

דָּרְסֵי רִיחֵיהֶוּ שְׂבִיבָה לְהוֹ וְנִפְיָהּ.

their odor grows offensive^N over time, one abandons the *sukka* and exits. It is inappropriate to establish a *sukka* in which it is impossible to remain.

אָמַר רַב חֲנַן בַּר רַבָּא: הֵינִי הַיּוֹמִי וְהֵינִי מְסַבְּכִין בְּהוּ. אַבְיֵי אָמַר: בְּהַיּוֹמִי מְסַבְּכִין, בְּהַיּוֹמִי לֹא מְסַבְּכִין. מֵאֵי טַעְמָא – בֵּינָן דְּנִתְרֵי טַרְפֵּיהוּ שְׂבִיבָה לְהוֹ וְנִפְיָהּ.

Similarly, Rav Ḥanan bar Rava said: With regard to these thorns^B and shrubs,^B one may roof the *sukka* with them. Abaye said: With thorns, one may roof his *sukka*; with shrubs, one may not roof his *sukka*.^H What is the reason for this distinction? Since their leaves fall over time and they are apt to fall into the food and disturb those in the *sukka*, one abandons the *sukka* and exits.

אָמַר רַב גִּידֵל אָמַר רַב: הָאֵי אֶפְקוּתָא דְּדִיקְלָא מְסַבְּכִין בְּהוּ: אֶף עַל גַּב דְּאֶגְדֵי – אֶגְדֵי בְּיַדֵי שְׂמִימִים לֹא שְׂמִימָא אֶגְדֵי. אֶף עַל גַּב דְּהָדָר אֶגְדֵי לְהוּ – אֶגְדֵי בְּחֵד לֹא שְׂמִימָא אֶגְדֵי.

Rav Giddel said that Rav said: With regard to this offshoot of the trunk of the palm tree, from which several branches emerge; one may roof the *sukka* with it. Although the branches are naturally bound, a binding at the hand of Heaven is not considered a binding. Furthermore, although one then binds the branches together at the end removed from the trunk, where they grow apart into separate branches, and roofs with them, the *sukka* is fit, since if one binds a bundle that is already bound into one unit it is not considered a binding.

אָמַר רַב חֲסֵדָא אָמַר רַבִּינָא בַר שִׁילָא: הֵינִי דוֹקְרֵי דְקִנֵּי מְסַבְּכִין בְּהוּ. אֶף עַל גַּב דְּאֶגְדֵי נִינְהוּ – אֶגְדֵי בְּיַדֵי שְׂמִימִים לֹא שְׂמִימָא אֶגְדֵי. אֶף עַל גַּב דְּהָדָר אֶגְדֵי לְהוּ – אֶגְדֵי בְּחֵד לֹא שְׂמִימָא אֶגְדֵי.

Likewise, Rav Ḥisda said that Ravina bar Sheila said: With regard to these offshoots of reeds,^H one may roof the *sukka* with them. Although the branches are naturally bound, a binding at the hand of Heaven is not considered a binding. Furthermore, although one then binds the reeds together at the other end, the *sukka* is fit, since if one binds a bundle that is already bound into one unit it is not considered a binding.

תַּנְיָא נְמִי הָבִי: קִנֵּי וְדוֹקְרֵי מְסַבְּכִין בְּהוּ. קִנֵּי פְּשִׁיטָא! אֵימָא: קִנֵּי שְׁלֵ דוֹקְרֵי מְסַבְּכִין בְּהוּ.

The Gemara notes that this opinion is also taught in a *baraita*: With regard to reeds and spades, one may roof a *sukka* with them. The Gemara asks: The fact that one may roof his *sukka* with reeds is obvious. After all, they meet all the criteria of fit roofing. Rather, say: With regard to these offshoots of reeds, one may roof the *sukka* with them.

NOTES

Their odor grows offensive, etc. – סָרֵי רִיחֵיהֶוּ וּבִי: The Ritva and the Ran write that while the cases of unfit roofing here may be similar, there is a distinction between wormwood and shrubs. Those items that are unfit due to their bad smell may not be used to build the walls of the *sukka* either, because odor is problematic regardless of where they are found in the *sukka*, while those unfit because they fall into one's food may be used in constructing the walls.

HALAKHA

Items with which it is prohibited to roof *ab initio* – הַדְּבָרִים הַאֲסוּרִים לְכַתְּחִילָה לְסִבּוֹךְ: There are certain materials that the Sages prohibited to use as roofing for the *sukka*, *ab initio*, e.g., plants with a foul odor or plants whose leaves tend to fall, lest they cause people to leave the *sukka*. If the odor is so pungent that one cannot tolerate it at all, then it is prohibited even by Torah law (*Peri Megadim*; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim* 629:14).

Offshoots of reeds – קִנֵּי הַדוֹקְרֵי: The legal status of reeds that emerge from a single stalk, even if they are tied at the opposite end, is not that of a bundle. They may be used for roofing the *sukka* (*Shulhan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim* 629:15).

BACKGROUND

Thorns [*hizmei*] – הַיּוֹמִי: *Hizmei* may be what is known today as *Ononis antiquorum* L. from the Papilionaceae family. The ononis, or restharrow, is a thorny plant reaching about 75 cm high. Its leaves are primarily clover shaped, and its thorny branches branch out to the sides. It is common in fields and along streams.

Shrubs – הַיּוֹמִי: The common camelthorn, *Alhagi maurorum*, is a thorny plant with plain, rounded leaves. It usually reaches 30 cm high, but there are some that reach a height of 1 m. It can be found in fields and salt flats.



Above: Camelthorn
Left: Restharrow

NOTES

With these... a person fulfills his obligation on Passover – יוצא בקנה ידיו חובתו בפסח: The Me'iri asked: Since the halakha does not mandate use of a specific species of vegetable for the fulfillment of the mitzva of the bitter herbs on Passover, why is there a discussion about the bitter herb of the marsh? He answered that while one seeking to fulfill his obligation may indeed use a wide variety of vegetables, here the Gemara is referring to one who seeks to use the species of bitter herbs specifically mentioned in the Torah. The question is if bitter herbs of the marsh fall into that category.

Whose name was differentiated – שגשגתה שמם: The difference between the opinions of Abaye and Rava is apparently whether or not bitter herbs of the marsh are truly a unique species. Abaye holds that although they are a unique species, the Torah did not distinguish between different species. Rava views them as a standard type of bitter herb, and the special name is due only to where they grow.

Mitzva of hyssop – מצות אֵזוֹב: Tosafot explain that with regard to the hyssop required for sprinkling the waters of purification, there is no requirement to use a bundle. That requirement is derived by verbal analogy from the hyssop used on Passover in Egypt, where the verse states: "A bundle of hyssop" (Exodus 12:22). There are apparently two separate derivations drawn from the bundle of hyssop: One is that more than one stalk is required, and the second is that they must be bound. The Rabbis held that the derivation concerning the number of stalks is a full-fledged verbal analogy from which Torah law is derived. The derivation with regard to the fact that the stalks must be bound is a mere support, but not a full-fledged derivation, and it is required by rabbinic law (Kesef Mishne).

Three stalks – שלשה קלחים: The commentaries explained that it must have the roots as well as the central stem emerging from the roots. And as long as any part of this central stem remains, that is considered the stump of the hyssop, and it remains fit for sprinkling.

HALAKHA

Plants fit for use as hyssop – צמחים הכשרים לאֵזוֹב: One may use only the species called merely hyssop for sprinkling the waters of purification. Those known as hyssop from Greece, stibium hyssop, desert hyssop, etc., are unfit, as per the mishna cited in the Gemara (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhoh Para Aduma 11:5).

Bitter herbs of the marsh – מרריתא דאגמא: One fulfills his obligation on Passover by using bitter herbs of the marsh, despite its unique name. The Torah did not specify the species of bitter herb but permitted the use of any vegetable with the requisite characteristics, as explained in tractate Pesachim (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 473:5).

A binding of two – אגוד בשנים: If one tied reeds emerging from one stalk together and added another unconnected reed, even if there are fewer than twenty-five units, it is unfit because its legal status is that of a bundle. This ruling is in accordance with the opinion of Rav Hsida, who ruled in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 629:15).

The mitzva of hyssop... stems – מצות גבעולי האזוב: The mitzva of hyssop requires three plants, each with a stem. If they wilted and only two are left, it is still fit. If one tied only two together, it is also fit, after the fact, in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhoh Para Aduma 11:4).

ואמר רב חסדא אמר רבינא בר שילא: הני מרריתא דאגמא אדם יוצא בקנה ידיו חובתו בפסח.

מיתביה: אזוב, ולא אזוב יון, ולא אזוב בוחלי, ולא אזוב מדברי, ולא אזוב רומי, ולא אזוב שיש לו שם לווי!

אמר אביי: כל שגשגתה שמו קודם מתן תורה, ובאתה תורה והקפידה עליה – בידוע שיש לו שם לווי, והני לא נשתנה שמיהו קודם מתן תורה כלל.

רבא אמר: הני מרריתא סתמא שמיהו, והאי דקרי להו מרריתא דאגמא – משום דמשתבח באגמא.

אמר רב חסדא: אגוד בחד – לא שמיה אגוד, שלש – שמיה אגוד, שנים – מחלוקת רבי יוסי ורבנן. דתנן: מצות אזוב – שלשה קלחים ובהן שלשה גבעולין, רבי יוסי אומר: מצות אזוב שלשה גבעולין, ושיריו שנים, וגרדומיו כל שהוא.

§ Apropos the above halakha, the Gemara cites another statement that Rav Hsida said that Ravina bar Sheila said: With these bitter herbs of a marsh, a person fulfills his obligation on Passover.^N

The Gemara raises an objection to his opinion. With regard to every mitzva that requires use of hyssop, one takes standard hyssop^B and neither a hyssop that grows in Greece, nor stibium hyssop, nor desert hyssop, nor Roman hyssop, nor any other kind of hyssop whose name is accompanied by a modifier.^H The same should hold true for the mitzva of bitter herbs; bitter herbs of the marsh, whose name is accompanied by a modifier, are not the bitter herbs mentioned in the Torah.

Abaye said in response: There is a distinction between the cases. Every species whose name was differentiated^N prior to the giving of the Torah, i.e., the distinction between its different subspecies predated the Revelation at Sinai, and the Torah then came and was particular about one specific subspecies, it is known that the species has other subspecies identified with a modifier that are unfit for use in fulfilling the mitzva. And these bitter herbs, their names were not differentiated prior to the giving of the Torah at all; all the subspecies were known simply as bitter herbs. Therefore, when the Torah requires bitter herbs, one may fulfill the mitzva with all subspecies of bitter herbs.

Rava said a different explanation. Actually, the name of this plant is merely bitter herbs without a modifier. And the fact that one calls them bitter herbs of the marsh^H is because they are typically found in the marsh. Therefore, there is no reason that they may not be used to fulfill the mitzva on Passover.

§ Rav Hsida said: If one bound one item, even if he did so with a knot, it is not considered a binding. If one bound three items together, everyone agrees that it is considered a binding. If one bound two^H items, it is the subject of a dispute between Rabbi Yosei and the Rabbis, as we learned in a mishna: With regard to all matters that involve the mitzva of hyssop,^N the requirement is to have three stalks^N with their roots, and on them three stems, one on each stalk. Rabbi Yosei says: The mitzva of hyssop fundamentally requires three stems.^H If the bundle of hyssop was rendered incomplete, its remnants are fit for use with two stems. If all the stems broke, the hyssop is fit for use, as long as the stumps of its central stem remain any size.

BACKGROUND

Hyssop – אֵזוֹב: Although the Sages themselves did not come to a definitive conclusion about the identity of this plant mentioned in the Torah, it seems from the various descriptions they provided that it is most likely the common hyssop, Majorana syriaca L. The hyssop is an aromatic bush ranging from 50–100 cm high. It branches out from its base, and its branches are hard and woody. Erect stems, which dry and wither in the winter, grow from these branches annually. White flower buds cluster at the ends of the branches of the bush. The plant can be found growing in rocky terrain throughout the Middle East. The dry hyssop leaves are used as a spice, and they are a primary ingredient in the well-known spice mixture z'atar.



Hyssop

קא סלקא דעתין: מדשיריו שנים – תחילתו נמי שנים, והאי דקתני שלשה – למצוה. ומדרבי יוסי שלשה למצוה, לרבנן שלשה לעבב.

והתניא, רבי יוסי אומר: אזור תחילתו שנים ושיריו אחד – פסול, ואינו כשר עד שיהא תחילתו שלשה ושיריו שנים! איפוך, לרבי יוסי שלשה לעבב, לרבנן שלשה למצוה.

והתניא: אזור תחילתו שנים ושיריו אחד – כשר, ואינו פסול עד שיהא תחילתו ושיריו אחד.

שיריו אחד פסול? הא אמרת שיריו אחד כשר!

It enters our minds to say: From the fact that Rabbi Yosei said that for the bundle of hyssop to be fit for the mitzva after the fact its remnants are two, apparently its origins were also two stalks. And the fact that the mishna teaches that the binding includes three plants, that is the requirement for the mitzva to be performed *ab initio*. And from the fact that Rabbi Yosei requires three plants only for the mitzva to be performed *ab initio*, conclude that the Rabbis, who disagree with him, hold that failure to include three stalks in the bundle renders it unfit for the mitzva. Apparently, the Rabbis and Rabbi Yosei dispute whether it is two or three items that are necessary to be considered a binding.

The Gemara questions that understanding of the dispute. But wasn't it taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Yosei said: With regard to the hyssop bundle, if its origins were two stalks and its remnants are one, it is unfit. And it is fit only when its origins were three and its remnants are two. Rather, reverse the opinions in the mishna: According to Rabbi Yosei, failure to include three stalks in the bundle renders it unfit for the mitzva; according to the Rabbis, three is the requirement for the mitzva to be performed *ab initio*.

The Gemara cites a *baraita* supporting this understanding. And this was taught in a *baraita*: With regard to the hyssop bundle, if its origins were two stalks and its remnants are one, it is fit. And it is unfit only when its origins and its remnants are one. Clearly, this is the opinion of the Rabbis.

The Gemara questions the end of the *baraita*: If its remnants are one, it is unfit? Didn't you say in the first clause of the *baraita* that if its remnants are one it is fit?

Perek I

Daf 13 Amud b

אלא אימא: עד שתהא תחלתו כשיריו אחד.

דרש מרימר: הני איסורייתא דסורא מסככין בהו, אף על גב דאגזן – למננא בעלמא הוא דאגזן.

אמר רבי אבא: הני צריפי דאורבני, בין שוההנה ראשי מעדנים שלהן – כשרין. והא אגדי מתתאי! אמר רב פפא: דשרי להו.

Rather, emend the *baraita* and say: It is unfit only when its origins, like its remnants, are one.

Mareimar taught: With regard to these bundles of reeds from Sura^B that are bound for sale, one may roof the *sukka* with them. Although the seller bound them,^H he bound them merely to ascertain the number more readily, and they will not remain bound.

Rabbi Abba said: With regard to these huts made of willow branches,^{BN} once their upper ties holding them together are undone, they are fit roofing. The Gemara asks: But aren't they still tied from below? Rav Pappa said: Rabbi Abba is referring to a case where he unties them from below as well.

BACKGROUND

Sura – סורא: Sura was a town in southern Babylonia. Sura was not an important Jewish community until the great *amora*, Rav, moved there and established the yeshiva of Sura (c. 220 CE). From that point until the end of geonic period (c. 1000 CE), Sura was a major Torah center. Under the leadership of Rav and his closest disciples, the yeshiva of Sura was influenced by the halakhic traditions of Eretz Yisrael and renowned for its unique approach to Torah study. Among the great scholars and leaders of Sura were Rav, Rav Huna, Rav Hisda, Ravina, and Rav Ashi. The editing of the Babylonian Talmud was primarily undertaken in Sura. There was another city of the same name, and in order to distinguish between them the other city was called Sura on the Euphrates.

Huts made of willow branches – צריפי דאורבני:



Depiction of long, flexible willow branches woven into a tent-like hut, tied at the top and woven at the bottom

HALAKHA

חבילות שקושרים למכירה – תבילות שקושרים למכירה: These are not considered bundles for halakhic purposes, and therefore they may be used for roofing the *sukka*. This is because they are tied only to facilitate their sale, and the customer typically unties them immediately after the purchase (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim 629:16*).

NOTES

צריפי דאורבני – צריפי דאורבני: Some explain that these huts are simple, inclined roofs made from a weave of willow branches, which roof the houses of the poor (*Arukh*). Rashi and others record that these are actually willows woven into a cage-like hut in which hunters hide. The common denominator between these two views is that the branches are held together. They are not merely tied together, but they are braided together, so that even after the knots are untied the branches remain connected.

אֲגַד שְׂאִינוֹ – A binding that is not destined to be moved – **עֵשׂוּי לְטַלְטֵל**: A bundle that cannot be carried does not have the legal status of a bundle, even if it is tied at both ends. Consequently, one may use it to roof a *sukka* (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 629:15*).

סִכַּךְ הַמְמַהֵר לְהִתְיַבֵּשׁ – Roofing made from vegetables that dry quickly is unfit roofing. Food items are unfit for roofing because they are susceptible to impurity, but the measure of food that renders the *sukka* unfit is four handbreadths as is the case with all unfit roofing. Three handbreadths of these vegetables render the *sukka* unfit, like airspace, due to their tendency to wither and crumble (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 629:12*).

Harvesting grain for roofing a *sukka* with regard to ritual impurity – הַקּוֹצֵר לְסִכַּךְ לְעֵמִין טוֹמְאָה: If one harvests stalks of grain to roof the *sukka* and, all the more so, if one harvests grapes for the winepress, the handles of the grain are not susceptible to ritual impurity. This ruling is in accordance with the opinion of Rav Menashya, who, based on the discussion of the Gemara, appears to hold in accordance with the opinion of the first *tanna* (*Kesef Mishneh*). Alternatively, it is possible to explain Rav Menashya's opinion is in accordance with all opinions (*Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Tumat Okhalin 5:6–7*).

וְאָמַר רַב הוּנָא בְּרִיהַ דְּרַב יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: אֲפִילוּ תִּימָא דְּלֹא שְׂרִי לְהוּ, כֹּל אֲגַד שְׂאִינוֹ עֵשׂוּי לְטַלְטֵלוּ – לֹא שְׂמִיָּה אֲגַד.

אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָא אָמַר שְׂמוּאֵל: יִרְקוֹת שְׂאֲמְרוּ חֲכָמִים אָדָם יוֹצֵא בְּהֵן יָדָי חוֹבְתוֹ בְּפֶסֶח – מִבִּיאִין אֶת הַטּוֹמְאָה, וְאִין חוֹצְצִין בְּפָנֵי הַטּוֹמְאָה, וְפוֹסְלִין בְּסוּבָה מְשׁוּם אֲוִיר. מֵאֵי טַעְמָא – בֵּינן דְּלָכִי יָבִשׁוּ פְּרָכֵי וְנִפְּלוּ, כִּמְאֵן דְּלִיתְנָהוּ דְּמִי.

וְאָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָא אָמַר רַב הוּנָא: הַבּוֹצֵר לֶגֶת – אִין לוֹ יָדוֹת.

וְרַב מְנַשְׁיָא בַר גַּדָּא אָמַר רַב הוּנָא: הַקּוֹצֵר לְסִכַּךְ אִין לוֹ יָדוֹת.

מֵאֵן דְּאָמַר קוֹצֵר – כֹּל שְׂכָן בּוֹצֵר, דְּלֹא מִחָא לִיהַ דְּלֹא נִמְצְיָה לְחִמְרִיהַ. מֵאֵן דְּאָמַר בּוֹצֵר שְׂאִין לוֹ יָדוֹת, אֲבָל קוֹצֵר – יֵשׁ לוֹ יָדוֹת, דְּמִחָא לִיהַ דְּלִיסְכַּךְ בְּהוּ, כִּי הִיכִי דְּלֹא לִיבְדִירן.

Rav Huna, son of Rav Yehoshua, said: Even if you say that Rabbi Abba is referring to a case where one does not untie them from below, they are fit for *sukka* roofing, as any binding that is not destined to be moved^d is not considered a binding. Since these huts are untied from above, were one to attempt to move them, they would fall apart.

Rabbi Abba said that Shmuel said: With regard to vegetables about which the Sages said:ⁿ One fulfills his obligation to eat bitter herbs on Passover, if they are spread over a source of ritual impurity imparted by a corpse, they transmit ritual impurity,ⁿ and the impurity spreads to objects beneath them. And, nevertheless, the Sages decreed that they do not serve as a barrier before the spread of ritual impurity. The impurity breaches roofing made of these vegetables and rises upward, as if there were no covering over it. If one roofs a *sukka* with these vegetables, it is as if they were not there at all, and they render a *sukka* unfit due to the unfitness of airspace.ⁿ Just as three handbreadths of airspace in the roofing renders a *sukka* unfit, so too, three handbreadths of these vegetables in the roofing renders a *sukka* unfit. What is the reason for this *halakha*? Since when they dry^h they crumble and fall, even while fresh, they are as one that is not there.

Apropos the statements of Rabbi Abba, the Gemara cites another. Rabbi Abba said that Rav Huna said: In the case of one who harvests bunches of grapes for the winepress, these bunches do not have handles.ⁿ The stems, which connect the grapes to the clusters, are not required for the production of wine. Therefore, their legal status is not that of a handle in terms of ritual impurity; they are merely waste. Consequently, if these stems come into contact with a source of ritual impurity, they do not become impure and they do not transmit impurity to the attached grapes.

And Rav Menashya bar Gadda said that Rav Huna said: In the case of one who harvests grain for roofing a *sukka*,^h the grain has no handles. The legal status of the straw is not that of a handle for the grain. Since his interest is roofing his *sukka*, he wants only the straw, which is fit roofing, and not the grain, which is unfit. Therefore, in this context, the straw does not facilitate moving the grain.

The Gemara notes: The one who said that in the case of one who harvests grain, the straw is not a handle, all the more so would he say so in the case of one who harvests grapes, since the stems are not suitable for his needs. Stems are not wanted in the winepress, so that they will not absorb wine. By contrast, the one who said in the case of one who harvests grapes that it has no handles, he said so only in that case; however, in the case of one who harvests grain, he would say that it has handles, since the grain attached to the straw is suitable for his needs. He can roof the *sukka* with them and weigh down the straw, so that it does not scatter in the wind.

NOTES

Vegetables about which the Sages said – יִרְקוֹת שְׂאֲמְרוּ חֲכָמִים: There are several common aspects to the vegetables the Sages enumerated as fit for the mitzva of bitter herbs. First, they are not typically eaten; they are eaten only in unusual circumstances. Furthermore, they each have quick-drying moisture, causing the vegetable to dry and crumble faster than other vegetables.

Transmit ritual impurity – מִבִּיאִין אֶת הַטּוֹמְאָה: Some of the early authorities have a variant reading of the text: They do not transmit ritual impurity (*Rid; Me'iri*; and others). According to this reading, the Gemara is more easily understood: Since these branches do not last long, their legal status from the outset is of something not there at all, even with regard to the *halakhot* of

ritual impurity. However, according to the version: They transmit ritual impurity (*Rashi; Tosafot; Ritva*), the Sages issued a decree that as long as they are moist they transmit impurity, despite the fact that by Torah law a dried vegetable does not transmit ritual impurity.

And they render a *sukka* unfit due to the unfitness of airspace – וְפוֹסְלִין בְּסוּבָה מְשׁוּם אֲוִיר: The Ran holds that they are unfit by Torah law since clearly they are not fit to last for the seven days of the Festival.

Handles – יָדוֹת: The *halakhot* of handles are discussed at length in tractate *Okatzin*, the final tractate in the order of *Teharot*. Essentially, any item that grows from the ground and is not

a vessel or utensil is susceptible to ritual impurity provided it meets two criteria: It must be fit for consumption by people and water must have been poured on it intentionally.

Typically, food comes with shells, peels, small branches, and the like attached to it. At times, these attachments are considered part of the food both in terms of the minimum requisite measure to become ritually impure and in terms of transmitting ritual impurity to the food. There are two primary attachments that fall into this category: Protection and handles. Protection is attached to the food and preserves it. Handles are attachments that facilitate carrying and handling the food. Halakhic discussions address the precise specifications of the handles along with the circumstances in which they become ritually impure.

נִמְא דְרַב מְנַשְׁיָא בַר גַּדָּא תְנַאי הִיא, דְתַנַּאי: סוֹכֵי תַאנִּים וְבִהֵן תַאנִּים, פְּרִיָלִין וְבִהֵן עֲנָבִים, קִשְׁיִין וְבִהֵן שְׂבִילִים, מַכְבְּדוֹת וְבִהֵן תְּמָרִים, כּוּלָן אִם פְּסוּלֵת מְרֻבָּה עַל הָאוֹכְלִין – כְּשֶׁרָה, וְאִם לֹא – פְּסוּלָה. אַחֲרֵים אוֹמְרִים: עַד שֶׁיְהִי קִשְׁיִין מְרֻבֵּין עַל הַיְדוּת וְעַל הָאוֹכְלִין.

מֵאֵי לָאוּ בְהָא קָא מִפְּלִגִי דְמַר סָבַר: יֵשׁ לְהֵן יְדוּת, וְמַר סָבַר: אֵין לְהֵן יְדוּת.

לְרַבֵּי אָבָא – וְדַאי תְנַאי הִיא, לְרַב מְנַשְׁיָא בַר גַּדָּא מִי לִימָא תְנַאי הִיא? אָמַר לֵךְ רַב מְנַשְׁיָא: דְכוּלֵי עֲלֵמָא סָבַר: הַקּוֹצֵר סָבַךְ אֵין לוֹ יְדוּת, וְהַכָּא בְמַאי עֲסָקִין – בְּגוֹן שְׂקוּצָצָן לְאֹכְלֵיהּ, וְנִמְלֵךְ עֲלֵיהֶן לְסִיבוּךְ.

אֵי קוֹצֵצָן לְאֹכְלֵיהּ מֵאֵי טַעֲמֵיהֶּוּ דְרַבְּנָן? וְכִי תִימָא קְסָבְרֵי רַבְּנָן: בֵּין דְנִמְלֵךְ עֲלֵיהֶן לְסִיבוּךְ בְּטָלָה לִיָּהּ מִחֲשֻׁבָּתוֹ, וְכִי בְטָלָה לִיָּהּ מִחֲשֻׁבָּה בְּהֶבֶי? וְהִתְנַן: כָּל הַכֵּלִים

The Gemara suggests: **Let us say that the statement of Rav Menashya bar Gadda is subject to a dispute between *tanna'im*, as it is taught in a *baraita*: Fig branches,^N and there are figs on them; vines, and there are grapes on them; straw, and there are stalks of grain on them; palm branches,^N and there are dates on them,^H with regard to them all, if the amount of waste is greater than the amount of the food, a *sukka* roofed with them is fit. And if not, the *sukka* is unfit. *Aherim* say: The *sukka* is unfit until the amount of straw is greater than the combined amount of the handbreadth of the handles attached to the food that is susceptible to ritual impurity and the food.**

The Gemara continues: **What, is it not that they disagree with regard to this: That one Sage, *Aherim*, who said that the straw must be greater than the handles as well, holds that the produce designated for roofing have handles; and one Sage, the first *tanna*, who disagrees, holds that they do not have handles?**

The Gemara notes: **According to the opinion of Rabbi Abba, who says that grape clusters harvested for the winepress do not have handles, but grain harvested for roofing does, it is certainly a dispute between *tanna'im*. Clearly, he holds in accordance with the opinion of *Aherim*, who hold that grain harvested for roofing has handles. However, according to the opinion of Rav Menashya bar Gadda, who says that grain harvested for roofing does not have handles, shall we say that it is a dispute between *tanna'im*, and that he holds in accordance with the first *tanna* of the *baraita*? Rav Menashya could have said to you that everyone agrees: With regard to one who harvests grain for roofing, the grain does not have handles. And here in the *baraita*, with what are we dealing? It is a case where one initially cut the stalks for food, and reconsidered his plan for them, and decided to use them for roofing. Since initially, as food, the grain had handles, its status does not change despite his change of intent.**

The Gemara asks: **If he cut them for food, what is the rationale for the opinion of the Rabbis that the grain has no handles? As a rule, grain has handles. And if you say that the Rabbis hold that once he reconsidered his plan for them and decided to use them for roofing, his initial intent was negated and their legal status is like any other inedible roofing, and they consequently have no handles, the Gemara asks: And was his initial intent negated in that manner? Didn't we learn in a mishna: All vessels^H**

NOTES

Roofing with branches of fig trees – סיבוך בסוכי תאנים – These figs and other fruits are not yet susceptible to ritual impurity because water did not fall upon them. Still, since they are food and not in the category of the waste of the threshing floor or the winepress, they are unfit for roofing.

Palm branches – מקבדות – The *ge'onim* explained this term, which also means brooms, in different ways. One explanation is that the dates hang off the branch, creating the appearance of a broom. Another is that after removing the dates from the branch, these branches were actually used as a broom.

HALAKHA

Branches with fruit upon them – ענפים שעליהם פירות – One may roof a *sukka* with fruit-laden branches, provided the inedible portion is greater than the fruit on the branches. If not, one may not roof a *sukka* with them. If one severs the branches for food, the handles of the fruit, i.e., the stems and the small branches attached to the fruit, are considered fruit for the purposes of this calculation. However, if one severs the branches for roofing, the stems and branches are considered branches for the purposes of this calculation. If one severs the branches for fruit and then reconsiders and decides to use the branches for roofing, thought alone is insufficient to alter their status. He must perform an action, e.g., trampling them, in order to negate their status as food (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 629:10).

How vessels contract ritual impurity – כיצד מקבלים כלים – **טומאה**: If a vessel that one deemed complete is capable of serving a purpose in its current state, thought alone renders it a vessel, and it is susceptible to ritual impurity. However, once the object is rendered a vessel, thought alone cannot reverse the process and negate its status as a vessel. The thought must be accompanied by an action that negates the earlier thought, as one thought alone cannot negate a previous thought, and all the more so one thought cannot negate a previous action (*Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhhot Kelim* 8:16).

Perek I
Daf 14 Amud a

יורדין לידי טומאה במחשבה, ואין עולין מטומאתן אלא בשנוי מעשה. מעשה מוציא מיד מעשה ומיד מחשבה, מחשבה אינה מוציאה לא מיד מעשה ולא מיד מחשבה.

descend into their state of ritual impurity by means of thought? Although an unfinished vessel ordinarily cannot become ritually impure, if the craftsman decided to leave it in its unfinished state, it immediately assumes the legal status of a completed vessel and can become ritually impure. **However, they ascend from their state of ritual impurity only by means of a change resulting from an action.** Merely deciding to complete the unfinished vessel does not alter its status. It loses its status as a vessel only when he takes action to complete it. **Action negates status created by action and status created by thought; however, thought negates neither status created by action nor status created by thought.**^N Therefore, once the straw of the grain harvested for food is considered a handle and is susceptible to ritual impurity, its status cannot be negated by thought alone.

NOTES

Thought and action with regard to ritual impurity – מחשבה ומעשה – There is a principle that only finished products can become ritually impure; raw materials cannot. In tractate *Kelim*, numerous details are provided with regard to how to determine the finished stage of any given vessel. However, they apply only when a worker crafts a vessel with no stated intent. If one decides that he finished work on a vessel at an earlier stage, it assumes the legal status of a vessel and is susceptible to ritual impurity at that point. Once a vessel assumes that status, the mere thought that one wishes to continue working on a vessel does not revoke its status. The unfinished vessel loses its status as a vessel only when one actually continues to work on it.