The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תרמ"ח סעיף ח'-י'

Overview

Siman 648 Seif 8:

If the stem from which the *esrog* hangs from the tree is removed from inside the *esrog* leaving behind a hole, it is invalid. If only some of the stem was removed and some of the thickness remains so that the width of the hole is covered, it is valid.

- It is considered deficient. In a pressing circumstance in which there is no other *esrog* in town Chacham Tzvi rules that one may even recite the *beracha* on such an *esrog* even on the 1st day and the same is true if the *pitum* was removed. (M.B. 33)
- Meaning, enough of the stem remains in the *esrog* that the hole is covered even though none of the stem extends beyond the height of the hole. (M.B. 34)

Siman 648 Seif 9:

If an esrog has two or three blisters (חזזית, related to Aramaic translation of the phrase או ילפת which is או חזזן)**the esrog is invalid. If there is only one blister but it covers the majority of the esrog it is also invalid. If a single blister appears on the chotem the esrog is invalid regardless of its size. The chotem is the part of the esrog that begins to slope towards the top.**

- The חזזית must rise above the surface of the *esrog*. (M.B. 35)
- Meaning it must cover the majority of the *esrog's* surface on both sides. (M.B. 37)
- One sees blemishes on that part of the *esrog* more than one notices them on other parts of the *esrog*. (M.B. 39)

Siman 648 Seif 10:

Some maintain that when a חזזית appears on two or three spots it is invalid only when the spots cover the majority of the *esrog* even though each spot constitutes only a minority of the *esrog*. When the spots cover only a minority of the *esrog*, e.g., they are all on one side of the *esrog*, it is valid. Some authorities invalidate the *esrog* when the spots cover only a minority of the *esrog* and are on one side.

- The implication is that if they extend to the second side it is considered to cover the majority since the majority of the circumference is covered even though it does not cover the majority of the *esrog's* surface. (M.B. 41)
- Many authorities follow the first opinion; however, when the spots extend to the second side it is invalid since it was explained previously that covering the majority of the circumference also is considered a majority of the *esrog*. (M.B. 42)

Halacha Highlight

An uneven *chotem*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 648 Seif 9
ואם על חטמו
And if it appears on the *chotem*

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ט') discusses a חזזית on an *esrog* and the circumstances in which a חזזית invalidates the *esrog*. If an *esrog* has two or three spots the *esrog* is invalid since the multiple spots give the *esrog* a speckled appearance. If there is only one spot but that spot covers the majority of the surface of the *esrog* it is invalid. If the חזזית appears on the *chotem* of the *esrog*, the *esrog* is invalid regardless of the size of the חזזית. The *chotem*, Shulchan Aruch explains, is the area of the *esrog* when it begins to slope towards the *pitum*. The reason a חזזית invalidates an *esrog* on the *chotem* regardless of its size is that the area of the *chotem* is more visible than other areas since that is the part of the *esrog* at which people gaze (מ"ב ס"ק ל"ט).

Poskim debate what is considered the *chotem* when on one side of the *esrog* it began to slope inwards but on the other side of the *esrog* it has not yet begun to slope inwards. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (תורת ד' מינים סי' כ"ג הע' י"ט) rules that the *chotem* is defined as the place where the *esrog* begins to slope inwards even though on the other side of the *esrog* it did not begin to slope. His reasoning is that once on one side it began to slope inwards, one looks carefully at the opposite side of the *esrog* as well. Rav Shmuel HaLevi Wosner (שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ח סי' ק"נ) maintains that each side of the *esrog* will have its own starting point for the *chotem* since people only gaze at the part of the *esrog* that begins to slope inwards. Rav Nissim Karelitz (חוט שני סוכות עמ' ר"פ) contends that the line between the two spots where the *esrog* begins to slope inwards should be considered the *chotem* and he finds it unreasonable that the *esrog* should have two different starting points for the *chotem* when the *chotem* represents the top of the *esrog*.