

Overview

Siman 42 Seif 1:

It is prohibited to change one's *shel rosh* to use as his *shel yad* and even to take the *retzuah* from the *shel rosh* and use it for one's *shel yad* is prohibited. The reason is that one may not lower an item from a higher degree of sanctity to a lower degree of sanctity and the *shel rosh* has a higher degree of sanctity since the majority of the name ש-די is contained in the *shel rosh*. It is permitted to transform the *shel yad* into a *shel rosh*. If the *shel rosh* was new, meaning that it was never used, it is permitted to use it as a *shel yad* by covering it with a single piece of leather so that it appears as though there is a single compartment.

- ❖ A case made for the *shel rosh* may also not be changed for use for the *shel yad*. (M.B. 2)
- ❖ Magen Avrohom writes that if one's *retzua* ripped near the knot he may not invert the *retzua* and have the part that had the knot lower down on his arm since this would involve lowering it to a lesser degree of sanctity. Similarly, if the *retzua* of the *shel rosh* ripped one may not adjust the *retzua* so that a part that surrounded the head should not be beneath the knot. (M.B. 3)
- ❖ There is a dispute in a case where part of the *retzua* beyond the knot ripped and one wants to adjust the *retzua* so that it should be the correct length. According to some this is permitted whereas according to others since some of the *retzua* that surrounds the head will be lowered beneath the knot it is prohibited. Therefore, one should not make this adjustment unless it is absolutely necessary. (M.B. 3)
- ❖ When making a *shel yad* into a *shel rosh* one must make four compartments for the four *parshiyos*. One may also take *parshiyos* and *retzuos* from a *shel yad* for a *shel rosh*. (M.B. 5)

Siman 42 Seif 2:

If one stipulated at the outset he may change his *shel rosh* into a *shel yad* even if he already wore it as a *shel rosh*.

- ❖ At the outset refers to when he first made the *shel rosh*. (M.B. 8)

Stories to Share

"We Ascend..."

ש"ע ס' מ"ב, ב': "מפני שאין מורידין מקדושה חמורה לקדושה קלה..."

We find on today's amud a practical case of the Talmudic principle, "We ascend in holiness, and do not descend."

"Know, my son," wrote the Skulene Rebbe, Rav Eliezer Zushia zt"l, "Chazal tell us to be happy with our lot, but this is only regarding material things. G-d forbid that we should be merely content in spiritual matters! The whole purpose of creation is spiritual, and no matter how much we achieve, it's never really enough. The redundancy of the phrase, 'we ascend, and don't descend,' means that if you are not going up in holiness then you are on your way down as a matter of course. If you are complacent, than you are going down! (כנפי יונה, ע' קכ"א) The Ramchal zt"l states that holding on to the aspiration to improve is what purifies a person who has fallen into sin. The struggle to keep going up is

Halacha Highlight

Upgrading parts of one's *tefillin*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 42 Seif 1

מפני שאין מורידין מקדושה חמורה לקדושה קלה

Because one may not lower something from a higher degree of sanctity to a lower degree of sanctity

The Gemara Menachos (34b) teaches that one may transform his *shel yad* into a *shel rosh* but one may not transform his *shel rosh* into a *shel yad*. The basis for this *halacha* is the principle that we do not take an item of greater sanctity and lower it to a position of lesser sanctity. Rashi (ד"ה תפילין של ראש) explains that the *shel rosh* has a greater degree of sanctity because two of the letters from the name of Hashem ש-די are found in the *shel rosh*. The *shel rosh* has a ש protruding on both sides and the knot is formed in the shape of a ד. The *shel yad*, on the other hand, only contains one letter; the knot is formed in the shape of a י. Piskei Rid (מנחות ל"ד:) explains that the *shel rosh* is considered more sacred than the *shel yad* because the head is a more honorable location on a person's body than his arm.

Poskim note that if using a sacred object for a purpose of less sanctity is prohibited it is certainly prohibited for one to remove it from sacred use altogether (עי' פסקי תשובות אורח חיים). This raises a very common question. There are times that a person has valid *tefillin* but he is interested in upgrading their quality. It may be new *batim*, *parshiyos* or *retzuos*. Is it permitted for one, for example, to take out valid *parshiyos* to replace them with one's that are better quality? There are Poskim who maintain that it is prohibited since switching *parshiyos* would mean that the old *parshiyos* will no longer be used (שו"ת חכם צבי סי' מ"ה). Other Poskim note that common custom is that people are lenient about this matter and they upgrade different parts of their *tefillin* as they see fit (קסת הסופר סי' ה' בלשכת הסופר סק"א). There are Poskim who write that the ideal approach is for one to upgrade all the different parts of his *tefillin* at once and either sell his old pair or lend them to someone in need (ספר תפלה למשה ח"ב פי"ח אורח חיים).

the most potent form of repentance.

שערי רמח"ל, שער הקיבוץ

After living in New York for a number of years, the Skvere Rebbe zt"l began to insist that his followers establish their own enclave far from the city. Since this was a new direction, a certain chassid got up the nerve to ask what inspired the rebbe to make such an abrupt decision.

He answered, "Until now the chassidim have been complaining that the spiritual atmosphere here is unbearable, a sentiment with which I fully agree. It is hard to guard your eyes, and there is a lot of materialism even among our brothers. But as long as they were still struggling with these problems, they had no real power over them. I could live with such a situation. For the last while, the complaining has died down; my chassidim are getting resigned to the conditions here and are no longer bothered by them. They have stopped striving... We must therefore get out of the city, no matter what the cost!"

כן שמעתי