The Chicago Center
Mishna Berura Digest
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, Aug 30, 2025 ■ ו' אלול, תשפ"ה
סימן י"ב סעיף א'-ג'

Overview

Siman 12 Seif 1b:

Rabbeinu Tam maintains that the *talis* is valid if some of the strings were severed leaving the length to tie a bow only if two of the strings (meaning four *tzitzis)* are intact for the length of twelve *godlim*. For this reason if three *tzitzis* are severed and one did not keep each side of the string separate the *talis* is invalid since one may not have two strings fully intact. If only two of the *tzitzis* were severed the *talis* is valid. The halacha follows the first opinion but one should make an effort to be stringent in accordance with Rabbeinu Tam's position. The custom is to follow Rabbeinu Tam's position. If one kept the two sides of the strings separate and three strings on one side became severed the *talis* is invalid and even if the three strings are from both sides one must be stringent since it may be three separate strings.

Siman 12 Seif 2:

In a circumstance in which one requires the length "to tie a bow," if one cannot tie a bow due to the thickness of the strings but if the strings were thinner it would be possible to tie a bow the *talis* is valid. We calculate whether there is enough string to tie a bow based on medium thick strings.

Siman 12 Seif 3:

The required length "to tie a bow" is measured, according to Rashi, from the fringes whereas according to R"I even if the fringe was severed completely but within the twisted cord there remains the length to "tie a bow" the *tzitzis* are valid. Common custom is like Rashi but when there is no alternative one may rely upon the position of R"I.

- One may relay upon R"I's opinion only when there are no other *tzitzis* available but when relying upon his position one may not recite the beracha nor walk outside on Shabbos wearing these *tzitzis*. (M.B. 13)
- If one of the strings rips in the place of the hole the *tzitzis* are invalid even according to R"I. (M.B. 13)
- One may not repair invalid *tzitzis* while he is wearing the garment. (M.B. 13)

Halacha Highlights

Wearing *tzitzis* that are *b'dieved* valid

Shulchan Aruch Siman 12 Seif 3

והיכא דלא אפשר יש לסמוך על ר"י

And when there is no alternative one could rely upon R"I's position

Shulchan Aruch records a disagreement whether the length "to tie a bow" is measured from the twisted cord – the *gedil* – or from the strings that hang beneath the twisted cord. Shulchan Aruch rules that common custom is to follow the stringent opinion but when there is no alternative it is acceptable to rely upon the lenient opinion. Mishnah Berurah (סי"ק י"ג) writes that even when one relies upon the lenient opinion, one should not recite the beracha on those *tzitzis* nor should one wear those *tzitzis* in the public domain on Shabbos. Sha'arei Aharon (שער העין אות ד') questions this ruling. Putting aside the issue of making a beracha on these *tzitzis*, there is a bigger issue to address. According to the stringent opinion these *tzitzis* are invalid and as such he is wearing a garment that does not have valid *tzitzis* which puts him in violation of the positive command to tie *tzitzis* to a four cornered garment.

He answers this question by citing Magen Avrohom's position that there is no Biblical prohibition against wearing a four cornered garment without *tzitzis*. Rather, there is a positive command to tie *tzitzis* when one wears a four cornered garment. On Shabbos, for example, since it is not possible to tie *tzitzis* to one's garment, he is exempt from the positive command. Similarly, during the week when one is unable to obtain *tzitzis* that will satisfy the stringent position, the positive command does not apply for that position and he may rely upon the lenient opinion to at least fulfill the mitzvah according to his position.

This discussion implies that there is no positive command to wear a four cornered garment to become obligated in the mitzvah of *tzitzis*. This is also the implication of Mishnah Berurah (סוס"ק י"ג). Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (שיח הלכה ח"א עמ' ע"ב אות א'), however, maintained that one is obligated to wear a four cornered garment. For that reason he wrote that one should make an effort to put on his *talis koton* as quickly as possible in the morning so that he should not be without *tzitzis*.

Stories to Share

The Ladder that Reaches the Heavens

ש"ע י"ב, ב': "היכא דצריך כדי עניבה..."

Today's daf continues discussing the halachos of tzitzis strings which were torn.

When one of the tzitzios of the Chazon Ish, zt"l, tore he was exceedingly careful to replace it even if it was still absolutely kosher. Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l, recounts that he once asked his father, the Steipler Gaon, zt"l, to explain why. "After all, isn't it a clear gemara that it is permitted to go with such tzitzis, which we see from Ravina himself? When his tzitzis tore in a manner that was halachically acceptable he did not repair it?"

The Steipler, zt"l, replied that the Chazon Ish was careful to repair it due to a different consideration. "Apparently the Chazon Ish was afraid that this would make a chilul Hashem since people would see that the tassel was torn and be unaware that such a tear is not a halachic problem."

מעשה איש, ח"ד, ע' קי"ח

The Doleh U'mashkeh, shlit"a, asked Rav Chaim Kanievsky if this stringency applied to regular bnei Torah. "It is very usual for one or two strings of the tzitzis to rip. How should a ben Torah act? Should he be stringent?"

"There is no halachic obligation to do so," he replied.

He continued, "But what about when one string is completely ripped away and the tzitizis are only permitted due to the other side of the same string? Should a ben Torah be stringent in such a situation?"

"There is no need to be stringent," answered Rav Chaim.

דולה ומשקה, ע' כ"ד

The Peleh Yo'eitz, zt"l, explains that one should only wear complete tzitzis for a different reason. "Even if one only loses one strand from one tzitzis tassel it is preferable to replace the entire tassel. There is surely a very deep reason why there are specifically thirty-two strings on every pair of tzitzis. Tzitzis are designed to be a 'ladder standing on earth that reaches to the heavens.' Why should his be lacking?"

חסד לאלפים, ס' י"ב, א'