The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן כ"ז סעיף ד'-ה'

Overview

Siman 27 Seif 4:

There should be no interposition between one's body and his *tefillin*, whether the *shel yad* or the *shel rosh*. This restriction applies to one's *tefillin* but not to the *retzuos*.

- Even the slightest interposition is problematic but if the *retzua* rests between his *tefillin* and body it is not an interposition but there are those who are *l'chatchila* stringent about the matter. (M.B. 14)
- Machatzis HaShekel opposes the practice of growing one's hair long and one of the reasons is that the hair is an interposition and makes keeping the *shel rosh* in its proper location difficult. (M.B. 15)
- Later authorities write that an interposition under the *retzua* near the knot should be avoided and for this reason one should not place his *shel rosh* on a wig. On the other hand, there are authorities who are lenient when it comes to the *retzuos* of one's *shel rosh* resting on a bandage covering a wound. The same leniency applies to a bandage on the arm where the *shel yad* is tightened. (M.B. 16)

Siman 27 Seif 5:

If a person is sensitive to the cold and if he were to be required to wear his *shel rosh* on his scalp he would not wear them he is permitted to wear his *shel rosh* on a thin hat that is on his head but he should cover it out of concern for those who will see. Those who follow this practice should not recite the *beracha* on the *shel rosh* and should limit themselves to the *beracha* on the *shel yad*.

- Shulchan Aruch refers to someone who suffers from an ailment of sorts that would become worse if exposed to the cold. Although it is permitted to keep something beneath one's *tefillin*, nevertheless, it should remain covered for those who don't know that he suffers from a medical condition. (M.B. 17)
- If one has a wound on his arm that prevents him from putting his *shel yad* directly onto his arm he may rest it on a bandage but he should not put his *shel yad* on his sleeve even if there is a wound on his arm. (M.B. 18)
- When reciting the *beracha* on the *shel yad* in a circumstance in which his *shel rosh* rests on a thin hat, one should have in mind his *shel rosh*. Some authorities write that one should try and wear his *tefillin* without an interposition at least for *Shema* and *Shemone Esrei*. (M.B. 20)

Halacha Highlight

Putting the *shel yad* on a bandage or cast

Mishnah Berurah Siman 27 Seif Koton 18

ואם יש לו מכה ביד במקום הנחת הקציצה וכו'

And if one has a wound on his hand where the *shel yad* rests etc.

Shulchan Aruch (סעי' ד') wrote that there should not be anything that intervenes between his *tefillin* and his body. The truth is that there is a disagreement whether the principle of interposition applies to *tefillin*. According to Rosh and the majority of Rishonim, the principle of *chatzitza* applies to one's *tefillin* and there may not be anything intervening between his *tefillin* and his body. Rashba agrees that there may not be anything between one's *shel yad* and his body, but there is a disagreement regarding the reason for this halacha. According to some it is the standard issue of a *chatzitza* but according to Magen Avrohom (סק"ו) the issue is that the *shel yad* is supposed to be a private sign for the one wearing the *shel yad* and not for others. This is the reason that *tefillin* may not be placed on one's sleeve. The fundamental difference between Rosh's position and Magen Avrohom's understanding of Rashba is the case of one with a bandage or a cast on his upper arm. According to Rosh, the bandage or cast is a *chatzitza* but according to Magen Avrohom's understanding of Rashba one could put his *shel yad* on a bandage or cast, since there is no issue of *chatzitza* but he must be careful to keep the *shel yad* covered. With this background we can now understand Mishnah Berurah's ruling.

Mishnah Berurah (סק"ק י"ח) discusses the case of one who has a wound on his arm that prevents him from putting his *shel yad* directly onto his skin. He rules that when there is no alternative one may put his *shel yad* onto the bandage or cast, consistent with Magen Avrohom, but he should not recite the *beracha* להניח תפילין since according to the majority of Poskim an interposition prevents the fulfillment of the *mitzvah*. Instead he should recite both *berachos* when he puts on his *shel rosh*. Mishnah Berurah then adds that one should make sure that he has another garment, e.g. sleeve, covering his *shel yad*.

Stories to Share

What Constitutes a Chatzitzah

ש"ע סי' כ"ז, ד': "לא יהא דבר חוצץ בין תפילין לבשרו..."

A certain person liked to roll up his sleeve and put tefillin on his exposed arm. During winter he would often cover his arm with a sweater so as not to be cold. Although he would often unwind his tefillin and pull it off while his sweater remained on, he would sometimes first remove the sweater and then the tefillin. Once when he removed his sweater a friend noticed that the strap of the tefillin was on top of the rolled-up sleeve of his shirt.

When he heard that his tefillin had been resting on his sleeve he was appalled. Who knows how many times he had put on his tefilin in this manner, possibly not discharging his obligation. He wondered if this was a problem even b'dieved. After all, the tefillin were on his arm as usual, but also on top of his shirt.

When this question was put to Rav Elyashiv, zt"l, he ruled that it was a problem even b'dieved.

"This is obviously the same as a tefillin strap that became unraveled, since the strap doesn't rest on his arm at all. If one noticed this later, he must even make a new brochah, since he was not wearing tefillin."

שבט הכהונה, קובץ ג'-ד', ע' פ"ה

When someone once asked Rav Moshe Sternbuch, shlit"a, whether he should put tefillin on a cast that covered his entire upper arm, the Rav replied that he should. "You can definitely put the tefillin on, but it is questionable whether you discharge your obligation in this manner. You should put the tefillin on over the cast, and make l'haniach tefillin. Then, without interrupting, put on your shel rosh. If your custom is to make a second brochah on your shel rosh, you should make a second brochah. If not, not."

תשובות והנהגות, ח"א, סי' ל"ז