The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן ל"ב סעיף ו'-ז'

Overview

Siman 32 Seif 6:

It is only necessary to score the first line. If one cannot write straight without scored lines he may score all the lines. The parchment should not be scored with lead because the scored line will remain colored. There are those that say that the parchment should be scored on top, on the bottom and on the two sides even if the scribe is capable of writing straight, and this is the custom.

- *Halacha L'Moshe M'Sinai* does not state that the parchment used for *tefillin* must be scored. The reason it is necessary to score the first line is that it is prohibited to write three words of a pasuk if the paper is not scored. (M.B. 20)
- *B'dieved* if one did not score the lines and the text was not straight the *tefillin* remain valid. (M.B. 21)

Siman 32 Seif 7:

***Halacha L'Moshe M'Sinai* dictates that *tefillin* must be written on *klaf* rather than on *duchsustus* or on *g'vil*. The text is written on the side of the *klaf* that faces the flesh and if one deviated it is invalid. What is *klaf* and what is *duchsustus*? When the hide is treated it can be divided into two parts, the outer part towards the hair is called the *klaf* and the inner part towards the flesh is called the *duchsustus*. Accordingly, when halacha states that the text is written on the inner part of the *klaf* it means the side that faces he flesh, which is the place that it connects to the *duchsustus*. Our parchment which is not divided into two is considered *klaf* and the text is written on the side towards the flesh because the scraping of the outer layer which is the place of the hair is done just to smooth it out and even if the hide was divided in two this scraping would be necessary. On the side of the flesh a lot of scraping is necessary so that all that is left is the hide.**

Halacha Highlight

Scoring the parchment used for *tefillin*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 32 Seif 6

אין צריך לשרטט כי אם שיטה עליונה

One is not required to score any more than the uppermost line

Tosafos (מנחות ל"ב: ד"ה הא וגיטין ו: ד"ה הא א"ר יצחק) writes that it is sufficient to score only the top line of *tefillin*. This opinion is echoed by many different Rishonim (ע' ספר הלכה ברורה שער הציון ס"ק ע"א). Mishnah Berurah (סק"כ) explains that *Halacha L'Moshe M'Sinai* does not require scoring the parchment of *tefillin* as one is required to score the parchment of *mezuzos*. The only reason to score the parchment is due to the prohibition against writing three words of a *pasuk* without scoring the writing material. A second opinion found in the Rishonim is that the parchment used for *tefillin* must be scored on top, at the bottom and on each of the sides (ע' הלכה ברורה הנ"ל ס"ק ע"ב). This opinion is mentioned by Rema, and he notes that common custom is to score the parchment used for *tefillin* on four sides.

Nowadays, the custom is to score all the lines of *tefillin* to help the *sofer* write the words straight. This is not, however, essential, and even if the parchment was not scored at all, even the top line, the conclusion of Biur Halacha (ד"ה אין צריך) is that it is acceptable. Furthermore, even if the lines of writing are not straight, Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק כ"א) ruled that it is valid. The top of each of the letters should be aligned to the scored line and if the top of the letter is below the scored line it is invalid. Nevertheless, one may thicken the top of the letter so that it should reach the scored line. Obviously, the scored lines should be straight so that the *sofer* will be able to write the line of text straight. A *sofer* who is not yet expert at writing straight may score the top and bottom of each line of text so that he will be able to write the letters uniform in size which thereby beautifies the writing.

Stories to Share

The Power of Tradition

ש"ע ס' ל"ב, ז': "הלכה למשה מסיני תפילין על קלף ..."

A certain businessman in South Africa acquired a large quantity of giraffe skins but wondered what he could do with them. Although this long-necked creature has fine strong skin, he tried to brainstorm to determine how he could make the sale of these skins lucrative. After some deliberation he determined that they were exactly right for using as batim for tefillin. If he could only get approval for this idea he would make a fortune.

But when he asked Rav Moshe Sternbuch, shlit"a, about this, the gadol refused to permit it. "Your entire idea is pasul from the outset. Why should we search to find a substitute for what our ancestors always used, especially since we have no clear tradition that a giraffe is kosher, and the hide of a non-kosher animal is invalid to use for making batim. Therefore, before even approaching the question I say, 'G-d forbid for anyone to be lenient in this matter!'

"Although you are correct that Rabbeinu Saadia Gaon writes explicitly that the creature זמר brought in the verse is a pure animal and his description appears to match that of a giraffe, it is impossible to really know. Who can be sure that a different long-necked creature was not extant then? So many species have become extinct, how can we be really certain that Rav Saadia Gaon is describing a giraffe? We definitely cannot permit a giraffe based solely on his description.

"This is especially true since there is absolutely no pressing reason to permit using these skins for batim. Why should we permit with such a clear lack of evidence? Therefore, the halachah of a giraffe is that it is forbidden to eat or to use for batim."

תשובות והנהגות, ח"ה, ס' י"ב