

Living Shabbos

Kotzer – “The Giving Tree”: Cutting, Climbing and Using Trees on Shabbos

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1 – While at the park this past Shabbos, I was sitting on a large tree root since there weren't any available chairs. Someone came over to me and kindly noted that it's preferable not to lean on any part of a tree on Shabbos. Were they correct?

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2 – When we come home from shul, I find myself enjoying the lilies in our front yard. Am I allowed to smell them on Shabbos?

1. שבת עג:

וְהַקּוֹצֵר. תָּנָא: הַקּוֹצֵר, הַבוֹצֵר, וְהַגּוֹדֵר וְהַמְסִיק, וְהַאוֹרֵה — כּוֹלֵן מְלַאכָה אַחַת ...

“And one who reaps.” It was taught in a Tosefta: One who reaps, and one who picks grapes, and one who harvests dates, and one who collects olives, and one who gathers figs have all performed one type of labor, as they all involve picking fruit.

2. שבת קז: – קח.

אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: הַשּׁוֹלֶה דָּג מִן הַיָּם, כִּיֹּן שֶׁיִּבֶשׂ בּוֹ כְּסָלַע, חַיִּיב ... אָמַר אֲבַיִי: הַאי מֵאֵן דְּתִלַּשׁ פִּיטְרָא מֵאוּנָא דְחַצְבָּא, מִיַּחֲיִיב מִשּׁוּם עוֹקֵר דְּבַר מְגִידוּלוֹ. מִתִּיב רַב אוֹשְׁעֵינָא: הַתּוֹלֵשׁ מֵעֲצֵיץ נְקוּב חַיִּיב, וְשֶׁאִינוּ נְקוּב פְּטוּר! הֵתֵם לָאוּ הֵיִינוּ רַבִּיתִיָּה, הֵכָא הֵיִינוּ רַבִּיתִיָּה .

Shmuel said: With regard to one who removes a fish from the sea, when an area on the skin of the fish has dried up the size of a sela, he is liable ... Abaye said: One who detached a mushroom from the handle of a pitcher on Shabbat is liable for uprooting an object from its place of growth. Rav Oshaya objected from that which we learned: One who detaches a plant on Shabbat from a perforated flowerpot is liable, and one who detaches a plant from an imperforate pot is exempt! The Gemara answers: There, in the case of an imperforate pot, that is not the way a plant grows. Whereas here, in the case of a mushrooms, that is the way it grows and is considered connected to the ground.

3. ירושלמי שבת ז:ב

רַבֵּנוּ דְּקֵיסְרִין אָמְרִין. הֵהוּ דְּצִיָּד פּוֹרָא וְכַלְדָּבַר שְׁאַתָּה מְבַדִּילוֹ מִחַיּוֹתוֹ חַיִּיב מִשּׁוּם קוֹצֵר.

The rabbis of Caesarea say, one who catches a fish or anything by which he separates it from the environment it needs to live is liable because of harvesting.

4. משנה, ביצה לו:

מתני' כל שחייבין עליו משום שבות, משום רשות, משום מצוה, בשבת חייבין עליו ביום טוב. ואלו הן משום שבות: לא עולין באילן, ולא רוכבין על גבי בהמה, ולא שטין על פני המים, ולא מטפחין ולא מספקין ולא מרקדין ... גמ' לא עולין באילן, גזרה שמה לתלוש. ולא רוכבין על גבי בהמה, גזרה שמה לצא חוץ לתחום. שמע מינה תחומין דאורייתא! אלא: גזרה שמה יחיתוד זמורה.

MISHNA: Any act for which one is liable due to a rabbinic decree due to rest [shevut] ... if it is prohibited on Shabbat, one is liable for it on a Festival as well ... And these are the acts prohibited by the Sages as shevut: One may not climb a tree on Shabbat, nor ride on an animal, nor swim in the water, nor clap his hands together, nor clap his hand on the thigh, nor dance. GEMARA: "One may not climb a tree": This is a decree that was made lest one detach leaves or branches from the tree. "Nor ride on an animal": This is a decree that was made lest one go beyond the Shabbat limit on the animal. The Gemara asks: Can one then learn from here that going beyond the Shabbos limits is forbidden by Torah law? Rather, it is a decree lest one cut off a branch to use as a riding switch.

5. סוכה לו:

ואמר רבה: [בבב](#) הדס במחובר, מותר להריח בו, אטרוג במחובר, אסור להריח בו. מאי טעמא? הדס דלהריח קאי, אי שרית ליה, לא אתי למגזייה. אטרוג, דלאכילה קאי, אי שרית ליה, אתי למגזייה.

And Rabba said: Regarding a myrtle branch, while it is attached to the tree, it is permitted to smell it on Shabbat. Regarding an etrog, while it is attached to the tree, it is prohibited to smell it. The Gemara explains: What is the reason for the difference between them? The myrtle branch, which exists primarily to smell it, if you permit him to smell it, he will not come to cut it. The etrog, which exists primarily for eating, one may not smell it because if you permit him to do so, the concern is that he will come to cut it from the tree to eat it.