

*Who's Asking?*

*Excerpted and adapted from a shiur by Dayan Yosef Greenwald*

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<https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Bhaaloscha-Two-for-one-and-Two-at-once.mp3>

*And those people said to him, "We are ritually unclean [because of contact] with a dead person; [but] why should we be excluded so as not to bring the offering of Hashem...?"*

Bemidbar 9:7

According to the Sifri, the phrase "those people" teaches that they asked the question about bringing the *korban* Pesach to Moshe themselves. The Panim Yafos explains that many of the people may not have been *tamei*, since only a person who carries the majority of the weight of a corpse becomes *tamei*, but one who helps to carry it with others (*mesayeia*) does not. Because they all asked together, Moshe ruled that they were all *tamei* to account for those who were certainly *tamei*.

The same conclusion would seem to emerge from the Gemara (Pesachim 10a) that states that if two people walk on two separate paths, one of which is known to be *tamei*, but it is uncertain which one, both individuals are *tahor*, because each has a *chazakah* that he is *tahor*. However, if they ask the question together, they are declared *tamei*, because two simultaneous rulings cannot contradict each other.

Tosafos there notes that this halacha is only *mid'Rabanan*, but *mid'Oraisa*, both persons are *tahor*. If so, it is difficult to understand how the Panim Yafos uses a similar idea to explain a *pasuk*. Perhaps the answer is that in the case in Pesachim, each person asks his own *shailah* about his own experience, albeit simultaneously. In the Pesach *Sheini* case, they all participated in the same activity of carrying a body, so perhaps they would all be *tamei* even *mid'Oraisa*.