

THE JOSEPH GRAZI EDITION

Halachot of Tefillin



Congregation Shaare Rahamim Halachot Series

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Typography and Layout:

Simcha Graphics 718/854-4830

Published and distributed by:

Congregation Shaare Rahamim
718/951-9444

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Graphics:

The Printed Word 718/258-4840

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ונשיא מועצת חכמי התורה

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In Memorium
JOSEPH E. GRAZI ז"ר

We are pleased to present this important work to the community in memory of Joseph E. Grazi. Joe Grazi was the oldest son of Fortune and Ezra Grazi – immigrants from Jerusalem and Aleppo, respectively – and he lived his life in accordance with his family heritage and the traditions of the Syrian community. He carried these values and traditions with him from his boyhood years in Havana, to his tour of duty in the United States Army during World War II, and through his college years at the University of Maine. He later settled within the confines of Bensonhurst and Gravesend, but, like many people of his time, he had a yearning to reach outward and eventually established a successful real estate business in New York City. Still, he never stepped far away from the community that continually nurtured him and his family.

It is most appropriate that we dedicate this volume, which details all of the *halachot* regarding the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*, to Joe's memory. Regardless of how busy life was, and no matter what pressures had mounted, Joe Grazi never forgot the importance of donning his *tefillin* daily. He approached this *mitzvah* the same way he approached virtually all aspects of his life: with meticulous attention. This sense of discipline, which he learned and imbibed already during his youth, constituted an essential part of his character. One can almost trace a straight line between his focus on daily prayer with *tefillin* and his perfectionist nature. Those who knew him well will always remember how many times he would say, "If you are going to do something, do it right!"

Joe Grazi was married to Sally, the daughter of Pauline and Vita Grazi, for 62 years. Their large family, *ken yirbu*, continues to be an active part of our community. Among their children and grandchildren are Torah scholars in Brooklyn, Deal and Lakewood, as well as others involved in medicine, law, politics, education, business, music and art. As the family patriarch, Joe insisted on taking his entire family to Israel on numerous occasions, thereby solidifying their ongoing commitments to Torah and Israel. Through his establishment of the Sally and Joe Grazi Family Foundation, which has made the publication of this work possible, Joe has enabled his descendants to continue philanthropic work on behalf of the Jewish community.

During the last year of his life, when illness felled this tower of strength, Joe's struggle to fulfill his Torah commitments made an indelible impression on every family member. He insisted on wearing *tefillin* each and every day, until the very end, even on days when he had energy for nothing else. Reflecting on the essence of the man, this struggle was part of who he was – a man of true integrity and uncompromising dedication to his values.

It is in this spirit that the family dedicates this work *l'ilui nishmat* Joseph E. Grazi, ז"ר. It is our hope that this compendium of the laws of *tefillin* will be used by the legions of our community's young men as they reach the milestone of their Bar Mitzvah, and for many years beyond. To the extent that it will foster within them a commitment to performing this essential *mitzvah* with detailed precision, it will serve to successfully perpetuate the special legacy of a truly remarkable and dearly beloved man.

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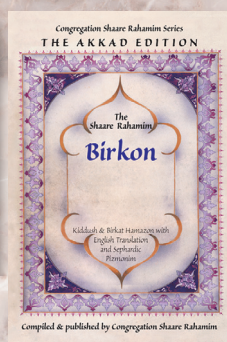
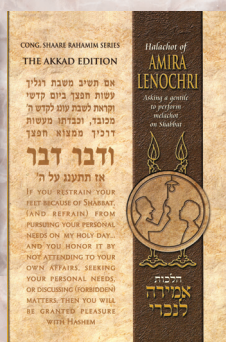
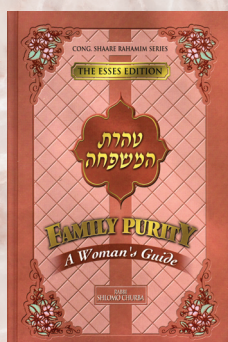
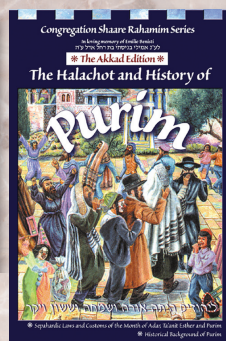
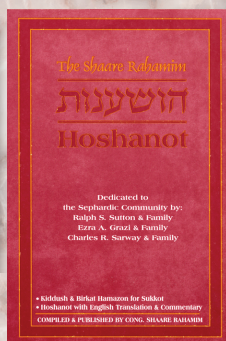
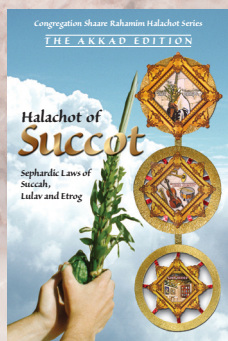
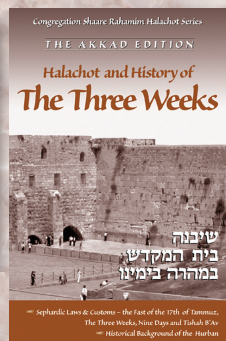
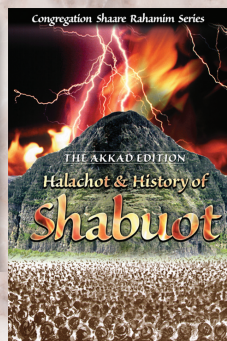
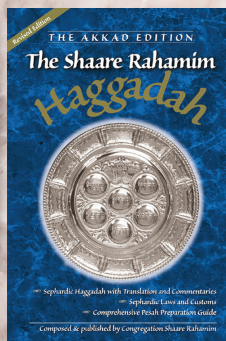
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Cover: Bottom Line Marketing Group 718.377.4567 • Tefillin photo: Tiferes Stam & Judaica 718-336-6866



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Rabbi's Message

קדושת תפילין קדושתן גדולה היא, שכל זמן שהתפילין בראשו של אדם
ועל זרועו הוא עניו וירא שמים. . .

*"The sanctity of tefillin is great, for as long as the tefillin is
upon a person's head and arm, he is humble and
G-d-fearing . . ."*

(Rambam, Hilchot Tefillin 4:25)

The two parts of the *tefillin* — the *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh* — are often understood as symbols of the two areas of religious commitment. The *shel yad*, fastened around the arm, represents the realm of human action, how we behave and conduct ourselves. The *shel rosh*, which we wear on top of our heads, alludes to the human mind — our thoughts and feelings.

Together, the two parts of the *tefillin* combine to represent the concept of complete devotion to the service of the Almighty. It reminds us that partial commitment does not suffice; dedicating one part of our lives to Torah observance but not the other is tantamount to not dedicating ourselves at all.

It is not enough to wear the *shel rosh* — to feel religious, to believe in the Torah and its commandments — without also wearing the *shel yad* — without acting on those feelings and beliefs. A Jew must commit to G-d not only his mind, but also his conduct, all the activities he performs from the moment he arises until he goes to sleep. By the same token, it is not enough to wear only the *shel yad*. Performing the rituals is critical but insufficient; one must also exercise the mind, by studying Torah and engendering within himself sincere love and devotion to his Creator.

Baruch Hashem, our blessed community truly embodies this fundamental message of the *tefillin*. Our members exemplify the concept of the *shel yad*, of hard work and effort in performing *mitzvot*. They flock to the synagogues both on Shabbat and during the week, involve themselves tirelessly and selflessly in important *hesed* projects, and make great sacrifices to preserve our ancient

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customs and traditions. But in addition, our members have also distinguished themselves in their commitment to the *shel rosh* — to filling their minds with the holiness of Torah knowledge. Synagogues in our community have become miniature *yeshivot* — thriving centers of Torah study where scores of men, women and children, spanning the entire range of ages, backgrounds and professions, come to bask in the radiance of Torah.

It is this commitment to intense Torah learning that continues to inspire us at Congregation Shaare Rahamim to produce high-level, challenging Torah literature to meet the growing demand. The success of earlier volumes is due mainly to the unquenchable thirst for knowledge on the part of our community. We are confident that this volume, like those that preceded it, will succeed in its goal to provide practical instruction and guidance, and to spread our ancient traditions throughout the English-speaking Sephardic world.

We must emphasize that this work in no way seeks to take the place of personal rabbinic consultation. The information in this work is intended to alert the readers to the basic laws relevant to the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*, and to encourage them to consult with their Rabbis when questions arise.

It is with great pride that I, on behalf of Shaare Rahamim and our entire readership, commend Rabbi Yitzchak Churba for his monumental achievement in producing this volume. The sheer scope of material, and the clarity in which it was arranged and formulated, is a testament to his knowledge and talents, and to the countless hours invested in this project. May Rabbi Yitzchak be blessed with continued success in the study and dissemination of Torah, and be rewarded with much joy, good health and *nahat*.

I hope and pray that in the merit of our studying and observing the laws of *tefillin*, we will be worthy of the rewards of this special *mitzvah*, and will, as the Rambam guaranteed, be “humble and G-d-fearing” every day throughout our lives, and thus be worthy of the Almighty’s continued grace and kindness.

Rabbi Shlomo Churba

Introduction

The *Mitzvah* of *Tefillin*: Its Meaning and Purpose

There is a Torah obligation to wear *tefillin* upon one's arm and head each day. The *tefillin* contain four *parashiyot*, or sections of the *Humash*, which the Torah commands us to bind upon our arms and heads. The Torah presents this command four times, in each of the four sections contained in the *tefillin* (*Shemot* 13:9, 16; *Devarim* 6:8, 11:18).

The *Sefer Ha'hinuch* (421) provides a most insightful explanation for the reason underlying this *mitzvah*:

A person, being a physical being, will naturally be drawn after desires, for this is the nature of physical matter — to seek everything that benefits it . . . And the Almighty wanted to bring us, His sacred nation, merit, and [therefore] commanded us to establish powerful guards around us, meaning, we are commanded that words of Torah shall never leave our mouths day or night, and that we shall place four fringes on the corners of our garments, a *mezuza* on our doorway, and *tefillin* upon our arms and heads. This is all to remind us, so that we withhold our hands from wrongdoing and not stray after our eyes and the evil thoughts of our hearts.

The *tefillin* thus serve as a reminder that we must strive for something far more meaningful than physical pleasures and de-

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lights. Like the *tzitzit* on our garments and the *mezuzot* on our doorways, the *tefillin* direct our attention to our spiritual mission, reminding us that we are to strive to serve the Almighty by studying Torah and performing *mitzvot*, rather than spending our lives in the endless pursuit of physical gratification.

Why were specifically these four sections of the Torah chosen to be placed upon our arms and heads?

The *Sefer Ha'binuch* explains that these four sections contain the basic, fundamental concepts upon which the Jewish religion is based:

- קבלת עול מלכות שמים (the acceptance of Divine Kingship);
- אחדות ה' (the belief that God is One);
- יציאת מצרים (the Exodus from Egypt, which proves God's unlimited might and providence over the earth).

As these constitute the fundamental principles of Judaism, the Torah required tying them near one's brain and heart — the organs that are commonly seen as the seats of human intellect. This *mitzvah* is thus intended to reinforce our belief in, and keen awareness of, these tenets, thus reminding us of our obligations toward God.

Scholars have offered symbolic interpretations of a number of details concerning the *tefillin*. The work *Hen Tov* (cited in *Yalkut Yitzhak*, 423) comments that the four compartments of the *tefillin shel rosh* allude to a person's two eyes and two ears, which must be subjugated to the service of God. The *tefillin shel rosh* thus reminds us to avoid looking upon forbidden sights and listening to forbidden sounds. The single compartment of the *tefillin shel yad*, the *Hen Tov* suggests, symbolizes the single heart in a person, which sustains and controls all the body's organs. Just as in the *shel yad*

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the four sections are combined into a single compartment, so must a person bring together all aspects of his being for the single goal of serving his Creator.

A slightly different approach is taken by the *Elyah Rabbah*, who explained that the *tefillin* represent the five senses. The four compartments of the *tefillin shel rosh* correspond to the four senses that are controlled in the head — hearing, sight, smell and taste — whereas the single compartment of the *tefillin shel yad* parallels the sense of touch, which occurs in the hand. The *tefillin* thus instruct that every area of our conduct, everything we do with our physical bodies, should be geared towards the service of the Almighty.

Thus, wearing *tefillin* is much more than merely a mechanical act, or a simple ritual. Rather, it serves to remind us of the fundamental precepts of the Jewish faith, and, perhaps most importantly of all, of the need to direct our lives toward spiritual excellence, rather than confining ourselves to a purely physical existence.

The Rewards and Punishment for the *Mitzvah* of *Tefillin*

The Sages teach that a person earns immense reward through the proper observance of the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*. The Almighty declares through the prophet Yeshayahu, אֲדֹנָיִי עֲלֵיהֶם יַחֲיוּ — “When God is upon them — they shall live” (*Yeshayahu* 38:16). Meaning, people who carry the Name of God upon their bodies by wearing *tefillin* are blessed with long life.¹ As the *Yafeh Le’lev* explains, the organs that play the most vital roles in sustaining a person are the

1. עיין מנחות מד. “אמר ר”ל כל המניח תפילין מאריך ימים שנא’ ה’ עליהם יחיו.” ופירש”י “אותם שנושאים עליהם שם ה’, תפילין, יחיו.”

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brain and heart, and thus by wearing *tefillin* near these organs, one earns long life. Indeed, the story is told of the great Kabbalist Rabbenu Yosef Gikatilla (Spain, 13th century) who fell gravely ill, and, while he was semiconscious, he beheld two people weighing his merits against his sins, and they were found to be equal. Rabbi Yosef immediately asked for his *tefillin* and put them on. At that very moment, when the merit of wearing *tefillin* were placed on the scale, he began recovering from his illness, as the *mitzvah* of *tefillin* prolongs a person's life.² The merit of this *mitzvah* also guarantees a person a share in the World to Come, and grants him protection from the fires of *Gehinnom* and forgiveness for all his sins.³

However, as the *Kaf Ha'hayim* notes, this reward hinges on the individual's compliance with the laws governing conduct while wearing *tefillin*, which forbid engaging in idle or frivolous talk or performing mundane activities while wearing *tefillin*.

If a person does not wear *tefillin* due to laziness, an unwillingness to take time away from his professional pursuits, other financial concerns, or distaste for the *tefillin* themselves, he is classified under the category of פושעי ישראל בגופן — “Jews who sin with their bodies.” This applies even if a person neglects to wear *tefillin* only on occasion, and even if he neglected this *mitzvah* on only a single day (unless, of course, he could not wear *tefillin* due to circumstances beyond his control). Furthermore, the *Gemara* establishes⁴ that failure to wear *tefillin* constitutes a violation of eight Biblical commands. As mentioned earlier, the Torah introduces this *mitzvah* in four different contexts, and thus by neglecting the *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh*, one is in violation of eight commands — four regarding the *shel yad*, and four regarding the *shel rosh*.

2. מובא בהקדמה לספר החרדים. 3. טור בשם הספר שימושא רבא. 4. מנחות מד.

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This should serve as a warning to those who wear their *tefillin* incorrectly, such as people who place the *tefillin shel rosh* on their foreheads (rather than on the top of the head). One who does not place his *tefillin* on the correct place on his head and on his arm is considered as not having donned *tefillin* at all, and is thus included under the category of פושעי ישראל בגופן.

Given the immense importance of this *mitzvah* and the gravity of its neglect, a person must ensure to purchase the parchment for his *tefillin* from a reliable, scholarly, reputable and God-fearing *sofer* (scribe). The straps and *tefillin* boxes, too, should be obtained from a reliable individual who can be trusted to prepare the straps in full accordance with *Halachah*. One who wears *tefillin* that were not produced in accordance with all relevant halachic details does not fulfill the obligation of *tefillin*, and all the *berachot* he recites when donning the *tefillin* are deemed *berachot le'vatalah* — *berachot* recited in vain. People exercise such meticulous care when purchasing furniture and appliances to ensure that they are in working order and of the highest quality. All the more so, it behooves one to purchase a beautiful pair of *tefillin*.⁵ One thereby fulfills the obligation of *hiddur mitzvah* — beautifying the *mitzvah*, as the Sages infer from the verse (*Shemot* 15:2), זה קלי ואגודה ("This is my God and I shall glorify Him").

5. שו"ע לז:א ומשנ"ב שם

Donning the *Tallit* Before the *Tefillin*

- 1) One should don the *tallit* before donning the *tefillin*, due to the halachic principle of מעלין בקודש ואין מורידין — “One ascends in sanctity, and does not descend.” Wearing *tefillin* is a more sacred act than wearing a *tallit*, because whereas with a *tallit* one covers himself with a *mitzvah* garment, by wearing *tefillin* one binds his body to the realm of *kedushah* (sanctity). It is thus proper to first don the *tallit* and then “ascend in sanctity” by donning *tefillin*.⁶
- 2) If one has *tefillin* but not a *tallit*, and he expects to receive a *tallit* before the final time for *Shema*, then he should not don his *tefillin* until after he receives the *tallit*. If, however, he suspects that the *tallit* will arrive only after the final time for *Shema*, then he should put on his *tefillin* even without the *tallit*, so that he can recite *Shema* and the *Amidah* with *tefillin*. Of course, once the *tallit* arrives he should don the *tallit*, as well.⁷

7. כה"ח שם

6. שו"ע כה:א וביה"ל שם

Removing the *Tallit* from One's Bag Before the *Tefillin*

The rule of *אין מעבירין על המצוות* ("One may not pass by a *mitzvah*") establishes that one may not pass over one *mitzvah* in order to perform another *mitzvah*. For this reason, *Halachah* requires that if one keeps his *tallit* and *tefillin* in the same bag, he must place the *tallit* in the front, so that he first encounters the *tallit* before the *tefillin*. Otherwise, he will be forced to pass over the *tefillin* to take the *tallit* (since the *tallit* is worn before the *tefillin*), in violation of the rule of *אין מעבירין על המצוות*.



- 1) This rule applies only if one intends to presently perform both *mitzvot*. If one does not intend to perform the *mitzvot* at this time, then he is certainly permitted to reach over one to take the other. Hence, if the *tallit* was mistakenly placed behind the *tefillin*, and one does not intend to use them at this moment, he may remove and rearrange them.⁸

⁸. משנ"ב שם

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- 2) If one mistakenly placed the *tefillin* in front of the *tallit* and now wishes to wear both the *tallit* and the *tefillin*, then some authorities rule that he should first don the *tefillin*, rather than reaching over the *tefillin* to take the *tallit*,⁹ whereas others maintain that the *tallit* should be worn first, even in such a case.¹⁰ To satisfy both opinions, one should rearrange the *tallit* and *tefillin* properly, divert his attention from them for a few moments, and then put on the *tallit* followed by the *tefillin*.¹¹
- 3) If the *tallit* which one wears on Shabbat is situated in front of the *tallit* worn on weekdays, he may reach over the Shabbat *tallit* to take the weekday *tallit*.¹²

11. ספר אור לציון להגה"ר ב"צ אבא שאול זצ"ל ח"ב

10. כה"ח שם

9. שו"ע כה:א

12. כה"ח שם מד:טז

Donning *Tefillin* at Home Before Going to the Synagogue

- 1) The *Zohar* emphasizes the importance of leaving one's home to the synagogue adorned with *tallit* and *tefillin*. It is therefore proper to put on the *tallit* and *tefillin* at home and then go to the synagogue while wearing the *tallit* and *tefillin*.¹³
 - a. As one walks outside while wearing *tefillin*, he should ensure to keep the *tefillin* covered — such as with a hat and jacket — in case he unknowingly passes through areas with exposed sewage and the like.¹⁴
 - b. While walking outside with *tefillin* it is proper to cover even the strap wrapped on one's arm and finger.¹⁵
- 2) If one cannot don *tefillin* at home before going to the synagogue, then, if possible, he should do so in the entrance to the synagogue and then enter the sanctuary wearing *tefillin*. This applies in the following cases:
 - a. One left his *tallit* and *tefillin* in the synagogue¹⁶;
 - b. He leaves his home before the earliest time for *tefillin*¹⁷;
 - c. He suspects that he will be unable to keep his mind focused on his *tefillin* on the way to the synagogue¹⁸;

16. כה"ח כה"ב

15. כה"ח מג"כ

14. כה"ח שם אות כ

18. כה"ח שם

13. שו"ע כה"ב

17. משנ"ב שם

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- d. He must pass by exposed sewage or other unclean areas on the way to the synagogue.¹⁹
 - e. He fears being seen in his *tefillin* by gentiles in the street.²⁰
- 3) Donning *tefillin* at home takes precedence over the *mitzvah* of being among the first ten men in the synagogue. Thus, even if donning *tefillin* at home would cause one to arrive in the synagogue after the first ten men, he should nevertheless lay *tefillin* at home and make an effort to be among the first ten in attendance at *minhah* and *arvit*.²¹

²¹. כה"ח שם

²⁰. משנ"ב כה"ב

¹⁹. שם

The Proper Time for Wearing *Tefillin*

- 1) The practice is to don *tallit* and *tefillin* only after one has recited all the morning *berachot*. Ideally, the *tefillin* should be donned before one recites the *Shema* in the *korbanot* section of the prayer service, or at least before one recites the *tamid* paragraph of the *korbanot* section.²²
- 2) In principle, the obligation of *tefillin* requires wearing the *tefillin* throughout the entire day. However, since most people are incapable of conducting themselves throughout the day in the manner required while wearing *tefillin* — refraining from passing air, and keeping one's mind focused on the *tefillin* — the custom developed not to wear *tefillin* the entire day. One must, however, ensure to wear *tefillin* during the *shaharit* service, as during this brief period it is indeed possible to conduct oneself in the manner required while wearing *tefillin*. The Sages expressed the importance of wearing *tefillin* during the morning prayer service when they declared, “Whoever lays *tefillin*, recites *Shema* and prays is considered as though he has wholeheartedly accepted upon himself the yoke of Divine kingship” (*Berachot 15a*). It is particularly important to wear *tefillin* during the recitation of *Shema*, which includes the commandment to wear *tefillin*. The Sages commented regarding one who recites *Shema* without wearing *tefillin*, כאילו מעיד עדות שקר בעצמו — he is considered as though he renders false testimony about himself. Since he speaks about an obligation that he does not fulfill at that moment,

²². כה"ח כה:ג"ד

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he gives the impression that he has no interest in fulfilling the will of his Creator, Heaven forbid.²³

- a. It is forbidden to wear *tefillin* during the nighttime hours, given the possibility that one might fall asleep while wearing them. The “nighttime hours” for the purposes of this *halachah* extend from sundown until the point known as “*mi’she’yakir*.” This refers to the time in the morning when there is enough light to enable one to recognize an acquaintance from a distance of four *amot* (cubits). The exact time of *mi’she’yakir* is printed in calendars.²⁴
- b. One should preferably don *tefillin* before the *Shema* recitation in the *korbanot* section of the prayer service, or at least before reciting the *tamid* section.²⁵
- c. If one does not have *tefillin* with him and suspects that he may not have access to *tefillin* until after the final time for *Shema*, he should recite *Shema* without *tefillin* and then don *tefillin* later when *tefillin* become accessible. This applies as well to a person who has *tefillin* but suspects that the final time for *Shema* will pass by the time he puts on the *tefillin*; he should first recite the *Shema* without *tefillin* and then don the *tefillin*. Since he genuinely intends to wear *tefillin* later in the day, he is not considered as “rendering false testimony about himself” and he may recite *Shema* without *tefillin*. In both these cases, the individual should then repeat the *Shema* recitation while wearing *tefillin*.²⁶

25. כה"ח כה"ד

24. שו"ע ל:א"ב

23. שו"ע לז"ב ומשנ"ב שם, ושו"ע כה"ד

26. משנ"ב וכה"ח שם

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- d. If a person does not yet have *tefillin* and he suspects that if he waits for the *tefillin* to arrive he will miss the congregational recitation of the *Amidah*, and no later *minyan* is available, he should recite the *Amidah* together with the congregation without *tefillin*. He should then don his *tefillin* later once they arrive, and recite *Shema* while wearing the *tefillin*.²⁷
 - e. If a person has with him only *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, but not the standard *tefillin Rashi*, and if he waits for his *tefillin Rashi* he will miss the opportunity to pray with a *minyan*, he should wear the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, without a *berachah*, and pray with the *minyan*. (This applies even to unmarried men, who generally do not wear *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*.) Later, when he receives the *tefillin Rashi*, he should put them on with a *berachah* and repeat *Shema*.²⁸
 - f. If a person forgot to add *ya'aleh ve'yavo* during the *Amidah* of *shaharit* on *Rosh Hodesh*, and he realizes his mistake only after *musaf*, at which point his *tefillin* have already been removed, he should preferably don his *tefillin* again before he repeats the *Amidah*.²⁹
- 3) If one did not have access to *tefillin* while reciting the morning prayers, or at the time he suffered from a stomach virus that precluded the possibility of his wearing *tefillin*, then he may — and must — wear *tefillin* sometime later

²⁷. משנ"ב שם. ובילקוט יוסף כתב שאם בטוח הוא בעצמו שיוכל לכוין דעתו היטב בתפילתו גם כשמתפלל ביחידות, אז עדיף להמתין ולהתפלל ביחידות עם התפילין. ²⁸. קול יעקב לד:ג.
²⁹. ילקוט יוסף

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during the day, before sundown. He must lay *tefillin* at some point during the day so that a day does not pass without his wearing *tefillin*. If one did not wear *tefillin* at all during the day until after sunset, he may still lay *tefillin* with a *berachah* until the point of *tzet ha'kochavim* (night-fall), unless he already recited *arvit*, in which case he should lay *tefillin* without a *berachah*.³⁰

- 4) It is forbidden to wear *tefillin* on Shabbat, Yom Tov or Hol Ha'mo'ed. *Tefillin* are worn to serve as a "sign" of our covenant with God, and Shabbat and festivals themselves constitute a "sign" of the covenant. Wearing *tefillin* on these occasions would thus be disrespectful to their role as a "sign."³¹

a. According to some authorities, one may not even move *tefillin* on Shabbat or Yom Tov, unless he intends to use the *tefillin* in some permissible fashion, or if he needs the space it currently occupies. Thus, for example, if a teacher wishes on Shabbat to show his students the manner in which the *tefillin* are produced and how the straps are tied, he may show them an actual pair of *tefillin* for demonstration. Likewise, if *tefillin* occupy space on the table and a person needs that space, he may move the *tefillin*. In addition, one may move *tefillin* if they are in a place where they may likely be stolen, damaged or soiled.³²

b. If one who follows the custom not to wear *tefillin* on Hol Ha'mo'ed prays on Hol Ha'mo'ed with a congre-

32. משנ"ב לא:א

31. שו"ע לא:א-ב

30. משנ"ב לז:ב, ושו"ע לז:ה ומשנ"ב שם

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gation of people who do wear *tefillin*, he should nevertheless follow his custom and not wear *tefillin*.³³

- c. If a resident of Israel spends Yom Tov outside Israel and intends to return to Israel, then on the second day of Yom Tov (which is observed only in the Diaspora) he should lay *tefillin* privately in the home where he stays. He should recite *Shema* while wearing *tefillin*, and then remove the *tefillin* and go to the synagogue to pray with the congregation.³⁴

- 5) *Tefillin* are worn on Purim. During the reading of the *Megilah*, when the reader reaches the verse, ליהודים היתה אורה, ושמחה וששון ויקר (‘‘The Jews experienced light, joy, jubilation and honor’’ — 8:16), one should touch his *tefillin shel rosh* and then kiss his hand.³⁵

³³. ילקוט יוסף

³⁴. ילקוט יוסף

³⁵. כה"ח שם, ילקוט יוסף

Laying *Tefillin* with the Proper Intention

- 1) The *Shulhan Aruch*³⁶ gives the following description of the intention one must have while laying *tefillin*:

יכוין בהנחתם שצונו הקב"ה להניח ארבע פרשיות אלו שיש בהם יחוד שמו ויציאת מצרים על הזרוע כנגד הלב ועל הראש כנגד המוח כדי שזכור נסים ונפלאות שעשה עמנו שהם מורים על יחודו ואשר לו הכח והממשלה בעליונים ובתחתונים לעשות בהם כרצונו וישתעבד להקב"ה הנשמה שהיא במוח וגם הלב שהוא עיקר התאוות והמחשבות ובוה יזכור הבורא וימעט הנאותיו.

“One should have mind while placing them that the Almighty commanded us to place these four sections [of the Torah] — which contain the oneness of His Name and the Exodus — on the arm, next to the heart, and upon the head, next to the brain, in order that we remember the miracles and wonders that He performed for us, which demonstrate His oneness and that He has the power and authority in both the upper and lower worlds to do with them as He wishes. And one must subjugate to the Almighty the soul, which is located in the brain, and also the heart, which is the primary [source] of desires and thoughts. One will thereby remember the Creator and minimize his [earthly] pleasures.

The required intention when laying *tefillin* is thus the following: “God commanded me to tie to my arm and head the sections of the Torah that tell of the Exodus and His oneness, and which testify to His unlimited power, and I therefore commit my thoughts, desires and mind to the service of the Creator.”

³⁶. כה:ה

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- 2) It is proper to verbally declare this intention by reciting the “*Le’Shem Yihud*” prayer printed in the *siddurim*.³⁷

If one did not have this intention when laying *tefillin*, he nevertheless fulfilled his obligation, so long as he had in mind to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*.³⁸

³⁸. משנ"ב שם

³⁷. כה"ח שם

Reciting the Four *Parshiyot*

The practice among Sepharadim is to recite while wearing *tefillin* the four *parshiyot* (sections in the Torah) that mention *tefillin* and that are written on the parchment inside the *tefillin*. These sections are: *kadesh* (*Shemot* 13:1-10), *ve'hayah ki yevi'acha* (*Shemot* 13:11-16), *Shema* (*Devarim* 5:4-9) and *ve'hayah im shamoa* (*Devarim* 11:13-21).

וידבר יידיד אל משה לאמר קדש לי כל בכור פטר כל רחם בבני ישראל באדם ובבהמה לי הוא ויאמר משה אל ה' זכור את היום הזה אשר יצאתם ממצרים מבית עבדים כי בחזק יד הוציא יידיד אתכם מזה ולא יאכל זמון היום אתם יצאים בחרש האביב והיה כי יביאך יידיד אל ארץ הכנעני והחזתי והאמרי והחזי והיבסו אשר זשבע לאבתיך כדת כל ארץ זבת חלב ודבש ועברת את העברת הזאת בחרש הזה שבעת ימים תאכל מצות וביום השביעי חג כי יידיד מצות יאכל את שבעת הימים ולא יראה כל זמון ולא יראה כל שאר בכל לבבך והגדרת לבבך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה עשה יידיד לי בצאתי ממצרים והיה כל לאות על ירך וכלכרון בין עיניך למען תהיה תורת יידיד בפניך כי ביד חזקה הוצאך יידיד ממצרים ושמרת את החזקה הזאת כמועדה מימים ימימה

והיה כי יבאך יידיד אל ארץ הכנעני כאשר זשבע כל ולאבתיך ונתנה לך והעברת כל פטר רחם ליידיד וכל פטר שלר בהמה אשר יהיה לך הזכרים ליידיד וכל פטר זמור תפדה בשה ואם לא תפדה וערפתו וכל בכור אדם בבניך תפדה והיה כי ישאלך בנך מחר לאמר מה זאת ואמרת אליו בחזק יד הוציאנו יידיד ממצרים מבית עבדים והיה כי הקשה פרעה לשלוחנו ויהרג יידיד כל בכור בארץ מצרים מבכר אדם ועד בכור בהמה על כן אני זכור ליידיד כל פטר רחם הזכרים וכל בכור בנך אפדה והיה לאות על ירכה לטוטפת בין עיניך כי בחזק יד הוציאנו יידיד ממצרים

שמע ישראל יידיד אלקינו יידיד אחד ואהבת את יידיד אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאריך והיו הרברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוך היום על לבבך וישננתם לבניך ודברתם בשבתך בביתך ובכלכתך בדרך ובשכרך ובקומך וקשרתם לאות על ירך והיו לטוטפת בין עיניך וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך

והיה אם שמעו תשמעו אל מצותי אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום לאהבה את יידיד אלקיכם ולעבדו בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם ונתתי מטר ארצכם בעת יורה ומלקוש ואספת דגלך ותיירשך ויצהרך ונתתי עשב בשדך לבהמתך ואכלת וישבעת השמור לך פן יפתה לבבכם וסרתם ועברתם אלהים אחרים והשתחויתם להם וחזרה אף יידיד בכם ועצר את השמים ולא יהיה מטר והארמה לא תתן את יבוכה ואבדתם מהרה מעל הארץ הטבה אשר יידיד נתן לכם ושמרתם את דברי אלה על לבבכם ועל נפשכם וקשרתם אתם לאות על ירכם והיו לטוטפת בין עיניכם וקשרתם אתם בנכם לדבר בם בשבתך בביתך ובכלכתך בדרך ובשכרך ובקומך וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך למען ירבו ימיכם וימי בנכם על הארמה אשר זשבע יידיד לאבתיכם לית להם כימי השמים על הארץ

The *parshiyot* of *Shema* and *ve'hayah im shamoa* are recited as

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part of the standard prayer service, while *kadesh* and *ve'hayah ki yevi'acha* should preferably be recited immediately after one dons his *tefillin*. In this way, one reads the four sections in the sequence in which they appear in the Torah. If a person did not recite *kadesh* and *ve'hayah ki yevi'acha* immediately after donning his *tefillin*, he should do so after the conclusion of the prayer service.³⁹

³⁹. משנ"ב כה:ה וכה"ח שם

Arranging the *Tefillin Shel Rosh* and *Tefillin Shel Yad* in the *Tefillin* Bag

The principle of *אין מעבירין על המצוות* which we discussed, also forbids passing over the *tefillin shel yad* or *tefillin shel rosh* in order to first take the other. Therefore, one must arrange his *tefillin* in such a way that he first encounters the one that he plans to wear first, namely, the *tefillin shel yad*. In presenting the obligation of *tefillin*, the Torah first mentions the *shel yad* (וקשרתם לאות על ידך) and only then the *shel rosh* (והיו לטוטפות בין עיניך), indicating that one must first don the *shel yad* before the *shel rosh*. As such, one must ensure that he first encounters the *shel yad* before the *shel rosh*, so that he will not be in a situation requiring him to “pass over” the *shel rosh* in favor of the *shel yad*.⁴⁰

- 1) The *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh* should be positioned in the *tefillin* bag one beside the other. In order to ensure to always first remove the *shel yad* before the *shel rosh*, one should accustom himself to always position the *shel yad* on the same side, either to the right or to the left.⁴¹
 - a. Preferably, one should position the *shel yad* on the right side and a bit higher than the *shel rosh*, in order



41. שו"ע כה:ב ומשנ"ב שם

40. שו"ע כה:ו ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

to further assure that he will always remove the *shel yad* before the *shel rosh*.⁴²

- b. One who uses a long, narrow *tefillin* bag (as opposed to the more common short, wide bags) must ensure to place the *tefillin shel rosh* inside the bag before the *tefillin shel yad*, so that he will always remove the *shel yad* first.



Furthermore, one should preferably not remove the *shel yad* from his arm until the *shel rosh* has been placed in the bag, thereby guaranteeing that the *shel yad* is always positioned near the opening of the bag.⁴³

- c. If one keeps his *shel yad* and *shel rosh* in two different bags, he must clearly label the bags so that they are always used for the same *tefillin*. Since the sanctity of the *shel rosh* exceeds that of the *shel yad*, it is improper to place the *shel yad* in the bag designated for the *shel*

⁴³. שם

⁴². משנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

rosh. If the two bags are kept together in a larger bag, the bag of the *shel yad* should be positioned a bit higher than that of the *shel rosh*, so that one will always remove the *tefillin shel yad* before the *tefillin shel rosh*.⁴⁴

- 2) If a person keeps his *tefillin Rashi* and *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* together in a large bag (in which he keeps also his *tallit* and *siddur*), he must ensure that the *tefillin Rashi* are always positioned on the same side, so that he will always remove them first. If one mistakenly removed his *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* before *tefillin Rashi*, he should nevertheless first don the *tefillin Rashi*.⁴⁵

44. שם

45. משנ"ב לד"ד

Reciting the *Berachah* and Donning the *Tefillin Shel Yad*

- 1) When introducing the obligation of *tefillin*, the Torah first mentions the *shel yad* (וקשרתם לאות על ידך) and only then speaks of the *shel rosh* (והיו לטוטפות בין עיניך), thus indicating that one should put on the *shel yad* before donning the *shel rosh*. Before tying the *shel yad* to one's arm, he recites the *berachah* ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו להניח תפילין. After placing the *tefillin shel yad*, one puts on the *tefillin shel rosh* without reciting any *berachah*.⁴⁶
- 2) The widespread practice among Sepharadim is to sit while putting on the *tefillin shel yad*, in accordance with Kabbalistic teaching. The *berachah* is likewise recited while sitting.⁴⁷
- 3) After one recites a *berachah* before performing a *mitzvah*, he must immediately perform the *mitzvah*, without any delay or interruption. Therefore, one should first position the *tefillin shel yad* on the proper spot on the arm, recite the *berachah*, and then immediately fasten the *tefillin* to his arm with its strap.⁴⁸
 - a. Nevertheless, if one mistakenly recited the *berachah* before he placed the *tefillin* on his arm, he has fulfilled his requirement and does not repeat the *berachah*.⁴⁹

49. משנ"ב שם

48. שו"ע כה"ח

47. כה"ח כה"ה

46. שו"ע כה"ה

Halachot of Tefillin

- b. If one did not recite the *berachah* when he put on the *tefillin*, he may recite it thereafter, so long as he has yet to remove his *tefillin*. In such a case, he should feel the *tefillin shel yad* and then recite the *berachah*.⁵⁰
- 4) When reciting the words “להניח תפילין” one should stress the *lamed* in the word “*tefillin*,” and should not stress the *nun* in the word “*le’hani’ah*.” (The *nun* in *le’hani’ah* is stressed only when it is used to mean “leave” or “abandon,” as opposed to its meaning here, “to place.”)⁵¹
- 5) According to many authorities, one is not required to wash his hands if he touched the skin of his upper arm while donning the *tefillin shel yad*, as this part of the body is normally uncovered. Likewise, if one touched his hair while laying the *tefillin shel rosh*, he does not need to wash his hands.⁵²
- 6) Some people have the practice to cover their arm while putting on the *tefillin shel yad*, as the Torah indicates that the *shel yad* should be placed in a private, concealed fashion — “It shall be *for you* as a sign upon your arm” (*Shemot* 13:9). Those who follow this custom ensure to cover their arms even when laying *tefillin* in a dark, empty room in the privacy of their homes.⁵³

52. כה"ח סי' ד

51. משנ"ב כה"ה, ושו"ע כה"ז. ועיין אליה רבה ס"ק יב

50. שם

53. כה"ח כה"ה

אות צט

Halachot of Tefillin

- 7) Strictly speaking, the *tefillin shel yad* need not be covered after it is placed on the arm, though it is preferable to do so.⁵⁴

⁵⁴. רמ"א ומשנ"ב כז:יא

Interrupting in Between the Placing of the *Tefillin Shel Yad* and *Tefillin Shel Rosh*

- 1) *Halachah* forbids making any kind of interruption in between the placing of the *tefillin shel yad* and the *tefillin shel rosh*. One may not speak even a single word in any language — including Hebrew — in between the laying of the two *tefillin*, even for the purpose of a *mitzvah*, such as to return a greeting to a Rabbi.⁵⁵
- 2) If a person did make an interruption, even accidentally, before donning the *tefillin shel rosh*, he must recite the *berachah* ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו על *berachah* מצות תפילין.⁵⁶ (The word מצות is pronounced in the singular form — *mitzvat* — and not in the plural form — *mitzvot*.⁵⁷) This *berachah* is recited after one places the strap of the *tefillin shel rosh* on his head, but before he fastens it around his head.⁵⁸ One must ensure that his head is covered while reciting this *berachah*, like with all *berachot*.⁵⁹
- 3) One should ensure not to make even a silent pause between the placing of the *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh*, even if he keeps his mind focused on the *tefillin* during the pause. The Torah writes in introducing the obligation of *tefillin*, והיה לך לאות על ירך ולזכרון בין עיניך, (“It shall be as a sign upon your arm and as a reminder between your eyes” — *Shemot* 13:9). Rather than allocating an independent clause for each *tefillin* (“It shall be. . . upon your arm; it shall be. . .

⁵⁷. משנה ברורה כה:ה, וכה"ח

⁵⁶. שו"ע שם

⁵⁵. שו"ע כה:ט, וביה"ל ומשנ"ב שם

⁵⁹. משנה ברורה כה:ח

⁵⁸. רמ"א כה:ח

Halachot of Tefillin

between your eyes”), the Torah incorporates both into a single phrase (“It shall be. . . upon your arm and. . . between your eyes”), implying that one should put them on together, without pausing in between. Nevertheless, if one did make a silent pause, he does not recite a *berachah* before donning the *tefillin shel rosh*.⁶⁰

- a. One should therefore ensure that the *tefillin shel rosh* is in front of him and readily accessible as he begins placing the *tefillin shel yad*.⁶¹
 - b. It is likewise forbidden to signal to somebody with hand motions, facial expressions and the like in between the placing of the *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh*, except for the purpose of a *mitzvah*. Thus, for example, if a poor person approaches somebody as he dons his *tefillin*, the person may not give the poor man charity but he may signal to him that he should wait.⁶²
 - c. One may kiss his *tefillin shel rosh* before putting it on his head, as this does not constitute an interruption.⁶³
- 4) Even if one fulfilled his *berachah* obligation by listening to the *berachah* recited by somebody else, he may not speak until after he has placed his *tefillin shel rosh*, and, if he did speak, he must recite the aforementioned *berachah* before donning the *tefillin shel rosh*. If the person who recited the *berachah* speaks before donning his *tefillin shel rosh*, then he must recite the *berachah* before wearing the *tefillin shel rosh*, but the one who listened to his *berachah* is not required to recite a new *berachah* before placing his *shel rosh*.⁶⁴

60. משנ"ב כה:ט 61. משנ"ב וכה"ח כה:ט 62. משנ"ב שם, ילקוט יוסף
63. אגרות משה או"ח ח"ד ס' י 64. כה"ח שם, ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

- 5) Preferably, one should not make even interruptions that are somehow relevant to the *tefillin*. Where this is absolutely necessary, however, one may interrupt, and in such a case he does not recite a new *berachah* over the *tefillin shel rosh*, even if he spoke after reciting the *berachah* and before fastening the *tefillin shel yad* around his arm.⁶⁵
- 6) One may not interrupt while laying *tefillin* even to respond to *kaddish*, *kedushah* or *barechu*. If one hears *kaddish*, *kedushah* or *barechu* in between the laying of the *tefillin shel yad* and the *tefillin shel rosh*, he should remain silent and think the response in his mind. Nevertheless, if one did verbally respond, he is not required to recite a new *berachah* over the *tefillin shel rosh*.⁶⁶
- 7) If, after reciting the *berachah* over the *tefillin*, one realizes that the congregation will soon recite *kaddish*, *kedushah* or *barechu*, he may place the *tefillin shel rosh* before wrapping the strap of the *shel yad* seven times around his forearm, so that he will be able to respond together with the congregation. He should firmly fasten the *shel yad* on his arm such that it stays in place — which might require wrapping the straps one or two times around the arm — don the *shel rosh*, and then respond to the *kaddish*, *kedushah* or *barechu*. Thereafter, he should complete wrapping the strap seven times around his arm.⁶⁷
- 8) It is preferable not to bring down one's sleeve to cover the *tefillin shel yad* until after he places the *tefillin shel rosh*, as

⁶⁷. משנ"ב כה"א

⁶⁶. שו"ע כה"י וכה"ח שם

⁶⁵. שו"ע כה"י ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

doing so may constitute a *hefsek* in between the laying of the *shel yad* and the *shel rosh*.⁶⁸

- 9) One who wears *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* may respond to *kaddish* or *kedushah* as he puts on the *tefillin*, though, in such a case, he should move the *tefillin shel yad* a bit before donning the *shel rosh* in order that they be considered to have been donned together, rather than on two separate occasions.⁶⁹

⁶⁸. ילקוט יוסף

⁶⁹. משנ"ב כה"י

When to Remove the *Shel Rosh* From the *Tefillin* Bag

- 1) One must ensure not to remove the *tefillin shel rosh* from the bag until after he has donned the *tefillin shel yad*. Even though removing the two simultaneously would not violate the rule of *אין מעבירין על המצוות*, as one does not pass by the *shel rosh* to take the *shel yad*, nevertheless, according to Kabbalistic teaching the *shel rosh* should remain in its bag until after one dons the *shel yad*.⁷⁰
- 2) If, for whatever reason, the *shel yad* and *shel rosh* are both outside of the bag, one should not begin preparing the *shel rosh* before donning the *shel yad*, even if he keeps the *shel yad* in his hands as he prepares the *shel rosh*. He should instead don the *shel yad* and only then take the *shel rosh*.⁷¹
- 3) Once the *tefillin shel yad* has been tied to the upper arm, one may remove the *tefillin shel rosh* from the bag, even before he wraps the strap of the *shel yad* around his arm, though it is customary to wrap the strap of the *shel yad* seven times around one's forearm before preparing the *shel rosh*. Furthermore, one may allow his fellow to begin preparing the *shel rosh* once he has placed the *shel yad* on his arm, even if he has yet to fasten it.⁷²

70. שו"ע כה"א ומשנ"ב שם

71. רמ"א כה"א ומשנ"ב שם

72. ילקוט יוסף

One Who Lays *Tefillin* Again After Removing Them

- 1) One recites the *berachah* over *tefillin* every time he puts them on during the day; thus, for example, those who wear *tefillin* during *minhah* on a fast day recite the *berachah* at *minhah* just as they do at *shaharit*.⁷³ (We refer here to somebody who wears a different pair of *tefillin* *Rashi*; the *halachot* pertaining to *tefillin* *Rabbenu Tam* are addressed in the chapter “*Tefillin Rabbenu Tam*.”)
 - a. However, if one removes his *tefillin* with the intention of wearing them again immediately thereafter, he does not recite a new *berachah*, provided that his mind was not distracted from his *tefillin* in the interim.⁷⁴
 - b. There is a dispute among the halachic authorities regarding one who removes his *tefillin* to use the restroom and then puts them back on after leaving the restroom. Whereas some require reciting the *berachah* as usual⁷⁵, others maintain that in this case one should omit the phrase ה' אלוֹקֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם in the *berachah*, and should think this phrase in his mind without verbalizing it.⁷⁶ One should consult his Rabbi for guidance in this regard.
- 2) If one removed his *tefillin* in order to wear a different pair of *tefillin*, he must recite a new *berachah* over the second pair.⁷⁷

74. רמ"א שם, ודלא כמרן. וכן פסק הכה"ח שם כדעת הרמ"א.

77. כה"ח שם

76. כה"ח שם

73. שו"ע כה"ב

75. ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

- 3) If the *tefillin* slipped out of its place, one does not repeat the *berachah* before returning it to its place. This applies even if the entire *shel yad* or *shel rosh* moved from its place, and regardless of whether or not this occurred during the prayer service. Similarly, if the knot of the *tefillin shel yad* became untied, one does not repeat the *berachah* before retying the knot.⁷⁸

78. שו"ע

Borrowed or Stolen *Tefillin*

- 1) One may fulfill his obligation by wearing *tefillin* that he borrowed from his fellow; one may even recite a *berachah* when wearing borrowed *tefillin*.⁷⁹
- 2) Generally speaking, one may take another person's *tefillin* without his knowledge and wear it for the *mitzvah*, as he may presume that the owner would agree to have a *mitzvah* performed with his property (“נוח לו לאדם שתיעשה מצוה”⁸⁰).⁸⁰
 - a. In such a case, the borrower must ensure to return the *tefillin* after using it in the manner in which it was wrapped originally. Otherwise, he would be considered as having stolen the *tefillin*, and would not be considered as having fulfilled the *mitzvah*; and the *berachah* he recited would be deemed a *berachah le'vatalah* (a *berachah* recited in vain).⁸¹
 - b. If the *tefillin*'s owner is known to forbid others from using his *tefillin*, such as if he finds it loathsome to wear articles that others have worn, or if he customarily locks his *tefillin* in a chest, then one may not take his *tefillin* without his permission.⁸²
 - c. A God-fearing person should refrain from taking other people's *tefillin* without their permission, since nowadays many people refuse to allow others to use their possessions, including their *tefillin*. If there is any

שם .82

ילקוט יוסף .81

משנ"ב שם .80

שו"ע כה"ב .79

Halachot of Tefillin

uncertainty as to whether the owner could be presumed to allow others to use his *tefillin*, one may not take the *tefillin* as he would thereby run the risk of transgressing the prohibition against theft. Additionally, the *berachah* he recites over the *tefillin* could potentially be a *berachah le'vatalah*.⁸³

- 3) One does not fulfill the *mitzvah* by wearing stolen *tefillin*, and if one wears stolen *tefillin* he may not recite a *berachah*.⁸⁴

83. שם

84. משנ"ב כה"ב, ילקוט יוסף

When to Remove the *Tefillin*

- 1) Strictly speaking, one may remove his *tefillin* after he recites the verse, “*Kadosh kadosh kadosh*” in the *U’va Le’siyon* section towards the end of *shaharit*.⁸⁵
 - a. According to Kabbalistic teaching, however, one should not remove his *tefillin* until after the *Kaddish Titkabal* recited following *U’va Le’siyon*.⁸⁶
 - b. According to the Arizal, one should not remove his *tefillin* until after he recites *Aleinu*.⁸⁷ In congregations where *Kaddish Yatom* (the mourners’ *kaddish*) is recited following *Aleinu*, one should not remove his *tefillin* until the conclusion of the *Kaddish Yatom*.⁸⁸
- 2) On days when the Torah is read in the synagogue, it is customary not to remove one’s *tefillin* until after the Torah is returned to the *Hechal* (Ark).⁸⁹

If, due to extenuating circumstances, one must remove his *tefillin* before the Torah is returned to the *Hechal*, he may not remove his *tefillin shel rosh* — thereby exposing his head — in the presence of the Torah. He should therefore move to the side of the synagogue before he removes his *tefillin shel rosh*. This does not apply if one wears a *tallit gadol* over his head, or if he is wearing a *kippah*, in which case his head is not exposed as he removes the *tefillin shel rosh*. However, one may remove his *tefillin shel rosh* in the presence of the Torah (even without a covering over his head) if the Torah is in a

⁸⁸. משנ"ב,

⁸⁷. משנ"ב וכה"ח שם

⁸⁶. רמ"א ומשנ"ב שם

⁸⁵. שו"ע כה"ג

⁸⁹. שו"ע כה"ג

פמ"ג ושאר אחרונים

Halachot of Tefillin

closed encasement.⁹⁰ One may remove his *tefillin shel yad* in the presence of the Torah.⁹¹

- 3) On Rosh Hodesh, one removes his *tefillin* just prior to the *musaf* prayer, after the Torah has been returned to the *Hechal*. In the *Kedushah* service of *musaf* we speak of the “*keter*” (“crown”) of the Almighty, and it is inappropriate to wear *tefillin* — our “crown” — while describing the crown of G-d. We therefore remove the *tefillin* just before reciting the *musaf* service. The prevalent custom follows the position of the Arizal, that the *tefillin* should be removed after the *kaddish* that precedes *musaf*, before the *Amidah*.⁹²

- a. If one normally wears *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* after wearing the standard *tefillin Rashi*, on Rosh Hodesh he should preferably ensure to don his *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* before the *musaf* service. He may don the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* anytime after the *hazan*’s repetition of the *Amidah* of *shaharit*. If he did not have the opportunity to put on *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* before *musaf*, he should do so after *musaf*.⁹³
- b. If a person forgot to add *ya’aleh ve’yavo* during *shaharit* on Rosh Hodesh, and he remembered his mistake only after the *musaf* prayer, such that he must recite a new *Amidah*, it is proper for him to put on his *tefillin Rashi* again before reciting the *Amidah*.⁹⁴

92. שו"ע, כה"ח ומשנ"ב שם

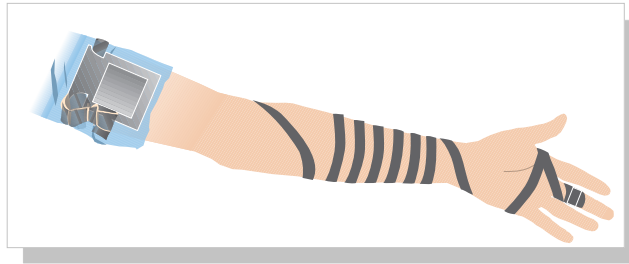
91. משנ"ב שם

90. עוד יוסף חי, פר' חיי שרה, אות ב

93. ילקוט יוסף 94. ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

- c. If while wearing *tefillin* a person hears the *kedushah* of *musaf* recited by a different *minyan*, he should remove his *tefillin*, join in the recitation of *kedushah*, and then put on his *tefillin* again. If he does not have time to remove his *tefillin* before the recitation of *kedushah*, then he should quickly move his *tefillin shel rosh* to the side and insert his *tallit* or shirtsleeve in between the *bayit* of his *tefillin shel yad* and his arm before *kedushah*.⁹⁵



- 4) If a *berit milah* (circumcision) is held in the synagogue immediately after the *shaharit* service, then one should not remove his *tefillin* until after the *berit milah*.⁹⁶
- a. Some have the custom that if the *berit milah* is conducted somewhere else, not in the place where *shaharit* was recited, then the child's father, the *mohel* (person performing the circumcision) and the *sandak* (person who holds the infant) wear *tefillin* for the *berit*.⁹⁷
- b. On Rosh Hodesh, however, one does not put his *tefillin* on again to wear it during a *berit milah* that is

⁹⁷ כה"ח שם

⁹⁶ משנ"ב כה:יג

⁹⁵ כף החיים שם

Halachot of Tefillin

conducted after *musaf*. The father, *mohel* and *sandak* simply wear a *tallit*, without *tefillin*.⁹⁸

- 5) It is proper not to remove one's *tefillin* until after he learns some Torah while wearing them. In particular, those who wear *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* should spend some time learning Torah before removing the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*.⁹⁹
- 6) It is improper to fold one's *tallit* or *tefillin* during *kaddish* or while praying, as this detracts from the concentration that *halachah* requires. Just as it is forbidden to engage in any activity — even simple activities — while reciting a *berachah*, so should one refrain from folding a *tallit* or *tefillin* while listening to *kaddish* or praying.¹⁰⁰
- 7) One should not remove his *tefillin* in the presence of his “*Rav muvhak*” — the Rabbi from whom he learned the majority of the Torah he has studied — as it is disrespectful to expose one's head before his Rabbi. A person should therefore move to the side and remove his *tefillin* in a manner whereby he does not expose his head in front of his Rabbi, or keep his head covered by a *tallit* or *kippah* while removing his *tefillin*.¹⁰¹

(The *halachot* concerning removing one's *tefillin* to wear *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* are discussed in the section entitled “*Tefillin Rabbenu Tam*.”)

101. שו"ע לח:יא ומשנ"ב שם

100. משנ"ב שם

99. כה"ח כה:יג

98. כה"ח שם

A Person Who Can Wear Only the *Shel Yad* or Only the *Shel Rosh*

If a person has access to only the *tefillin shel yad* or only the *tefillin shel rosh*, he wears the *tefillin* he has, with a *berachah*. If he has only the *tefillin shel yad*, he wears it and recites the usual *berachah* of להניח תפילין. If he has only the *tefillin shel rosh*, he wears it and recites the *berachah* of על מצות תפילין. This also applies to a person who has a complete pair of *tefillin* but cannot wear either the *shel yad* or the *shel rosh* due to a bandage and the like.¹⁰²

- 1) If he anticipates having access to the other *tefillin* before the final time for reciting *Shema*, then he should not wear the *tefillin* that he has until the other arrives, when he can put them on together.¹⁰³
- 2) If a person has only a *tefillin shel yad* of Rashi and a *shel rosh* of Rabbenu Tam, then he wears both and recites the *berachah* over the *shel yad*, as usual. If, however, he has only a *shel yad* of Rabbenu Tam and a *shel rosh* of Rashi, then he places the *shel yad* without reciting a *berachah*, and then places the *shel rosh* with the *berachah* of על מצות תפילין.¹⁰⁴

(For the *halachot* concerning a person who has only *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, see the section entitled “*The Proper Time for Wearing Tefillin*”).

¹⁰⁴. כה"ח שם, דלא כהמשנ"ב לד:ב שכתב

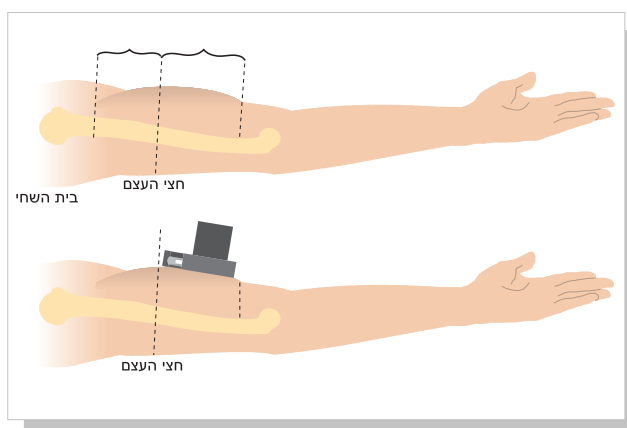
¹⁰³. ביאור הלכה כו:א

¹⁰². שו"ע כו:א"ב

להניח הש"ר של רש"י תחילה ואח"כ הש"י של ר"ת.

Where Should the *Tefillin Shel Yad* be Worn?

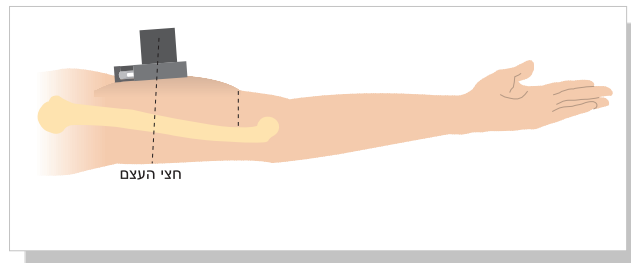
- 1) The Torah requires wearing the *tefillin shel yad* on “ידכה,” which literally means “your arm,” but can also be read as “יד כהה,” “the weak arm.” As such, a person defined by *halachah* as right-handed should wear the *tefillin* on his left arm, whereas somebody defined as left-handed wears the *tefillin* on his right arm. (The halachic definitions of “right-handed” and “left-handed” are explained in the section entitled “Defining the Weak Arm.”) One who wears the *tefillin shel yad* on the wrong arm does not fulfill the obligation.¹⁰⁵
- 2) One should place the *tefillin shel yad* on upper part of the arm, on the lower half of the muscle, meaning, the half closer to the elbow.^{105*}



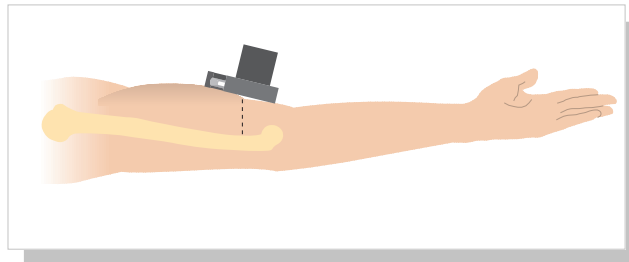
105. שו"ע כז:א ומשנ"ב שם
 105*. וזה לשון מרן בסימן כו ס' ז, העצם הסמוך לבית השחי מחציו עד הקובדו הוא מקום הנחת תפלין, עכ"ל. משמע דעיקר מקום הנחת תפלין של יד הוא על חצי התחתון של העצם. אבל יש פוסקים שסוברים שהוא על חצי התחתון של בשר התפוח ולא חצי העצם, וממילא השיעור הוא קצת נמוך מחצי העצם, ולכן משתדלים להניחם בחצי התחתון של בשר התפוח.

Halachot of Tefillin

One who placed the *tefillin* on the half closer to the armpit has nevertheless fulfilled his obligation, so long as the *tefillin* is situated on the elevated part of the upper arm.



However, if one wears his *tefillin* even slightly lower than (shown below) or above the muscle, he does not fulfill the obligation of *tefillin* and is considered as though he did not wear the *tefillin shel yad* at all.¹⁰⁶

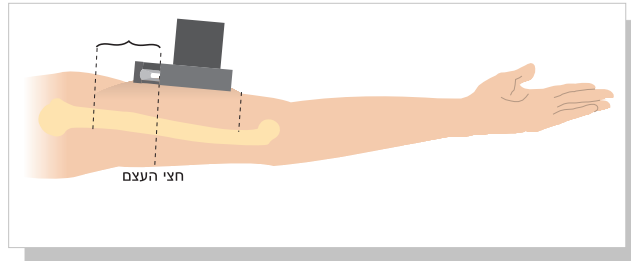


Therefore, one should not wear very large *tefillin*, as part of the *tefillin* will likely extend either above or below the area where the *tefillin* is to be worn. If one has access to only

106. שו"ע, רמ"א ומשנ"ב שם

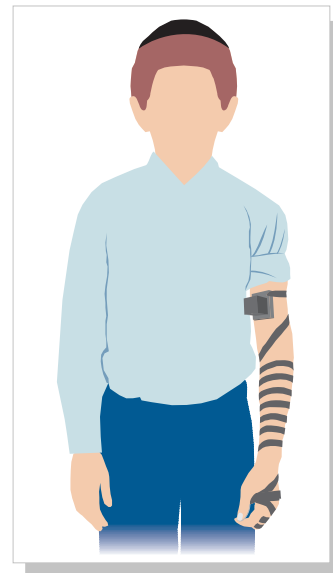
Halachot of Tefillin

very large *tefillin*, he should let it extend to the upper half of the muscle, near the armpit;



this is preferable to allowing part of the *tefillin* to extend beneath the muscle, which would invalidate the *mitzvah* altogether and render the *berachah* a *berachah le'vatalah* (*berachah* recited in vain).¹⁰⁷

- 3) The *tefillin* should be tilted slightly towards the body, such that when one drops his forearm the *tefillin* is situated near his heart, in fulfillment of the verse, “These words that I command you this day shall be upon your heart” (*Devarim* 5:6).¹⁰⁸

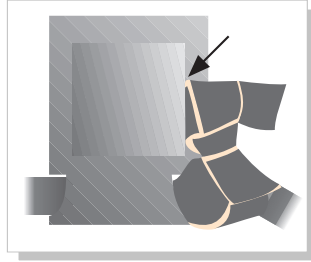


¹⁰⁸. שו"ע שם

¹⁰⁷. משנ"ב שם

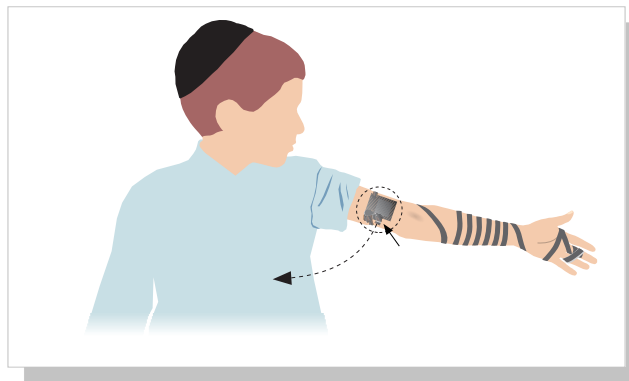
The “Yod” Knot of the *Tefillin Shel Yad*

The *tefillin shel yad* contains a knot shaped like the Hebrew letter *yod* that extends from the *ma’abarta* — the area of the base of the



tefillin through which the straps pass. In this section we present some of the laws relevant to this knot.

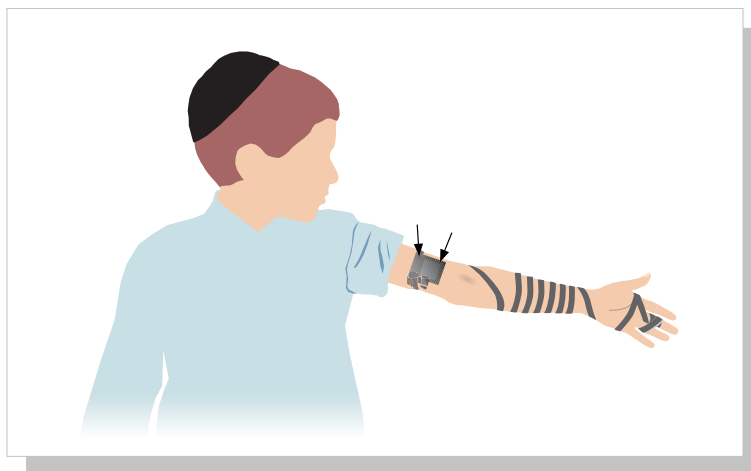
- 1) One should wear the *tefillin shel yad* in such a manner that the “*yod*” knot is positioned towards the body, while the box of the *tefillin shel yad* faces outward. The *ma’abarta*



(section of the base of the *shel yad* through which the strap pass) should be positioned on the upper part of the arm,

Halachot of Tefillin

towards the shoulder, with the rest of the box facing downward, toward the hand.¹⁰⁹



- 2) If a left-handed person only has access to the *tefillin* of a right-handed person (or vice versa), then he must wear the *shel yad* upside-down, meaning, with the *ma'abarta* positioned on the bottom, towards the hand, in order that



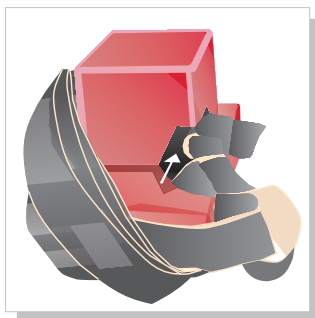
the “*yod*” knot will be situated near the body, rather than outward. (This also applies to a person whose halachic status as right-handed or left-handed is uncertain, and must therefore wear his *tefillin shel yad* on both arms.)¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰. משנ"ב כז"ג

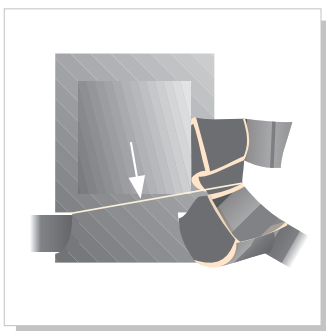
¹⁰⁹. שו"ע כז:ב"ג

Halachot of Tefillin

- 3) One should ensure that the “*yod*” knot does not move away from the *tefillin shel yad*, even while they are in their case.¹¹¹



If one sees that the “*yod*” knot consistently slips away from the box of the *tefillin*, he may have a sofer wrap a *gid* (sinew string) around the knot and the box to hold it in place.¹¹²



111. שו"ע ומשנ"ב כז:ב.

112. משנ"ב שם.

Wearing the *Tefillin* Directly on One's Arm and Head Without a *Hatzitzah*

- 1) One must wear the *tefillin shel rosh* directly on one's head and the *tefillin shel yad* directly on one's arm; hence, one must ensure that there is nothing in between the *tefillin* and his arm or head.¹¹³
 - a. If there is dirt on one's upper arm in the place where the *tefillin shel yad* is worn, he must wash and then thoroughly dry the area before donning *tefillin*.¹¹⁴
 - b. Some authorities maintain that overgrown hair constitutes a *hatzitzah* (interruption) between the *tefillin shel rosh* and one's head. Although other authorities disagree, it is proper not to allow one's hair to grow long, in order to fulfill the *tefillin* obligation according to all views. Moreover, *Halachah* requires that the *tefillin shel rosh* be tightly fastened around one's head. *Tefillin* placed on overgrown hair generally hangs on the head, and cannot be tightly fastened. For this reason, too, one should ensure that his hair does not grow long. ¹¹⁵
 - c. Strictly speaking, powder and conditioning gel do not constitute a *hatzitzah* between the *tefillin* and one's hair or skin. Nevertheless, it is preferable to be stringent in this regard and not apply powder or conditioning gel to his arm or hair before donning *tefillin*.¹¹⁶

116. כה"ח שם

115. משנ"ב כז"ד

114. משנ"ב וכה"ח שם

113. שו"ע כז"ד

Halachot of Tefillin

- d. After having one's hair cut, it is proper to wash the hair to remove the small pieces of hair that often remain and could constitute a *hatzitzah* in between the *tefillin* and one's head. People with dandruff should thoroughly comb their hair before donning *tefillin*. Nevertheless, if this is not possible, one may rely on the authorities who do not consider dandruff or small hair remnants a *hatzitzah*.¹¹⁷
 - e. Due to the curvature of the head, part of the *tefillin shel rosh* is usually suspended slightly above the head, rather than resting directly on the head. This is perfectly acceptable, as the air in between the *tefillin* and the head does not constitute a *hatzitzah*.¹¹⁸
- 2) A person who wears a toupee must remove it before putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*. If this would cause him embarrassment, he should don *tefillin* at home without the toupee and recite the *Shema* while wearing *tefillin*. He should then go to pray in the synagogue and wear his *tefillin* over the toupee. If, however, the hair was permanently implanted onto his head, or if the toupee is attached and immovable, it is considered his own hair and does not constitute a *hatzitzah*; one may thus wear *tefillin shel rosh* over such hair without concern.¹¹⁹
- 3) The following are the guidelines for one who has a bandaged wound on the head, where the *tefillin shel rosh* is worn, or on the upper arm where the *tefillin shel yad* is worn:

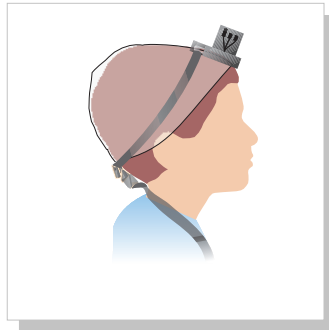
119. אגרות משה או"ח ח"ד סי' מ

118. שם

117. ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

- a. If one has a wound on his head and cannot wear *tefillin* directly on the wound, he may wear the *tefillin* over the bandage. In such a case, *halachah* allows one to rely on the view of the *Rashba*, who held that a foreign substance in between the body and the *tefillin* does not disqualify the *mitzvah*.



If possible, he should endeavor to remove the bandage for the recitation of *Shema* and the *Amidah*. One who must wear *tefillin* over a bandage should cover it so that people do not mistakenly conclude that the *tefillin shel rosh* need not be worn directly on the head. If in such a case the person does not, for whatever reason, wear the *tefillin shel yad*, he does not recite a *berachah* over the *tefillin shel rosh*.¹²⁰

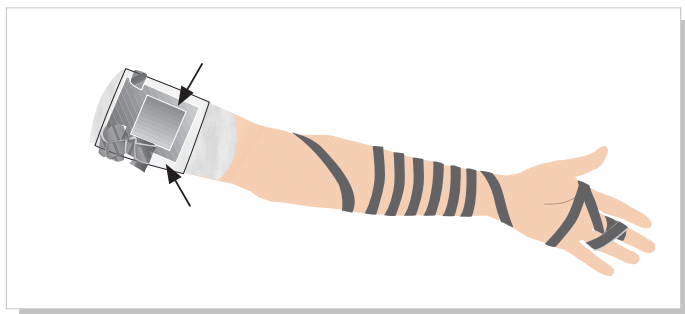
- b. If the wound is on the upper arm, where the *shel yad* is worn, then ideally, the bandage should be temporarily removed so that the *tefillin* may be worn directly on the arm. Similarly, a person who must have his arm

120. שו"ע כז:ה, ומשנ"ב וכה"ח שם

Halachot of Tefillin

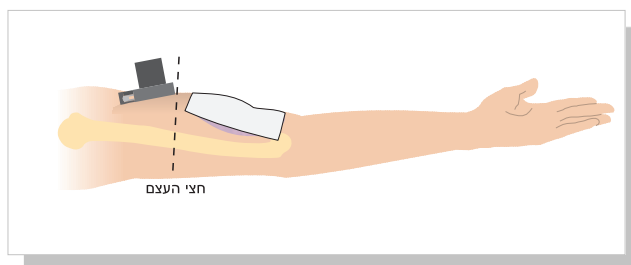
placed in a cast should, when possible, ensure that the cast does not extend to the upper arm where the *tefillin shel yad* is worn.

- c. If the bandage cannot be removed or the cast extends to the upper arm, then one should place the *tefillin* over the bandage or cast, and ensure to cover the



tefillin with his sleeve. In such a case, he does not recite a *berachah* before donning the *tefillin shel yad*; instead, he should recite the *berachah* על מצות תפילין of *tefillin shel rosh* and have in mind for this *berachah* to apply to the *shel yad*, as well.¹²¹

- d. If the bandage or cast covers only the lower half of the muscle on the upper arm, while the upper half



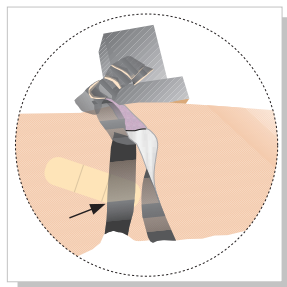
¹²¹. משנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

remains exposed, then the *tefillin* should be worn on the upper part of the muscle.¹²²

- e. If one cannot wear *tefillin* on his left arm at all, due to the immense pain he would experience or the damage that the *tefillin* could cause to the injured area, then he does not wear *tefillin shel yad* at all. Preferably, however, he should don *tefillin* on his right arm without a *berachah*.¹²³
- 4) It is proper to ensure that nothing comes in between the straps of the *tefillin shel rosh* and one's head, and between the straps of the *tefillin shel yad* and one's upper arm. According to some authorities, one should also ensure that nothing comes in between the seven wrap circuits on the forearm and the skin of the arm. Beyond the seven wrap circuits, however, it is not necessary for the straps to be wrapped directly on one's skin. Thus, strictly speaking, it is not necessary to remove one's wristwatch before laying *tefillin*. Nevertheless, it is commendable to act stringently in this regard and remove one's wristwatch before donning the *tefillin shel yad*.¹²⁴

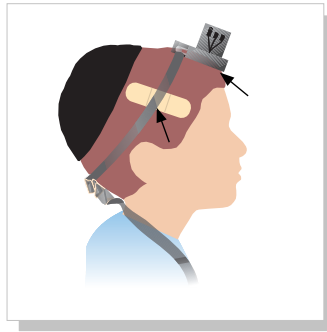
- 5) If a person has a bandage on the upper arm in the place



¹²². משנ"ב כז:ז וכה"ח שם
¹²³. עיין פמ"ג שכתב שיוצא עכ"פ למ"ד הנחה ביד שמאל לא
¹²⁴. משנ"ב כז:ד, ילקוט יוסף
הוי לעיכובא.

Halachot of Tefillin

where the strap of the *tefillin shel yad* is wrapped, he may don *tefillin* as usual, wrapping the strap on the bandage, and may even recite a *berachah*, as *halachah* treats the straps more leniently than the *bayit* in this regard. (He should make a point of covering the *tefillin shel yad*, as mentioned earlier.) This applies to the strap of the *tefillin shel rosh*, as well: one may don *tefillin* as usual with a *berachah* even if there is a bandage on his head underneath the strap of the *tefillin shel rosh*.¹²⁵



125. משנ"ב כז:ד

Defining the “Weak” Arm: The Status of a Left-handed Person with Respect to *Tefillin*

The Torah requires wearing *tefillin* on the “weaker” of the two arms. The halachic authorities debate the question of how this status is determined. One view maintains that the arm used for writing constitutes the “strong” arm with respect to this *halachah*, whereas the other contends that the “strong” arm is the arm used for most activities.¹²⁶ We present in this chapter the halachic conclusions reached by the later authorities in this regard. A left-handed person should consult with his Rabbi for practical guidance, as numerous different factors may be relevant in determining his status with respect to *tefillin*.

- 1) A person who writes and performs most activities with his right hand wears his *tefillin shel yad* on his left arm, whereas a person who writes and performs most activities with his left hand places his *tefillin shel yad* on his right arm. One who wears the *tefillin* on the wrong arm does not fulfill the *mitzvah*.¹²⁷
- 2) If a person writes with his right hand but performs all other activities with his left hand, or, conversely, he writes with his left hand but performs all other activities with his right hand, his status is determined based on the hand he

¹²⁶. שו"ע כז:ו. שו"ע כז:ו ומשנ"ב שם. אמנם עיין כה"ח שם שהביא דעת המהר"י צמח שגם איטר מניח תפילין ביד שמאל. והוסיף הכה"ח שראוי לאיטר להניח תפילין ביד שמאלו אחרי התפילה וכשיברך יהרהר שם המלכות בלבו ולא יוציא בפיו. ואח"כ יקרא ק"ש עם התפילין מונחין בשמאלו. ויש לאיטר לעשות שאילת חכם כיצד לנהוג.

Halachot of Tefillin

uses for writing. If he writes with his right hand, he lays *tefillin* on his left arm, and vice-versa. However, since some authorities maintain that one's status is determined in this case based on the hand used for other activities, the person should place *tefillin* after *shaharit* on the arm used for writing, without reciting a *berachah*, and recite *Shema*.¹²⁸

- 3) Somebody who is ambidextrous, and performs all activities with both hands with equal efficiency, wears the *tefillin shel yad* on his left arm, as though he were right-handed. If, however, he can perform activities more efficiently with his left arm, he is considered left-handed even if he can also perform activities with his right arm.¹²⁹
- 4) If one was born right-handed and trained himself to become left-handed, or if he suffered an injury to his right arm and as a result became left-handed, he is considered left-handed with respect to *tefillin*.¹³⁰
- 5) If a right-handed person trained himself to write with his left hand, but still performs all other activities with his right hand, he lays *tefillin* on his left arm like other right-handed men.¹³¹
- 6) If a left-handed person trained himself to write with his right hand, but still performs all other activities with his left hand, he lays *tefillin* on his right arm.¹³²
- 7) If a person writes with equal efficiency with both hands, but performs other activities with his left hand, he lays

130. משנ"ב כזו:

129. שו"ע ומשנ"ב שם

128. שו"ע כזו, ילקוט יוסף

131. משנ"ב שם

132. שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ג ס' ב

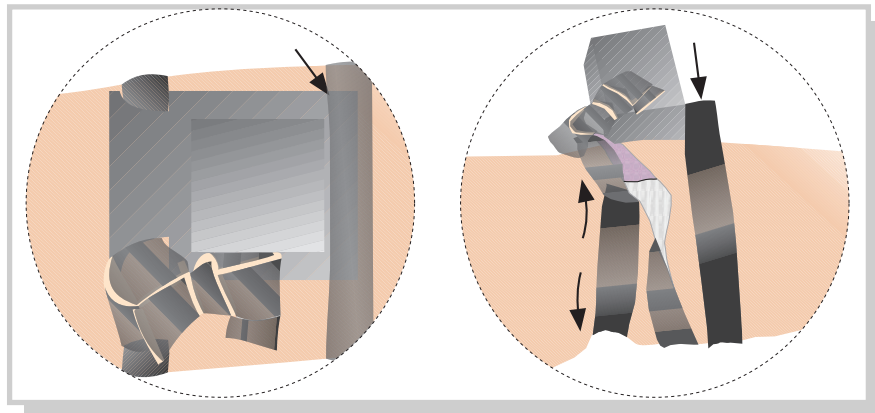
Halachot of Tefillin

tefillin on his left hand. However, in order to satisfy all opinions after *shaharit* he should lay *tefillin* on his right arm without reciting a *berachah*, and then recite *Shema*.¹³³

¹³³. בית יוסף שם בשם הסמ"ק

Wrapping the Straps of the *Tefillin Shel Yad* Around One's Arm

- 1) Some have the custom to wrap the strap around the *yod*-shaped knot that is tied to the side of the *tefillin* box. A different custom is to proceed immediately to wrap the strap seven times around the forearm. The communities of Aram Soba follow the second view, and proceed directly to wrapping the strap seven times without first wrapping it around the *yod*-shaped knot. However, even for those following this second custom, if a person has narrow arms and the *tefillin* thus does not stay in place, he may wrap the strap around the *titura* (the front area of the base of the *tefillin*) in order to hold the *tefillin* in its place.¹³⁴

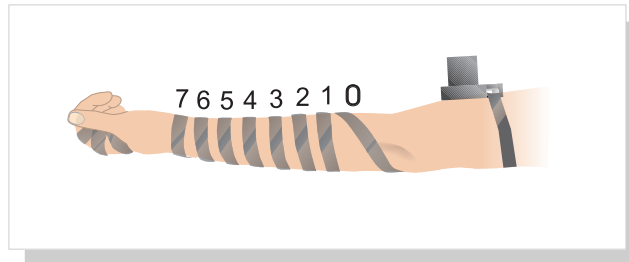


- 2) The common practice is to wrap the strap seven times around the forearm while seated, before donning the *tefil-*

¹³⁴. כה"ח כה"יא, כז"ח, ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

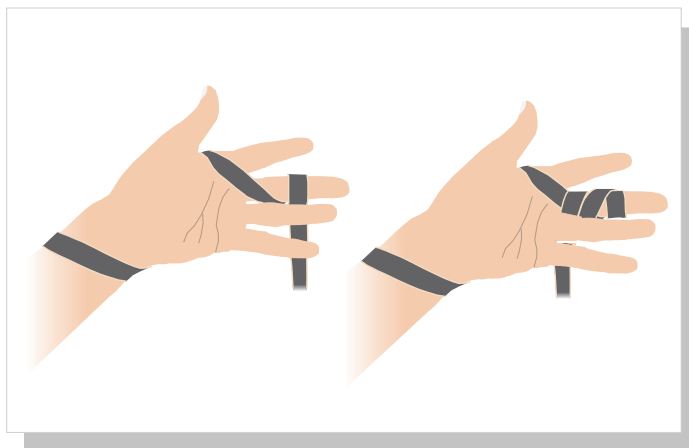
lin shel rosh. When one wraps the *tefillin* around his forearm, he must ensure to wrap the straps seven complete times. The partial wrap circuits at the beginning (near the elbow) and at the end (near the hand) do not combine to comprise a complete wrap circuit.¹³⁵



¹³⁵. שו"ע כוזח וכו"ח שם

Wrapping the Strap of the *Shel Yad* Around the Middle Finger

- 1) It is customary after donning the *tefillin shel rosh* to wrap the strap of the *shel yad* three times around one's middle finger, while standing. The first wrap circuit is made around the middle part of the finger, while the second and third wrap circuits are made on the lower part of the finger, near where the finger attaches to the hand.



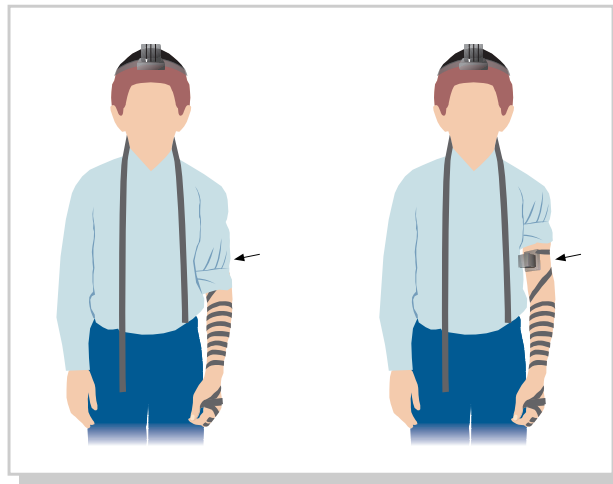
Some have the custom to recite the following two verses from the Book of *Hoshea* (2:21-22) while making these wrap circuits:

וארשתיך לי לעולם. וארשתיך לי בצדק ובמשפט ובחסד ורחמים. וארשתיך
“I shall betroth you to Me forever, and
I shall betroth you to Me with righteousness, justice, kind-
ness and compassion. I shall betroth you to Me with faith,
and you shall know that I am *Hashem*.”¹³⁶

¹³⁶. משנ"ב כז:ח, כה"ח שם, ובא"ח פר' וירא, טז. ובילקוט יוסף הביא שיטות הסוברים שאין לומר וארשתיך.

Halachot of Tefillin

- 2) If one's middle finger has been severed or injured, these three wrap circuits are made around the pointer. If the middle finger is bandaged, these wrapcircuits are made over the bandage.¹³⁷
- 3) One should preferably keep the *tefillin shel yad* covered. Therefore, after one completes wrapping the strap around the middle finger, he should pull his shirt sleeve over the *shel yad* to cover it.¹³⁸



- 4) The communities of Aram Soba follow the custom to recite the verse, וראו כל עמי הארץ כי שם ה' נקרא עליך ויראו ממך (Devarim 28:10) after laying *tefillin*, while straightening the straps of the *shel rosh*.¹³⁹

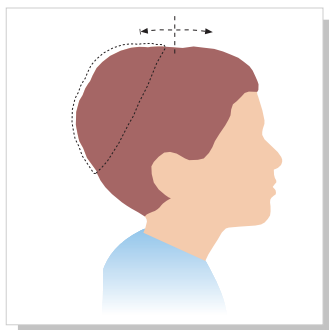
¹³⁹. ספר דרך אר"ץ (דרך ארם צובא)

¹³⁸. רמ"א ומשנ"ב כז:יא

¹³⁷. ילקוט יוסף

Donning the *Tefillin Shel Rosh*

- 1) After one wraps the *tefillin shel yad* seven times around his forearm, he should stand and don the *tefillin shel rosh*, without reciting a *berachah*.¹⁴⁰
- 2) When one handles the *tefillin shel rosh* in preparation for putting it on one's head, he should preferably hold the box and the knot together. One may, however, momentarily hold only the knot or only the box as he prepares to place the *tefillin* on his head.
- 3) The *tefillin shel rosh* must be placed within the area from the front hairline until the end of the spot on the head that

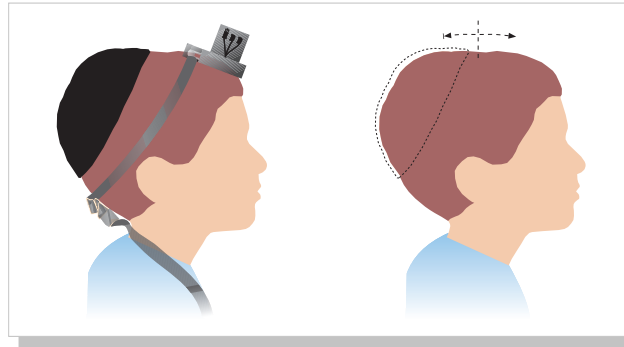


is soft during infancy, which is located along the top surface of the head. The *tefillin* should be positioned directly parallel to the area in between the eyes.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰. שו"ע כה:יא. ועיין כה"ח כה:ה שהביא דעת המקובלים שקודם שיניח התש"ר יסתכל בשני השי"נים אשר על התש"ר. ויסתכל קודם בשי"ן של ד' ראשין ואח"כ יסתכל בשי"ן של ג' ראשין. ¹⁴¹. שו"ע כז:כ

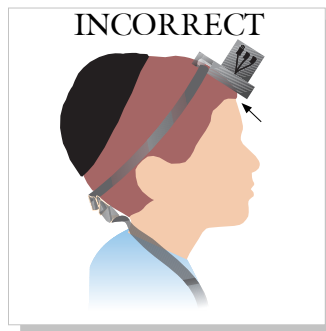
Halachot of Tefillin

- 4) Preferably, one should wear the *tefillin* no further back than the halfway point from the hairline to the peak of the



head. To that end, one should ensure not to wear very large *tefillin*.¹⁴²

- 5) Unfortunately, many people mistakenly assume that the *tefillin* may be worn until the ends of the hair in the front of the head, and thus wear *tefillin* on the upper part of the forehead. This is incorrect; the *tefillin* may be worn only



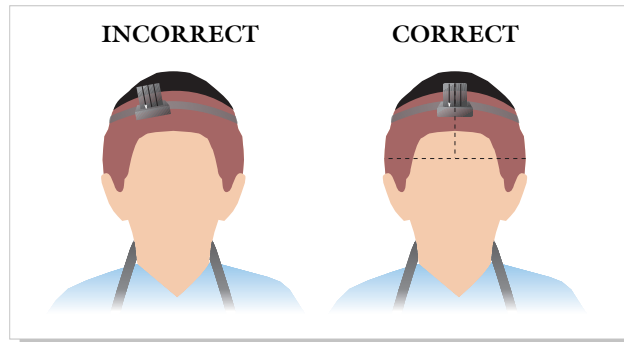
until the root of the front hair, and must therefore be placed on the top of the head, and not on the forehead.

¹⁴². שו"ע כז:ט וכה"ח שם, ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

Preferably, they should be worn slightly above the root of the front hair so that they won't fall down onto the forehead. People who wear the *tefillin shel rosh* on their forehead, beyond the root of the front hair, do not fulfill their obligation.¹⁴³

- 6) If the *tefillin* slips down onto one's forehead he should immediately return it to its proper place. If the *tefillin shel rosh* repeatedly falls lower than the hairline, it is likely that the strap needs to be adjusted and shortened.¹⁴⁴
- 7) Those who are bald or whose hairline has receded should place the *tefillin shel rosh* until the place of the original hairline, even though there is currently no hair at that spot.¹⁴⁵
- 8) As mentioned above, the *bayit* of the *tefillin shel rosh* must be positioned on the area on the head that corresponds to the area between the eyes.



Otherwise, according to many authorities, one does not fulfill the obligation of *tefillin*. It is permissible to use a mirror to ensure that the *tefillin shel rosh* is properly positioned.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³. כה"ח שם

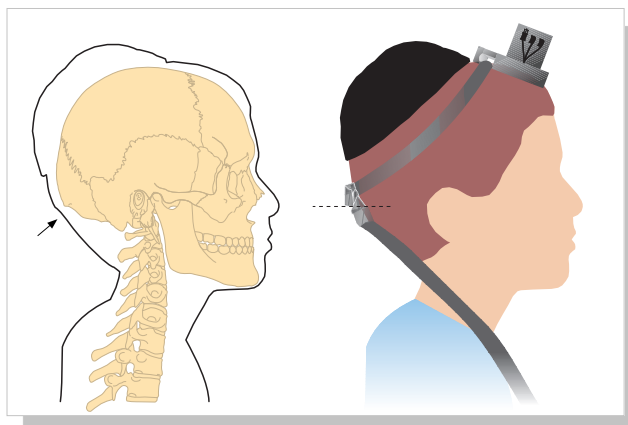
¹⁴⁴. משנ"ב וכה"ח שם

¹⁴⁵. משנ"ב כז:ט וכה"ח שם

¹⁴⁶. שו"ע כז:י ומשנ"ב שם, ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

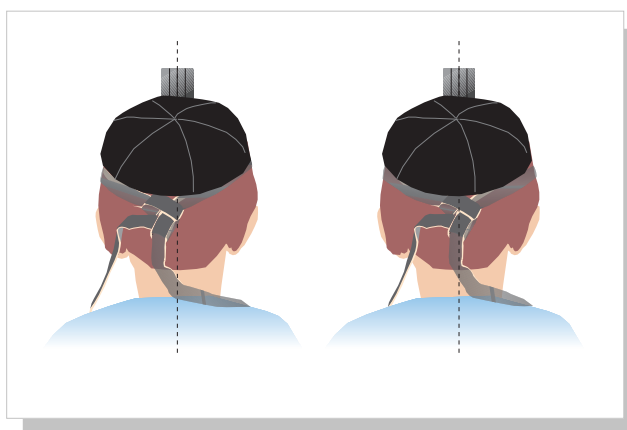
- 9) The knot of the *tefillin shel rosh* should be positioned in the back of the head, at the bottom of the skull, parallel to the



face, rather than parallel to the throat. It should be situated squarely in the middle of the back of the head, and not off to the side.¹⁴⁷

INCORRECT

CORRECT

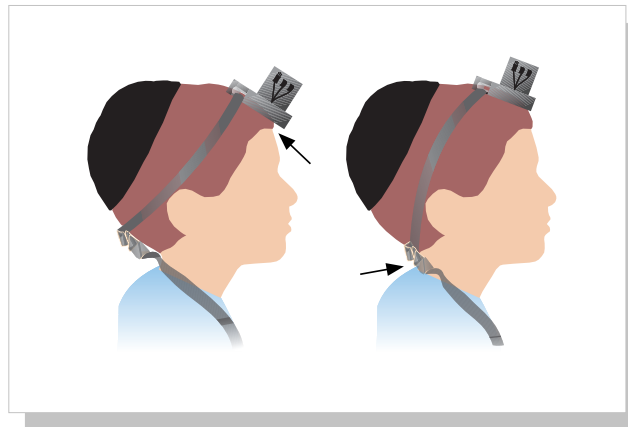


¹⁴⁷. שו"ע כוזי ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

- a. One should endeavor to position the *tefillin* such that the majority of the knot is situated just above the indentation below the skull. At very least, one must ensure that no part of the knot should be below the hair.¹⁴⁸
- b. One must ensure that the strap of the *tefillin shel rosh* is adjusted in accordance with the size of his head so that when the *bayit* and knot are positioned in their proper places, the *tefillin* is tightly fastened around the head.

INCORRECT



The *mitzvah* of *tefillin* requires that the *tefillin* be securely tied to the head, and not be loosely placed on the head, and, additionally, if the *tefillin* is not wrapped tightly around the head, the *bayit* or knot will likely move from its proper place. Therefore, one who borrows *tefillin* must ensure to adjust the straps to accommodate the size of his head.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹. משנ"ב שם

¹⁴⁸. משנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

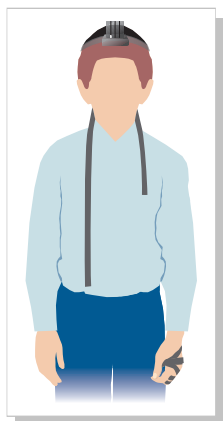
- c. One who wears a hat during the prayer service must pay particular attention to ensure that the hat does not move the *tefillin* from its place.¹⁵⁰
- 10) After one finishes placing the *tefillin shel rosh* on his head, he should remain standing and wrap the strap of the *tefillin shel yad* around his middle finger, as discussed more fully in the section entitled “Wrapping the Strap of the *Shel Yad* Around the Middle Finger.”
- 11) There are divergent views as to whether the *tefillin shel rosh* should be exposed or covered by the *tallit*. Most authorities maintain that it should be exposed, as suggested in the verse, וְרָאוּ כָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי שֵׁם ה' נִקְרָא עָלֶיךָ (“All nations on earth shall see that the name of *Hashem* is called upon you” — *Devarim* 28:10), which refers to *tefillin shel rosh*. The *Arizal*, however, held that one should cover the *tefillin shel rosh* with the *tallit*.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰. כה"ח שם

¹⁵¹. שו"ע כו"ז יא וכה"ח

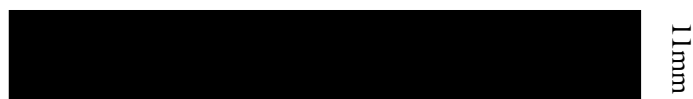
Laws Relevant to the Straps of the *Tefillin*

- 1) The straps extending from the knot of the *tefillin shel rosh* behind the head should be positioned in front of a person's body. The right strap must extend at least until the navel, and the left strap must extend until the chest. The straps



may extend even lower than the navel and chest, but the right strap should extend lower than the left strap.¹⁵²

- 2) According to the *Hazon Ish*, the straps must be at least 11



mm (.44 inches) wide, whereas Rav Haim Naeh maintained that the minimum width is 9 mm (.36 inches). One



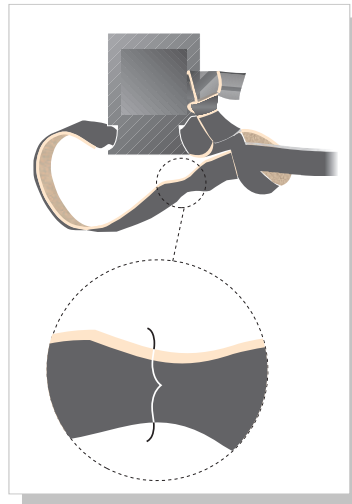
should endeavor to satisfy the stringent view and ensure that his straps are at least 11 mm wide.¹⁵³

¹⁵³. שו"ע שם, ובא"ח פר' וירא, יז

¹⁵². שו"ע כזי"א, משנ"ב וכה"ח שם

Halachot of Tefillin

- a. If the strap of the *tefillin* is less than 9 mm (.36 inches) wide, then one should preferably wear a different pair of *tefillin*. If he has no access to another pair of *tefillin*, then he should wear the *tefillin* that he has but without a *berachah*. If the strap of one's *shel yad* does not meet the minimum width requirement, but the strap of his *shel rosh* is the proper width, then he should recite the *berachah* over the *tefillin shel rosh* — “*al mitzvat tefillin*” — and have in mind for the *berachah* to apply to the *tefillin shel yad*, as well.¹⁵⁴
- b. Often, the strap of the *shel yad* stretches at the part used to tie the *shel yad* to the upper arm. One must ensure to keep the strap in its original form, for if it



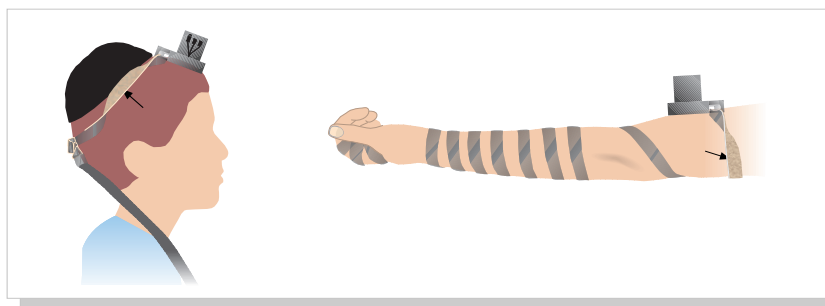
stretches its width might be reduced to less than the minimum required width.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵. משנ"ב כז:יא

¹⁵⁴. שו"ע וכה"ח ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

- 3) The *tefillin* straps must be colored black. If one discovers that the straps have begun turning white, they should be painted black. Particular care must be taken regarding the area of the strap of the *tefillin shel yad* that is tied around the arm, as this area very often fades and turns white. Painting the *tefillin* should be done by a Jewish adult, rather than by a gentile or a Jewish child, unless a Jewish adult stands over him to observe as he paints. While painting the *tefillin* one should have specific intent for the *mitzvah* of *tefillin* and should verbally declare, לשם קדושת תפילין (“for the sake of the sanctity of the *tefillin*”).¹⁵⁶
- 4) One must ensure that the black-colored side of the straps — of both the *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh* — face outwards at all times. This applies to the part of the strap of the *tefillin shel rosh* that surrounds the head, and the part of the strap of the *tefillin shel yad* with which one makes the first wrap circuit around the upper arm. Strictly speaking,



there is no requirement for the black-colored side to face outward in the straps of the *tefillin shel rosh* that hang down

¹⁵⁶. שו"ע לג:ד ומשנ"ב שם, ועיין עוד בביה"ל שם.

Halachot of Tefillin

from behind the head, or in the strap of the *tefillin shel yad* after the first wrap circuit around the upper arm. Nevertheless, in the interest of beautifying the *mitzvah*, it is proper and customary for the black-colored side of all the straps to face outwards.¹⁵⁷

- a. Those who have the custom to paint both sides of the straps black must ensure that they are worn properly, with the outside facing outward and the inside facing inward.¹⁵⁸
- b. It is customary to give charity as atonement if the black-colored side of the *tefillin* strap faced inward in the area where it wraps around the head or around the upper arm throughout the entire time the *tefillin* were worn. One should donate to charity an amount of money that could purchase one day's worth of food. As a *midat hasidut* (special measure of piety), some have the custom to observe a fast in such a case, rather than give charity.¹⁵⁹

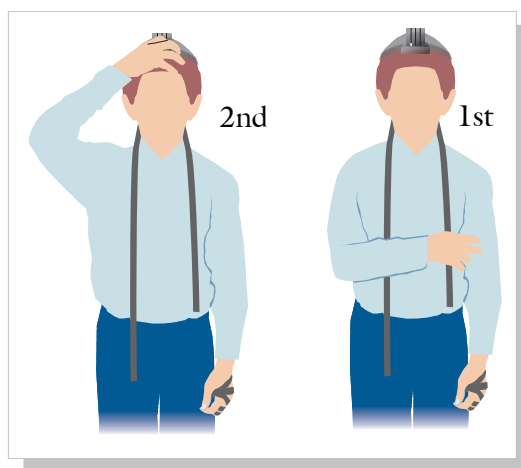
159. כה"ח שם

158. כה"ח שם

157. שו"ע כז:יא ומשנ"ב שם

Keeping One's Attention Focused on the *Tefillin*

- 1) It is forbidden to allow one's attention to be distracted from the *tefillin* while wearing them, by engaging in frivolity, laughter and the like. There is a special *mitzvah* to keep one's mind focused on his *tefillin* throughout the entire time he wears them, and refrain from idle talk and inappropriate thoughts. To this end, it is proper to touch one's *tefillin* occasionally when he wears them at times other than during prayer and Torah study, in order to keep his mind focused on them. During prayer and Torah study, however, one is not required to focus his attention on his *tefillin*, as concentrating on Torah and prayer suffices to fulfill the requirement to keep one's mind focused while wearing *tefillin*.¹⁶⁰
 - a. When one feels his *tefillin* for this purpose, he should first touch the *shel yad*.¹⁶¹



161. שו"ע ע"ש

160. שו"ע, משנ"ב וכה"ח כח"א

Halachot of Tefillin

- b. When one recites the words וקשרתם לאות על ידיך in the first paragraph of *Shema*, and when he recites the words וקשרתם אותם לאות על ידכם in the second paragraph of *Shema*, he should touch his *tefillin shel yad*. Likewise, when he recites the words והיו לטוטפות בין עיניך and והיו לטוטפות בין עיניכם he should touch his *tefillin shel rosh*.¹⁶²
- c. If while touching his *tefillin* one notices that both the *shel yad* and the *shel rosh* have slipped from their proper places, he should first return the *shel yad* to its place, and then the *shel rosh*.¹⁶³
- d. One must ensure to refrain from idle talk while wearing *tefillin*.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶². שו"ע שם

¹⁶³. משנ"ב וכה"ח שם

¹⁶⁴. כה"ח כח:א

The Procedure for Removing One's *Tefillin*

- 1) The Torah introduces the obligation of *tefillin* by speaking first of the *tefillin shel yad*, and then mentioning the *tefillin shel rosh*, in the plural form (והיו לטוטפות בין עיניך). The plural form used in the context of the *shel rosh* indicates that it is never worn alone; it is worn only while the *shel yad* is worn. Hence, one must ensure to remove the *shel rosh* before removing the *shel yad*.¹⁶⁵
- 2) The halachic rule of כהנחתן כך חליצתן establishes that one must remove *tefillin* in the same manner in which they are placed. Accordingly, one should remove the *tefillin shel rosh* while standing, and then remove the *tefillin shel yad* while sitting.¹⁶⁶
- 3) When one removes his *tefillin*, he should first undo the three wrap circuits around his finger, and then remove the *tefillin shel rosh* while standing.¹⁶⁷
 - a. Some have the practice to also undo two or three of the wrap circuits around the arm before removing the *tefillin shel rosh*.¹⁶⁸ This is the practice followed in the communities of Aram Soba.
 - b. There is a מנהג חכמים (custom observed by Torah scholars) to remove the *tefillin shel rosh* specifically with the left, weaker hand, to demonstrate that one removes the *tefillin* slowly and ambivalently, rather than hastily. According to this custom, a left-handed person

¹⁶⁸. כה"ח שם

¹⁶⁷. שו"ע כה"ב ומשנ"ב שם

¹⁶⁶. משנ"ב שם

¹⁶⁵. שו"ע כה"ב

Halachot of Tefillin

removes his *shel rosh* with his right hand. (One also removes his *tallit* while standing and with his weaker hand.)¹⁶⁹

- 4) Some have the practice to kiss the *tefillin* before and after removing them.¹⁷⁰
- 5) If one cannot roll the straps of the *tefillin* immediately, such as on Rosh Hodesh when one removes his *tefillin* immediately before *musaf*, or if one must use the restroom right after he removed his *tefillin*, he must ensure to leave the *tefillin* lying flat. He may not leave it upside-down, with the *ma'abarta* (section of the *tefillin* through which the straps pass) facing upward.¹⁷¹
- 6) One may not wrap the straps directly on the *bayit* of the *tefillin*, unless the *bayit* is in a plastic case, because the halachic sanctity of the *bayit* exceeds that of the straps.

CORRECT

INCORRECT



Some have the practice of wrapping the straps in the form of wings.¹⁷²

¹⁷². משנ"ב כח:ג

¹⁷¹. כה"ח שם

¹⁷⁰. שו"ע כח:ג

¹⁶⁹. משנ"ב וכה"ח שם

עפ"י המעשה של אלישע בעל כנפיים מובא במס' שבת מט:.

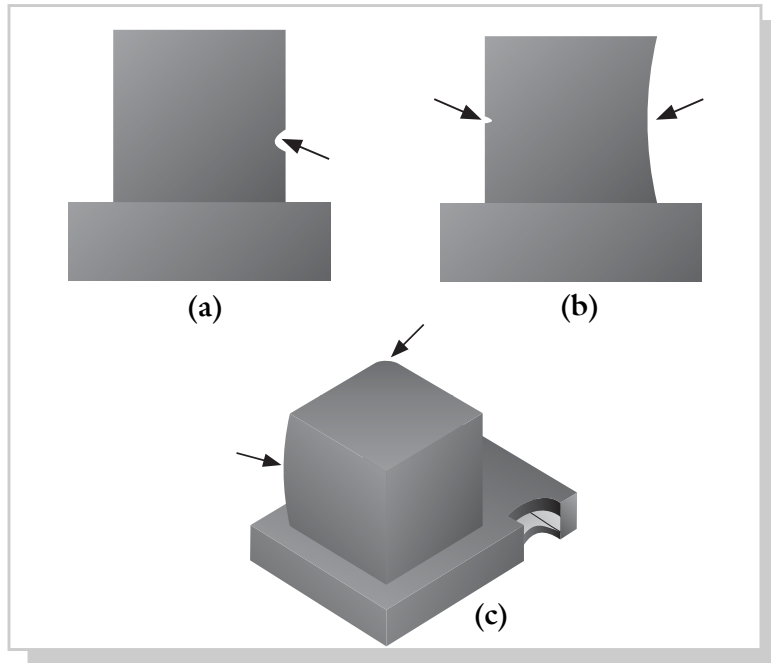
Halachot of Tefillin

- 7) One should not wrap the *tefillin* by holding the straps in place and rotating the box of the *tefillin*, as this is disrespectful to the *tefillin*; one should hold the box of the *tefillin* in place and rotate the straps around it.¹⁷³
- 8) One should preferably wrap his *tefillin* straps by himself, rather than allow somebody else to do so, in order to demonstrate his love and affection for the *mitzvah*.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³. שם. ¹⁷⁴. כה"ח שם. ועיין שם כט:א שנכון לומר בזמן חליצת התפילין את הפסוק "והיה אם שמוע תשמע לקול ה' אלוקיך. . ." (שמות טו:כו).

Laws Relevant to the *Batim* — the Boxes of the *Tefillin*

- 1) The *batim* of the *tefillin* must be perfectly square. This applies to both the *titura* — the base of the *tefillin* — and the *bayit* — the cube that sits on top of the *titura*. If the *titura* or *bayit* was ruined in any way, such as if the edges were (a) chipped or (b) became crooked or (c) rounded,



one must show the *tefillin* to a qualified Rabbi or *sofer* who will determine whether it still meets halachic qualifications. Similarly, if the leather of the *bayit* tore, or if the *tefillin* somehow became soaked with water, it must be checked immediately given the likelihood that damage was caused to the writing on the parchment. If nobody is

Halachot of Tefillin

available to examine the *tefillin*, they should be worn but without a *berachah*.¹⁷⁵

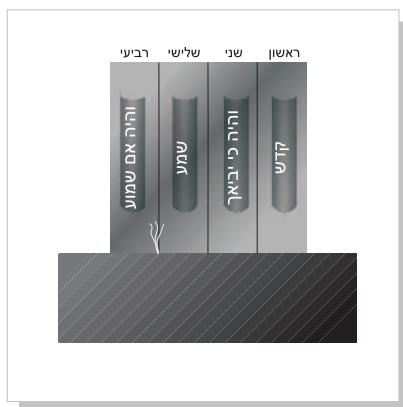
- 2) The surface of the entire *bayit* and *titura* must be black. If an area becomes white, it must be painted black. When painting *tefillin* one must have specific intention that he does so for the sake of the *mitzva* of *tefillin*, and he should verbally declare, לשם קדושת הפילין (“for the sake of the sanctity of *tefillin*”).¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵. שו"ע לב:לט ומשנ"ב

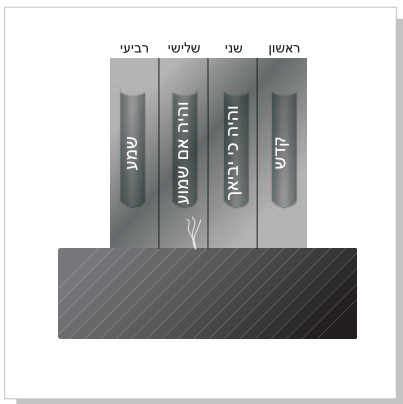
¹⁷⁶. שו"ע לב:מ, לג:ד

Tefillin Rabbenu Tam

There is a disagreement between Rashi and Rabbenu Tam concerning the sequence in which the four *parashiyot* (sections of the Humash) are to be arranged inside the *tefillin*. Rashi maintains that their arrangement should follow the sequence in which these *parashiyot* appear in the Torah: קדש לי, והיה כי יביאך, שמע, והיה אם שמע.



Rabbenu Tam, by contrast, held that the section of והיה אם שמע should precede שמע, as follows: שמע, והיה אם שמע, והיה כי יביאך, קדש לי.



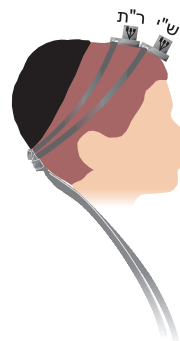
Halachot of Tefillin

The *Shulchan Aruch* sides with Rashi's view, which is indeed the accepted position, but adds that a G-d-fearing person should endeavor to fulfill both opinions.¹⁷⁷

It is therefore customary to put on *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* without a *berachah* after the *shaharit* service every weekday morning, and to recite while wearing them the four sections of קדש, והיה, והיה אם שמוע and שמע, כי יביאך.¹⁷⁸

- 1) If one will not have time after *shaharit* to don *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, he should put them on after the *hazzan's* repetition of the *Amidah*, so that he can wear them during the recitation of the *kedushah* section in *U'va Le'siyon*. One should preferably not put on *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* during the *hazzan's* repetition, since *halachah* requires paying attention to the *hazzan*. One may don *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* after he completes the silent *Amidah* if he feels confident that he will finish putting them on before the *hazzan* begins the repetition.¹⁷⁹
- 2) Some have the practice of wearing *tefillin Rashi* and *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* together, simultaneously, rather than donning *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* after *shaharit*.¹⁸⁰

- a. One who follows this practice should wear the *tefillin shel rosh* of Rashi toward the front of his head, closer to his face, and the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* behind it, toward the back of his head.



179. שו"ת יבי"א או"ח ג:ד

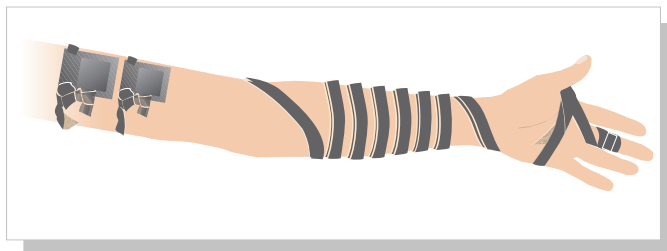
178. שו"ע שם ומשנ"ב כהה

177. שו"ע לד:א"ב

180. שו"ע לד:ב

Halachot of Tefillin

The *tefillin shel yad* of Rashi should be positioned on the designated part of the muscle of the upper arm, while the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* should be placed lower down, facing the hand.¹⁸¹



- b. One should preferably ensure that the base of the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* does not rest on the *ma'abarta* of the *tefillin Rashi*, or vice versa, despite the fact that this is permissible according to the strict *halachah*. They should instead be situated one in front of the other.¹⁸²
 - c. The straps of the *tefillin shel Rashi* should be wrapped over the straps of the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*.¹⁸³
 - d. One should recite the *berachah* and then tighten the straps of both *tefillin* simultaneously.¹⁸⁴
- 3) One who wears both *tefillin Rashi* and *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* — regardless of whether he wears them simultaneously or separately — must have in mind that he fulfills the *mitzvah* only with the correct pair of *tefillin*, and the other is not worn for the purpose of a *mitzvah*. If one does not have this intent, he might be in violation of the prohibition of *bal tosif* — adding onto the *mitzvot* of the Torah.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵. שו"ע

¹⁸⁴. משנ"ב שם

¹⁸³. משנ"ב לדב

¹⁸². שם

¹⁸¹. משנ"ב שם

ומשנ"ב וביה"ל שם

Halachot of Tefillin

- 4) Unmarried men should not wear *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* unless they feel confident in their ability to refrain from inappropriate thoughts throughout the time they wear the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*.¹⁸⁶
- 5) When one puts on *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, he may not speak in between the laying of the *shel yad* and the laying of the *shel rosh*, as when donning *tefillin Rashi*, because the two should be placed immediately one after the other. During this time one may not even speak in matters of Torah, or answer “*Baruch Hu u’varuch Shemo*.” One may, however, answer “*Amen*” and respond to *kaddish*, *kedushah* and *barechu* in between the placing of the *shel yad* and *shel rosh* of *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*. Furthermore, if one sees lightning or hears thunder during this period, he may recite the appropriate *berachah*. In such a case, after reciting the *berachah* one should preferably touch the *tefillin shel yad* and tighten it around his arm before placing the *tefillin shel rosh*. Likewise, one who mistakenly spoke in between the placing of the *shel yad* and *shel rosh* of *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* should feel the *shel yad* and tighten it before placing the *shel rosh*.¹⁸⁷
- 6) It is proper to spend some time studying Torah after *shaharit* while wearing *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*.¹⁸⁸
- 7) If one mistakenly put on his *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* with a *berachah* before wearing his *tefillin Rashi*, thinking that they were *tefillin Rashi*, and he realized his mistake before he spoke, then he should remove the *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*

188. כה"ח כה"יג

187. קול יעקב לד:ג ושם

186. ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

and then place *tefillin Rashi* without a *berachah*. If, however, he realized his mistake only after he had spoken, then he must recite a new *berachah* when he dons *tefillin Rashi*.¹⁸⁹

- 8) One who mistakenly removed his *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* from his *tefillin* bag before *tefillin Rashi* should nevertheless put on his *tefillin Rashi* first.¹⁹⁰
- 9) One should make a point of keeping the *tefillin Rashi* and *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* in two separate, clearly-labeled bags.



Since only one of the two pairs is endowed with the sacred status of *tefillin*, and *halachah* forbids placing a mundane article in the bag designated for *tefillin*, one must ensure to always place each in its designated bag. However, if a bag was initially designated for both *tefillin Rashi* and *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, he may keep both pairs of *tefillin* in that bag.¹⁹¹ Furthermore, one may keep both pairs of *tefillin* together in his *tallit* bag, since in any event the *tallit* bag is not designated exclusively for *tefillin*.¹⁹²

¹⁹². משנ"ב שם

¹⁹¹. שו"ע לד:ד ומשנ"ב שם

¹⁹⁰. משנ"ב לד:ד

¹⁸⁹. ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

- 10) One's *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* should be smaller than his *tefillin Rashi*, both for reasons involving the teachings of *Kabbalah*, and so that one will know the difference between the two pairs and not mistake one for the other.¹⁹³

¹⁹³. קול יעקב לד"ד

The Age at Which One Begins Wearing *Tefillin*

- 1) When a child matures to the point where he can conduct himself properly while wearing *tefillin* — meaning, that he can refrain from passing air, sleeping and engaging in frivolity while wearing *tefillin* — and he is being educated in proper Torah observance, his father must train him to perform the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*. Even if he has yet to reach the age of *mitzvah* obligation, nevertheless, once he reaches the level of maturity described above the father must train him to don *tefillin* with the *berachah*. Practically speaking, divergent customs have evolved concerning the exact age at which a boy begins wearing *tefillin*. Some have the practice to have a boy begin wearing *tefillin* a full year or even two years before his *bar-mitzvah*, while others do so one, two, or three months before the *bar-mitzvah*. There are also those who do not allow a boy to wear *tefillin* until he reaches the age of *mitzvah* obligation, namely, the age of thirteen¹⁹⁴, and this is the view followed by the communities of Aram Soba.
- 2) Even in communities where boys begin wearing *tefillin* only upon reaching the age of thirteen, a boy who had lost a parent, Heaven forbid, begins wearing *tefillin* at least a month before the *bar-mitzvah* — assuming he is capable of conducting himself properly while wearing *tefillin* — in order to bring merit to the soul of the departed parent.¹⁹⁵
- 3) This obligation for a child to begin training in the *mitzvah* of *tefillin* before the age of thirteen applies only on the level

194. שו"ע לז"ג, ורמ"א, כה"ח ומשנ"ב שם

195. ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

of *mi'de'rabbanan* — Rabbinic enactment. As far as Torah law is concerned, a child is not required to wear *tefillin* until he reaches the age of *bar-mitzvah*. At that point, he is obligated even to purchase a pair of *tefillin* if his parents do not purchase one for him, as he now bears full responsibility with regard to *mitzvah* observance as an adult.¹⁹⁶

- 4) A deaf person who cannot hear but can speak, or a person who can hear but cannot speak, is included in the obligation of *tefillin*. A deaf-mute, however, who can neither speak nor hear, is not obligated to wear *tefillin*, though he may wear *tefillin* if he so wishes.¹⁹⁷
- 5) The *Rishonim* (Medieval Halachic scholars) debate the question of whether or not one must recite the *berachah* of *she'heheyanu* when he dons *tefillin* for the first time. The custom among the communities of Aram Soba is not to recite the *berachah*, though one who wishes to satisfy all opinions should wear a new garment before he dons *tefillin* for the first time. He should recite *she'heheyanu*, put on the new garment, and then recite the *berachah* over *tefillin*.¹⁹⁸

198. כה"ח כב:א

197. משנ"ב שם וכה"ח לח:א

196. כה"ח שם

People Who are Exempt From the Obligation of *Tefillin*

- 1) *Tefillin* may not be worn if one does not have full control over his bodily functions. Therefore, a person experiencing a stomach virus, or who is taking a laxative or diarrhetic medication, is exempt from the obligation of *tefillin*, and is in fact forbidden from wearing *tefillin*. This applies even if he feels well and is fully functional. It is forbidden for a person in such a condition to wear *tefillin*, except for the recitation of *Shema* and the *Amidah* if he determines that he can maintain bodily cleanliness throughout this recitation.¹⁹⁹
- 2) A person who suffers from an illness other than a stomach virus, and experiences discomfort to the point where he cannot settle his mind, is exempt from the obligation of *tefillin*, as he will likely be unable to keep his attention directed toward his *tefillin*. If he wishes, however, he may wear *tefillin* despite his condition. The prohibition of *hesek ha'da'at*, diverting one's attention away from the *tefillin* while wearing them, applies only to distractions involving frivolity and the like. Therefore, in a case where one's mind is distracted due to physical discomfort, he may wear *tefillin* if he so wishes. If a patient experiences discomfort but feels capable of maintaining focus on his *tefillin*, he is obligated to wear *tefillin*.²⁰⁰
- 3) One who feels unable to restrain himself from passing air should not wear *tefillin*. If, however, he feels capable of

200. רמ"א ומשנ"ב שם

199. שו"ע לח:א ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

restraining himself during the recitation of *Shema*, then he should don *tefillin* after concluding the *berachah* of *ahavat olam* (that immediately precedes *Shema*), with a *berachah*. At that point he should recite *Shema* and then remove his *tefillin*.²⁰¹

- 4) If one feels capable of restraining himself until he can remove his *tefillin shel rosh*, but is unsure whether he can restrain himself until he removes both *tefillin*, then he may nevertheless wear both. If it happens that he passes air after he removes his *shel rosh* but before he removes his *shel yad*, no violation is committed since the requirement of maintaining bodily cleanliness applies mainly to the *tefillin shel rosh*.²⁰²
- 5) One who does not have control over his bladder, or who has an external catheter to collect his urine, may nevertheless wear *tefillin*, provided that his outer garments are clean and do not emit any foul odor.²⁰³
- 6) The obligation of *guf naki* — bodily cleanliness while wearing *tefillin* — also requires that one refrain from thinking thoughts relating to sexual desire while wearing *tefillin*.²⁰⁴ A person who feels unable to refrain from such thoughts is nevertheless required to wear *tefillin*, and he should make every effort to subdue his evil inclination and avoid thoughts of immorality. Still, he should wear his *tefillin* only during prayer, and not at other times.²⁰⁵

204. שו"ע

203. שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"א ס' כז

202. משנ"ב שם

201. שו"ע לח"ב

205. משנ"ב וכה"ח שם לח"ב

Halachot of Tefillin

- 7) One who has no garment with which to cover his chest should not wear *tefillin*, as it is disrespectful to the *tefillin* to wear them with one's chest exposed.²⁰⁶
- 8) Whenever a person is exempt from the *tefillin* obligation due to some temporary condition, such as illness or the absence of a shirt, if the condition passes that day he must ensure to wear *tefillin*. Thus, if a person did not wear *tefillin* in the morning due to a stomach flu and recovers from his condition before sundown, he must wear *tefillin*.
- 9) Women are exempt from the obligation of *tefillin*, just as they are exempt from all מצוות עשה שהזמן גרמא, meaning, *mitzvot* that apply only in certain times (and *tefillin* is not worn on Shabbat or festivals). A woman who wishes to nevertheless don *tefillin* should be discouraged from doing so.²⁰⁷ (As with regard to all *mitzvot*, a *tumtum* or *adroginus* — somebody whose genitals are concealed, or who features both male and female organs — must wear *tefillin*.²⁰⁸)

208. משנ"ב שם

207. שו"ע ורמ"א לה:ג

206. משנ"ב שם

A Mourner's Exemption From *Tefillin*

A person is exempt from the obligation of *tefillin* on the day of a family member's passing, Heaven forbid, as the glory and grandeur associated with *tefillin* is inconsonant with the tragic occasion of a family member's death. This section outlines the various *halachot* that pertain to a mourner with regard to *tefillin*.

- 1) On the day of a family member's passing, one does not wear *tefillin* at all that entire day. This applies to both *tefillin Rashi* and *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, and both before and after the funeral. The *tefillin* obligation resumes on the following day; thus, a mourner wears *tefillin* as usual during the *shiv'ah* period. A mourner who normally wears *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* should do so during his period of mourning, as well (after the first day).²⁰⁹ On the day after the burial, the mourner should preferably make a point of donning *tefillin* no earlier than sunrise (as opposed to other days, when one may wear *tefillin* already from the point of *משיכיר*, as discussed in the chapter entitled "The Proper Time for Wearing *Tefillin*").²¹⁰
- 2) If a mourner mistakenly put on *tefillin* on the day of a family member's passing, he should remove them immediately upon realizing his mistake.²¹¹
- 3) In a case where the deceased was not buried on the day of his passing, there is a dispute as to whether the mourner lays *tefillin* on the day of the burial. Thus, for example, if the family member passed away on Monday, and the burial

211. כה"ח שם

210. שו"ע לתה: ומשנ"ב שם

209. כה"ח שם

Halachot of Tefillin

took place on Tuesday, it is uncertain whether the mourner should wear *tefillin* on Tuesday. He should therefore don *tefillin* in private without reciting a *berachah*.²¹² If, however, the family member passed away on Shabbat and was buried on Motza'ei Shabbat or on Sunday, then the mourner does not wear *tefillin* at all on Sunday. Since mourning was not observed on Shabbat, we consider Sunday equivalent to the day of the passing.²¹³

- 4) If the family member was buried on the final day of *Yom Tov* (in the Diaspora), then the mourner dons *tefillin* on the following day, *Isru Hag*.²¹⁴
- 5) If a person learned of a family member's passing within thirty days of the passing, or even on the thirtieth day itself, he does not wear *tefillin* that day. Even if he received the news at nighttime, he does not wear *tefillin* the following day. If one was wearing *tefillin* at the time when the news arrived, he must remove his *tefillin*.²¹⁵
- 6) If a person learned of a family member's passing beyond thirty days after the death, he wears *tefillin* that day, not to mention that if he was wearing *tefillin* when the news arrived, he need not remove them. If, however, the news of his family member's passing causes him to cry, he should remove his *tefillin*.²¹⁶
- 7) If one's family member passed away on Purim and was buried that day, he should not put on *tefillin*. If the family member passed away on the day before Purim and was

²¹⁵. משנ"ב שם

²¹⁴. משנ"ב שם

²¹³. ילקוט יוסף

²¹². ילקוט יוסף

²¹⁶. משנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

buried on Purim, then the mourner dons *tefillin* with a *berachah* on Purim.²¹⁷

- 8) One is obligated to wear *tefillin* on Tisha B'Av, though different customs exist concerning when on Tisha B'Av the *tefillin* should be worn.²¹⁸ The practice in Jerusalem is to wear *tallit* and *tefillin* during *shaharit* on Tisha B'Av as usual, and then to remove them before the recitation of *kinot*.²¹⁹ Others, however, have the practice of not wearing *tallit* or *tefillin* during *shaharit*, and wearing them instead during the *minhah* service.²²⁰ Those who follow this custom should don *tallit* and *tefillin* in their homes before *shaharit* and recite *Shema* while wearing them. Afterward, they should remove the *tefillin*, go to the synagogue for *shaharit* without *tallit* and *tefillin*, and then put on their *tallit* and *tefillin* again for *minhah*.²²¹ Others have the custom to recite *shaharit* privately at home with *tallit* and *tefillin*, and then go to the synagogue without *tallit* and *tefillin* to hear the Torah reading and recite *kinot*.²²² This is the custom followed by the communities of Aram Soba.
- 9) One who customarily wears *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* should do so on Tisha B'Av.²²³

220. שו"ע תקנא:א

219. כה"ח שם

218. שו"ע לח:ו

217. ילקוט יוסף

223. שם

222. שם

221. כה"ח שם

Purchasing and Checking *Tefillin*

- 1) *Tefillin* may be purchased only from an expert, God-fearing scribe who is proficient in the proper spelling of all the words in the Biblical sections written in the *tefillin*. If, *be'di'avad* (after the fact), one purchased *tefillin* from a scribe who does not meet these qualifications, then he must have the *tefillin* checked to ensure that the words are spelled correctly and that the letters are drawn in accordance with *halachah*.²²⁴
- 2) *Tefillin* that may be presumed to have been written properly never require checking. Nevertheless, it is preferable to have them checked on occasion to ensure that they are valid for use. ²²⁵
 - a. Particularly pious Jews make a point of having their *tefillin* checked each year during the month of Elul, though this is not required according to the strict *halachah*. ²²⁶
 - b. *Tefillin* that are not worn regularly should be checked twice every seven years — meaning, once every 3.5 years.²²⁷
- 3) If a person purchased *tefillin* on the assumption that they were valid for use, and several years later discovered that they were, in fact, not valid, he should feel distressed over having failed to perform this *mitzvah* throughout this pe-

226. ילקוט יוסף

225. שו"ע לט"י ומשנ"ב שם

224. שו"ע לט"ח"ט ומשנ"ב שם

227. שו"ע לט"י

Halachot of Tefillin

riod. He should increase his involvement in Torah learning, and, if he had not been previously accustomed to wearing *tefillin Rabbenu Tam*, he should commit to wear *tefillin Rabbenu Tam* each day (in addition to standard *tefillin*).²²⁸

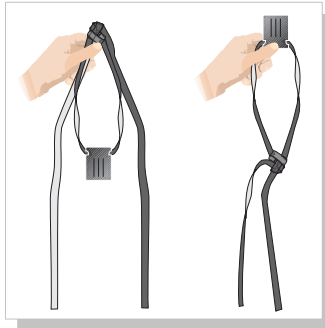
²²⁸. ילקוט יוסף

Respectful Treatment of *Tefillin*

- 1) It is forbidden to hang the *tefillin* boxes or straps on a peg such that they are suspended in the air, as this is disrespectful to the *tefillin*.²²⁹



- a. When one prepares to put on the *tefillin shel rosh*, he should preferably hold the box together with the knot, rather than holding one with the other suspended in the air. One should then place the box in its place on the head, followed by the knot. Nevertheless, while donning the *tefillin* it is permissible to momentarily hold the *tefillin* box with the straps hanging, or to hold the straps of the *tefillin shel rosh* with the box hanging.



229. שו"ע מ:א ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

Since this is done as part of the procedure of donning the *tefillin*, it does not appear disrespectful to the *tefillin*.²³⁰

- b. If the *tefillin* are already in their bag, one may hang the bag on a peg such that the bag hangs in the air.²³¹



- 2) There is a custom to observe a fast if one drops his *tefillin* onto the floor, if they were not in their bag.²³²
 - a. The authorities debate the question of whether one must fast if the *tefillin* fell from a height of three *tefahim* (9-12 inches) or less from the ground.²³³ In such a case one should consult with his Rabbi for guidance.
 - b. If the individual is frail and experiences difficulty fasting, and certainly if he studies Torah and fasting would undermine his ability to properly learn, then in lieu of fasting he should donate to charity the value of one meal.²³⁴ In all such cases one should consult with his Rabbi to determine whether or not he should fast.

²³⁰. משנ"ב שם ²³¹. שו"ע שם ²³². משנ"ב שם ²³³. עיין כה"ח שכתב
דהיכא שנפלו מגובה שהוא תוך ג' טפחים מעל הארץ א"צ להתענות, ויתן מעות לצדקה. אולם הבא"ח לא
חילק בזה. ²³⁴. כה"ח שם

Halachot of Tefillin

- c. If the *tefillin* fell while in their bag or in their plastic case, then one should give charity and is not required to fast.²³⁵
 - d. There is a debate among the authorities as to when the fast is observed in a case where a person chooses to fast. The first view maintains that one fasts on that same day when the *tefillin* fell.²³⁶ According to the second view, he should verbally accept upon himself the fast at *minhah* on that day and then fast the following day.²³⁷ A person should consult with his Rabbi for guidance in such a case.
 - e. If the day on which one is supposed to fast (either on the day the *tefillin* fell or on the following day, depending on which view he follows) is a day when fasting is prohibited, such as Shabbat or a festival, then he fasts on a different day. According to all views, on the day of the fast one adds the *Anenu* section in the *Amidah*.
- 3) A person who sees *tefillin* fall to the ground is not required to observe a fast.²³⁸
 - 4) If one dropped the *tefillin* straps on the ground, he is not required to fast; one must, however, ensure that the straps do not drag on the floor.²³⁹
 - 5) If a pair of *tefillin* is situated on a bench, one may not sit on the bench while the *tefillin* are there.²⁴⁰

239. שם

238. כה"ח מ"א

237. ילקוט יוסף

236. כה"ח שם

235. משנ"ב שם

240. משנ"ב מ"ג

Halachot of Tefillin

- 6) If the benches in the synagogue have shelves underneath them on which to place *siddurim* and the like, and somebody placed his *tefillin* on such a shelf, then some authorities forbid sitting on the bench, while others are lenient in this regard. All authorities agree, however, that if an empty space the height of a *tefach* (4 inches) or more separates the *tefillin* from the bench, one may sit on the bench, as he is then not considered to sit over the *tefillin*. Nevertheless, even in such a case one should preferably refrain from sitting on the bench given the particular reverence with which one must treat *tefillin*. One may be lenient if the bench is attached to the wall with nails.²⁴¹
- 7) One may not eat a meal while wearing *tefillin*. A “meal” for the purposes of this *halachah* is defined as at least a *kebesah*, or 2 oz., of bread, other baked goods, or cooked food made from one of the five principal grains (wheat, oats, spelt, rye and barley).²⁴²
- 8) While wearing *tefillin* one may drink, eat fruits or vegetables, or eat less than 2 oz. of bread or other baked goods. When one eats or drinks with *tefillin*, he must exercise care not to divert his attention away from his *tefillin*. If one has completed the prayer service and does not intend to spend some time studying Torah immediately at that point, he should preferably remove his *tefillin* before eating or drinking even small amounts.²⁴³
- 9) One may not sleep, or even take a short nap, while wearing *tefillin*. This applies even while wearing only the *tefillin shel yad* or the *tefillin shel rosh*.²⁴⁴

244. שו"ע מד:א

243. שם

242. שו"ע מ:ח ומשנ"ב שם

241. משנ"ב מ:ה

Halachot of Tefillin

- 10) One may not place in the bag designated for *tefillin* other articles, including religious articles of a lower level of sanctity than *tefillin*, as this constitutes an infringement upon the unique honor that must be afforded to *tefillin*. Thus, for example, one may not place a mirror or *siddur* together with the *tefillin* in their bag. One who wishes to place such items in the *tefillin* bag should verbally stipulate before he places *tefillin* in the bag for the first time that he does not designate the bag exclusively for *tefillin*.

If one keeps the *tefillin* bag in a larger bag together with his *tallit* and *siddur*, he may keep mundane articles in the large bag, as well, since the bag was not designated exclusively for religious articles.²⁴⁵ In all circumstances, one must ensure not to leave *tefillin* underneath a *tallit* or *siddur*, as the sanctity of *tefillin* exceeds that of a *tallit* or *siddur*.²⁴⁶

- 11) It is forbidden to engage in marital relations in a room where *tefillin* (or Torah books) are present, unless they are situated behind a partition extending at least ten *tefachim* (40 inches) high. Alternatively, one may place the *tefillin* in a *כיס בתוך כיס*, or “double covering.” Meaning, if the *tefillin*



are placed in a bag which is then placed inside another bag, and the outer bag is not designated especially for the

²⁴⁶. כה"ח כח:ג.

²⁴⁵. שו"ע מב:ג ומשנ"ב, ילקוט יוסף

Halachot of Tefillin

tefillin, then marital relations are permitted in the room.²⁴⁷ The halachic authorities debate the status of the large bag used for one's *tallit*, *tefillin* and *siddur* with respect to this *halachah*, whether or not it can be considered a second bag. It is preferable not to treat it as a separate bag, and one should therefore store his *tefillin* bag in another covering, such as in a shopping bag or a drawer.²⁴⁸ Couples must be aware of this *halacha* when lodging in a hotel or visiting somebody else's home, when the husband's *tefillin* is usually kept in the room where they sleep.

- 12) The small bag designated specifically for *tefillin* that is no longer used must not be discarded; it must instead be put into *genizah* (collection of sacred articles that are no longer in use and are therefore buried).²⁴⁹
- 13) One may not bring *tefillin* into the restroom, even while they are in their bag, unless he has no safe place to keep them while he uses the restroom, such as in an airport or other places where bags cannot be safely left unattended. One may bring *tefillin* into the restroom if they are in a כיס בתוך כיס, meaning, in a bag which is itself placed in a different bag that is not designated exclusively for *tefillin*. (As noted above, in *halachah* 11, it is uncertain whether the large bag used for one's *tallit*, *tefillin* and *siddur* may be considered a second bag for this purpose.) Thus, for example, if one keeps his *tefillin* bag in a shopping bag, he may bring the *tefillin* into the restroom in such a fashion.²⁵⁰
- 14) When removing the *tefillin* from their bag, one should not shake the bag so that the *tefillin* will fall out onto the

247. שו"ע סי' מג

248. משנ"ב שם

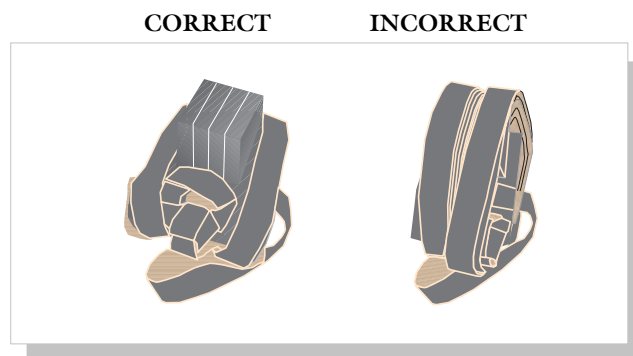
249. כה"ח שם

250. שו"ע מ"ב ומשנ"ב שם

Halachot of Tefillin

table. He should rather take hold of the *tefillin* and remove them from the bag. He should then hold the *bayit* while he prepares the straps, rather than allow the *bayit* to turn over and dangle as he prepares the straps, which would be disrespectful to the *tefillin*.²⁵¹

- 15) When one wraps his *tefillin* after using them, he must ensure not to wrap the straps directly on the *batim* (the leather boxes), as the sanctity of the *batim* exceeds that of



the straps. However, if one keeps his *tefillin* inside a plastic case (as is the common practice nowadays), he may wrap the straps over the plastic case.²⁵²

- 16) The bag in which one keeps his *tefillin* should be aesthetically pleasing.²⁵³
- 17) There is a *מנהג חכמים* (practice observed by Torah scholars) to kiss the *tefillin* both when they are put on and when they are removed.²⁵⁴

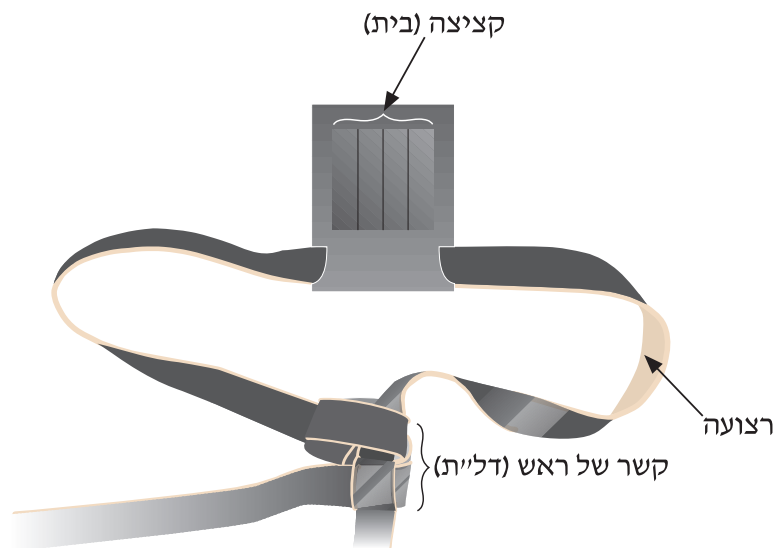
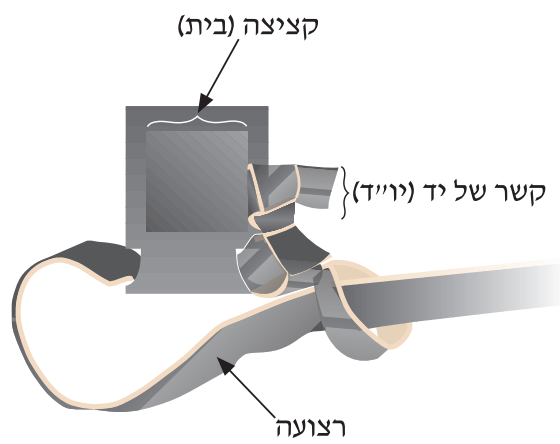
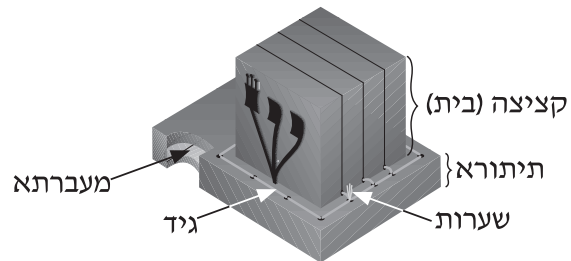
²⁵³. כה"ח

²⁵². שם ושור"ת דברי שלמה ח"ב ס' קפד

²⁵¹. משנ"ב כח:ג, וכה"ח שם

כה:ב. ²⁵⁴. שור"ע כח:ג

Diagram of *Tefillin*





In honor of
Chaim Moshe and Leah Greenwald
and
In memory of their families
who where

מוסר נפשם על קידוש השם

In World War II

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

by their children





Dedicated in
loving memory of

אליהו בן רחל ע"ה

ואשתו

תמם בת אורו ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.



עטיה בן וורדה ע"ה

ואשתו

פולין בת גרז ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By the Akkad family





Dedicated in honor of

Joseph and Sophie Tobias

and

Joseph and Celia Saff

By Neil and Moselle Tobias



In memory of

Rachel bat Shulamit A"H

by the Haber Family





Dedicated
for the
Refuah Shelemah
of
Dina bat Sara
Anonymous





In honor of
Harry and Vivian Shalom
and
Meyer and Cynthia Cohen
by their children
Billy and Allice





In memory of

Halfon and Rose Cabasso

and their son

Joseph

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

by their family





In honor of

Ezra and Nancy Levy

by their children

Benny and Abie



Dedicated

for the Refuah Shelemah

of

Mr. Ellis A. Safdeye

By his family





In memory of

Avraham ben Serach Imani A"t

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By his wife and children





In loving memory of

David and Lorraine Mizrahi

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By their children





Dedicated in
loving memory of

Sofia and Lazer Stein

אליעזר בן יואל ע"ה

סימי סופיא בת זלדא ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

and

Isaac Salem

יצחק בן רחל ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By their children





Dedicated in memory of
Solomon and Grace Franco A"t

שלמה בן מוזל ע"ה

גרז בת רחל ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

and

Isaac Salem A"t

יצחק בן רחל ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By their loving children
and grandchildren





Dedicated in loving memory of
Mr. Amin and Lillian Adjmi A"H

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By their children
Richard and Gladys Adjmi



In honor of my dear wife

Sheryl

and my children

By Soli Mizrahi





In loving memory of
our dear parents

Morris and Freida Beyda A"ח

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By their son

Jack Beyda and family





Dedicated in loving memory of

Edmond Sassoon A"H

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

By his family



In honor of

our dear children

by

Victor and Sheffy Sutton





In loving memory of
our beautiful mother,
אשת חיל true



Sherry Assoulín A"t

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

You will always continue to inspire us
May her memory be blessed forever

By her children





Dedicated in loving memory
or our parents

Nissim and Mazie Shalom A"H

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

by their children

Raymond and Sharon Shalom



לעילוי נשמת

שלמה בן סינבול ע"ה

שפיקה בת מזל ע"ה

דוד בן שפיקה ע"ה

משה עזרא בן שפיקה ע"ה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.





In memory of

Aouni Faks ben Rahel A"H

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.



Dedicated in honor of

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Harary





Dedicated in honor or

Sol and Norma Betesh

By their children



*Dedicated to the memory
of our beloved father*

*ירוחם בן אברהם ע"ה
and our brother*

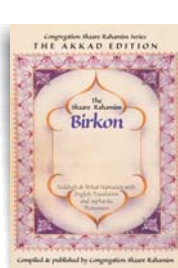
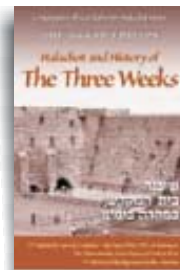
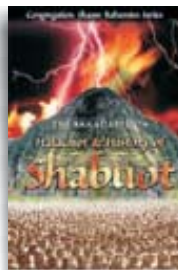
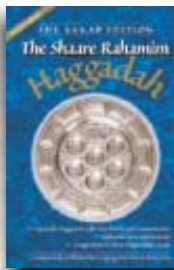
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