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Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תרמ"ח סעיף ג'-ה'

Overview

Siman 648 Seif 3:

Some explain that the term מפלש refer to where the hole runs from one end of the *esrog* to the other. Others explain that once the hole reaches that seed region which contains the seeds it is considered מפלש.

- The reasoning is that the thick peel that surrounds the seed chamber is not the same entity as the seed chamber and when that thick peel contains a hole from one end to the other the *esrog* is considered מפלש. One should be stringent in accordance with the latter opinion but in a pressing circumstance one could even recite a *beracha* on such an *esrog* and certainly when the *esrog* is not deficient. (M.B. 14)
- If the *esrog* is pierced from one end to the other but not through the seed region, meaning in the narrow part of the *esrog*, it is considered pierced according to all opinions. (M.B. 15)

Siman 648 Seif 4:

If the flesh of the *esrog* dissolved but the outer peel as well as the seed region remains intact it is valid but some authorities maintain that it is invalid.

- One should be stringent in accordance with this opinion when possible. (M.B. 17)

Siman 648 Seif 5:

If the *esrog* is split from the top to the bottom, even though it is not deficient it is invalid. If some remains intact on the top on top and on the bottom, even the slightest amount, it is valid. Some maintain that this is true only regarding the bottom of the *esrog* but if it is split by the *chotem*, even the slightest amount it is invalid. Some are stringent and invalidate an *esrog* that is split the majority of its length. If the split does not penetrate the majority of the thickness of the peel it is not considered split.

- Shulchan Aruch implies that it is invalid even if it is split on only one side. (M.B. 18)
- Even if it is split on both sides it is valid if some of the *esrog* remains intact at the top and bottom. (M.B. 19)
- Taz and Magen Avrohom assert that there is no authority who invalidates an *esrog* that is split a majority of the length but Gra proves Rema correct, even on one side of the *esrog*. (M.B. 20)
- Even if the split reaches the seed region the *esrog* is invalid since it is considered a hole that penetrates through the *esrog*. (M.B. 22)
- Even by the *chotem* the split must penetrate the majority of the depth of the peel because otherwise it is not considered split. (M.B. 23)

Halacha Highlight

A hole through the *pitum*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 648 Seif 3

מפלש יש מפרשים כפשוטו

Some explain the term מפלש according to its conventional meaning

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ג') presents a dispute regarding the definition of מפלש. The first opinion understands it according to its conventional meaning that there is a hole that penetrates the *esrog* on one end and extends all the way through to the other side. The second opinion maintains that once a hole penetrates the *esrog* and reaches the seed chamber it is categorized as מפלש. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"ד) explains that the second opinion maintains that the thick peel that surrounds the seed chamber is separate and distinct from the seed chamber and thus once the thick peel has a hole that extends all the way through it, the *esrog* has a hole that is מפלש. Mishnah Berurah writes that one should be stringent in accordance with the second opinion, although in a pressing circumstance in which one has no access to another *esrog* one may rely on the first opinion and even recite the *beracha* on such an *esrog*. Mishnah Berurah's ruling, in accordance with the second opinion, follows the general rule that when Shulchan Aruch presents two opinions and each one is introduced with the words יש אומרים the *halacha* follows the second opinion (מחזיק ברכה סק"ד).

Sefer Toras Dalet Minim (שו"ת סי' כ"ה סע' א') addresses an *esrog* that has a hole that extends through the *pitum* (i.e. the stem-like protrusion at the top of the *esrog* that holds the knob-like *shoshanta* in place). He rules that if the hole is in the part of the *pitum* that extends above the surface of the *esrog* the *esrog* is valid. His reasoning is that a hole in the *pitum* at that location is no worse than if the *pitum* broke off from that place where Mishnah Berurah (סק"ל) cited Magen Avrohom who ruled that such an *esrog* is valid. However, since Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק ל"א) also ruled that it is preferable to obtain another *esrog* since there are authorities who maintain that an *esrog* that is missing part of the *pitum* is invalid, one should be stringent in this case as well, if another *esrog* is available.