

Up to a third, by a מצוה

עד שליש במצוה –

OVERVIEW

The גמרא concluded that when רב הונא ruled that עד שליש במצוה, he meant that for a מצוה one should be willing to increase up to a שליש. According to רש"י this means that one should be willing to pay more (up to a third) if he can observe the מצוה in manner of greater הידור. However תוספות offers a different interpretation.

פירוש¹ שאם מצא אתרוג כאגוז² כמו ששיעורו חכמים³ ואחד גדול ממנו שליש⁴ יקנהו:⁵
The explanation of the term עד שליש במצוה is, that if he found an אתרוג for sale that was the size of a walnut, which is the size that the חכמים established as the minimum size for an אתרוג, and he then found another אתרוג which was larger than the original אתרוג by a third (the second אתרוג was a third larger than the first) [and therefore more expensive], he should purchase the larger אתרוג, even if it costs more.

SUMMARY

One should purchase an אתרוג a third more than the minimum size, for הידור מצוה.

THINKING IT OVER⁶

1. Why do רש"י and תוספות disagree with each other?
2. What will be the practical difference between רש"י and תוספות?
3. Is the rule of הידור מצוה limited only to an אתרוג, where the תורה writes הדר, or is it applicable to all מצוות?
4. What will be the דין if he already purchased the inferior אתרוג; is he required to purchase the מהודר עד שליש?

¹ The term פירוש in תוספות (usually) indicates that he is negating a different (or more obvious) interpretation. Here תוספות is negating רש"י's interpretation that עד שליש means that you are required to pay a third more to achieve a הידור מצוה. תוספות disagrees. See however footnote # 3.

² See אמ"ה. כביצה is the minimum size of an אתרוג. However the הלכה is כר' יהודה that the minimum size of an אתרוג is כר' יהודה. See however footnote # 3.

³ It seems that the obligation of הידור מצוה עד שליש is only to increase over the minimum שיעור. However if one has an אתרוג that is greater (by a שליש) than the minimum שיעור, there is no further obligation for הידור.

⁴ The מהר"ם שי"ף amends the text to read עד שליש. See footnote # 1.

⁵ תוספות does not give any monetary limit of how much to spend for this הידור.

⁶ See בל"י.