The Chicago Center
Mishna Berura Digest
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Mon, Jan 13 2025 ■ י"ג טבת תשפ"ה
סימן שע"ג סעיף א'

Overview

Siman 373 Seif 1:

Two balconies (Meaning, boards that extend from the second floor above the public domain) **that extend from two second stories opposite one another and one placed between then a four *tefach* wide board, it is considered as though there is an entrance between them.** If the distance between them is less than four *tefachim*, even without a board the same *halacha* will apply. **If they want to make separate *eruvin* they may do so. However, if the balconies are not opposite one another, e.g., one extends to the east and the other extends to the west, they may not make a joint *eruv*. Similarly, if one is higher than the other, it is not considered an entrance, however, this is true when they are three *tefachim* apart but when they are within three *tefachim* of one another, whether in distance or whether in height, it is considered an entrance.**

- The board must be secured with nails so that it should not be moved on Shabbos. (M.B. 2)
- It becomes permitted to transport objects from one yard to the other if they choose to make a joint *eruv* since the board makes it easy to transport objects from one balcony to the other. If a board that was more than ten *tefachim* above the ground connected two yards that are at ground level, it is ineffective since the board is higher than ten *tefachim*. (M.B. 3)
- One can thereby easily walk from one to the other. (M.B. 4)
- They have the choice to make one *eruv* or two. If the balcony ran the full length of the balcony they would only be permitted to make a joint *eruv*. (M.B. 5)
- The *eruv* permits him to transport objects that began Shabbos in his home on his balcony or to his friend's yard but even if they did not make a joint *eruv*, each one can make a separate *eruv* for his house, yard and upper story. (M.B. 6)
- On the area of the balcony that is opposite the board as well as on the board, it seems logical that it is prohibited since each one is breached to his friend's place and they prohibit one another. (M.B. 7)
- The board would have to be placed on the corner of each balcony and people do not make entrances in corners. (M.B. 9)

Halacha Highlight

Connecting two balconies

Shulchan Aruch Siman 373 Seif 1
שתי גזוזטראות
Two balconies

Shulchan Aruch addresses the *halacha* of two balconies that are on opposite sides of the street. He rules that if they secure a board with nails to the balconies (מ"ב סק"ב) and that board is four *tefachim* wide, it serves an entrance between the two yards and they then have the option to make either a joint *eruv* or separate *eruvin*. If they choose to make a joint *eruv* they may transport objects from one balcony to the other. The novelty of this *halacha* is that although the residents may not make an *eruv* to connect their yards since there is a public domain that separates between them, nevertheless, they may transport objects from one yard to the other via the balconies.

Shulchan Aruch then notes that this *halacha* applies only when the two balconies are directly opposite one another but if they are not, e.g., one balcony extends to the east and the other extends to the west, a board that extends from one balcony to the other is not considered an entrance that allows the residents to make a joint *eruv*. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ט) explains that when the balconies are not opposite one another the board will be placed in the corner of each balcony and consequently will not constitute an entrance since people do not make entrances in corners. Secondly, since the board is on an angle people are fearful that they may fall off and thus the entrance does not serve its purpose of allowing easy access from one domain to the other. Taz (סק"ג) notes that there is a practical difference between these two explanations. According to the first explanation, if the board is placed in the middle of each balcony rather than on the corner it would be valid since it would not be an entrance in the corner. However, according to the second explanation that when the board is on an angle people will be afraid, placing the board in the middle of the balcony will not rectify the matter.