* (Boaz 24:4) we can find another difference between the case of the bed leg and *mizran*. He explains that the reason why in the case of the bed leg that was *tameh midras* and then attached to the bed, the entire bed becomes *tameh midras*, is because even though the bed leg is a “minor” part of the bed, it is necessary to complete the bed itself. A *tameh* addition that is not necessary for the completion or function of the *kli* would not make the *kli* share the same *tumah* status as the attachment. Similarly in this case, if something that was *tameh midras* was attached to the bed to function like a *mizran*, it would not make the entire bed *tameh midras*.



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¹ This article is assuming the explanation of the *Rambam*. The *Rash* however has a different understanding of a *mizran*. The *Mishnah Achrona* explanation of the juxtaposition of the two *Mishnayot* supports the *Rambam's* understanding of the *mizran*.



REVISION QUESTIONS

טהרות י"ח:ה' – י"ט:ט'

- If a *tameh* bed is dismantled by removing one side, when is it still *tameh* and when is it the subject of debate? (י"ח:ה')
- How much of the legs of the bed must be cut such that it *tahor*? (י"ח:ה')
- What is the law regarding a *tameh* bed, if the beam at its length breaks and is repaired? (י"ח:ו')
- What is the law if the other beam breaks and is repaired? (י"ח:ז')
- If is the law regarding the leg of a bed that was *tameh midras* prior to being attached to a bed? (י"ח:ח')
- What is the law if it is then removed? (י"ח:ט')
- Regarding the previous two questions, what is the law if the leg had come into contact with a corpse? What if it was originally *tumat erev*? (י"ח:י')
- When would a *tefillin shel rosh* that was *tameh met*, become *magah tameh met*? Become *tahor*? (י"ח:יא')
- What is the law regarding a *tameh* bed, of which half was stolen? (י"ח:יב')
- What is the law if the half was returned and the bed was put together again? (י"ח:יג')
- Explain the debate between *R' Eliezer* and the *Chachamim* regarding how a bed (constructed of parts) can become *tameh* and *tahor*. (י"ח:יד')
- If a *tameh* bed is dismantled, are the straps/ropes also *tameh*? (י"ט:א')
- At what point are the straps/ropes of a bed considered part of (*chibur*) the bed? (י"ט:ב')
- Regarding the previous question, how much of those ropes would then be considered a *chibur*? (י"ט:ג')
- How much of excess rope hanging off a *tameh* bed is *tameh*? (י"ט:ד')
- What are the two reasons for the ruling described in the previous question? (י"ט:ה')
- What is the *mizran* of a bed, and how much of its excess hanging from a *tameh* bed is *tameh*? Include both opinions. (י"ט:ו')
- What two cases are brought as a practical difference between these two opinions? Explain. (י"ט:ז')
- What is the law regarding a *mizran* that was wrapped around a bed that was *tameh midras*? (י"ט:ח')
- What is the law if the *mizran* is removed? (י"ט:ט')
- What are the other two cases brought that are similar to the previous two questions? (י"ט:י')
- What is the law regarding the bed and *mizran* where the *mizran* came into contact with a *sheretz* while attached, and was then removed? (י"ט:יא')
- Explain the following principle: (י"ט:יב')
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- What forms of *tumah* is a chest susceptible to if its opening is on its top? (י"ט:יג')
- If a chest is broken at which end is it no longer *tameh* (*tamei met*)? (י"ט:יד')
- In that case, what is the law regarding the drawers? (י"ט:טו')
- What other two cases are similar to the previous two questions? (י"ט:טז')
- What forms of *tumah* is a chest susceptible to if its opening is on its side? (י"ט:יז')
- What is the law if that chest breaks at the top? (י"ט:יח')
- Explain the debate if that chest breaks at the bottom. (י"ט:יט')



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19 July · ה' אב	20 July · ו' אב	21 July · ז' אב	22 July · ח' אב	23 July · ט' אב	24 July · י' אב	25 July · י"א אב
Keilim 18:5-6	Keilim 18:7-8	Keilim 18:9-19:1	Keilim 19:2-3	Keilim 19:4-5	Keilim 19:6-7	Keilim 19:8-9

Have a good Shabbos!