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Sukkah Daf 14

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Rabbi Elozar said: Why are the prayers of the righteous likened to a pitchfork, as just like a pitchfork turns over the grain on the threshing floor from one place to another, so too the prayers of the righteous transform the manner in which HaShem conducts Himself from the Attribute of Strict Judgment to the Attribute of Mercy.

One can use boards as s’chach; these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah: Rabbi Meir prohibits this.

If one placed a board that is four tefachim wide on a Sukkah, it is valid, provided that he does not sleep beneath it.

There is a dispute in the Mishna whether one can cover a Sukkah with boards. Rav maintains that the argument is regarding boards that are more than four tefachim, and the argument is explained as follows: Rabbi Meir holds that there exists a Rabbinic decree against using boards that resemble a roof of a house, whereas Rabbi Yehudah does not subscribe to such a decree. Beams, however, that are less than four tefachim, are valid according to all opinions.

Shmuel maintains that the dispute deals with boards that are less than four tefachim, and all agree that boards that are more than four tefachim are invalid.

The *Gemora* asks: Did Shmuel mean to imply even less than three (that R’ Meir prohibits its usage)? But in this case, are they not mere sticks?

Rav Pappa answered: He means as follows: If they are four tefachim wide, the Sukkah is invalid according to all; if they are less than three, it is valid according to all. What is the reason for this? It is because they are mere sticks. Regarding what case do they dispute? They argue where the boards are from three to four tefachim wide. One master (R’ Yehudah) holds the opinion that since there is not in them the size of a significant area, we do not make a restrictive decree, and the other master (R’ Meir) holds the opinion that since the law of lavud (closing a gap of less than three tefachim) can no longer apply to them, we make a restrictive decree.

The *Gemora* attempts to support Shmuel’s opinion from our *Mishna*: If one placed a board that is four tefachim wide on a Sukkah, it is valid,

provided that he does not sleep beneath it. Now, it is understandable according to Shmuel who says that the dispute is where there are not four tefachim, but where there are four, all agree that it is invalid; for this reason he must not sleep under it. But according to Rav who says that the dispute is where there are four tefachim, but where there are less than four, all agree that it is valid, why, according to Rabbi Yehudah, may he not sleep under it?

The *Gemora* disagrees with the proof: Do you then think that this statement is according to all? The concluding statement is in accordance only with Rabbi Meir.

The *Gemora* attempts to another proof to Shmuel from a *braisa*: Two sheets combine (to invalidate a Sukkah); two boards (according to R' Yehudah who holds that boards are valid *s'chach*) do not combine. Rabbi Meir says: Boards also are like sheets (and they combine to invalidate the *s'chach*).

Now, it is well according to Shmuel who says that the dispute is where there are not four tefachim, but where there are four tefachim, all agree that it is invalid; accordingly, what does Rabbi Meir mean when he said that they combine (to invalidate the Sukkah)? He means that they (two boards which are narrower than four tefachim) combine to four (tefachim, and therefore, the entire Sukkah is invalid). But according to Rav,

who says that their dispute is where there are four tefachim, but where there are not four tefachim all agree that it is valid, what are the circumstances of this case? If there are four tefachim, why is it necessary for them to be combined; if there are not four tefachim, why is it invalid? Are they not mere sticks?

The *Gemora* answers: Indeed it is a case where there are four tefachim, and what is meant by "combine" is that they combine to form four amos at the side (of the Sukkah, where the entire Sukkah would be rendered invalid).

Another version: Now, it is well according to Shmuel who says that the dispute is where there are not four tefachim, but where there are four tefachim, all agree that it is invalid; accordingly, what does the *braisa* mean when it said that they combine (to invalidate the Sukkah)? It means that they combine to form four amos at the side (of the Sukkah, where the entire Sukkah would be rendered invalid). But according to Rav, it is well according to Rabbi Meir, since what is meant by 'combine' may be that they combine to form four amos at the side, but according to Rabbi Yehudah who said that even if the boards are four tefachim the Sukkah is valid, what does it mean that they do not combine? Are they not mere sticks?

The *Gemora* answers: Since Rabbi Meir said that they combine (to invalidate the Sukkah), Rabbi

Yehudah said that they do not combine (even though the boards themselves are valid).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* in support of Rav, and a *braisa* also has been taught in agreement with Shmuel.

It has been taught in agreement with Rav: If he covered the Sukkah with boards of cedar which are not four tefachim wide, it is valid according to all. If they have four tefachim, Rabbi Meir declares it invalid and Rabbi Yehudah valid.

Rabbi Yehudah, who maintains that boards (of four tefachim) are valid for *s'chach*, sought to offer a proof to his opinion from an incident that occurred at a time of danger (when observance of certain mitzvos was banned). The Jews would disguise a Sukkah as a porch by covering the porch with boards that were four tefachim wide, and they would sit underneath them.

They said to him: One cannot prove a halachah from an incident that occurred during a time of danger.

A *braisa* has been taught in agreement with Shmuel: If he covered the Sukkah with boards of cedar which are four tefachim wide, it is invalid according to all. If they do not have four tefachim, Rabbi Meir declares it invalid and Rabbi Yehudah valid.

The *braisa* continues: Rabbi Meir, however, admits that if there is a space of one board between every two boards, one may place *pesal* (valid *s'chach*) between them, and the Sukkah is valid. And Rabbi Yehudah agrees that if he placed on it a board four tefachim wide, although the Sukkah is valid, a man may not sleep under it, and if he sleeps beneath it he has not fulfilled his obligation.

It was stated: If he placed the boards on their sides (and then covered the Sukkah with them), Rav Huna declared it invalid, and Rav Chisda and Rabbah son of Rav Huna declared it valid (for they now do not resemble a roof).

Rav Nachman once came to Sura and Rav Chisda and Rabbah son of Rav Huna came in to him and asked: If he placed them on their sides, what is the law? He said to them: It is invalid, since they are regarded as metal spits (and intrinsically unsuitable for *s'chach*). Rav Huna said to them: Did I not tell you that he would say as I do? They answered him: Did then the master provide us with a reason and we did not accept it? He said to them: Did you ask me for a reason and I did not give one to you?

The *Gemora* asks: Can we say that the following *braisa* provides support for his view: If the Sukkah cannot contain his head, the majority of his body and his table, or if a breach has been made in it large enough for a goat to bolt through, or if he



placed on it a board four tefachim wide, even if only three tefachim of it enter inside of it, it is invalid.

The *Gemora* explains: How is this last statement meant? Surely that he placed them on their sides (and yet, they render the Sukkah invalid)?

The *Gemora* disagrees: No! Here we are dealing with a case where he placed it above the entrance of the Sukkah, with three of the four tefachim inside the Sukkah and one protruding outside, in which case it is considered as *pesal* (*s'chach*) protruding from the Sukkah, and every *pesal* protruding from a Sukkah is regarded as part of the Sukkah.

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Potters and Boards

The Gemara on Daf 8 stated that it was common for a potter to have a hut inside another hut. Rashi explained that the inside hut cannot be used as a Sukkah because since the potter lives there all year, it is not discernable that he is dwelling in the hut for the sake of fulfilling the mitzvah.

It is evident from Rashi that biblically speaking, the hut is valid, and it is only invalid from a rabbinical standpoint.

The Gemara on Daf 14 rules that one cannot fulfill his obligation of sitting in a Sukkah when the *s'chach* consists of beams that are wider than four tefachim. The reason for this ruling is that such a Sukkah would be akin to sitting inside a house. Rashi explains that one cannot fulfill his obligation of dwelling in a Sukkah by sitting in a house because the Torah explicitly used the word *Sukkah* and one cannot dwell in the house that he resides in all year.

Rashi appears to contradict himself, as on Daf 8 Rashi implies that sitting in a house is rabbinically invalid, whereas on Daf 14 Rashi implies that sitting in a house is biblically invalid.

Rabbi Yosef Ber Soloveitchek offers a novel explanation to distinguish between the two cases. Regarding the hut of the potter, the *s'chach* appears to look like *s'chach* of a Sukkah and does not appear to look like the *s'chach* of a house, and for this reason the *s'chach* is biblically valid. The hut is nonetheless rabbinically invalid because one resides in the hut throughout the year. Regarding the boards, however, the roof has the same look as a house, and is thus deemed to be a house, which is biblically invalid.

Big Sukkah, Small Sukkah

The Gemara stated previously that Bais Shammai and Bais Hillel disagree regarding the minimum

dimensions that are required for the Sukkah to be valid. Bais Shammai maintains that the Sukkah must be large enough to accommodate one's head, most of his body and his table. Thus, the minimum measurement for a Sukkah is seven squared tefachim.

The Rif rules in accordance with the opinion of Bais Shammai and the Rif adds that the reason for this ruling is due to the concern that if the Sukkah is too small, one will be drawn out of the Sukkah.

This line of reasoning would also explain why Bais Shammai maintains that when a table is outside a large Sukkah, one cannot fulfill his obligation.

There is an interesting dispute in the Acharonim based on the words of the Rif. Regarding one who dwells in a Sukkah that is smaller than seven squared tefachim and his table is located in a large Sukkah which is adjacent to the smaller Sukkah, *Rabbi Akiva Eiger* (Mishnayos Sukkah 2:7) rules that one can fulfill his obligation. Although one is normally prohibited to leave the Sukkah, in this situation he is not in violation of the prohibition because even if he exits the Sukkah, he still will be in the larger Sukkah.

Bais HaLevi (Teshuvos 3:53:1) disagrees and maintains that one does not fulfill his obligation. The Bais HaLevi posits that since Bais Shammai once ruled that a Sukkah that is smaller than the

required measurement is invalid, this rule applies in all circumstances.

A noteworthy question here is, what would be the Halacha in the reverse case? What would be the Halacha if one is dwelling in a large Sukkah that does not have a table in it, where Bais Shammai maintains that the Sukkah is invalid, and the table is located in a small Sukkah adjacent to the larger Sukkah?

DAILY MASHAL

Mitzvos at all Times

The Gemara cites an incident where the gentiles had banned observance of mitzvos and the Jews brought boards that were four tefachim wide and they disguised a porch with the boards, thus fulfilling their obligation of dwelling in a Sukkah. It is well known that *Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Berditchev* would defend the Jewish People before HaShem, claiming that although the Jews were perhaps guilty of smuggling against the law of the Czars, a Jew would never be found with chametz in his possession on Pesach, despite the fact that there were no police ensuring that they were not in violation of the Torah law. This Gemara is also proof that even when faced with danger, the Jews always found methods of observing the mitzvos.