

Daf 32: כַּפּוֹת תְּמָרִים – BRANCHES OF DATE PALMS

The *lulav* is one of the *arba'at haminim* (four species). According to *Sefer VaYikrah* (Book of Leviticus), "And you shall take 'kapot t'marim'" – one needs to take the branch of a tree on which dates grow, which is a palm tree.



Is it permissible to take a wide branch of a palm tree, a branch from which large leaves emerge from its sides [to fulfill the mitzvah of *arba'at haminim*]? From what source do the *chachamim* know that it is necessary to take a *lulav* whose leaves are closed? The Talmud responds that the Torah does not command performance of *mitzvot* that are harmful to a person's body or health. On the contrary, all of the *mitzvot* of the Torah are pleasant and beneficial for people.

Therefore, the *chachamim* stated that the Torah certainly would not command the taking of a branch whose thorny leaves stab and cause pain. Rather, *kapot t'marim* must be a branch like the *lulav*, whose leaves are closed and do not potentially cause injuries. King Solomon said in *Sefer Mishlei* (Book of Proverbs) regarding the Torah, that "its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace."

Daf 33: "עֵץ עֵץ עֲבוֹת" – "THE BRANCH OF A DENSE-LEAVED TREE"



In *Sefer VaYikra*, the Torah refers to the "*hadas*" (myrtle) as "*anaf etz avoht*" (branch of a dense-leaved tree). *Anaf etz* – a tree that looks like one branch entirely covered with leaves, where the tree base is not visible; *avoht* – the leaves look like a chain.

Rabbi Yehudah said: In what way do the leaves resemble a chain? On each branch there are multiple clusters of three leaves. One tier of three clustered leaves, then another tier of three, and another tier of three. Each tier of leaves reaches up to the beginning of the next tier. In this way, the leaves look like a long chain.

Hadas shoteh (wild myrtle): A myrtle whose leaves are not arranged in a straight row, rather, one leaf is slightly higher, while the other two leaves in the cluster are lower. This type of *hadas* is *pasul* (invalid) to fulfill the mitzvah of *arba'at haminim*.

Hadas she'nechtach (myrtle that has been cut): Is a *hadas* whose tip has been cut off still *kosher* (fit)? Some say the *hadas she'nechtach* is *kosher*, and others say it is *pasul* (unfit). For this reason, REMA, Rabbi Moshe Isserles, wrote that it is worthwhile to avoid taking a truncated *hadas* (whose tip is cut off).



**FROM THE TALMUD
SEDER MOED
MASECHET SUKKAH
DAF 32**

מן התלמוד:
סדר מועד, מסכת סוכה דף ל"ב:
"אמר ליה רבינא לרב אשי - ממאי דהאי כפות תמרים דלולבא הוא? אימא חרותא בעינא כפות וליכא ואימא אופתא כפות, מכלל דאיכא פרוד והאי כפות ועומד לעולם, ואימא כופרא, אמר אביי דרכיה דרכי נועם וכל נתיבותיה שלום' כתיב.."

Translation

חרותא ... Charutah ... **hardened branch of a date palm**
אופתא ... Ufta ... **The trunk of the date palm**
כופרא ... Kufra ... **branch of a date palm [that has not yet hardened]**

Explanation

Ravina asked Rav Ashi how do we know the "*kapot t'marim*" (branches of a date palm) mentioned in the Torah actually refer to the *lulav*? Perhaps the term refers to the hardened branch, or to the trunk, or to another part of the palm tree? Rav Ashi replies that the other definitions are not consistent with the language of the Torah. Moreover, it is not possible that the Torah would command use of a thorny and sharp branch because "Its ways are ways of pleasantness."

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Daf 34: איזו ערבה פֿשרה? – WHICH WILLOW IS FIT?

There is a tree named “*tzaftzafa*,” which is similar to the *eitz ha’aravot* (willow tree). However, it is not *kosher* (fit) for use as one of the *arba’at haminim* (four species). How is it possible to discern which *aravah* (willow) is *kosher* (fit) and which is *pasul* (unfit)?

The Talmud cites several *simanim* (distinguishing characteristics):

1. The leaves of the *aravah* are elongated, while the leaves of the *tzaftzafa* are round. Who said it is obligatory to take an *aravah* whose leaves are long? The sages learned this from the Torah’s terminology “*arvei nachal*” (willow of the brook) that the leaves of the *aravah* are long and extend onward, like a brook.
2. The stem of the *aravah* is a reddish color, while the stem of the *tzaftzafa* is white.
3. The leaves of the *aravah* are smooth, while the leaves of the *tzaftzafa* are serrated and look like a small sickle.



Daf 35: “פרי עץ הדר” – האתרונג – THE CITRON, “FRUIT OF A BEAUTIFUL TREE”



Let’s become familiar with the various parts of the *etrog* (citron):

Okef — a small sprig, or tiny branch, found at the bottom of the *etrog*. This sprig was connected to the tree and was cut by the person who picked it, when the *etrog* was harvested.

Pitam — Many times, a small, brown-colored bulb remains at the upper tip of the *etrog*. This portion is called the “*pitam*.”

Chotem — The place from which the *etrog* begins to narrow is called the “*chotem*.”

Daf 36: אֶתְרוּגִים פְּסוּלִים – UNFIT ETROGIM

Fallen “Pitam”: An *etrog* whose *pitam* has fallen off is *pasul* (unfit). However, if an *etrog* is the type whose “*pitam*” customarily falls off while the *etrog* is still attached to the tree, that *etrog* is *kosher* (fit). [Cont’d on p.3]



Dvar Torah SHOFTIM

“כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכַל וְאַתָּה לֹא תִכְרַת, כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה”

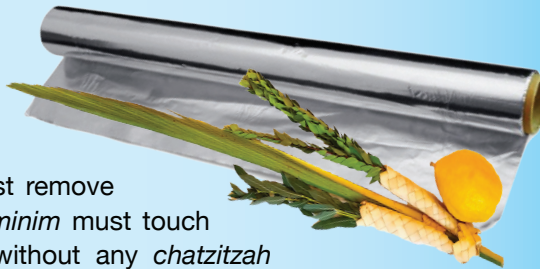
The final portion of *Parashat Shoftim* contains various *mitzvot* related to *Am Yisrael’s* manner of combat. War is generally seen as an event lacking inhibition and boundaries; as a place where rules of justice and morality are forgotten in order to destroy and eliminate the enemy on the other side. However, the Torah teaches us that even in times of war, when fighting for our lives, there is a framework, a path, with moral rules we must preserve. For example, the Torah prohibits the destruction of food-bearing trees surrounding a city which you are besieging. “For you may eat them, but you will not cut them down, because a human is [like] the tree of the field.” This *mitzvah* places before us one of the most beautiful and important principles in the Torah — which calls on us to maintain the image of God within us, even in the most difficult times.



[Cont'd from p.2] *Scratched Etrog*: An *etrog* from which a piece is missing — for example, an *etrog* that became scratched, and as a result a portion is now missing — that *etrog* is *pasul* (unfit). It is important to note that an *etrog* missing a piece is only *pasul* (unfit) on the first day of *Sukkot*. However, on the remaining days of *Sukkot* a scratched *etrog* is *kosher*.

Daf 37: אַרְבַּעַת הַמִּינִים עֲטוּפִים – WRAPPED FOUR SPECIES

Some wrap their *lulav* together with *hadassim* and *aravot* (myrtle and willow branches) in aluminum foil so they will remain fresh and not dry out. Before reciting the blessing over the *arba'at haminim* (four species), a person must first remove any foil wrapping because the *arba'at haminim* must touch the palms of the hands of the person without any *chatzitzah* (interfering object) — i.e., without anything separating the *arba'at haminim* and the palms of the person's hands.



Daf 38: מְדוּעַ מְנַעֲנְעִים אֶת אַרְבַּעַת הַמִּינִים? – WHY WAVE THE FOUR SPECIES?



When fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *arba'at haminim*, the package of four species are shaken in every direction: right, left, forward, backward, up, and down. Rabbi Yochanan said that we do so to demonstrate that we fulfill this *mitzvah* on behalf of Hashem, to whom the entire world belongs — up, down, right, left, forward, and backward. Rabbi Yosei

son of Rabbi Hanina said we shake the *arba'at haminim* in order to halt harmful winds that could damage the world. And, moreover, by doing so, we halt the falling of dew that could harm the grain.

An additional *halachah* that appears on this *Daf* is that it is possible to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *arba'at haminim* all day long. Therefore, those who did not fulfill the *mitzvah* in the morning are able to fulfill this *mitzvah* at any point during the day.



QUESTIONS FOR THE WEEK

1. What is “*hadas shoteh*”?
2. What color is the stem of the *aravah*?
3. When shaking the *arba'at haminim*, is it permissible to hold the four species wrapped in foil?

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