

שלשה should state משנה The

ליתני שלשה –

OVERVIEW

The גמרא asks why the משנה writes בשלש (דרכים) which is feminine¹; it should have written בשלשה (דרכים) which is masculine. תוספות explains why the גמרא prefers the masculine form over the feminine.

פירוש² משום דכל התורה כולה בלשון זכר נאמרה:³

The explanation of the question וליתני שלשה is that שלשה is preferable since the entire תורה was said in the masculine form.

SUMMARY

When there is a choice, one should use the masculine form since the entire תורה is written בלשון זכר.

THINKING IT OVER

The term פירוש (usually) indicates that תוספות is negating another (seemingly simpler) explanation. Which explanation could תוספות be negating here?⁴

¹ In לשון הקודש the masculine and feminine forms of the numbers two through ten are reversed. The numbers ending with a ה' (שלשה ארבעה וכו') are masculine and those ending without a ה' (שלוש ארבע כו') are feminine.

² The term פירוש indicates that the question needs some clarification. Seemingly the question of the גמרא is not understood. It would seem proper to mention the feminine form of שלש, since we are discussing the modes in which an אשה is נקנית. Therefore תוספות explains the meaning of the question.

³ For instance in the עשה"ד it says לא יהיה לך and לא תהיה לך; also כבד את אביך, and not כבדי, etc. etc. etc.

⁴ See אמ"ה.