

Is it Forbidden To Pay My Rent Late?

## Rav Eliezer Cohen

**Question:** We know that there is a prohibition of “*ba'al talin*”, delaying payment of a worker. Is it also forbidden to pay one’s rent late?

**Answer:** The *Mechaber* states that *ba'al talin* applies to renting objects, just as it applies to paying a worker; therefore, if one rents a table or car, for example, he would have a *mitzvah* to pay on time and it would be forbidden to pay late. The *Mechaber* adds that some say that there is no prohibition of *ba'al talin* when it comes to renting land.

The *Ketzos Hachoshen* says that the *Mechaber* may only be referring to land itself, and not to something that is built on land. If one rents a house that is situated upon land, it is unclear if the house would be considered an object-comparable to a car or table- which is subject to the law of *ba'al talin*, or if it would be comparable to land, which might not be subject to this prohibition.

The *Ketzos* rules that since this is a *safek d'oraysa*, an uncertainty related to a Biblical law, one must be stringent and make sure to pay the rent for his house on time.

In contemporary times, this *shailah* is not so relevant because most renters pay in advance, at the beginning of the month, and, therefore, there is no issue of paying late. Furthermore, if the renter gave a security deposit on the apartment, there may not be a concern of *ba'al talin*.

If, for whatever reason, an uncommon arrangement was made wherein the renter pays at the end of the month, the prohibition of *ba'al talin* would be applicable, and he would have to make sure to pay his rent on time.

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This month’s shiur has been sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Avigdor Fried, in memory of שלמה בן אביגדור משה ז”ל, מלכה בת משה ע”ה, יצחק יעקב בן אליהו ז”ל, רבקה בת גבריאל חיים

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