



## Reducing the Size of a Ma'or

The thirteenth *perek* discusses a *me'or* – a light-hole. In particular the *Mishnah* is focused on the minimum dimensions such that *tumah* can pass through it. The size varies on whether it was purposefully drilled or created by nature events. Furthermore, the minimum size required for a *me'or* when it is first created is larger than an existing one that begins to close or fill with foreign items. The first *Mishnah* records those dimensions.

In some situations however, a foreign object placed in the *me'or* has no impact in the transfer of *tumah*. One object discussed whose presence is significant is the *neveilat ohf tameh* – the non-kosher bird that died. The *Mishnah* (13:5) explains that it can reduce the space of the *me'or* provided it did not have both *hechsher* and *machshava*. In other words, it had not intentionally come into contact with one of the seven liquids and the owner did not intend to consume it. The *Bartenura* explains that the *neveilat ohf tameh* requires both *hechsher* and *machshava* to be susceptible to *tumah* and once this happens, it can no longer reduce the space of the *ma'or*.

The *Mishnah Achrona* notes that based on this reasoning, the *Mishnah* could have also listed any other foods without *hechsher*. Regular food with *hechsher* is equivalent to a *neveilat ohf tameh* with *machshava* but without *hechsher*. In other words, since they are not susceptible to *tumah* their presence should also be able to reduce the size of the *ma'or*. Nevertheless, he cites the *Rambam* that explains that food that did not have *hechsher*, provided it is less than a *ke'beitzah* in size, it reduces the space of the *ma'or* since they are insignificant to the owner and will not be removed. This implies that if they are larger than a *kebeitza* then they would not reduce the

size of the *ma'or* despite not having had *hechsher*. Consequently, if the *neveilat ohf tameh* was larger than a *kebeitza* the law should be different, yet the *Mishnah* makes no mention of this distinction.

The *Mishnah Achrona* suggests that the difference between *neveilat ohf tameh* and food, is that since food is useful (*chazi*), it is fit for consumption, *bitul* (annulling it) is ineffective. He cites the *Rambam* that explicitly states: “other food that has not had *hechsher* do not separate; even though it is not susceptible to *tumah*, he intends to eventually remove it.”

Yet according to this reasoning there must be another distinction between *neveilat ohf tameh* and food. With the *ohf*, once there is *machshava* it should be considered like food in that now it is *chazi*. Given that is the case, the difference must be whether intentional *bitul* after *machshava* is effective. For food, *bitul* does not work. For *neveilat ohf tameh* however, since it required *machshava* from the outset, the subsequent *bitul* (or *machshava*) can undo the previous *machshava*.

The *Mishnah Achrona* however raises a number of issues with this approach. Firstly, there are instances where the *Rambam* rules that explicit *bitul* is effective for everything. More striking however is that the *Rambam* does not mention the law of *neveilat ohf tameh* or *tahor* in this context. Its absence can be attributed to its simplicity. Yet if however the above distinction exists, i.e. that subsequent *bitul* is only effective for *neveilat ohf tameh* but not for any other food, one would expect such a law to be mentioned. Considering the *Rambam's* position, he leaves the question on our *Mishnah* unanswered.

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## Revision Questions

תולה א' ב"י – יב: ד"י

- Explain the debate regarding a *b'tach*. (ג' ב"י)
- Explain the debate regarding a *sandel shel arisa*. (ד' ב"י)
- What is the law if regarding a case where the planks of wood on the first floor and the roof are spaced and aligned with one another, and *tumah* is found on the ground floor? The first floor? The roof? (ה' ב"י)
- How would the law differ if the planks in the roof aligned with the spaces left by the planks on the first floor? (ו' ב"י)
- What are the minimum dimensions of a round and square plank such that it can act as an *ohel*? (ז' ב"י)
- What must the circumference of a pillar (lying on its side) be such that *tumah* is transferred if it is found underneath (but not squashed by) the pole? (ח' ב"י)
- Explain the debate regarding a *kezayit* from a corpse that is found stuck to the threshold. (ט' ב"י)
- What is law if it stuck to the outside of the lintel? (י' ב"י)
- What is the minimum measure (*shiur*) of the following spaces for *tumah* to be transferred through them:
  - A *Ma'or*?
  - *Sh'yarei Ma'or*? (Explain.)
  - A hole created by water? (יא' ג"י)
- What other cases have the same ruling as the last case and in what situations does the size change? (יב' ג"י)
- What is the *shiur* of a window made for ventilation for *tumah* to pass through it and when does this change? (יג' ג"י)
- What is the minimum measure (*shiur*) of the following spaces for *tumah* to be transferred through them:
  - A hole in a door? (Provide two cases.) (יד' ג"י)
  - A hole for a *kaneh*?
  - A peep-hole? (טו' ג"י)
- List some items that relate to *tameh* objects that can be used to reduce space of a window preventing *tumah* from spreading through them. (טז' ג"י)
- List some items that relate to *tameh* objects that cannot be used to reduce space of a window preventing *tumah* from spreading through them. (יז' ג"י)
- What is the general rule regarding the previous two questions? (יח' ג"י)
- What is a *ziz*? What is a *gizra*? When (in terms of placement and dimensions) can the transfer *tumah* to the inside of a house? (יט' ד"י)
- What is the difference between the required dimensions of a *ziz* above a door and a window? (כ' ד"י)

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## Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שדוק תבש
10 <sup>th</sup> May א"כ רי"א	11 <sup>th</sup> May ב"כ רי"א	12 <sup>th</sup> May ג"כ רי"א	13 <sup>th</sup> May ד"כ רי"א	14 <sup>th</sup> May ה"כ רי"א	15 <sup>th</sup> May ו"כ רי"א	16 <sup>th</sup> May ז"כ רי"א
Ohalot 14:3-4	Ohalot 14:4-5	Ohalot 14:6-15:1	Ohalot 15:2-3	Ohalot 15:4-5	Ohalot 15:6-7	Ohalot 15:8-9

