The Gemara asks: And, according to the Rabbis, if they derived their opinion from the doorway of the Sanctuary, let them require doors in order to render an alleyway fit for one to carry within it, just as there were doors in the Sanctuary. Why then did we learn in the mishna: With regard to the method of rendering an alleyway fit for carrying within it, Beit Shammai say: Both a side post placed adjacent to one of the sides of the alleyway’s entrance and a cross beam over the entrance to the alleyway are required. And Beit Hillel say: Either a side post or a cross beam is sufficient. However, not even according to the more stringent opinion of Beit Shammai are doors required.

The Gemara answers: The Sanctuary doors were made solely for the purpose of privacy, but served no practical function. The doorway of the Sanctuary did not require doors to be considered an entrance. It was a full-fledged entrance even without them.

The Gemara raises another question: But if so, that the Rabbis derive their opinion from the entrance to the Sanctuary, the form of a doorway, i.e., two vertical posts on the two sides, with a horizontal cross beam spanning the space between them, should not be effective if the alleyway is more than ten cubits wide, as the Sanctuary had the form of a doorway, and even so, it was no more than ten cubits wide. Why then did we learn in the mishna: If the entrance has the form of a doorway, then even if it is wider than ten cubits, he need not diminish its width?

The Gemara answers: As that is the reason only according to Rav, who holds that the Rabbis derive their opinion from the doorway of the Sanctuary. Didn’t Rav Yehuda teach this mishna to Hiyya bar Rav before Rav, saying that if the entrance had the form of a doorway, he need not diminish it, and Rav said to him to teach a different version: He must diminish it. Apparently, according to Rav himself, the form of a doorway does not render it permitted to carry within the alleyway if its entrance is wider than the doorway of the Sanctuary, and therefore the question about the form of a doorway poses no difficulty to his opinion.

The Gemara raises an additional difficulty: However, if that is so, a molded or protruding cornice [amaltera] crowning the entrance should not be effective in rendering an alleyway fit to carry within it if it is higher than twenty cubits, as the Sanctuary had a cornice, and even so it was twenty cubits high, and no more. As we learned in a mishna: Over it were five oak cornices, one protruding above the other.

The Gemara attempts to dismiss this difficulty: And, with regard to that mishna, what is the refutation? Perhaps when that mishna with regard to cornices was taught, it was taught with regard to the Entrance Hall, whose height was forty cubits, and not with regard to the Sanctuary.

Perhaps when that mishna with regard to cornices was taught, it was taught with regard to the Entrance Hall – (Rabbinic)\. The word perhaps is problematic in this context. According to the commentaries, it should not be understood as expressing uncertainty, but rather as a matter received through tradition. The proof is that there is a mishna concerning cornices and the Entrance Hall which appears in tractate Midræ (Ritva).
The Gemara responds: And what is the difficulty with that? Perhaps the design of the Sanctuary was like the design of the Entrance Hall. Just as there were cornices in one doorway, there were cornices in the other.

The Gemara returns to its question with regard to a cornice: Why then did Rabbi Ile'a say that Rav himself said: If the width of a cross beam is four handbreadths, even if it is not sturdy, it renders the alleyway fit for carrying within it. And if it has a cornice, even if it is higher than twenty cubits, one need not diminish its height."

Rav Yosef said: This halakha with regard to a cornice was not actually stated by Rav, but rather it is a baraita. Who, in fact, teaches that baraita? Perhaps it is not an authoritative baraita, and Rav does not have to accept what it says.

Abaye said: Isn’t it Hama, son of Rabba bar Avuh, who teaches it? And therefore, even if the halakha with regard to a cornice will be a baraita, it nevertheless poses a difficulty to Rav.

Rav could have said to you: Even if you eliminate me and my explanation from the discussion here, don’t the two baraitot themselves, the baraita that states that the Rabbis derive the dimensions of an entrance from the doorway of the Sanctuary and the baraita that states that in the case of a cornice, even if it is higher than twenty cubits, it need not be lowered, contradict each other? Rather, what have you to say to reconcile the contradiction? The matter is the subject of a dispute between tanan'im; so too, according to my opinion, it is the subject of a dispute between tanan'im.

Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: Without Rav, the baraitot do not contradict each other, as according to the Rabbis, what is the reason that a cross beam renders an alleyway fit for carrying? Because it serves as a conspicuous marker between the alleyway and the public domain. Ordinarily a cross beam more than twenty cubits high is not noticeable; however, a cornice attracts attention even at that height. And that which is taught in the other baraita with regard to the height of a beam at the entrance to an alleyway: Greater than the entrance of the Sanctuary, is merely a mnemonic device. No actual halakhot are derived from the entrance of the Sanctuary.

The Gemara notes: And that the explanation of Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak works out well if he does not hold this opinion of Rabba; however, if he holds this opinion of Rabba, it is difficult. As Rabba said with regard to the fitness of a sukka whose roofing is higher than twenty cubits that it is written: “In order that your generations should know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 23:43). When the roofing of a sukka is up to twenty cubits high, a person is aware that he is dwelling in a sukka; however, when the roofing of the sukka is above twenty cubits, a person is not aware that he is dwelling in a sukka, because the eye does not discern the sukka roofing. One does not usually raise his head to look that high, and consequently, he sees the walls and does not notice the defining feature of the sukka, its roofing.

The Gemara explains the difficulty: Apparently, with regard to sukka as well, the Rabbis and Rabbi Yehuda disagree whether or not an item more than twenty cubits high is conspicuous. According to Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak, why do I need them to disagree about the same point in two cases, that of sukka and that of an alleyway? That the dispute between the Rabbis and Rabbi Yehuda with regard to sukka revolves around this issue indicates that their dispute with regard to an alleyway revolves around a different point, as asserted by Rav.
The Gemara answers: It is necessary to teach both disputes, as had the mishna taught us only with regard to sukka, one might have thought that only in this case does Rabbi Yehuda say that an object is conspicuous even above twenty cubits; since a sukka is designed for extended dwelling, the eye undoubtedly discerns the roofing at some point. However, in the case of an alleyway, which is designed for walking, say that he concedes to the Rabbis that a person walking in an alleyway does not notice objects at so significant a height. And had the mishna taught us only with regard to that case of an alleyway, one might have thought that only in that case do the Rabbis say that people do not notice objects at so significant a height; however, in that case of sukka, say that they concede to Rabbi Yehuda, for the above-stated reason. Therefore, it is necessary to teach both disputes.

The Gemara seeks to arrive at a precise definition of amaltera, translated above as cornise. What is an amaltera?7 Rav Hama, son of Rabbi bar Avuh, said: It refers to decorative wood carvings in the shape of birds’ nests. When Rav Dimi came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, he said that they say in the West,8 Eretz Yisrael, it is referring to cedar poles.9

The Gemara explains: The one who said that amaltera refers to cedar poles would allow all the more so permit use of carvings of birds’ nests, as a cross beam engraved with images attracts attention and is noticeable even at a great height. However, the one who said that amaltera refers to carvings of birds’ nests would say that the halakha with regard to a cornice applies only to them, but not to cedar poles.

The Gemara clarifies the opinion of the one who said cedar poles. What is the reason for his opinion? He holds that since its length is great, a cedar pole attracts attention. But isn’t the length of a sukka great as well, and nevertheless, the Rabbis say that a sukka higher than twenty cubits is not fit?

Rather, the reason is as follows: Since a cedar pole is of significant value, it generates publicity. People passing through an alleyway stop and stare at a cross beam of that kind, even when it is higher than twenty cubits, leading others publicity to do so as well.

If part of the roofing of a sukka is above twenty cubits, but the bottom of the roofing was twenty cubits or less off the ground, the sukkah is fit, in accordance with the opinion of Rava, since he is a greater authority than Rabbi bar Avuh, and because Rabbi Papia cited support for his view in the Tosefta (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 635:2).

If the roofing of the sukka was twenty cubits or less off the ground, the sukka is fit, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi, since he is a greater authority than Rabbi bar Avuh, and because Rabbi Pappia cited support for his view in the Tosefta (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 635:1).

The Gemara answers: If you thin the sukkah’s roof, it would result in a sukka whose sun is more than its shade. Were the section of the roofing above twenty cubits removed, the roofing that remained would not provide sufficient shade for the sukka.

Skewer (shefud) - עַרְבָּא. From the Greek σκόρπιον, spidors, meaning ashes. In Hebrew the word means metal skewer, especially one on which meat is roasted.

NOTES

Birds’ nests (kinnei) and cedar poles – רַבָּנַן דְּאַרְזָא כִּי אֱמַלְתְרָא. Some commentators explain that kinnei are small, decorative openings in the walls beneath the cross beam in which birds occasionally nest. Cedar poles are four handbreadths wide, and the statement: It is of great length, refers to their width; in accordance with the earlier statement of Rav. Other authorities explain cedar poles as poles sunk into the wall that protrude from the sides of the entrance beneath the cross beam and create the impression of lowering the cross beam (Arukh).

The height of the cross beam – הַיָּד הַלֵּאָד. The conclusion in the Jerusalem Talmud is that everyone agrees that the entire cross beam must be no more than twenty cubits off the ground, lest one raise it above twenty cubits and render the alleyway unfit for carrying within it. It must have at least three walls, one of which need only be a handbreadth. The sukka must be roofed with material that grows in the ground but is no longer attached, e.g., branches or leaves, and which is not susceptible to ritual impurity.

If part of the cross beam is within twenty cubits, and part of the cross beam is above twenty cubits – קָשַׁבְּנָא דְּאַרְזָא כִּי אֱמַלְתְרָא. If part of a cross beam is less than twenty cubits off the ground, then even if part of it is above twenty cubits, the cross beam renders the alleyway fit for carrying within it, since the space between the cross beam and the ground is less than twenty cubits. The halakha is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi, since he is a greater authority than Rabbi bar Avuh, and because Rabbi Papia cited support for his view in the Tosefta (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 635:2).

If part of the roofing is within twenty cubits, and part of the roofing is above twenty cubits – קָשַׁבְּנָא דְּאַרְזָא כִּי אֱמַלְתְרָא. If the roofing of a sukka extended above twenty cubits, but the bottom of the roof- ing was twenty cubits or less off the ground, the sukka is fit, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi, since he is a greater authority than Rabbi bar Avuh, and because Rabbi Papia cited support for his view in the Tosefta (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 635:1).

LANGUAGE

Skewer (shefud) – עַרְבָּא. From the Greek σκόρπιον, spidors, meaning ashes. In Hebrew the word means metal skewer, especially one on which meat is roasted.
The Gemara explains Rabba’s distinction differently. Rava from Parzakya said: A *sukka*, which is generally erected for an individual, if the portion of the roofing below twenty were removed and only the portion above twenty remained, he would not be reminded to lower the remaining roofing and would dwell in a *sukka* that is unfit. An *alleyway*, in contrast, which is used by many people, if the section of the cross beam below twenty cubits were removed, they would remind each other to remedy the situation.

Ravina said a different explanation: With regard to a *sukka*, since its mitzva is by Torah law, the Sages were stringent. However, with regard to an *alleyway*, since the entire requirement to place a cross beam across the entrance in order to permit carrying in an alleyway is only by rabbinic law, the Sages were not stringent.

The Gemara offers a different explanation of Rabba’s distinction: Rava from Parzakya said: In the case of a *sukka*, which is generally erected for an individual, he casts responsibility upon himself and is reminded to make certain that the roofing is fit. In the case of an *alleyway*, which is used by many people, they are likely to rely upon each other and are not reminded to check the height of the cross beam. As people say: A pot belonging to partners is neither hot nor cold. When responsibility falls upon more than one person, each relies on the other, and ultimately the task is not completed.

Ravina offered a different explanation and said: The mitzva of *sukka*, which is by Torah law, does not require reinforcement by the Sages, and consequently, they were lenient in that case. However, since the entire requirement to place a cross beam across the entrance to an *alleyway* is by rabbinic law, it requires reinforcement, and therefore the Sages were stringent.

Since there are two contradictory versions of Rabba’s statement, the Gemara inquires: What practical conclusion was reached about this problem, if part of the roofing of the *sukka* or the cross beam was above twenty cubits? Rabba bar Rav Ulla said: In that case, both this, an *alleyway*, and that, a *sukka*, are unfit. Rava said: Both this and that are fit,
as that which we learned in the mishna, with regard to the unfitness of a sukka higher than twenty cubits, is referring to the interior space of the sukka; and that which we learned in the mishna, that a cross beam spanning an alleyway that is more than twenty cubits must be lowered, is referring to the space at the entrance of the alleyway beneath the cross beam.

Rav Pappa said to Rava: A baraita was taught that supports your opinion: If the cross beam spanning the entrance of an alleyway is higher than twenty cubits off the ground, greater than the entrance of the Sanctuary, one must diminish its height. And the space of the entrance of the Sanctuary itself was twenty cubits high, and its roof was higher than twenty cubits. Apparently, the twenty cubits mentioned with regard to a sukka and an alleyway refers to the space beneath the roofing and the cross beam.

Rav Shimi bar Rav Ashi raised an objection to Rav Pappa from the Tosefta: How precisely would he do it? He places the cross beam from the edge of twenty cubits and below. Apparently, the entire cross beam must be within twenty cubits of the ground, and if any part of it rises above twenty it is unfit.

Rav Pappa replied: Emend the Tosefta and say: From the edge of twenty cubits and above. Rav Shimi retorted: But isn’t it taught: And below? What justification is there to completely reverse the meaning of the Tosefta?

Rava explained that there is no need to emend the language of the baraita, but merely to reinterpret it. The baraita is teaching us the following: The halakha below is like the halakha above. Just as above, with regard to the maximum height of the cross beam, it is the space beneath the cross beam that may not be more than twenty cubits, so too below, with regard to the minimum height of the cross beam, it is the space beneath the cross beam that may not be less than ten handbreadths. However, a cross beam placed within ten handbreadths of the ground is unfit and does not render it permitted to carry within the alleyway.

The Gemara considers the measure of the cubit mentioned in the mishna and elsewhere. Abaye said in the name of Rav Nahman: The cubit mentioned with regard to the halakhot of sukka and the cubit mentioned in connection with the halakhot of an alleyway is a small cubit consisting of five handbreadths. In contrast, the cubit of a forbidden mixture of diverse kinds of seeds is a large cubit consisting of six handbreadths. Apparently, Rav Nahman rules stringently in all cases.

The Gemara elaborates: The cubit of an alleyway is a cubit consisting of five handbreadths. With regard to what halakha does this ruling apply? It applies to the issue of the height of the cross beam spanning an alleyway that may not be more than twenty cubits high, and to the breach of an alleyway that may not be more than ten cubits wide.
Curved wall – דּוֹ׳ֶן עֲ וּמָּה

If part of the roof of a sukka, adjacent to one of its walls, is made of common roofing material, unfit for use in a sukka, then this part of the roof is considered an extension of the sukka wall. It is as if the wall is curved at the top. If it is four cubits wide, it invalidates the sukka.

Less Than 4 Cubits

Part of the sukka roof made of common roofing material

Diverse kinds in a vineyard – כִּלְאֵי הַכֶּרֶם

The relevant halakhot are elucidated in tractate Kilayim in the mishna and Jerusalem Talmud. Some of the fundamental halakhot of diverse kinds in a vineyard are: The prohibition only applies in a vineyard. Therefore, in the case of a lone vine or vines not planted in the form of a vineyard, one need only distance foreign crops six handbreadths from the vines. Since cultivation of a vineyard begins with plowing, which was performed with oxen, one must leave four cubits on either side of the vines as the work area of the vineyard. Similarly, one may not sow in the four cubits adjacent to the fence of the vineyard, because people would walk there.

The dispute between Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel with regard to a clearing in a vineyard and the perimeter is based on a different halakha. If a person sows seeds in a vineyard, even if the seeds are distanced four cubits from the vines, the sown area is negated relative to the vines, and the sowing is prohibited. It is permitted only if the sown area is large enough to be considered a separate field. According to Beit Hillel, the minimum size of a field is four by four cubits, while Beit Shammai maintain that the minimum size is eight by eight cubits.

The Gemara poses a question: But isn’t there also the issue of the minimal length of an alleyway? For carrying in an alleyway to be rendered permissible by means of a side post or a cross beam, it must be at least four cubits long. In that case, measuring the alleyway with small cubits will lead to a leniency.

The Gemara resolves this difficulty: Rav Nahman holds in accordance with the opinion of the one who said that the length of an alleyway need only be four handbreadths. However, a cubit mentioned in the context of an alleyway is always a small cubit, which is a stringency.

The Gemara proposes an alternative solution: And if you wish, say instead that actually Rav Nahman holds in accordance with the opinion that the length of an alleyway must be four cubits, and in that case, the alleyway is measured with large cubits of six handbreadths as a stringency. When he is saying that the cubit of an alleyway is a cubit of five handbreadths, he is speaking of most, but not all, cubits mentioned in the context of an alleyway.

Rav Nahman said that the cubit of a sukka is a small cubit consisting of five handbreadths. The Gemara asks: With regard to what halakha does this ruling apply? It applies to the halakha governing its height, i.e., that a sukka may not be more than twenty cubits high, and to the halakha of a curved wall. A sukka is considered valid if there are up to four cubits of invalid roofing, provided that this roofing is adjacent to one of the walls of the sukka. In that case, the invalid roofing is considered an extension of the wall, i.e., the wall is considered to be curved, and consequently, the entire sukka is valid. With regard to both halakhot, the ruling is stringent and distance is measured with small cubits.

The Gemara asks: But isn’t there also the halakha of the minimal length of a sukka, which must be at least four cubits long? If it is measured with small cubits, that will lead to a leniency. As it was taught in a baraita: Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: I say, any sukka that does not have in it an area of at least four cubits by four cubits is invalid.

The Gemara resolves this difficulty: Rav Nahman holds in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis, who say: A sukka is valid even if it holds only one’s head, most of his body, and his table.

The Gemara suggests another solution: And if you wish, say instead: Actually, Rav Nahman’s statement holds true even if it is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi that a sukka must be at least four cubits long. Indeed, the sukka is measured with large cubits consisting of six handbreadths, which is a stringency. And when he says that the cubit of a sukka is a cubit of five handbreadths, he is speaking of most, but not all, cubits mentioned with regard to sukka.

The Gemara continues: As stated above, Rav Nahman said that the cubit of a forbidden mixture of diverse kinds of seeds is a cubit consisting of six handbreadths. The Gemara asks: With regard to what halakha does this ruling apply? It applies to the halakha of a clearing in a vineyard and to the halakha of the perimeter of a vineyard.

As we learned in a mishna in tractate Kilayim: With regard to a clearing in a vineyard, Beit Shammai say: Its measure is twenty-four cubits, and Beit Hillel say: Sixteen cubits. With regard to the perimeter of a vineyard, Beit Shammai say: Twelve cubits, and Beit Hillel say: Sixteen cubits.

HALAKHA

A clearing in a vineyard – הָא בַּנַּסֵא בְּאַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת

One may sow foreign seeds in the middle of a vineyard ab initio only if there is an area of sixteen by sixteen cubits clear of vines, in accordance with the opinion of Beit Hillel. If he distanced the seeds from the vines more than four cubits on either side, neither the vines nor the other crops are prohibited after the fact (Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De’a 296:42).

The perimeter of a vineyard – הָא בַּנַּסֵא בְּאַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת

One may sow foreign seeds between the vineyard and the fence ab initio only if there is an empty space of twelve cubits, in accordance with the opinion of Beit Hillel. Even if one distanced the other seeds four cubits from the vines, neither the vines nor the other crops are prohibited after the fact (Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De’a 296:43).
The Gemara raises a difficulty: But isn’t there also the halakha of vines that planted consecutively, within four cubits of each other, with regard to which measuring the distance with large cubits would lead to a leniency? As we learned in a mishna: With regard to a vineyard that was planted in consecutive rows with less than four cubits between them, Rabbi Shimon says: Since the rows are planted so closely together, it is not considered a vineyard, and if one plants other crops there he is not liable. And the Rabbi says: It is a vineyard, and one regards the middle vines, those planted between two appropriately spaced rows, as if they are not there. One who plants other crops there is indeed liable. According to Rabbi Shimon’s opinion, measuring the distance between the rows with large cubits leads to leniency.

The Gemara resolves the difficulty: Rav Nahman made his statement in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis, who say that a densely planted vineyard is a vineyard. And if you wish, say instead: Actually, Rav Nahman’s statement holds true even if it is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon, that a densely planted vineyard is not a vineyard, and the distance between the rows is measured with small cubits consisting of five handbreadths as a stringency. When he says that the cubit of diverse kinds of seeds is a cubit consisting of six handbreadths, he is speaking of most, but not all, cubes mentioned with regard to a forbidden mixture of diverse kinds of seeds.

The above was based on the ruling of Rav Nahman according to Abaye. But Rava said in the name of Rav Nahman: All cubits mentioned in measurements by the Sages are cubits consisted of a large cubit of six handbreadths. However, these, the cubits mentioned with regard to diverse kinds of seeds, are measured with expansive handbreadths, with the fingers spread apart, whereas those, the cubits mentioned with regard to an alleyway and a sukka, are measured with compressed handbreadths, with the fingers held together.

The Gemara raises an objection from a baraita: All cubits that were mentioned by the Sages are cubits of six handbreadths, provided...