The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תקפ"ו סעיף ח'

Overview

Siman 586 Seif 8:

If a shofar is cracked lengthwise it is invalid. According to some opinions, even a slight crack invalidates unless one bound the shofar with string or rope (and the size necessary to blow remains from the end of the string to the mouthpiece). **According to some opinions, it is invalid only if the crack runs the majority of the length of the shofar. If one glued the edges it is valid even if one used glue. There is an opinion that maintains that it is not valid unless one attaches the edges to each other by heating the shofar until they became soft and fused the two edges together. If it cracked the entire length, even on one side, it is invalid even if one heated the edges to attach them to one another.**

- A crack has a tendency to grow larger but a notch is valid. If one noticed the notch before Yom Tov it is preferred if he repairs it. (M.B. 37)
- Shulchan Aruch refers to where the crack went all the way through the side of the shofar. (M.B. 38)
- Many later authorities are lenient even if the minimum size of a shofar does not remain as long as the sound is not affected. (M.B. 41)
- This is true even if it is cracked on only one side. If it is not cracked a majority of the length even if the minimum size of a shofar is not intact the shofar is valid. In a pressing circumstance one may rely upon this opinion. If one blew a shofar that is cracked a minority of its length and one later obtained a valid shofar one should blow again without reciting the beracha. (M.B. 43)
- If one held together the pieces with string or rope it is invalid. (M.B. 44)
- This is not considered repairing the shofar with a foreign material since the glue is not discernible between the cracks but if the crack is wide and the glue is discernible one should certainly be stringent. (M.B. 46)
- Glue would be considered a foreign material and would follow the halacha as presented in seif 7. The first opinion is primary, however, if the sound of the shofar is effected one should be stringent if it is not a pressing circumstance and blow the shofar again without repeating the beracha. (M.B. 47)

Halacha Highlight

A cracked shofar

Shulchan Aruch Siman 586 Seif 8
נסדק לארכו פסול
If a shofar is split along its length

Shulchan Aruch discusses a shofar that has a crack that runs the length of the shofar. He cites two opinions concerning the point at which the shofar becomes invalidated. According to the first opinion any crack renders the shofar invalid. The reason why even a small crack renders the shofar invalid is that there is a concern that as one continues to blow the shofar the pressure of the air being blown through the shofar will cause the crack to grow until it is cracked the entire length of the shofar. The reason the shofar is invalid even before it cracks the entire length is based on the principle that anything that will crack is considered as though it is already cracked. In the event that one wrapped a string or cord tightly around the shofar it may be used for the mitzvah but Rema adds that the part of the shofar near one's mouth must be intact for the minimal length of a shofar.

The second opinion contends that the shofar is not invalid until the crack extends the majority of the length of the shofar. Once the crack runs the majority of the length of the shofar we apply the principle רובו ככולו— the majority is comparable to the entirety– and we look at the shofar as though it is cracked for the entire length of the shofar. If that happens the only option is to reattach the two cracked edges back together and there is a dispute whether glue may be used to accomplish that task. Biur Halacha (ד"ה ויש אומרים) observes that Shulchan Aruch did not cite the position that a cracked shofar is not invalidated until the crack runs the entire length of the shofar. This indicates that the position is rejected in halacha. However, if there is no other shofar available, not even one that is outside of the techum that could be transported by a gentile, one may rely on the opinion that maintains that as long as some of the length of the shofar is intact it may be used for the mitzvah.