The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן י"ד סעיף ג'

Overview

Siman 14 Seif 3:

One who borrows a garment from his friend that does not have *tzitzis* is exempt from putting on *tzitzis* for thirty days since the pasuk refers to one's garment rather than the garment of others. After thirty days there is a Rabbinic requirement to put on *tzitzis* since it seems as though it is his. If the garment was returned within thirty days and then borrowed again the two periods of time do not combine; rather the thirty days must be consecutive. **If one borrows a garment that already has *tzitzis* he recites the beracha immediately.**

- One who attaches *tzitzis* to a borrowed garment and makes the beracha, even immediately, does not lose. (M.B. 9)
- A renter has the same halacha as a borrower. (M.B. 10)
- When borrowing a garment that has *tzitzis* it is best to ask the owner to give it as a gift, on condition that it should be returned. (M.B. 11)
- One who borrows a friend's *talis* for an *aliyah* or to serve as *shaliach tzibbur* does not recite a beracha on the *talis*. Other authorities disagree therefore it is preferable for the borrower to have in mind that he does not intend to acquire ownership of the *talis*. (M.B. 11)
- One is required to make a beracha when one puts on a *talis* that belongs to the *tzibbur* since it is already considered to be his property. (M.B. 11)
- If one does not return a borrowed *talis* before the owner needs to use it for himself the gift is retroactively revoked and the borrower loses credit for the mitzvah. (M.B. 12)
- If the *talis* becomes damaged in the possession of the borrower, even if it was not his fault, the mitzvah is not considered fulfilled since he is not returning it as it was when he borrowed it. (M.B. 12)

Halacha Highlights

Making a *beracha* on the shul's *talis*

Mishnah Berurah Siman 14 Seif Koton 11

אבל בטליתות של קהל ... צריך לברך עליו לכלי עלמא

When it comes to a *talis* that belongs to the congregation … one is required to make the *beracha* according to all opinions

Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק י"א) writes that according to all opinions when one wears a *talis* that belongs to the shul he is obligated to make a *beracha* before he puts it on. Even if he will wear it only to serve as *shaliach tzibbur* or to when he receives an *aliyah* he is nevertheless obligated to make the *beracha* because he is already considered to be an owner of that *talis* and as such, intent not to acquire the *talis* is ineffective (ע' שו"ת הר צבי ח"א סי' י"ז). Notwithstanding the long list of Poskim who maintain that one is obligated to make a *beracha* when putting on a *talis* that belongs to the shul, common custom is that people do not make the *beracha* when they put on the shul's *talis* for an *aliyah* or when serving as *shaliach tzibbur*. It is only when one wears the shul's *talis* in order to fulfill the mitzvah does one make the *beracha* on the shul's *talis*, for example, one does not have his *talis* with him and will wear the shul's *talis* for davening (ע' פסקי תשובות אות ז').

The basis for this lenient position is found in Biur Halacha (ד"ה שאלה כשהיא מצויצת) in the name of Sh'arei Ephraim and Be'er Heitev that one who wears a *talis* out of consideration for *kavod hatzibbur* – honor of the congregation – is not wearing the *talis* in a manner that necessitates *tzitzis*. The Torah refers to a garment that one wears to cover himself (Devarim 22:12) and wearing a *talis* for the purpose of an *aliyah* or to serve as *shaliach tzibbur* is not to cover himself, therefore it is unnecessary to make the *beracha* or even examine the *tzitzis* before putting on the *talis*. Nevertheless, since so many Poskim maintain that one should recite the *beracha* on a *talis* that belongs to the shul one should renounce his ownership of the *talis* before putting it on. Another approach is that when a shul purchases a *talis* for use by the congregants they should stipulate that the *talis* does not become the property of the shul members. Accordingly, one who uses the *talis* is a borrower rather than an owner and all opinions would agree that a *beracha* would not be recited.

Stories to Share

A Borrowed Tallis

מ"ב י"ד, ט': "כמו נשים שיכולות לברך על מצות עשה שהזמן גרמה.."

On today's amud the Mishnah Berurah writes the well-known dictum that a woman may even make a blessing on a time-bound positive mitzvah. Although he uses this application to explain why a man may make a blessing on a borrowed tallis, clearly implying that a woman certainly can, this is actually not so simple. The Rama in siman 17 writes that although this is theoretically permitted, she may not do so since this is a sign of conceit; even a man is not obligated by the letter of the law to buy a four-cornered garment so that he will have the opportunity to place tzitzis on it.

In addition, the Kaf Hachaim brings that according to the Arizal, putting on tzitzis does not constitute any spiritual rectification for a woman. Although it is possible that unique women throughout the ages needed to wear tzitzs for personal reasons, this is not even applicable to a slight minority of women, since this practice was either a mistake or an exception to the rule.

כף החיים, ס' י"ז

A certain woman was convinced that wearing a tallis katan was exactly what she needed for her spiritual advancement. When she asked Rav Yosef Ber Soleveitchik, zt"l, about this he tried to discourage her, quoting the above Rama but she would not budge. "All right," said the rav. "Why don't we do a test? Wear a four-cornered garment without tzitzis to start with, and after a few months we will see how you feel."

After a month the woman returned to the rav. "I was so overwhelmed with emotion even just wearing a four-cornered garment without tzitzis!" she recounted. "It definitely had a powerful impact on my avodah."

The rav gently explained that this merely showed her fallacy. "If you felt spiritually uplifted by this tallis, what you are feeling is clearly not spiritual since the garment itself had no holiness. Your feelings where a result of your imagination, nothing more…"

מפי השמועה