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Sukkah Daf 32

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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

The Mishnah ruled that a lulav whose top is clipped off is invalid. Rav Huna qualifies the Mishnah’s ruling to be referring to a case where the top of the lulav was actually cut off, but if the lulav was split,¹ it is valid.

The *Gemora* asks from a *Baraisa*: A lulav which is bent over, one that is barbed, a split one, one that is curved like a sickle, is invalid. If it is like a hardened branch, it is invalid. If it is similar to a hardened branch, it is valid.

Rav Pappa answers: The *Baraisa* refers to a case where the lulav was made like a *himnak* (which is a metal tool used by scribes). [The *himnak* is forked at one end and is in the shape of a letter Y. Alternatively, it may mean that the middle leaf is split open, and is spread apart so far that it appears like two separate leaves.] (31b3 - 32a1)

If a lulav is curved like a sickle it is invalid. Rava qualifies this ruling to mean that it is invalid only if it is curved forward, but if it is curved backward, it is valid, for that is its natural form.

Rav Nachman said: If the lulav is curved to the side, it is as if it is curved forward. But others say: It is as if it is curved backward.

Rava said: A lulav which grew with one single row of leaves is blemished, and therefore invalid. (32a1)

The Mishnah had stated: If its leaves were torn. Rav Pappa said: “torn” means that they resembled a broom. “separated” means that they parted from each other.

Rav Pappa inquires: What is the halachah is if the middle leaf of the lulav is split. Come and hear what Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: If the middle leaf is removed, it is invalid. No doubt if it is split the same law would apply? No, if it is removed the law is different, since it is entirely lacking. Another version is that Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: If the middle leaf is split, it is as though it is removed, and [the lulav] is invalid. (32a1 - 32a2)

The *Mishnah* had stated (regarding a lulav, whose leaves were spread out) that Rabbi Yehudah says: It should be tied together at the top.

The *Gemora* cites a *Baraisa*: Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rabbi Tarfon: *kappos temorim* – branches of date palms. It could be read as *kafus* – tied; and therefore, if it was spread out, it should be tied. (32a2)

Ravina said to Rav Ashi: How do we know that ‘*kappos temorim*’ refers to the palm branch (whose leaves hug its spine); perhaps it means a hardened branch? He responded: It must be a branch whose leaves can be bound together, and this one cannot. Ravina asked further: But perhaps it means the log (of the tree)? Rav Ashi replied: Since the word ‘bound’ is used, it must refer to something which can be separated, but this is permanently bound. The *Gemora* asks: But perhaps it means the palm shoot? Abaye answered: It is written: *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace* (so the Torah would not mandate the use of

¹ Every lulav leaf is made of two leaves stuck together. When the leaves separate from each other, it is called “split.”

something with thorns – that can cause pain and would be unpleasant to hold).

Rava Tosfa'ah said to Ravina: But perhaps it means two clusters of dates? Ravina replied: The word is written 'kappos' (in the singular form). He persisted: Then perhaps it means one? Ravina responded: That would be called 'kaf.' (32a2)

The Mishnah had stated: The palms of the Iron Mountain are valid. Abaye qualifies the ruling of the *Mishnah*: This was taught only where the tip of one leaf reaches the base of the other, but if the leaves of the lulav are very small and the top of one leaf does not reach the bottom of the leaf above it, the lulav is invalid.

The *Gemora* supports this by citing a *Baraisa* which states that the palms of the Iron Mountain are invalid, and yet, our *Mishnah* rules that they are valid!? The answer must be like Abaye (that there is a distinction between the case where the top of the leaves reach the bottom of the leaves on top of them, and when they do not). Indeed, learn it from this.

There were those that cited the discussion as follows: Our *Mishnah* ruled that the palms of the iron mountain are valid, and yet, a *Baraisa* rules that they are invalid!? Abaye answered that this is not difficult, for the *Mishnah* is referring to a case where the top of the leaves reach the bottom of the leaves on top of them, and the *Baraisa* refers to a case where the top of the leaves do not reach the bottom of the leaves on top of them.

Rabbi Maryon said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, and others say that Rabbah bar Mari taught a *Baraisa* in the name of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai: There are two palm trees in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, and smoke ascends from between them. And these are the trees which we learned about in the *Mishnah* which states that the palms of the Iron Mountain are valid, and this is the entrance to Gehinnom. (32a2 - 32b1)

The Mishnah had stated: A lulav that has the length of three tefachim. Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: The minimum length of the hadas (myrtle) and the aravah (willow) is three tefachim, and that of the lulav is four, so that the lulav should extend one tefach beyond the hadas.

And Rabbi Parnach said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The spine of the lulav should extend a tefach beyond the hadas.

The *Gemora* challenges both opinions from that which we learned in our *Mishnah*: A lulav which is three tefachim in length, long enough to wave, is valid?

The *Gemora* answers: Read it to mean: and long enough to wave; and each one explains it according to his own view (that a tefach must be waved – either from the leaves or from the spine).

The *Gemora* asks on Rabbi Yochanan from that which was taught in a *Baraisa*: The minimum length of the hadas and the aravah is three tefachim, and that of the lulav is four. Surely, this means, does it not, inclusive of the leaves?

The *Gemora* answers: No, it is exclusive of the leaves. (32b1)

The *Gemora* returns to that which was stated above: The minimum length of the hadas and the aravah is three tefachim, and that of the lulav is four. Rabbi Tarfon says: An amah consisting of five tefachim.

Rava said: May Rabbi Tarfon's Master (Hashem) forgive him (for this seemingly absurd statement)! We cannot find a valid hadas three tefachim long, would one of five tefachim be required?

When Rav Dimi came, he explained it as follows: Make an amah which has six tefachim, and divide it into five portions. Take from these the three for the hadas (and aravah) and an additional tefach for the lulav.

The *Gemora* asks: How much then is it? It is three and three-fifths. Do not then two statements of Shmuel contradict one another, for here Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel that the minimum length of the hadas and the aravah is three standard tefachim, and elsewhere Rav Huna said in the name of Shmuel that the halachah is like Rabbi Tarfon?

The *Gemora* answers: Shmuel was not precise (when he said that the minimum length is three tefachim, for in truth, it is a bit more).

The *Gemora* asks: But do we not say that one is not precise only when this results in a stringency of the law, but not when it results in a leniency?

The *Gemora* explains: When Rav Dimi came, he explained it as follows: Make an amah which has five tefachim, and divide it into six portions. Take from these the three for the hadas (and aravah) and an additional tefach for the lulav.

The *Gemora* asks: How much then is it? It is two and a half. Do not then two statements of Shmuel contradict one another (for elsewhere he said that the minimum is three tefachim)?

The *Gemora* answers that he was not precise, and in this case, his lack of precision results in a stringency of the law, since Rav Huna said in the name of Shmuel that the halachah is like Rabbi Tarfon (who maintains that it is two and a half tefachim). (32b1 – 32b2)

MISHNAH: A hadas that is stolen or dry is invalid. If it is from an asheirah tree or a subverted city, it is invalid. If its top is clipped off, or if its leaves were torn, or if its berries outnumbered its leaves, it is invalid. If, however, pone decreased its berries, it is valid, but one may not decrease them on Yom Tov. (32b2 – 32b3)

² Since it has sharp and prickly leaves; the Torah would not command us to hold something that would be painful and unpleasant.

GEMARA: Our Rabbis taught in a *Baraisa*: ‘A shoot of a plaited tree’ [means] [that kind of tree] whose shoots completely cover its branches. Now what [tree] is this? Obviously you must say that it is the myrtle. But perhaps it is the olive? — It must be plaited, which [the olive] is not. But perhaps it is the chestnut tree? — It is required that the shoots shall cover its branches, which is not the case [with the chestnut tree]. But perhaps it is the hirduf? Abaye said: Its [i.e., the Torah’s] ways are the ways of pleasantness, and [with the hirduf] this is not the case.² Rava expressed [the same idea] from the following verse: Love truth and peace.

Our Rabbis taught in a *Baraisa*: [That plant whose leaves are] plaited like a braid, and resemble a chain, is the myrtle. Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov said: ‘A shoot of a plaited tree’ [means] a tree the taste of whose wood and whose fruit is similar: Say, then, it is the myrtle.

A Tanna taught: A twig that is plaited is valid, and which is not plaited is not valid. What constitutes plaited? — Rav Yehudah said: When three leaves grow out of each base. Rav Kahana said: Even [if they only grow in] twos and one [overlaps them, it is valid].

Rav Acha the son of Rava sought to obtain one [whose leaves grew] in twos and ones, since Rav Kahana said [that such are valid]. Mar bar Ameimar said to Rav Ashi: My father used to call that the wild myrtle. (32b3 – 32b4)

Our Rabbis taught in a *Baraisa*: If the majority of its leaves fell off and the minority remained, it is valid, provided that its plaited appearance remains. But is not this self-contradictory? You said that if the majority of its leaves fell off it is valid and then it is stated, ‘provided that its plaited appearance remains’. But since two [of the three leaves] have fallen off, how is it possible to have a plaited appearance? — Abaye said: It is possible with the “boundary myrtle” which has seven [leaves] in each base, and



[therefore] when four fall off, there are still three left. Abaye said: [From this] we can deduce that the “boundary myrtle” is valid for the hoshana.³ But isn’t this obvious? — I might have said that since it has a distinctive name, it cannot be considered valid, therefore he informs us [that it is valid]. But perhaps it is indeed so? - The Merciful One says: ‘shoots of a plaited tree’ i.e., of any kind. (32b4 – 33a1)

Our Rabbis taught in a *Baraisa*: If the majority of its leaves dried up, and only three stems with moist leaves remained, it is valid. And Rav Chisda added: [Provided] that they are at the top of each [stem]. (33a1)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Measurements of a Tefach

The Gemara states that the spine of the lulav must extend one tefach above the hadas. The Gemara in Niddah lists five items whose measurements are required to be a tefach. Amongst the items listed are the third wall of a Sukkah, the size of a shofar and the tefach of the lulav.

It would seem that the measurements for the lulav and shofar are a biblical requirement similar to the third wall of a Sukkah which must be at least a tefach and the ruling regarding the third Sukkah wall was taught as *Halacha LeMoshe MiSinai*.

It is noteworthy that the *Levush* in Orach Chaim 650 writes that the measurements of the height of the lulav, hadassim and aravos are all biblical in nature as they are *Halacha LeMoshe MiSinai*, whereas the requirement that a shofar must be a minimum of a tefach is only rabbinic in nature.

Reb Meir Arik in *Tal Torah* questions the words of the *Levush*, because there should be no distinction between the shofar and the lulav. The Gemara in Niddah seems to imply that both shofar and lulav are biblically required to be a tefach.

³ For the lulav bundle.

DAILY MASHAL

The Torah’s Ways are Pleasant

The Gemara states that one cannot use a palm shoot to fulfill the mitzvah of lulav, because although its stems can be tied and this would fulfill the requirement of *kafus*, tied up, it is invalid because it is said regarding the Torah *its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its pathways are peace*. A palm shoot has thorns that make it difficult to hold, and the Torah would not instruct us to take such a branch on Sukkos.

It is fascinating that the Gemara uses a verse to prove that the ways of the Torah are pleasant. One may have thought that although HaShem is merciful, regarding mitzvah performance one is at times required to undergo suffering to perform the mitzvah. The verse teaches us otherwise. The Torah’s ways are pleasant, and one should not be subject to pain in performing a mitzvah.

The obvious lesson from this Gemara is that if the Torah ensures that one should not feel pain in fulfilling a mitzvah, then certainly a Jew should not cause his friend any pain, as one is required to love his fellow man, and causing someone else pain would be the antithesis of loving a fellow Jew.