



Bikurim from Ravaged Lands

Bikurim refers to the *mitzvah* of bringing one's first fruit to the *Beit HaMikdash* and giving them to a *Kohen*. We learnt that this *mitzvah* only applies to the *shivat ha'minim* (seven species). When the person arrives he also makes a declaration, whose content is verses from the *Torah* – “*Arami oved avi...*”. The *masechet* opens by recording cases where even though one might possess first fruits, the owner is not able to recite the *parasha* or not able to bring *bikurim* at all. One case brought (1:6) is where either the spring that irrigated the field dried up or the fruit tree itself was cut down prior to separating *bikurim*. The *Mishnah* explains that while *bikurim* are still brought, one may not recite the *parasha* of *bikurim*. *R' Yehuda* however understand that one can nevertheless still recite the *parasha*. We shall try to understand the debate.

The *Gemara* (*Berachot* 40a) raises this *Mishnah* in the context of the following question: from where does the fruit of a tree primarily grows – the land or the tree. This question is important as it impacts on whether reciting the *beracha* of *bore pri ha'adamah* is acceptable for fruit. The *Gemara* aligns the opinion of *R' Yehuda* in our *Mishnah* with the opinion that the fruit primarily grows from the ground; meaning that the *beracha* of *bore pri ha'adamah* is valid.

To explain the connection to our *Mishnah*, *Rashi* explains that since according to the *Chachamim's* opinion the principle growth of the fruit is from the tree, once the tree is cut down it is as if the person has no “*adama*” (land). He therefore cannot recite the *parasha* in which he would thank *Hashem* for giving him fruit producing *adama*. According to *R' Yehuda* however, since the growth stems primarily from the land, he still maintains fruit producing *adama*.

The *Mishnah Rishona* questions this explanation of the *Chachamim's* position. He reasons that if it is because that after the supporting spring stops or the tree is cut down it is considered as if there is no land, then the owner should not be able to bring *bikurim* at all. We learnt in the first *Mishnah*

that a basic requirement is that the fruit grows entirely from one's land.

The *Mishnah Rishona* answers that since the fruit had grown prior to these events, the obligation of bringing *bikurim* was already engaged. Since however, it is now considered as if he has no land, he cannot recite the *parasha* as he would be contradicting the substance of the declaration.

The *Mishnah Rishona* however provides another explanation. There is another statement in the declaration that would disqualify him from reading the *parasha* – “*ve'samachta be'chol ha'tov*”. *Simcha* – happiness – is part of the declaration and therefore a prerequisite. Since in this case the owner's field has taken a significant hit, the element of *simcha* will be lacking. *R' Yehuda* however would argue, much like the opinion of *R' Yehuda ben Beteira* and the end of this *Mishnah*, that the owner's *simcha* is not essential.

The *Mishnah Rishona* however directs our attention to the *Tosfot* that provides a different explanation. They explain that the reason why the owner cannot recite the *parasha* is because rather the praising *Hashem*, in this case it would appear as though the owner is complaining that *Hashem* gave him land that could not produce fruit. The *Mishnah Rishona* however finds this difficult given that the owner simply reads a set text. Others question the necessity of the *Tosfot's* explanation at all given the *Gemara's* explanation of the *Chachamim's* position that he has no land.

The *Maharsha* answers that the *Tosfot* found the simple reading of the *Gemara* difficult. Granted that it is considered as if the owner does not have land now, he is nevertheless presenting fruit that were produced in the property that he still possesses. Why then is he prevented from reciting the *parasha*? For this reason the *Tosfot* adds that uttering the words, “the land that you have given me” in the current context would be interpreted in a negative way. The *parasha* should therefore not be recited.

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Revision Questions

ערלה ג': ד' – ט'

- What must be done with food that was cooked with *orlah* peels? (ג': ד')
- What must be done with food that was cooked with *orlah* peels that became mixed up with other cooked foods? (ג': ד')
- What must be done with bread that was baked in an oven in which *orlah* peels were burnt? (ג': ה')
- What must be done with bread that was baked in an oven in which *orlah* peels were burnt that then became mixed up with other bread? (ג': ה')
- What must be done with *tiltan* that had *tiltan kil'ei kerem* mixed in with it? (ג': ו')
- Explain the reasoning of *R' Meir* and the *Chachamim's* opinions in the above cases. (ג': ז')
- The *Chachamim* listed six things that do not become absolved (ג': ז'); what condition is added on the six things? (ח': ז')
- How is *safek orlah* treated in Israel, *Surya* and outside Israel? (ט': ז')
- Does the *issur* of *chadash* apply to produce outside of Israel? (ט': ז')

ביכורים א': א' – ח'

- What are the three cases listed in the first *Mishnah* that are exempt from bringing *bikurim*? (א': א')
- What is the reason for the above ruling and what four cases were added as a result of this reason? (ב': א')
- From which fruit does one bring *bikurim*? (ג': א')
- Before which date is one not allowed to bring *bikurim*? (ג': א')
- According to the *Mishnah*, which six people can bring *bikurim* yet cannot read the *parashat bikurim*? (ד': א')
- Explain the debates regarding whether one can bring *bikurim* and read when: (ו': א')
 - One purchased two trees in his friend's field.
 - The fruit tree was chopped down.
 - The *bikurim* was brought between *Sukkot* and *Chanukah*.
- If someone separates *bikurim* then sold his field, who brings *bikurim* and can they read the *parashat bikurim*? (ו': א')
- What should one do if they separate *bikurim* and they were stolen or lost prior to being brought to *Yerushalaim*? (ז': א')
- What should one do if they brought their *bikurim* to *Yerushalaim* and they became impure? (ז': א')

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
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Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf
9:00am
Kollel Magen Avraham
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Rabbi C. Brown
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendars/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
5 February ט' שבט	6 February י' שבט	7 February י"א שבט	8 February י"ב שבט	9 February י"ג שבט	10 February י"ד שבט	11 February ט"ו שבט
Bikurim 1:9-10	Bikurim 1:11-2:1	Bikurim 2:2-3	Bikurim 2:4-5	Bikurim 2:6-7	Bikurim 2:8-9	Bikurim 2:10-11

