The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, Sept 2 2023 ■ ט"ז אלול, תשפ"ג
סימן תרמ"ח סעיף ו'-ז'

Overview

Siman 648 Seif 6:

When the outer peel was removed in a manner that does not cause it to be deficient and it remains green, if the entire peel was removed the *esrog* is invalid but if some of it remains the *esrog* is valid. Some maintain that the *esrog* must remain with peel equal in size to an *isur*.

- There is no deficiency in the *esrog* itself. (M.B. 24)
- If the *esrog* was peeled more deeply it is considered deficient and invalid even in the slightest amount. (M.B. 25)
- If the appearance of the *esrog* changed even if just the majority of the *esrog* was peeled it is invalid. If the peel was removed from two or three different places on the *esrog* it is invalid since it appears speckled. When it is peeled on the *chotem* and the appearance thereby changed it is invalid even in the slightest amount. Some maintain that this applies when the *esrog* changes to an invalid appearance but if it changes to an acceptable color the *esrog* remains valid and in a pressing circumstance one may rely upon this. (M.B. 26)

Siman 648 Seif 7:

If the דד was removed, which is the small tip that contains the שושנתא, it is invalid. Some are stringent when the שושנתא was removed which is what we call the פטמא and one should be stringent when possible, however, as regards *halacha* it is not invalid unless the דד was removed which is the wood that contains the פטמא and the top is called the שושנתא. This applies when it was removed but if it never had a דד it is valid and that is the condition of most of the *esrogim* that are brought into these countries.

- It is considered deficient. The wording implies that even the part of the wood that is contained inside of the *esrog* was removed leaving behind a hole and that is the reason it is invalid but if just the part above the surface was removed it is valid but there are authorities who are stringent even if the part above the outer surface was removed but if some of the wood above the surface of the *esrog* remains intact Magen Avrohom maintains that there is no reason to be stringent. (M.B. 30)
- If this is a choice *esrog* there is no reason to be stringent on account of the שושנתא. However, if some of the wood is also missing it is preferable to obtain another *esrog* even though some of the wood remains above the surface. (M.B. 31)
- It is discernable because where the פטמא would be there is a hole. Bikurei Yaakov explains that this is true when the hole is small so that the only issue is whether it is deficient so that since it grew this way it is not considered deficient but if the hole descends to the seed chamber and this could be confirmed by inserting a needle, the *esrog* is invalid since a natural hole is invalid any time a pierced hole would invalidate an *esrog*. (M.B. 32)

Halacha Highlight

When the *pitum* falls off naturally

Rema Siman 648 Seif 7
אבל אם לא היה לו דד מעולם
But if it never had a knob

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ז') rules that if the *pitum* and *shoshanta* broke off the *esrog* leaving a hole in the top of the *esrog* (מ"ב סק"ל) the *esrog* is invalid since it is considered deficient. Rema adds that even if just the *shoshanta* (the knob-like protrusion that sits atop the *pitum*) falls off one should be stringent when possible even though technically such an *esrog* is valid. However if the *pitum* came off entirely, (ע' בה"ט דיש דס"ל דאפ' נטל מקצתו דיש להחמיר) it is invalid. Rema then notes that an *esrog* without a *pitum* is invalid only when it had a *pitum* and it was severed but if an *esrog* never had a *pitum* it remains valid since that is the way it grew and its absence is not a deficiency.

Nowadays, it is common for *esrogim* to begin to grow with a *pitum* but as the body of the *esrog* increases in size the *pitum* falls off because its attachment to the *esrog* is weak and the sun dries it so that it simply falls off. In some instances the *pitum* falls off at a later stage when the *esrog* is closer to ripening (פסקי תשובות אות ו'). Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה סוכות פ"י סע' י"ח) rules that the *esrog* is valid as long as it is the natural part of its growth that the *pitum* falls off. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (הערות סוכה ל"ה : ד"ה נטלה בוכנתו) contends that it is only when the *pitum* falls off when the *esrog* is small, e.g. before it reaches one-third of its final size and is not yet large enough to use for the *mitzvah*, is the *esrog* valid since it is considered as though it never had a *pitum*. But if the *pitum* falls off at a later stage it is invalid since it is considered deficient. He also writes (אשרי האיש ח"ג פל"א אות ד') that on the first day it is preferable to take an *esrog* with a *pitum* that has *bletelach* than an *esrog* whose *pitum* fell off at a later stage that is clean. On the subsequent days, however, it is preferable to take an *esrog* that does not have *bletelach* even though it does not have a *pitum*.