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Wool and Linen

Abaye said: This teaching of the Academy of Rabbi Yishmael (*which states that only a garment of wool or linen is susceptible to tumah*) differs from that of another teaching of the same school. For a *braisa* was taught in the Academy of Rabbi Yishmael: It is written by *tzaraas*: *A garment*. I understand that only a garment of wool or linen (*can become contaminated with tzaraas*); how can I include garments of camel's wool, of rabbit's wool, of goat's feathers, or of silk, floss silk (*made from the cocoon of the silkworm*) or corded silk? The Torah therefore says: Or a garment (*which includes all other garments*).

Rava said: When does this *Tanna* of the Academy of Rabbi Yishmael reject the *tumah* of other materials? That is only in respect of three fingerbreadths square; but if it is three *tefachim* square, he accepts it.

The *Gemora* asks: But it was Rava who said that in respect of three by three *tefachim* in other clothes, Rabbi Shimon ben Elozar accepts their liability to *tumah* while the *Tanna* of the Academy of Rabbi Yishmael rejects it?

The *Gemora* answers: Rava retracted from that (*initial*) view.

Alternatively, this latter statement was made by Rav Pappa (*Rava's successor*), for Rav Pappa said: [*When the first Tanna concluded by saying that...*] so too all cases [*are of wool and linen*] is to derive (*the prohibition of*) *kilayim* (*that only a mixture of wool and linen is forbidden, but no other; accordingly, it does not relate to tumah at all, and does not*

contradict the other teaching of the Academy of Rabbi Yishmael).

The *Gemora* asks: But of *kilayim* it is explicitly stated: *You shall not wear shatnez, wool and linen together?*

The *Gemora* answers: It might have entered your mind that these words are only in the manner of wearing (*that only a mixture of wool and linen is forbidden*), but to cover it over oneself, any two materials (*mixed together*) are forbidden. [*Therefore, the teaching of R' Yishmael is necessary to teach us that even regarding covering, it is only a mixture of wool and linen that is forbidden.*]

The *Gemora* asks: Now, doesn't that follow through the following *kal vachomer* (*and a special teaching would not be necessary*): If of wearing, though the entire body derives benefit from *kilayim*, you say that wool and linen alone are forbidden, but nothing else; how much more so regarding covering oneself!

Evidently, this interpretation of Rav Pappa is a fiction.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: [*When the first Tanna concluded by saying that...*] so too all cases [*are of wool and linen*] is to derive the law of *tzitzis* (*that only wool and linen garments are subject to the mitzvah of tzitzis; accordingly, it does not relate to tumah at all, and does not contradict the other teaching of the Academy of Rabbi Yishmael*).

The *Gemora* asks: But of *tzitzis*, it is explicitly stated: *You shall not wear shatnez, wool and linen together*, and then it is written: You shall make for yourself twisted threads (*and*

the juxtaposition shows that they are required only in garments of wool or linen)?

The *Gemora* answers: I might have thought that it should be interpreted in accordance with Rava's teaching, for Rava raised the following contradiction: Rava asked: One verse states: And you will put on the *tzitzis* of the corner, implying that the strings should be of the same material as the corner; however, when the Torah mentions *shatnez* and *tzitzis* next to each other, it says, "wool and linen," implying that wool and linen fringes should be placed on all types of garments. How do we resolve this? Rava explains that wool or linen threads can be used for a garment of its own material or any other material to fulfill its obligation of *tzitzis*, while strings of other material can only be used to fulfill an obligation of *tzitzis* for a garment made out of the same material, but not for any other material. So you might have thought that it is as Rava; therefore we are informed otherwise.

Rav Acha the son of Rava asked Rav Ashi: According to the *Tanna* of the School of Rabbi Yishmael, why is *tumah* different that we include other garments (*besides wool and linen*) because '*or a garment*' is written? Then here too (*with respect of tzitzis*), let us say that other garments (*besides wool and linen*) are included, because it is written: *with which you cover yourself (which is superfluous)*!

The *Gemora* answers: That comes to include a blind person's garment, for it was taught in a *braisa*: *And you will see it* excludes clothing worn at night. This could exclude clothing worn at night or the clothing of a blind man. When the verse states, *that you will be covered with it* this clearly includes a blind person as being obligated in *tzitzis*. It must therefore be that, "*and you will see it*" excludes clothing worn at night. Why should we include the clothing of a blind person and exclude clothing worn at night? The clothing of a blind person is included because others see his clothes during the day. Clothing worn at night is not seen by anyone.

The *Gemora* asks: But perhaps it should come to include other garments (*that are not of wool or linen*)?

The *Gemora* answers: It is logical that when the Torah is discussing garments of wool and linen, it includes (*a particular garment of*) wool and linen; but when discussing garments of wool and linen, shall it include other garments?

Abaye said: Rabbi Shimon ben Elozar and Sumchos said the same thing. Rabbi Shimon ben Elozar, as stated (*that flax is the only tree derivative which is unfit to be used as sechach on a sukkah; this is so even flax that was not woven, for it is susceptible to tumas tzara'as – even though it is not susceptible to the tumah of a sheretz*). Sumchos, for it was taught in a *braisa*: Sumchos said: If one covers a *sukkah* with spun flax, it is invalid, because it is susceptible to *tumah* by *tzara'as* afflictions.

The *Gemora* asks: With whom does that agree?

The *Gemora* answers: It agrees with the following *Tanna*, for we learned in a *Mishna*: The warp and the woof threads are susceptible to *tzara'as tumah* immediately (*after they were spun*); these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehudah, however, maintained: The (*woolen*) warp (*threads are susceptible to tzara'as tumah*) when it is removed (*from the kettle in which it is boiled – in order to clean them*); the (*woolen*) woof (*threads are susceptible to tzara'as tumah*) immediately; and bundles of (*unspun*) flax (*are susceptible to tzara'as tumah*) after bleaching (*in the oven; this is the source of Abaye's ruling*). (27a – 27b)