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The blood of a *sheretz* and its flesh can combine with one another (*for the size of a lentil – in order to transmit tumah*). Rabbi Yehoshua laid down the following general rule: All things that are alike both in respect of their *tumah* (1. *How they transmit tumah (contact, carrying, etc.)*; 2. *How long that which became tamei through them remains tamei for*) and in respect of their minimum size (*to transmit tumah*) can combine with one another. Things, however, that are alike in respect of their *tumah* but not in respect of size, or, in respect of size but not in respect of their *tumah*, or, if they are alike neither in respect of their *tumah* nor in respect of size, cannot combine with one another.

Rav Chanin said in the name of Rav Ze'ira: Only the blood and its meat (*can combine with one another, but not with the meat of a different sheretz*).

Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Chanina asked on this from the following *braisa*: It is written (regarding the eight *sheratzim*): ***The ones which are tamei***. This teaches us that the *sheratzim* can combine one with the other (*to the size of a lentil – in order to transmit tumah*); even (*the meat of*) one *sheretz* with another; (*the meat of*) a *sheretz* with the blood (*of a sheretz*), whether they are of one denomination (*a half olive-size of meat from a choled with a half olive-size of blood from*

¹ A corpse renders tamei everything that is under the same roof as the corpse itself. This method of defilement is called 'ohel' (tent). Also a quarter of a log of blood from a corpse effects tumah by 'ohel'. If a person passes over, tentlike, a corpse or a quarter of a log of blood he himself forms the 'ohel', roofing, and is tamei.

a choled) or two denominations (*a half olive-size of meat from a choled with a half olive-size of blood from an achbor*). [Certainly then, the blood of one *sheretz* can combine with the meat of a different *sheretz* – one that is the same species as it!?!]

Rav Yosef said: There is no difficulty, for the *braisa* refers to a case [*where he touched it*] in its entirety (*e.g., he touched both the meat and the blood; he will become tamei if together they combine to the minimum size*); whereas Rav Chanin is dealing with a case [*where he touched*] only part of it (*so if the blood and the meat are from one sheretz, he becomes tamei, but if they are from two different sheratzim, he does not become tamei*).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* as a source for this distinction: If the blood was poured out on a pavement, which was a sloping place, and he passed over¹ a portion he remains tahor, if he passed over the whole of it he is tamei'. Now, what does 'a portion' mean? Shall I say, a portion [of the standard quality of blood]?² But didn't Rabbi Chanina say in the name of Rebbe: 'If one stirred³ the exact quantity of a fourth of a log of blood he remained tahor'.⁴ You must therefore conclude [that a distinction has to be made in the following manner]: In the one instance the blood came from

² I.e., if he passed over less than the required fourth of a log, he is tahor; and accordingly if he passed over the whole quantity, although it was scattered and disconnected, he is tamei.

³ And thereby passed over it.

⁴ Because a part of the blood must have been sucked into the ladle with which it was stirred, and the blood is thus disconnected. We thus learn that the fourth of a log must be connected.

a whole body, in the other from a portion of it.⁵ This indeed proves it.

Rabbi Masya ben Charash once asked Rabban Shimon ben Yochai, in Rome: From where do we know that the blood of *sheretzs* is tamei? — He replied: Because it is written: And these are they that are tamei.⁶ His disciples then said to him: The son of Yochai has grown wise. He said to them: This is a teaching prepared in the mouth of Rabbi Elozar son of Rabbi Yosi. For the [the Roman] Government had once issued a decree that [Jews] might not keep the Shabbos, circumcise their children, and that they should cohabit with menstruant women. Thereupon Rabbi Reuven son of Istrovoli cut his hair in the Roman fashion,⁷ and went and sat among them. He said to them: If a man has an enemy, what does he wish him, to be poor or rich? They said: That he be poor. He said to them: If so, let them⁸ do no work on the Shabbos so that they grow poor. They said: He speaks rightly, let this decree be annulled. It was indeed annulled. Then he continued: If one has an enemy, what does he wish him, to be weak or healthy? They answered: Weak. He said to them: Then let their children be circumcised at the age of eight days and they will be weak. They said: He speaks rightly, and it was annulled. Finally he said to them: If one has an enemy, what does he wish him, to multiply or to decrease? They said to him: That he decreases. If so, let them not cohabit with menstruant women. They said: He speaks rightly, and it was annulled. Later they came to know that he was a Jew, and [the decrees] were re-instituted. [The Jews] then conferred as to who should go [to Rome] to work for the annulment of

the decrees. Let Rabban Shimon ben Yochai go for he is experienced in miracles. And who should accompany him? — Rabbi Elozar son of Rabbi Yosi. Said Rabbi Yosi to them: And were my father Halafta still alive, would you have said to him to give his son for slaughter?⁹ Answered Rabbi Shimon: Were Yochai my father still alive, would you have said to him to give his son for slaughter? Said Rabbi Yosi to them: I shall accompany him, for I fear Rabbi Shimon may punish him.¹⁰ He [Rabbi Shimon] undertook thereupon not to inflict any punishment on him. Notwithstanding this, he did punish him, for when they were proceeding on the way the following question was raised in their presence: From where do we know that the blood of a *sheretzs* is tamei? Rabbi Elozar son of Rabbi Yosi curved his mouth¹¹ and said: It is written: And these are they that are tamei. Said Rabbi Shimon to him: From the undertone of your utterance one can see that you are a scholar, yet the son shall not return to the father. Then Ben Temalyon¹² came to meet them. [He said]: Is it your wish that I accompany you? Thereupon Rabbi Shimon wept and said: The handmaid of my ancestor's house was found worthy of meeting an angel¹³ thrice, and I not even to meet him once. However, let the miracle be performed, no matter how. Thereupon he advanced and entered into the Emperor's daughter. When [Rabbi Shimon] arrived there, he called out: 'Ben Temalion leave her, Ben Temalion leave her', and as he proclaimed this he left her. He said to them: Request whatever you desire. They were led into the treasure house to take whatever they chose. They found that bill, took it and tore it to pieces. It was with reference to this

⁵ When the blood comes from a whole body it need not be connected; when from a part of it, it must be connected.

⁶ A superfluous passage as the same is said in verse 31 and hence taken to include blood.

⁷ He trimmed the front of the hair like a fringe on the forehead and let the curls hang down on the temple.

⁸ Viz., the Jews.

⁹ So you cannot expect me to send my son. He feared that Rabbi Shimon might curse his son as he explains later in the conversation,

but Rabbi Shimon misunderstood this as cowardice, viz., that he feared to run the risk of being executed by the Romans, and therefore replied with displeasure that he, too, is risking his life.

¹⁰ Viz., my son, when finding fault with him.

¹¹ I.e., pouted, speaking in an undertone; for it is unseemly for a pupil to speak unasked in his master's presence.

¹² Rashi: A demon.

¹³ Refers to Hagar.

visit that Rabbi Elozar son of Rabbi Yosi related: 'I saw it in the city of Rome and there were on it several drops of blood'.

MISHNAH. Piggul and nossar cannot combine with one another because they are of two different denominations. *Sheretz* and *neveilah* as well as *neveilah* and the flesh of a corpse cannot combine with one another to effect *tumah*, not even in respect of the more lenient of the two [grades] of *tumah*.¹⁴

GEMARA. Said Rabbi Yehudah in the name of Shmuel: This has been taught only with reference to the *tumah* of the hands,¹⁵ which is only a Rabbinical enactment, but with regard to [the liability attached to] eating they can combine with one another. For we have learned: Rabbi Eliezer said: It says, it shall not be eaten for it is holy; with this the Torah comes to impose a negative command upon whatever among holy things has become disqualified.¹⁶

MISHNAH. Food contaminated through contact with a primary *tumah* can combine with that contaminated by a secondary *tumah* to effect *tumah* according to the lower degree of *tumah* of the two.¹⁷ All kinds of [tamei] food can combine with one another to make up the quantity of half a

¹⁴ The gradation refers both to the standard size and the duration of *tumah*. The *tumah* caused through contact with a corpse lasts seven days, with *neveilah* or a *sheretz* only one day. The standard size for *neveilah* and a corpse is an olive, that of a *sheretz* is a lentil. Any two of these cannot combine even to the larger of the respective standard sizes, and even to effect the *tumah* of the lesser duration of the two.

¹⁵ Both *nossar* and *piggul* render the hands *tamei* through contact.

¹⁶ They are therefore to be considered as 'of one denomination with regard to eating, and can therefore combine one with the other.

¹⁷ The contaminated thing is as a rule one degree lower in the scale of *tumah* than the object from which it contracted the *tumah*. In the case of a combination the contaminated object is a degree lower than the lowest of the components.

*peras*¹⁸ in order to render the body unfit¹⁹ [or to make up the food] for two meals to form an 'eruv²⁰ or to 'make up an egg's bulk to contaminate food, or to make up a dry fig's bulk in respect of the prohibition to carry forth on the Shabbos²¹ and a date's bulk with regard to Yom Kippur.²² All kinds of drinks can combine with one another to make up the fourth [of a log] in order to render the body unfit or to make up a mouthful with regard to Yom Kippur.

GEMARA: It has been taught: Rabbi Shimon said: What is the reason? Because things *tamei* in the second degree can become *tamei* in the first degree. But can indeed a thing *tamei* in the second degree become *tamei* in the first degree? Surely this is an impossibility?²³ — Said Rava: This is what is meant: What caused the object to be rendered *tamei* in the second degree? Surely it was something *tamei* in the first degree!²⁴ Rabbi Ashi said: Things *tamei* in the first degree and those *tamei* in the second degree in relation to *tumah* of the third degree are considered as belonging to one category.

¹⁸ I.e., the quantity of half a loaf.

¹⁹ A person that has eaten *tamei* food must not eat any *terumah* or sacred food. If he touches these they are *tamei*, unless he has immersed before.

²⁰ By depositing food sufficient for two meals at the end of the Shabbos limit of two thousand cubits, one is permitted to walk on the Shabbos another two thousand cubits from that place.

²¹ It is forbidden to carry things of the quantity of a dry fig from a private place to a public thoroughfare and vice versa.

²² The eating of food of the quantity of a date on Yom Kippur is punishable with extinction; the same applies to a mouthful of any drink.

²³ A thing *tamei* through contact with that of the second degree of *tumah* is itself only of the third degree!

²⁴ And because of this origin a combination of the two degrees should be possible.