The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Sun, Nov 2, 2025 ■ י"א חשון, תשפ"ו
סימן כ"ז סעיף ב'-ג'

Overview

Siman 27 Seif 2:

The custom is for the "*yud*" of the knot to be on the side towards one's heart and the *tefila* away from the body. One should be careful that the "*yud*" should not become separated from the *tefila*.

- Biur Halacha writes that it is correct that the loop through which the *retzua* passes when tightening one's *shel yad* should not be too large so that it could be as close to the heart as possible. (M.B. 8)
- The Zohar is very stringent about keeping the "*yud*" of the knot touching the *tefila* and there are those who are stringent even when one's *tefillin* are in their bag. (M.B. 10)
- The *titura* should be notched so that the "*yud*" could be in contact with the *shel yad*. (M.B. 11)

Siman 27 Seif 3:

The correct custom is for the *ma'avarta* which contains the *retzua* to be towards the shoulder and the *ketzitza* towards one's hand.

- Biur Halacha discusses the correct procedure for a "righty" who wears a "lefty's" *shel yad* or vice-versa. (M.B. 12)

Stories to Share

The Yud of the Tefilin Shel Yad

ש"ע ס' כ"ז,ב': "יש ליזהר שלא תזוז יו"ד של הקשר מהתפלה..."

Although the Shulchan Aruch rules that the yud of the tefillin shel yad must not separate from the bayis, on many people's tefillin the yud is clearly separate from its bayis. Some even have a slim box over their tefillin with no perforation and their yud rests on this box. When a certain person asked the Chazon Ish zt"l, whether he was required to protest this blatant disregard of the halachah, the Chazon Ish surprised him.

The gaon asked, "Who told you that the Shulchan Aruch means that the yud must rest on the top part of the bayis? Even if the yud only touches the base of the tefillin, this is sufficient."

אורחות רבינו, ח"ג, ע' קצ"ד

When someone asked Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l, about this, he agreed. "Even if he yud only touches the tefillin's base, this is enough."

חכו ממתקים, ח"ב, ע' ש"ך

Rav Shamai Kehas Gross, shlit"a, made two compelling points against relying on the authorities that allow the yud to rest on the base of the tefillin, however. "Firstly, the Prishah implies that the yud must rest on the bayis, not the base. Secondly, the prevalent custom of most G-d-fearing Jews is that the yud rest specifically on the bayis, not the base of the tefillin.

אורח כהלכה, ע' נ"א

Rav Shlomo Zalman himself had a gid attached which kept the yud perpetually fastened to the actual bayis.

חכו ממתקים שם

Although the Mishnah Berurah writes that the custom of using a gid fastened from below should be nullified since this constitutes a chatzitah, others argue. The Chazon Ish brought an interesting proof against using such a gid. "Since this simple advice was not given by chazal, presumably those who hold that even such a gid is a chatzitzah are correct."

אורח כהלכה, שם

Halacha Highlight

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

Shulchan Aruch Siman 27 Seif 2

שהיא היו"ד של קשר תפלה של יד לצד הלב

The "yud" of the knot of the *shel yad* should face the heart

Shulchan Aruch emphasizes two things regarding the correct manner of wearing *tefillin*. The first point (סע' ב') is that the "yud" of the knot on the *shel yad* should face the body and the *tefila* should be on the outside. The second point (סע' ג') is that the *ma'avarta* through which the *retzua* passes should be on the part of the arm closest to the shoulder and the *ketzitza* should be towards one's hand. In normal circumstances it is not necessary for a person to think about these matters since *tefillin* are designed to be worn in this manner. Sometimes, however, a person does not have his own *tefillin* and he must wear someone else's *tefillin*. What can make that experience particularly challenging is when a "righty" must wear a *shel yad* that belongs to a "lefty" or vice versa.

Biur Halacha (סי' ג' ד"ה המנהג הנכון) writes in the name of Shvus Ya'akov that when, for example, a "lefty" only has available the *shel yad* of a "righty" he should take the *shel yad* and put it on his right arm with the *ma'avarta* facing his hand and the *ketzitza* on the part of the arm closest to the shouder. The rationale behind this ruling is that the "yud" of the *shel yad* facing the heart is a requirement mentioned in the Gemara whereas the placement of the *ma'avarta* towards the shoulder and the *ketzitza* towards the hand is not. Therefore the correct location of the "yud" is a higher priority.

Biur Halacha then records Chaya Adam's ruling in this case. He writes that the "lefty" should pull the *retzua* out of the *shel yad* altogether and insert from the other side (the side of the *ma'avarta* that is not notched). By doing so the *ma'avarta* will remain on the part of the arm closest to the shoulder and the "yod" will face the body. Although this seems to accommodate both requirements, Biur Halacha advises following Shvus Ya'akov's approach.