The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן שי"ז סעיף א'

Overview

Siman 317 Seif 1 (a):

One who ties a permanent knot that is expertly made is liable, for example, a camel's knot, a ship's knot, the knot on shoes and sandals that shoemakers tie to hold straps in place when manufacturing shoes and anything similar. One who ties a knot that is permanent but not expertly made is exempt. Some authorities disagree and maintain that one who ties any permanent knot, even if not expertly made, is liable. Some authorities maintain that any knot that is not intended to be untied that day is a permanent knot. Others are lenient and contend that for up until seven days it is not considered permanent (and see below *siman* 314:10).

- The Gemara teaches that there are three categories of knots, one for which one is liable to offer a Chatas, one for which one is exempt and a third that one is permitted to tie. According to Rif and Rambam if the knot is permanent, meaning it is intended to remain knotted forever, and was expertly made, one is liable to offer a Chatas. If it is permanent but not expertly made or expertly made but not permanent one is exempt from liability and if it has neither characteristics it is permitted to tie the knot. According to Rashi, Rosh and other *Poskim* the issue of whether it was expertly made is irrelevant and the critical issue is whether the knot is permanent. If permanent, one is liable, if the knot is intended to remain one is exempt and if the intent is to untie it that day it is permitted. Some maintain that if it will be untied in seven days it is as if it was intended to be untied that day. (Introduction)
- It is permanent even if it can be untied with one hand since it will not come undone on its own. (M.B. 1)
- Rema disagrees with Shulchan Aruch even concerning a temporary knot that is not expertly made but intended to remain for a period of time. According to Shulchan Aruch it is permitted whereas according to Rema it is Rabbinically prohibited. According to the first opinion cited by Rema if it is intended to remain for the day it is partially permanent and according to the second opinion if it will be untied within seven days it is not considered permanent at all. (M.B. 5)
- If the intent is to untie the knot after Shabbos it is not considered permanent at all since any knot that will be untied within 24 hours is not considered permanent at all. (M.B. 6)

Halacha Highlight

Tying a knot and then throwing it in the trash

Mishnah Berurah Siman 317 Introduction

דהינו שאינו קובע זמן בדעתו להתירו

In other words, he does not designate a time in his mind to untie it

Mishnah Berurah in his introduction writes that there is a dispute amongst the *Rishonim* concerning the type of knot that is Biblically prohibited. According to Rif and Rambam a knot must be permanent and be considered a craftsman's knot to be Biblically prohibited whereas according to Rashi, Rosh, and others it is Biblically prohibited to tie a permanent knot regardless of whether it is a craftsman's knot. Both positions agree about the definition of a permanent knot, which is a knot that is tied with the intent for it to remain tied forever. Shulchan Aruch cites as an example of a permanent knot one that is tied on the edge of a boat and when the boat docks another rope is looped through the permanent knot. A knot that is not intended to remain knotted forever is either Rabbinically prohibited or possibly permitted altogether.

There are times that a person closes something with a knot and since the item is no longer needed it is thrown away knotted. For example, if one knots the end of a garbage bag in order to close it so that it can be easily transported to the trash can, he does not intend to untie that knot, but on the other hand he does not benefit from it remaining knotted since the bag is thrown in the trash. Rav Nissim Karelitz (חוט שני ח"ב פל"ד סק"ב) rules that this is a permanent knot being that the one who tied it does not intent to undo the knot. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (שמירת שבת כהלכתה פל"ה הע' ס"ג) also initially adopted this position when he ruled (in the context of sewing which follows similar guidelines) that one may not close a dirty diaper since the intent is for it to remain closed forever. However, he subsequently (שם ח"ג) retracted his opinion in accordance with a ruling of Maharil Diskin (קו"א סי' ה' אות ל"ה) that a knot that is tied and then thrown in the trash is categorized as a temporary knot.