



PERMANENCE AND TRANSIENCE (KEVA AND ARAI): HOMES, FOODS, DEEDS AND WORLDS

בסוכות תשבו שבעת ימים אמרה תורה כל
שבעת הימים צא מדירת קבע ושב בדירת
עראי.

In Sukkos you shall dwell for seven days, every citizen (Ezrach) in Yisrael should sit in sukkos (Vayikra 23:42). The Torah said: All seven days, leave your fixed dwelling (diras keva) and sit in a temporary dwelling (diras arai) Sukka 2a

The *Kli Yakar* translates *ezrach* as *toshav*, a permanent resident. At the time of harvest, on Sukkos, everyone wants to live in his house, a *yeshivas keva*. The Torah instructs one who wishes to be a permanent resident of this world and not a *ger*, a sojourner, to leave his fixed dwelling for a temporary one.

He will thereby recognize that he is merely passing through this world (as in *Rosh Hashana* 9b) on the way to the next, permanent world.

A wealthy American visited the Chafetz Chaim in Radin. He offered to buy him a new home and new furniture that befits the *gadol hador*. The Chafetz Chaim replied: "During your sojourn in and near Radin, despite your wealth, you also are living in very modest quarters." The rich man responded: "In my permanent residence in America I have a beautiful home and furnishings. Here, I am merely passing through." The Chafetz Chaim concluded: "I have no need for a new home or furniture in this world. I am only passing through."

This is the lesson of Sukkos. We dwell in a sukkah to recognize that our successes and our lives in this world are only temporary, *arai*, and not *keva*.

Arai and Keva in the Laws of Sukkah

We may eat and drink lightly (*arai*) outside the sukkah (*Sukka* 25a). How much is light eating? Rav Yosef said (bread the size of) two or three eggs. Abaye asked, Often that is enough to satisfy a person, and it constitutes a regular meal (*keva*). Rather, Abaye said, as a yeshiva student tastes before going into the shiur (26a). Rashi (27a) explains that it is the size of an egg. Any more than an egg is a regular

meal and must be eaten in the sukka (O.C. 639:2). It's a totally quantitative *shiur* of bread.

The Rambam (*Sukka* 6:6) exempts light eating, the size of an egg or a bit less or more. It is not a purely quantitative *shiur*. One is exempt if it is not viewed as a meal, but rather a snack to abate his desire to eat until subsequent mealtime (Commentary to Chap. 2 Mishna 7, see Bartenura). A bit more than an egg means up to the *shiur* of two eggs of Rav Yosef.

Why does Rav Yosef say two or three? If the size of three eggs is exempt, then certainly the size of two eggs is exempt! Perhaps the answer is that three eggs is a known quantity for a meal (Rambam *Eruvin* 1:9, see M.B. 168:24). Three eggs is a meal for most people, and up to that amount is exempt. But some establish a meal on as little as the size of two eggs. For them, more than two eggs must be eaten in the sukka.

However, the halacha follows Abaye, not Rav Yosef. According to Abaye and the Rambam, one egg or less is halachically light. From one to two is light if eaten as a snack and not as a meal. More than two is halachically a meal. However, according to the *Shulchan Aruch*, any bread larger than the size of one egg must be eaten in the sukkah.

What about other foods? The *Shulchan Aruch* (639:2) exempts fruit and wine. The *Mishna B'rura* (13) includes meat, fish, and cheese in this exemption, since the *Shulchan Aruch* rules that only a cooked item made



from grain, if it is eaten as a meal, must be eaten in the sukka. A bit more than the size of an egg is exempt, as opposed to bread (*Mishna B'rura* 15). While some disagree, we do not recite "*leshev basukka*," since he is likely exempt.

Despite that, the *Mishna B'rura* (16) records the custom to recite *leshev basukka* on a bit more than the size of an egg of cake, since it is similar to bread. This is questionable. The Rosh (2:13) exempts meat and cheese since it is not common to establish a meal on them. Today, however, many people avoid bread and eat meat or cheese as the main part of the meal, and the exemption may not apply. By contrast, cake is considered a snack and *leishev basukka* is questionable.

Rabbi Lamm's Arai and Keva

Rabbi Norman Lamm z"l has left this temporary world of ours for the permanent World to Come. In his lifetime, despite the burdens of his illustrious career, he made

Torah study *keva* (*Avos* 1:15), a fixed practice. All of his other myriad accomplishments he viewed, as did earlier generations, as relatively temporary (*B'rachos* 35b). His remarkable literary output in all areas of Torah interest, notwithstanding his communal responsibilities, continues to teach and inspire. His herculean efforts, which sustained our Yeshiva financially and enhanced its Torah study programs dramatically, place us all in his debt. As the Gemara (*B'rachos* 35b) teaches, those who made their Torah *keva* and their *melacha*, other work, *arai*, both their Torah and their work endure. As beneficiaries, then and even now, of Rabbi Lamm's Torah and his support, we must continue his commitment to excellence, in our Yeshiva and beyond. May Rabbi Lamm's multiple merits accrued in our temporal world, which can yield additional dividends if we serve Hashem better because of his influence, elevate his neshama in its *achilas keva* in the world of truth and permanence.



Find more shiurim and articles from Rabbi Willig at <https://www.yutorah.org/rabbi-mordechai-i-willig>