The Gemara relates that certain rams were brought to the town of Mavrakhta on Shabbat. Rava permitted the residents of Mehoza to purchase them and take them home, although Mavrakhta was outside the Shabbat limit of Mehoza and could be reached by the residents of Mehoza only by way of an eiruvin of Shabbat limits.

Ravina said to Rava: What is your reasoning in permitting these rams? You must rely upon that which Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: Objects belonging to a gentile do not acquire residence, and so they are permitted even if they were brought to Mehoza from outside the Shabbat limit.

Isn’t the principle, in disputes between Shmuel and Rabbi Yohanan, that the halakha is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yohanan? And Rav Hiyya bar Avin already said that Rabbi Yohanan said: Objects that belong to a gentile do not acquire residence, based on a decree in the case of a gentile owner, due to the case of a Jewish owner. The halakha is in accordance with his opinion.

Rava reconsidered and said: Let the rams be sold only to the residents of Mavrakhta. Although the rams acquired residence, and may be moved only four cubits as they were taken beyond their Shabbat limit, the legal status of all Mavrakhta is like four cubits for them. However, they may not be sold to the residents of Mehoza, as the halakha is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yohanan.

Rabbi Hiyya taught a baraita: A water-filled ditch [herem] that lies between two Shabbat limits requires an iron partition to divide it into two separate areas, so that the residents of both places may draw water from it. Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, would laugh at this teaching, as he deemed it unnecessary.

The Gemara asks: Why did Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, laugh? If you say that it is because Rabbi Hiyya taught the baraita stringently, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri, saying that ownerless objects acquire a place of residence, and Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina holds leniently, in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis and says that those objects do not acquire residence, this is difficult. Just because he holds leniently, does he laugh at one who teaches stringently?

Rather, he must have laughed for a different reason, as it was taught in a baraita: Flowing rivers and streaming springs are like the feet of all people, as the water did not acquire residence in any particular spot. Consequently, one who draws water from rivers and springs may carry it wherever he is permitted to walk, even if it had previously been located outside his Shabbat limit. According to Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, the same halakha should apply to the water in the ditch.

The Gemara rejects this argument: No proof can be brought from this ruling concerning rivers and springs, as perhaps we are dealing here with a ditch of still, collected water that belongs exclusively to the residents of that particular place.
A ditch requires it, but there is no remedy – רְשֵׁי כּוּרִים וְאֵין קְוֶלֶל. This expression appears in several places. The point is that when the Gemara uses the word requires it does not always mean that doing so is necessarily feasible in practice. Rather, it occasionally means that in principle a certain action is necessary. However, since it is impossible to perform that action, the matter in question remains prohibited.

HALAKHA

To walk and to carry – רָחָבוּ עַד נְפֵי אָמָה שֶׁל בַּרְזֶל לְהַ׳ְסִי וֹד וּמַאי שְׁנָא. All people are permitted to walk and to carry objects within four cubits in the public domain, under all circumstances. However, the early and later commentaries dispute the exact measurement of these four cubits. With regard to walking, some authorities teach that the four cubits are measured with the person located at their center (Rema, citing the Tur). This ruling is in accordance with the statement of Rabbi Eliezer in the beginning of this mishna, which is the statement by the unattributed tanna cited before Rabbi Yehuda. Rabbi Eliezer states that since a total of four cubits are permitted, only two cubits are permitted in each direction (Magen Avraham, see the Vilna Gaon). The Rema, citing Rabbi Zerarya Ha-Levi and the Rashba, rules that he may walk four cubits in each direction, meaning that his limit is eight by eight cubits. This is in accordance with the opinion of the first tanna who disagrees with Rabbi Yehuda, who is lenient. With regard to carrying, four cubits and their diagonal are permitted (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 327:1).

Rather, Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, must have laughed for a different reason, because Rabbi Hiiya taught in his baraita that the ditch requires an iron partition to divide it into two separate sections. Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, argued: Why is a partition of reeds different, that we should say it is not effective in that case? Apparently, it is because water enters it and passes from one limit to the other. But this is difficult, as even in the case of a partition of iron, water enters it and passes from one limit to another, as it cannot be hermetically sealed. If so, what does the iron accomplish that the reeds do not accomplish?

The Gemara raises a difficulty: Perhaps the baraita is saying as follows: A water-filled ditch that lies between two Shabbat limits requires an iron partition to divide it into two separate sections. But there is no remedy, because it is impossible to hermetically seal a partition of that kind, and therefore its water may not be used.

Rather, you must say that Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, laughed at Rabbi Hiiya's teaching for a different reason, because the Sages were lenient with regard to water. The Rabbis said that a minimal partition suffices in the case of water. Consequently, there should be no need for an iron partition.

This is similar to the case involving Rabbi Tavla, as Rabbi Tavla asked of Rav: Does a suspended partition, i.e., a partition that is suspended and does not reach the ground, permit carrying in a ruin? Do we say that the remnants of the walls that are suspended in the air are considered as though they descend to the ground and close off the area, so that it is regarded as a private domain?

Rav said to him: A suspended partition of this kind permits carrying only in the case of water, as the Sages were lenient with regard to water. Just as the Sages were lenient about water with respect to a suspended partition, so too they should be lenient here and not require an iron partition; rather, a minimal partition should suffice, even one made of reeds.

The mishna taught: And the Rabbis say that if a person is sleeping at the onset of Shabbat and has no intention of acquiring residence in his location, he has only four cubits, whereas Rabbi Yehuda says he can walk four cubits in any direction he chooses. The Gemara asks: What is the dispute? The opinion of Rabbi Yehuda is the same as that of the first tanna, i.e., the Rabbis.

Rava said: There is a practical difference between them, as the Rabbis permit him to carry in an area of eight by eight cubits. Rabbi Yehuda maintains that he has only four cubits, in the direction of his choosing, whereas according to the Rabbis he has four cubits in every direction, which totals an area of eight by eight cubits. That was also taught explicitly in a baraita: He has eight by eight cubits; this is the statement of Rabbi Meir, which is the opinion of the Rabbis of the mishna.

And Rava further stated: This dispute between Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yehuda relates only to walking, but as for carrying objects, all agree that to carry them four cubits is indeed permitted; but to carry them more than that is not.

The Gemara inquires about the basis of this law: These four cubits within which a person is always permitted to walk on Shabbat, where are they written in the Torah?

The Gemara answers: As it was taught in a baraita: The verse “Remain every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day” (Exodus 16:29), means one must restrict his movement to an area equal to his place. And how much is the area of his place? A person’s body typically measures three cubits, and an additional cubit is needed in order to allow him to spread out his hands and feet, this is the statement of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehuda says: A person’s body measures three cubits, and an additional cubit is needed in order to allow him to pick up an object from under his feet and place it under his head, meaning, to give him room to maneuver.
The Gemara asks: What is the practical difference between them? The Gemara answers: There is a practical difference between them in that Rabbi Yehuda provides him with exactly four cubits but no more; whereas Rabbi Meir maintains that we do not restrict him in this manner, but rather he is provided with expansive cubits, i.e., enough room to spread out his hands and feet, which measures slightly more than four cubits.

Rav Mesharshiya said to his son: When you come before Rav Pappa, inquire of him as follows: The four cubits [amamot] mentioned here, do we grant them to each person measured according to his own forearm [amma], i.e., the distance from his elbow to the tip of his index finger, or do we measure them according to the cubit [amma] used for consecrated property, i.e., a standard cubit of six medium handbreadths for everyone?

If he said to you that we provide him four cubits measured according to the standard cubit used for consecrated property, what will be with regard to Og, king of the Bashan, who is much larger than this? And if he said to you that we provide him four cubits measured according to his own forearm, say to him: Why was this halakha not taught together with the other matters whose measures are determined by the specific measure of the person involved, in the mishna that teaches: These are matters with regard to which they stated measures all in accordance with the specific measure of the person involved. This means that the measures are not fixed, but rather change in accordance with the person in question. If the four cubits are measured according to each person’s forearm, this law should have been included in the mishna.

When Rav Mesharshiya’s son came before Rav Pappa, the latter said to him: Were we to be so precise, we would not be able to learn anything at all, as we would be too busy answering such questions.

In fact, we grant him four cubits measured according to his own forearm. And as for that which was difficult for you, why was this law not taught in the mishna that teaches: These are matters with regard to which they stated measures all in accordance with the specific measure of the person involved? It is because this law is not absolutely clear-cut. It occasionally must be adjusted, since there may be a person whose limbs are small in relation to his body. With regard to such a person, we do not measure four cubits according to the size of his own forearm, but rather by the standard cubits used for consecrated property.

The mishna taught: If there were two people positioned in a way that part of the four cubits of the one were subsumed within the four cubits of the other, they each may bring food and eat together in the shared area in the middle. Rabbi Shimón likened this case to that of three courtyards that open one into another, where the two outer courtyards established an eiruv with the middle one. The Gemara asks: Why does Rabbi Shimón need to offer an analogy and say: To what may this be likened, and thus connect our case to a different issue?

The Gemara explains: This is what Rabbi Shimón said to the Rabban: After all, to what is this similar? To three courtyards that open one into another, and that also open into a public domain. What is different there that you disagree with me and say that it is prohibited to carry from any one courtyard to any other, and what is different here that you do not disagree with me?

And how do the Rabbis reply? There the residents of the courtyards are numerous, and some might come to carry objects in a place where it is prohibited to do so; whereas here the residents are not numerous, and a mere three people can warn each other against Shabbat desecration.
The mishna taught: If the residents of the two outer courtyards established an eiruv with the middle one, it is permitted to carry from the middle one to the two outer ones, and it is permitted to carry from the outer ones to the middle one. And it is prohibited to carry from one of the two outer courtyards to the other, as they did not establish a joint eiruv. The Gemara asks: Why is it prohibited? Since the residents of the outer courtyards established an eiruv with the middle one, they are as one, and consequently, they should all be permitted with one another.

Rav Yehuda said: The mishna is referring to a case where the two outer courtyards did not place their eiruv in the middle courtyard; rather, to a case where the residents of the middle courtyard placed its first eiruv in this courtyard and its second eiruv in that courtyard, so that the eiruv of each of the other courtyards is not in the middle courtyard.

And Rav Sheshet said: Even if you say that the residents of each of the outer courtyards placed their eiruv in the middle courtyard, they are still not considered a single courtyard, as we are dealing with a case where they placed each eiruv in two separate houses, and consequently the two outer courtyards do not join together and become as one.\(^1\)

The Gemara asks: In accordance with whose opinion did Rav Sheshet state that an eiruv placed in two houses, even within the same courtyard, does not join the houses together? He must have said this in accordance with the opinion of Beit Shammai, as it was taught in a baraita: With regard to five people who collected their eiruv and placed it in two separate utensils, even in a single house, Beit Shammai say: Their eiruv is not a valid eiruv, as the two parts of the eiruv have not been deposited in the same place, and Beit Hillel say: Their eiruv is a valid eiruv as long as the entire eiruv was deposited in a single domain.

The Gemara rejects this argument: Even if you say that this is in accordance with the opinion of Beit Hillel, Beit Hillel may have stated their opinion only there, with regard to two utensils that are located in one house and consequently, they join together. However, if the two utensils are located in two separate houses, even Beit Hillel agree that the eiruv is not valid.

Rav Aha, son of Rav Ayya, said to Rav Ashi: The explanation of Rav Yehuda is difficult\(^2\) and the explanation of Rav Sheshet is difficult. The explanation of Rav Yehuda is difficult, as he said that it is speaking about a case where the middle courtyard established its first eiruv in the one courtyard and its second eiruv in the other courtyard. However, once the middle courtyard establishes an eiruv with one of the outer ones, they are regarded as one, so that when it later establishes an eiruv with the other outer courtyard, it acts also on behalf of the first outer courtyard, as both of them are treated like a single courtyard.

And the explanation of Rav Sheshet is difficult. Since the two outer courtyards placed their respective eiruvin in the middle courtyard, all are regarded as residents of the middle courtyard. And since each of the outer courtyards placed its eiruv in a different house, the case should be treated like that of five people who lived in the same courtyard, one of whom forgot and did not join the eiruv, where they all prohibit one another to carry in the courtyard. Similarly in this case, all should be prohibited to carry in the middle courtyard, the residents of the middle courtyard as well as the residents of the outer courtyards.
Rav Ashi said to him: It is not difficult according to the explanation of Rav Yehuda and it is not difficult according to the explanation of Rav Sheshet. It is not difficult according to the explanation of Rav Yehuda, since the residents of the middle courtyard established an eiruv with each of the two outer courtyards, and the residents of the two outer courtyards did not establish an eiruv with one another. The residents of each of the outer courtyards indicated that it desired to join with the middle courtyard, but did not desire to join with the other outer courtyard. Since the residents of the outer courtyards demonstrated that they did not want to join together and form a common eiruv, they cannot be forced to do so.

And it is not difficult according to the explanation of Rav Sheshet. If they said that the people living in the outer courtyards are considered as residents of the middle courtyard as a leniency, so that they should be permitted to carry in the middle courtyard, does this mean that they will say that they are considered residents of the middle courtyard also as a stringency, so that they should be prohibited from carrying in the middle courtyard as if they live there?

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: This statement in the mishna, that objects may be carried from either of the outer courtyards into the middle courtyard and also from the middle courtyard into either of the outer courtyards, is the statement of, i.e., in accordance with the opinion of, Rabbi Shimon. But the Rabbis say: One domain serves two domains. That is to say, it is permitted to carry objects from either of the outer courtyards into the inner one, as no prohibition is imposed upon the outer courtyards, given that both established an eiruv with the middle courtyard. But two domains do not serve one domain, meaning that it is prohibited to carry objects from the middle courtyard into either of the two outer courtyards. The utensils of the middle courtyard are drawn after the other two, meaning that were he to bring them into one of the outer courtyards, he would be regarded as having removed them from the other.

Rav Yehuda relates: When I recited this teaching before Shmuel, he said to me:

This teaching, that carrying objects from either of the outer courtyards into the middle courtyard is permitted, is also the statement of, i.e., in accordance with, the opinion of Rabbi Shimon. But the Rabbis say: All three courtyards are prohibited, that is to say, carrying is prohibited from any of the courtyards to any of the others.

It was taught in a baraita in accordance with the opinion of Rav Yehuda, in accordance with the opinion of Shmuel. Rabbi Shimon said: To what is this comparable? It is comparable to three courtyards that open into one another, and that also open into a public domain. If the two outer courtyards established an eiruv with the middle one, a resident of one of the outer courtyards may bring food from a house in that courtyard and eat it in the middle courtyard, and likewise a resident of the other courtyard may bring food from a house in that courtyard and eat it in the middle courtyard. And similarly, this resident may bring leftovers from the house where he ate back into the house in that courtyard, and that resident may bring leftovers from the house where he ate back into the house in this courtyard.

However, the Rabbis say: All three courtyards are prohibited. Since the residents of the outer courtyards are prohibited to carry from one outer courtyard to the other, this results in a place where carrying is prohibited, and such a place prohibits carrying in all three courtyards.