The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Shabbos, Dec 10, 2026 ■ כ״א טבת, תשפ״ו
סימן מ״ב סעיף ג׳

Overview

Siman 42 Seif 3 (b):

If one stipulated [that one should be able to use the kerchief for non-sacred items] it is permitted. Parchment that was manufactured for *tefillin* may not be used for writing mundane matters since designation for a sacred item is significant. **If one designated the kerchief for use for one's *tefillin* but it was not used or if it was used but not designated one may use the kerchief to wrap money.**

- A stipulation works even if the bag was made for *tefillin* and was used regularly for that purpose but it may not be used for a disrespectful purpose. (M.B. 17)
- Rema refers to parchment to be used for *tefillin* and the same *halacha* applies to leather manufactured for *batim* and certainly leather made for use in a *Sefer Torah* or *mezuzah*. (M.B. 18)
- Parchment manufactured for *tefillin* or even for a *Sefer Torah* may be used for a *mezuzah* or other words of Torah. (M.B. 19)
- The designation to which Rema refers is limited to where one performed an action of designation rather than just verbalized his intent. (M.B. 20)
- Designation as a sacred item is different than designation as an object that will serve a sacred item which may be used for non-sacred purposes. (M.B. 21)
- Designation to be a *mitzvah* object does not prohibit use of that item for non-*mitzvah* purposes since designation is not significant. (M.B. 22)
- Designation as a sacred item prohibits one from using that object for non-sacred purposes but it may be used for a lesser sacred purpose. Magen Avrohom cites authorities who maintain that designation has no effect but one should be stringent about this matter. (M.B. 23)
- Temporary use even many times does not prohibit the use of the object for non-sacred purposes. (M.B. 24)
- According to some even if the object is not sanctified by temporary use one may not use the bag for money while the *tefillin* are inside. (M.B. 26)7

Halacha Highlight

Using sacred items for less sacred purposes

Rema Siman 42 Seif 3 (b)

וקלף המעבד לשם תפלין אסור לכתב עליו דברי חל

Parchment that was processed for *tefillin* may not be used to write upon it mundane matters

Rema writes that hide that was treated for the purpose of writing *tefillin* may not be used for writing mundane matters since in this regard designation is significant – הזמנה מילתא היא. Mishnah Berurah (ס״ק כ״ג) notes a contradiction, namely, that earlier in the *Siman* (סע׳ א׳) we learned that designation is not significant. He answers that earlier the question was using a *shel rosh* as a *shel yad*. Since the transfer involves moving an item from one sacred purpose to another sacred purpose it is allowed even though the second purpose is less sacred. In contrast, our case involves taking an item that was designated for a sacred purpose and using it for something mundane. In such a case *halacha* recognizes designation as significant and the parchment may not be used for writing mundane matters.

Elsewhere (סע׳ ל״ב סע׳ ח׳) Shulchan Aruch taught that before processing hide that one intends to use for *tefillin* he should verbalize his intent to use the leather for *tefillin* or a *Sefer Torah*. In the event that he verbalized the intent to use the hide for a *mezuzah,* it may not be used for *tefillin* or a *Sefer Torah*. The reason hide processed for use for a *Sefer Torah* may be used for *tefillin*, explains Mishnah Berurah, (ס״ק כ״ו) is that once one verbalized the intent to use this leather for a *Sefer Torah* it is infused with a great degree of sanctity and to use that leather for something that is less sacred is allowed. On the other hand, if one verbalized the intent to use the processed hide for a *mezuzah* which has only a small degree of sanctity it may not be used for something that is more sacred like *tefillin* of a *Sefer Torah*. Sha'arei Teshuvah (ס״ק י״ב) notes that this ruling that allows using something infused with a higher degree of sanctity for something that is less sacred is disputed but nevertheless, Sha'agas Aryeh supports Shulchan Aruch's ruling that it is allowed.

Stories to Share

Mundane Use

ש״ע ס׳ מ״ב, ג׳: ״וקלף שמעובד לשם תפילין אסור לכתוב עליו דברי חל...״

We find on today's amud that one may not write mundane matters on parchment that was processed so that it could be used for tefillin.

A certain sofer began to write the first parshah of tefillin, but made such an egregious error at the very start that he immediately took out another piece of parchment and began fresh. After he finished work, he tore off the beginning of the parshah that contained the error and placed it in genizah.

The next day he wanted to test his pen to make sure it worked well and was on the verge of testing it on the remnant of parchment from the day before when he wondered if he was allowed to do so. Perhaps it had been afforded some holiness due to its proximity to the earlier writing? After all, if he had not erred, it would have been filled with the holy words of the first parshah of tefillin.

When this question reached Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zt"l, he ruled that it is forbidden to test the kolmus on such a scrap. "Although the remnant itself does not require genizah, you still may not test your pen on it. Doing so is a disgrace and is tantamount to throwing it away, which is also forbidden.

"The same is true regarding beginner soferim who practice their writing on parchment. Even if the sofer was careful to avoid writing the shem Hashem or a full verse, the scraps may not be thrown out."

פסקי הלכות, ע׳ ס״ז