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Machshava

The first *Mishnah* in the new *masechet*, *Masechat Taharot*, discussed the special laws that apply to a *neveilat ohf tahor* – the carcass of a bird from a *kosher* species. One such law is that in order for parts of the carcass to be susceptible to *tumah* it requires *machshava* – intention for human consumption. What is the requirement for *machshava*?

Ordinarily food does not require *machshava* to become susceptible to *tumah* (as opposed to *hechsher*). In *Masechet Uktzin* (3:3) the *Tana* clarifies our *Mishnah* stating that the requirement for *machshava* for *neveilat ohf tahor* is only in the villages where they were not eaten. In the cities however *machshava* was not required. The *Bartenura* explains that since *neveilat ohf tahor* is prohibited it is not assumed ready to be eaten and therefore requires *machshava*. In the cities, where a majority of people consumed them, *machshava* was not required. The *Mishnah Achrona* however argues that the main issue is whether the birds were eaten and not whether they are *assur*. Note that the *Mishnah Achrona*, based on *Rashi*, understood that in the villages they did not eat birds at all, whether *neveilah* or slaughtered, due to their poverty.¹

Rav Aharon Lichtenstein shlita explains that there are two points to consider: there is food that is edible and there is food that is for eating. If a particular object, like a stone, is neither, then *machshava* will never help. If a food is both, for example an apple, then there is no requirement for *machshava*. If however the object is edible but not eaten, like in the case of *neveilat ohf tahor*, then *machshava* is required.

Rav Lichtenstein continues that this requirement is learnt from the *pasuk* from which we learn about the susceptibility to *tumah* of food: “of any food, that is edible...” (*Vayikra* 11:34). There are two ways to understand the above derivation. The first is that the *pasuk* begins by including anything that is defined as food – “of any food” – even if it is animal feed. It then continues to limit the scope to only that food that is eaten by people – “that is edible”. Importantly, the *pasuk* takes the definition of food that is shared elsewhere and then restricts it.

The second way of understanding the *pasuk* is that the second part, “that which is edible”, comes to define the first, “of any food”. In other words a functional definition of food is being applied to the word of *tumah* and *tahara*. Indeed the definition of food could also be restricted according to this understanding. Yet for some cases the *Torah* could be even be expanding on the regular definition of food.

Rav Lichtenstein explains that a practical difference between these two understanding is possibly expressed in another debate regarding food of poor quality. Just as foodstuff must be defined as food in order to be susceptible to *tumah*, food that is *tameh* can lose its *tumah* if it degrades to a state of no longer being defined as food. According to the *Rambam* there are separate definitions of food for each of the above two laws. For food to be susceptible to *tumah* it must be edible to humans (*Tumat Ochlin* 2:14). It can only lose its *tumah* however if it degrades to being inedible for animals (2:18). The *Ra'avad* however does not differentiate between when the food becomes susceptible and when it loses its *tumah*. The distinction he draws is instead regarding the original definition of that food when it became *tameh*. If it is animal food then it is not susceptible to *tumah* even if a dog is licking it. If however it is food for humans, then the point at which it becomes susceptible or loses its *tumah* is when it is fit for animal consumption.

HaRav Lichtenstein explains that *Rambam* may understand the derivation the way it was first explained. The definition of food for *tumah* and *tahara* is the same as other categories of law. However the *Torah* restricted this definition when discussing the susceptibility to *tumah* (“it is edible [to humans]”). The *Ra'avad* may however understand the derivation in the second way. In other words, the *pasuk* does not use the objective definition of food when dealing with *tumah* and *tahara*. Instead the definition used is “that which is edible” which can be expanded to food that is only fit for a dog to eat.

Yisrael Yitzchak Bankier

¹ The *Mishnah Achrona* adds that the reason why the *Mishnah* only includes *neveilot* and not slaughtered birds is that slaughtering the bird would be equivalent to *machshava*. Note that the *Mishnah Achrona* suggests another explanation that combines both reasons. In other words

the requirement of *machshava* is when the food is both *assur* and not eaten in general.

Revision Questions

פרה ייב: י" – י"א

- What are the two opinions regarding whether a cover of a *meicham* connected with a chain is considered *chibbur*? (ייב: י"א)
- Which people may not perform *hazaya*? (ייב: י"ב)
- What is the law if the *eizov* was dipped in the *mei chatat* during the night and *hazaya* was performed during the day? (ייב: י"א)
- What is the law if the *tameh* person immersed in the *mikveh* during the night and then had *hazaya* performed on him during the day? (ייב: י"א)
- When is the earliest time *hazaya* can be performed (*lechatchila* and *bedieved*)? (ייב: י"א)

טהרות א': א' – ב': ג'

- What are the thirteen laws stated by *nivlat ohf tahor*? (א': א' – ב')
- Explain the debate regarding what can “*metaher*” a *ohf tahor* that is a *treifah*. (א': א')
- Explain the debate regarding the *notza*. (א': ב')
- Explain what it means that the nails are “מטמאין ומטמאין ומצטרפים” (א': ב')
- List the ways in which *nivlat ohf tameh* differs from *nivlat ohf tahor*. (א': ג')
- For which “*tumah*” can the hide of an animal combine with its flesh to complete the *shiur*? (List some other parts that share the same law.) (א': ד')
- What is law regarding the meat of a *tameh* animal that was slaughter by a *yisrael* for a *nochri*, while the animal is convulsing? (א': ד')
- Can food that is *rishon le'tumah* combine with food that is *sheni le'tumah* to make the minimum *shiur* to transmit *tumah*? (What is that *shiur*?) (א': ה')
- What is the law regarding a *k'beitzah* of *sheni* that was mixed with a *k'beitzah* of *shilishi* food? (א': ו')
- What is the law if that mixture was then split into two? (א': ו')
- How does the law change in the previous two questions if each part was initially two *beitzim* in size? (א': ו')
- What is the law if two piece of dough stuck together and then one came into contact with a *sheretz*? (א': ז')
- What is the law if the where then separated? (א': ז')
- How does the law change in the previous two questions if they became stuck together only after one touched a *sheretz*? (א': ח')
- In what case could a *sheretz* that touches *kodesh* bread cause all *kodesh* bread touch it (in a chain fashion) to be *tameh*? (א': ט')
- In what case would the law be the same for *trumah* bread? (א': ט')
- What is the law regarding a pot of cooking *trumah* vegetables where one (who is *tahor*) touches a leaf that hangs outside the pot? (א': ב')
- How does the law differ if the leaf was wet? (א': ב')
- How does the law differ if the person was *tameh met*? (א': ב')
- Describe the case of doubt involving a *tevul yom* that relates to the previous questions and what is the law in that case? (א': ב')
- Explain the debate regarding one that eats *tameh* food that is *rishon l'tumah*. (א': ב')
- What is the law regarding what has the ability to attract and transmit *tumah* for food that is *rishon*? *Sheni*? *Shlish*? (א': ג')

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday

After maariv
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before mincha
Beit Ha'Roeh

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
20 th December ג' טבת	21 th December ד' טבת	22 th December ה' טבת	23 th December ו' טבת	24 th December ז' כסלו	25 th December ח' טבת	26 th December ט' טבת
Taharot 2:4-5	Taharot 2:6-7	Taharot 2:8-3:1	Taharot 3:2-3	Taharot 3:4-5	Taharot 3:6-7	Taharot 3:8-4:1

