

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The New Year for an esrog (cont.)

Following the challenge to Rabbah bar R' Huna's initial statement, the Gemara revises his statement.

The Gemara explains that the reason the Baraisa chose a case of an esrog going from the third into the fourth year of the Shemittah cycle was in order to teach that touching the esrog tree during Shemittah causes damage to the tree, resulting in it not bearing fruit for three years.

R' Yannai taught R' Yochanan that the New Year for the esrog is Shevat.

R' Nachman or R' Yannai teach that during a leap year the New Year for the esrog will also be in Shevat, as it is in most years, rather than in Adar I.

Rabbah teaches the ma'aser halachos of an esrog that goes from the sixth to the seventh year and the halachos of an esrog that goes from the seventh to the eighth year.

Abaye unsuccessfully challenges Rabbah's first halacha.

R' Hamnuna rules that an esrog that emerged in the sixth year and was picked in the seventh year is considered a sixth-year fruit, and if it emerged in the seventh and was picked in the eighth it is considered a seventh-year fruit.

A Baraisa is cited that presents a challenge to Rabbah and R' Hamnuna.

The Gemara responds that there is a dispute between Tannaim regarding this issue, and Rabbah and R' Hamnuna follow the other opinion.

R' Yochanan and Reish Lakish rule that an esrog that emerged in the sixth year and was picked in the seventh year is considered a sixth-year fruit for all matters.

Ravin cites a similar ruling in the name of R' Yochanan.

2) Determining ma'aser for other fruit trees

The anonymous opinion of the Baraisa rules that ma'aser is determined by whether the fruit emerged before or after the fifteenth of Shevat. R' Nechemyah limits this ruling to those trees that produce fruit over an extended period of time but ma'aser for those trees whose fruit ripen at one time is determined by the year in which they were picked.

R' Yochanan notes that people follow R' Nechemyah's opinion in regard to carob.

Reish Lakish challenges this ruling and R' Yochanan responded with silence.

The Gemara records an exchange between R' Abba Ha-Kohen and R' Yosi HaKohen about how to interpret R' Yochanan's silence. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

Shevat of the months

שבט חדשים או שבט דתקופה

When Rabbi Yochanan told Rabbi Yannai that the time for ma'aser to apply for an esrog is the month of Shevat, Rabbi Yannai asked Rabbi Yochanan to clarify whether he meant the month of Shevat or the season of Shevat. What is the meaning of this inquiry

Sefer *די שמיא* explains that the difference between the שבט of the months and the שבט of the seasons is as follows: "Of the months" refers to the lunar months, based on the new moon. "Of the seasons" refers to the months of the tropical year (based on the seasons) divided into twelve months, each season being three months long. On the first day of תקופת טבת, the winter solstice (December 21 or 22), the sun is overhead at its farthest point south of the equator, 23.44° south. The earth's axis is tilted, and, at this time of the year, the north pole is inclined away from the sun, with the south pole tilted toward the sun. As the earth revolves around the sun, the tilt of the earth changes relative to the sun. On the vernal (spring) equinox (March 20 or 21), the sun is directly over the equator and neither of the poles is inclined toward the sun (see diagram 3). The spring equinox is the start of תקופת ניסן, the spring season. The three months between תקופת טבת and תקופת ניסן are שבט, טבת, and אדר.

These three months make up the seasonal months of תקופת טבת; they have no relationship to the lunar months, since they are based solely upon the sun. Therefore, שבט of the seasons may begin before or after the lunar שבט which is based on the moon. Since lunar months are shorter than seasonal months (twelve lunar months are about 354 and 3/8 days), leap months (seven in a nineteen year cycle) are added to the lunar calendar to assure that the lunar and solar months coincide so that the Jewish holidays occur in their proper seasons. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

The new year of Tu B'Shevat

ראש השנה שלו שבט

Its (the esrog) New Year is in Shevat

The significance of Tu B'Shevat as the New Year for trees has significance beyond its application for halachos related to terumah, ma'aser, orlah and revai. Rav Yosef Karo¹ observes that the custom is that we do not recite tachanun on Tu B'Shevat because it is the New Year for trees. Accordingly, based on the ruling in Shulchan Aruch² that connects **צדקתך** with tachanun, **צדקתך** is also not recited on Tu B'Shevat. Furthermore, Rav Moshe Isserles, the Rema³, connects the recitation of **אב הרחמים** with **צדקתך**; consequently **אב הרחמים** is not recited on Tu B'Shevat.

The significance extends another step concerning the issue of saying **למנצח מזמור לדוד**. Rema⁴ writes that **למנצח** is generally recited even on days when tachanun is omitted. Rav Yaakov Chaim Sofer⁵, the Kaf HaChaim, notes that Rav Chizkiyah de Silva, the Pri Chadash, rules that **למנצח** is not recited on all the days that tachanun is omitted. Kaf HaChaim concludes that practice depends on custom. Sephardim follow the ruling of Pri Chadash and do not recite **למנצח** on days when tachanun is omitted; therefore they would not say **למנצח** on Tu B'Shevat. Ashkenazim follow the ruling of Rema and generally recite **למנצח** on days when tachanun is omitted; therefore they would say **למנצח** on Tu B'Shevat.

There are two customs worthy of mention related to Tu B'Shevat. The first is mentioned by Magen Avrohom⁶ who

REVIEW and Remember

1. What is שבט דתקופה?
2. What is the point of dispute between Rabbah and R' Hamnunah?
3. According to R' Nechemyah, what is the difference between those trees that ripen all their fruit at once and those that ripen their fruit over an extended period of time?
4. Does a response of silence represent an admission?

writes that the custom was to eat fruit on Tu B'Shevat to give honor to the name of the day. The second one relates to the custom to daven for a nice esrog on Tu B'Shevat. Since this is the day that the sap rises it is an appropriate day to daven that one should be able to perform the mitzvah in a beautiful fashion⁷. ■

1. בית יוסף א"ח סי' קל"א ד"ה כתב רוקח
2. שו"ע א"ח סי' רצ"ב סע' ב'
3. רמ"א א"ח סי' רפ"ד סע' ז'
4. רמ"א א"ח סי' קל"א סע' א'
5. כף החיים שם אות ל"ז
6. מג"א סי' קל"א ס"ק ט"ו
7. ע' טעמי המנהגים אות תתס"ו (עמ' ש"ע וע' שם שמדייק ענין זו מלשון דמתניתין "א' בשבט ר"ה לאילן וכו' בלשון יחיד

STORIES Off the Daf

Gathering the fruit of the fig tree

באילן שעושה שתי בריכות בשנה... אבל אילן העושה בריכה אחת... מתעשרין לשנה הבאה

A tree that sprouted before the fifteenth of Shevat has its tithes taken according to the previous year, otherwise the tithe is taken according to the current year. Rav Nechemiah says, however, that this only holds true for those that are like the fig tree, whose fruit does not ripen all at once. Any tree that only produces a single crop of fruit has the tithe taken in accordance to the time during which it is harvested—even if they too sprouted before the fifteenth of Shevat.

The verse states, "He who guards the fig tree will eat of its fruits." (Mishlei 27:18) The Gemara (Berachos 57) and the Midrash explain that this verse alludes to the Torah. Since a fig tree's fruits ripen a little at a time, one must always stand guard in the orchard to gather them so that none goes to waste. So too, one must inhabit the orchard of the Torah all the time, because its fruits are only enjoyed by those who study every single day!

Once, a certain bochur was heading home for the intercession and decided to take his leave of the Chazon Ish, zt"l, before going. On his way out, the gadol said, "During bein hazemanim, you must be careful to get some rest and relaxation. You don't have to learn with

the same intensity that you would during the zeman itself. It will suffice to learn like a ba'al habayis."

The bochur asked, "What does this mean, exactly?"

The Chazon Ish responded with a quote from the Rambam: "...If one is a craftsman, he should work for three hours and learn for nine."

The gadol continued, "We see from here that even a ba'al habayis must learn for nine hours! You, too, can limit yourself to a mere nine hours of study a day."

Just imagine the shock and dismay of the Chazon Ish when the bochur protested, "But, Rebbi, I'm not sure that I learn that much even in the middle of the zeman!" ■

