



Volume 8. Issue 34

Raining on Sukkot

We have learnt (2:9) that if it rains on *Sukkot*, one is exempt from the *mitzvah* of sitting in the *sukkah*. We shall try to understand the scope and nature of this exemption.

The *Rama* (OC 639:5) rules that this exemption does not apply on the first night of *Sukkot*; one must make *Kiddush* and eat at least a *kezayit*'s worth of bread in the *sukkah* even if it is raining. The *Mishnah Berura* (35) explains that the *Rama* understands that the exemption of *mitzta'er* (feeling discomfort) does not apply on the first night of *Sukkot*. The obligation to eat in a *Sukkot* is learnt from a *gezeira shava* from *Pesach*. Just as one must eat *matza* on the first night of *pesach*, so too one must eat in a *sukkah* on the first night of *Sukkot*. The *Rama* aligns with those that maintain that the *gezeira shava* extends to equate *Pesach* and *Sukkot* further. Since one eats *mitzvah* regardless of comfort, the same applies with the *mitzvah* of *sukkah* on the first night.

The *Mishnah Berura* continues that whether the *gezeira shava* is extended this far is the subject of debate with others maintaining that the exemption of *mitztaer* applies equally throughout all of *Sukkot*. Consequently, while one must eat in the *sukkah* if it rains, out of concern for the other opinions the *beracha* of "*leishev ba'sukkah*" would not be recited. Nevertheless he adds that one should wait some time for the rain to stop and he brings a number of opinions regarding how long one should wait.

With that background we can now appreciate a story involving Rav Soloveitchik *ztz"l* and his father (Rav Moshe *ztz"l*) (*Harerei Kedem* 114). It was raining on the first night of *sukkot* and having waited, they made *Kiddush*, ate a small amount inside the *sukkah* and completed the meal inside. Rav Moshe however stayed awake and when the rain stopped, he woke his children so that they could eat a *kezayit* in the *sukkah* in order to satisfy those opinion who

maintained that they earlier they were exempt; those that maintain that a *mitztaer* is exempt even on the first night.

The *Rav* objected that in any case he should be exempt - now he should be considered a *mitztaer* due to sleep! We see that the *Shulchan Aruch* (639:7) explains that if one was sleeping in the *sukkah* and it started to rain and he went inside, we do not bother him to return to the *sukkah* for the rest of the night. Indeed the *Mishnah Berura* (36) brings this exact logic to explain that *halacha*.

Rav Moshe Soloveitchik however explained the original debate, whether rain exempts one from the *sukkah* on the first night, in a different manner. Really, everyone agrees that the exemption of *mitztaer* does not apply on the first night. Those that maintain that rain exempts one from sitting in the *sukkah* is not because of the rule of *mitztaer*. Rain is very different and the exemption is because the *sukkah* itself. The rain means that the *sukkah* can no longer be defined as a dwelling, it can no longer be defined as a *sukkah*. In fact, the *Bi'ur Ha'Gra* cites the *Rashba* that explains, "when it rains it has no status of a *sukkah*."¹

The *Rav* adds that even our *Mishnah* seems to suggest that the exemption of rain is different. The *mashal* (parable) that is brought that the advent of rain is "like a servant that comes to pour a drink for his master and [the master] empties the jug on [the servant's] face." We see from the *mashal* that the capacity for performing the task, for performing the *mitzvah*, has been taken away.

That being the case, his father understood that when it was raining, the means of fulfilling the *mitzvah* was taken away. Once the rain had stopped, since everyone agrees that there is no exemption of *mitztaer* everyone was obligated to wake up and eat a *kezayit* in the *sukkah*.

Yisrael Yitzchak Bankier

¹ Interestingly, the *Rambam* discusses the exemption of *mitztaer* (6:2) and the exemption of rain (6:10) in two different places. Also it is noteworthy our *Mishnah* does not write, "If it rains, when is one exempt?" it writes, "If it rains when is one allowed to clear out [and go inside]?" According to

this understanding it makes sense. Rain is not like the exemption of *mitztaer* that applies to the person. Instead the *sukkah* is no longer and the question is when is a person left without a *sukkah*.

Revision Questions

סוכה ב' ד' ג' ח'

- Can one make a *sukkah* where trees are used to make the walls? (בי: ד')
- Which people are exempt, due to their circumstance, from sitting in a *sukkah*? (בי: ד')
- What can one eat outside a *sukkah*? (בי: ד')
- What three things did R' Tzadok do when he was given food less than a *ke'beitzah* and why? (בי: ה')
- List the two opinions regarding the number of meals that one must eat in a *sukkah*. (בי: ו')
- Explain the debate regarding a person whose body was inside the *sukkah* yet the table from which he was eating was outside the *sukkah*? (בי: ז')
- Which three people are exempt from eating in the *sukkah*? (בי: ח')
- Complete the following phrase: (בי: ט')
 "_____ כל שבעת ימים אדם עושה _____"
- If it is raining, from what point is one allowed to move inside? (בי: ט')
- Can one use a stolen *lulav*? (גי: א')
- What extra requirement does R' Yehuda place on the *lulavim*? (גי: א')
- What are *tzinei har ha'barzel* and can they be used as *lulavim*? (גי: א')
- How large must the *lulav* be? (גי: א')
- Can one use a dried out *hadas*? (גי: ב')
- How many berries can the *hadas* have before it becomes invalid? (גי: ב')
- If the head of the *aravah* is severed, is it acceptable? (גי: ג')
- What is an *aravah* that is describe as *tzaftzafa* and is it acceptable? (גי: ג')
- Is an *aravah* acceptable if it lost some of its leaves? (גי: ג')
- How many of each of the four species must be taken? (include all opinions) (גי: ד')
- Is an *etrog* from an *ir hanidachat* acceptable? (גי: ה')
- Can an *etrog* of *orlah* be used? (גי: ה')
- Which of the following invalidates an *etrog*: (גי: ו')
 - A crack?
 - A hole (with nothing removed)?
 - The *oketz* being removed?
 - A small *chazazit*?
 - Being green in colour?
- What are the two opinions regarding the minimum size of an *etrog*? (גי: ז')
- What material may be used to bind a *lulav*? (גי: ח')

Local Shiurim

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
 Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Beit Ha'Roeh
 Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf
 9:00am
Kollel Magen Avraham
 Reemon Neighbourhood

ONLINE SHIURIM

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rav Meir Pogrow
613.org/mishnah.html

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
 Rabbi C. Brown
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendars/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
 In US dial: 718 906 6400
 Then select: 1 – 2 – 4

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
15 th January כ' טבת	16 th January כ"א טבת	17 th January כ"ב טבת	18 th January כ"ג טבת	19 th January כ"ד טבת	20 th January כ"ה טבת	21 st January כ"ו טבת
Sukkah 2:4-5	Sukkah 2:6-7	Sukkah 2:8-9	Sukkah 3:1-2	Sukkah 3:3-4	Sukkah 3:5-6	Sukkah 3:7-8

