

Overview

Halacha Highlights

Siman 21 Seif 3:

It is permitted to enter a bathroom while wearing *tzitzis*. It is certainly permitted to sleep with *tzitzis*. There are authorities who write that one should not sleep in a *talis* that has *tzitzis* nor should one give one's *talis* to a gentile launderer so that mitzvos should not be disgraced in one's eye but the custom is to be lenient regarding sleeping.

- ❖ It is only a *talis koton* one may wear in the bathroom but one's *talis* that is worn for davening should not be worn in the bathroom. Similarly, the *kittel* worn on Yom Kippur should not be worn in the bathroom. (M.B. 14)
- ❖ According to Arizal one should sleep in his *talis koton*. (M.B. 15)
- ❖ The custom also permits giving one's *talis* with *tzitzis* to a gentile launderer. (M.B. 17)

Siman 21 Seif 4:

A person wearing a *talis* should be careful that the *tzitzis* do not drag on the ground.

- ❖ According to some opinions the concern is that it is degrading to the mitzvah whereas according to others the concern is that they will become invalidated. (M.B. 18)

Siman 22 Seif 1:

When a person purchases a *talis* and makes *tzitzis* he should recite *שהחיינו* since a *talis* is no worse than other new garments. If *שהחיינו* was not recited when the *tzitzis* were made it should be recited the first time one wraps himself in the *talis*.

- ❖ Reciting the *beracha* when making the *tzitzis* also satisfies those who maintain that *שהחיינו* is recited the first time one fulfills a *mitzvah*. (M.B. 1)
- ❖ If one puts *tzitzis* on an old garment that never had *tzitzis* *שהחיינו* is not recited. (M.B. 2)
- ❖ One first makes the *beracha* on his *talis* and then *שהחיינו* (M.B. 3).

Keeping one's *tzitzis* off the floor

Shulchan Aruch Siman 21 Seif 4

יש ליוזהר כשאדם לובש טלית שלא יגרר ציציותיו

One must be cautious when wearing his *talis* that the *tzitzis* do not drag on the floor

The source for this ruling is Sefer Agur (סי' י') quoting Haghos Mordechai who applies the pasuk in Yishayahu (י"ד:כ"ג), "And I will sweep it clean with the broom of destruction," to one who allows his *tzitzis* to drag on the floor. Magen Avrohom (סק"ג) challenges this ruling. Shulchan Aruch (סי' כ"ג סעי' א') teaches that one is permitted to enter a cemetery wearing a *talis* as long as he does not allow his *tzitzis* to drag on the graves. This clearly implies that outside of a cemetery there is no concern for one's *tzitzis* dragging on the floor. Similarly, the Gemara in Gittin (6a) mentions a person known as Ben *Tzitzis* Hakeses whose *tzitzis* would regularly drag on pillows and blankets.

Magen Avrohom (ס"ט) suggests that the restriction applies only when one first puts on his *talis*, but if one's *tzitzis* drag while he is walking it is not a disgrace to the *tzitzis*. Sefer Yafeh LaLev distinguished between one's *talis* that is a garment exclusively for davening and the *tzitzis* that are attached to one's regular garment. The restriction against *tzitzis* dragging is limited to one's *talis* but on one's regular garment it is not considered such a disgrace if the *tzitzis* are on the floor. Shiyurei Knesses HaGedolah (הג"י ב"י סק"ג) distinguishes between a person sitting and a person walking. It is only while walking that *tzitzis* are disgraced if they drag on the floor but not if they are on the floor while one is sleeping.

Sefer Meir Oz (סעי' ד' אות ו') relates that Rav Chaim Kanievski says in the name of Chazon Ish that it is not necessary to alert someone that his *tzitzis* are on the floor. His rationale is that since most people don't take rebuke well one must be concerned that alerting someone that his *tzitzis* are on the floor could lead to hatred and *lashon hora* and since there are reasons to be lenient it is not necessary to tell him.

Stories to Share

A Perpetual Mitzvah

שי"ע, סי' כ"א, סעי' ג': "מתר לכנס בציצית לבית הכסא..."

Although the The Mishnah Berurah writes explicitly that one may bring his tallis katan into the bathroom as we find on today's amud, it is a bit unclear why this should be. After all, is it permitted to fulfill a mitzvah in the bathroom? In addition, the Rama points out that some prohibit even sleeping in their tallis katan but the custom is to be lenient. It is very clear that the essential principle holds true regarding the bathroom, and it would seem that the right course of action would be to prohibit it. The question is, why is it permitted?

When this question came before Rav Moshe Sternbuch, shlit"א, he explained very clearly. "First of all, the Biur Halachah in siman 588 is very relevant to this question. The Chofetz Chaim there wonders if one may do an action that is a mitzvah in a filthy place like the bathroom. He brings a proof that this is permitted

from a tallis katan which may be worn in the bathroom. Presumably any mitzvah that does not require enunciation of Hashem's Name is permitted in the bathroom. Subsequently he brings that the Mateh Efraim prohibits and posits two possible reasons why. It is either because mitzvos must be done with kavanah but thinking about the purpose of the mitzvah in the bathroom is prohibited, or because doing a mitzvah is an avodah which is prohibited in the bathroom.

"In view of this we may indeed wonder why a tallis katan is permitted in the bathroom, since we obviously fulfill a mitzvah with it. The answer is that, unlike other mitzvos like lulav and shofar, the mitzvah of a tallis katan is constant. It follows that if we were to take it off we would lose out on the precious mitzvah which can be fulfilled passively. Although the Mateh Efraim holds that the sages prohibited doing a mitzvah in the bathroom, they did not prohibit the passive fulfillment of a perpetual positive mitzvah!"

תשובות והנהגות ח"ה, סי' ט'