



Harav Shaul Israeli zt"l
Founder and President

Shabbat, Mishkan, and Shekalim

Harav Shaul Yisraeli – from Siach Shaul pp. 303-5

The *Mishkan*, about whose construction we learn this week, is not a physically impressive structure, but it is very spiritually impressive. It allows one to reach great spiritual peaks. The *Mishkan* served as the base for the Divine Presence's dwelling within *Am Yisrael*, as the Torah writes explicitly: "They shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I shall dwell among them" (Shemot 25:8). It is also alluded to twice in our *parasha* (ibid. 29:45-46).

The fire that was lit on the top of the *menora* (candelabrum) was a testament to the Divine Presence. However, the revelation occurred between the two *keruvim* (cherubim) on the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, where normally no man may go.

Keruv and *rochev* (ride) share letters, and both hint at the Chariot upon which Hashem figuratively/spiritually "rides." The Rider of the Chariot is One Who can never be seen. In fact, only the very choicest of the spiritual can see even a vision of the Chariot, and it is strictly forbidden for one who is not on the appropriate, lofty spiritual level to delve into the topic (Chagiga 2:1). In honor of Purim Katan, with the idea of the hidden (*hester*) on our mind, we will carefully take a small peek.

A chariot that is not tied to a horse is not a functional chariot. In the Purim story, the turning point comes when Achashverosh commanded Haman to lead Mordechai around on the king's horse. Riding on a royal horse or chariot was always a way of showing the greatest esteem. This was behind Paroh's honoring Yosef with a special chariot (Bereishit 41:43) and Hashem's sending a Heavenly chariot and horses of fire to bring Eliyahu up to the Heavens (Melachim II, 2:11).

A flesh and blood Jewish king is commanded to not have too many horses for his chariots, whereas Hashem has special chariots and horses of fire as we will see from another section of Melachim II. The King of Aram tried to seize the prophet Elisha, sending a delegation of troops with cavalry and chariots to capture him in Dotan. Elisha's assistant panicked, and Elisha prayed to Hashem to show the assistant a vision of the Chariot. When the assistant opened his eyes, he saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire to help Elisha (Melachim II, 6:16-17).

In *Tanach* we find mention of a vision of the Chariot in which angels of fire appear. One was Yeshayahu's first prophecy (Yeshayahu 6:1-2). Yechezkel also saw the "Holy Beasts" (Yechezkel 1:5) and another time, he saw *keruvim* (ibid. 10:5). Other prophets saw chariots and horses (Zecharia 6:2).

The *midrash* tells us that mention of the king in Megillat Esther can refer simultaneously to the human king and hint at the King of the World (Esther Rabba 3:10). We can suggest that the horse Mordechai rode had elements of being "Hashem's horse." Then, Mordechai experienced something similar to what Eliyahu experienced – to ride a spiritual chariot, go the inner sanctums, and see a vision of *keruvim*.

On Purim, people dress in disguise; even Hashem and His horses do so. Esther, as well, had to go to an inner sanctum in an officially forbidden manner. To the extent we will follow her instructions to "go and gather all of the Jews" (Esther 4:16) we will debunk the accusation of being a "scattered nation" (ibid. 3:8). When we act as a united nation, with brotherly love, it is our enemies, not we, who must worry.

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Those who fell in wars for our homeland.
May Hashem avenge their blood!

Mr. Gershon (George) ben Chayim HaCohen Kaplan Adar II 6



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Ask the Rabbi

by Rav Daniel Mann

Reattaching Ripped Tzitzit

Question: One of my *tzitzit* strings ripped so that it was very short. May I tie the ripped part to the stub to restore it to legal length?

Answer: According to your description, the *tzitzit* are kosher without reattachment, as we will explain. If the other *tzitzit* are of kosher length (details are not our focus) and only one string ripped, the *tzitzit* remain kosher for the following reason. The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 12:1) cites two opinions on leeway regarding ripped *tzitzit* strings. The Ri posits that each of the four strings can be “too short” on one of its ends if the other end is the proper length. (Background – each corner of the *tzitzit* has four strings, which look like eight because both ends of the strings face in one direction. One can know the pairings of the string ends if he, as recommended, was consistent about keeping the same four string ends together on opposite sides of the knots.) Rabbeinu Tam holds that two of the four strings must be complete on both ends. If only one of the eight strings became too short, the *tzitzit* are kosher according to all.

Now to your question about whether it is possible to fix *tzitzit* by tying on a string to a stub. *Retzuot* of *tefillin* that are tied together are not kosher (Menachot 35b; Shulchan Aruch, OC 33:5) because we derive from the word “*u'kshartam*” that there must be a *kshira tama* (i.e., attaching the *tefillin* with unblemished *retzuot*). The Taz (OC 12:3) and Magen Avraham (15:1) posit that the disqualification of tying is unique to *tefillin*, as generally, things that are connected by a permanent knot form one halachic unit. The Magen Avraham points out, for example, that when threads are tied together, their new size counts regarding size requirements of the laws of *nega'im*. Although there are some halachic comparisons made between *tefillin* and *tzitzit*, here it makes sense to follow the precedent found in the *gemara* (Menachot 35b) that the remnants (*gardumei*) of *tzitzit* strings are kosher, whereas the remnants of *tefillin retzuot* are not because *tefillin* have a level of sanctity that *tzitzit* do not.

The Taz, though, points out that the connection needs to be made at the right time, because of the concept of *ta'aseh v'lo min he'asuy* (= *tvlmh*). This means that regarding *mitzvot* that require acting to create the object of the *mitzva* (including *sukka* or *tzitzit*), the creating must be significant at the time it was done, as opposed to receiving its significance retroactively. For example, if one tied three sets of *tzitzit* strings on a three cornered garment (for which there is no *mitzva* of *tzitzit*) and later forms a fourth corner, the existing sets of strings are invalid until he redoes them (Shulchan Aruch, OC 10:5). So, says the Taz, if one tied strings together before attaching the *tzitzit* to the garment, all is fine. However, if one originally attached *tzitzit* strings that were too short and tied on extensions afterwards, it is *pasul* because of *tvlmh*.

What is more complicated is when the *tzitzit* were fine when they were attached, later strings ripped, and one wants to return them by tying. This seems to depend on a difference of opinion regarding a case of a *mitzva* that was done properly, lost relevance, and was restored (see Pitchei Teshuva, Yoreh Deah 286:13, regarding *mezuzot* on a doorway which went in, out, and back into obligation in *mezuza*). The Ba'er Heitev (OC 12:3) cites our Taz as saying that our case would be fine, but the Sha'arei Teshuva (ad loc.), Eliya Rabba (12:1), and Mishna Berura (12:7) point out that the correct reading of the Taz is that it is *pasul*.

However, the Mishna Berura (ibid.) points out that if one fixed a string when the *tzitzit* had enough kosher strings, it is not a problem of *tvlmh*, and the string apparently counts in your case. The value of fixing can show itself if other strings rip even later. Also, an individual short string is not optimal (see Taz ibid.), and reattaching the string apparently fixes that drawback.

“Behind the Scenes” Zoom shiur

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Do not hesitate to ask any question about Jewish life, Jewish tradition or Jewish law.



Igrot HaRe'aya - Letters of Rav Kook

Shemitta for Fields of Grain and Vegetables – #196

Date and Place: 12 Iyar 5669, Yafo

Recipient: Rav Shmuel Salant and Rav Chaim Berlin, the Chief Rabbis of Jerusalem


Body: Recently, I received a letter from a dear *talmid chacham* from the dear sons of Zion, in which it says that you, great Torah giants, had a thought of implementing an idea in connection to the upcoming *Shemitta* year. It focused on the idea of following the laws of *Shemitta* without relying on difficult leniencies that require uprooting this holy *mitzva*, to which we have been looking longingly from the time we were exiled from our Land and distanced from our holy soil. I am coming merely to notify you that I too am ready to be a young man holding on to the bottom of the cloaks of the holy Torah giants and to join in this difficult work of purity with Hashem's help and without making it an oath.

It is a simple matter that after all of the arduous steps that we hope Hashem, who chooses the Desired Land to give it to His nation so that we can observe His laws and testaments, will enable us to take, we will not be able to escape the need to use the *Heter Mechira* (leniency of selling land to non-Jews for the *Shemitta* year). This applies at least to most of the orchards and the vineyards, because severing the connections with exporters for one year could, Heaven forbid, devastate the commercial standing for years to come. In such a case, we say that one cannot learn what to do from a case where there are options to a case where there are no options (i.e., there is no way we can rule stringently).

In contrast, regarding all of the fields dedicated to vegetables and grains, the situation is different. First, the halachic situation is much more stringent in these fields, [which require sowing and other agricultural work on a yearly basis, for which there are not many significant possible leniencies]. This is different from orchards and vineyards [which are planted before *Shemitta*], where most of the work is just to protect the trees, and there are several possibilities to permit the work according to complex halachic analysis, which this is not the place to get into.

In regard to commerce with the fruit and exporting the holy fruit to the Diaspora, there are some ways to contemplate leniency, upon which one can rely in a situation of great need, as we are now in, along with the *Heter Mechira*. However, regarding fields that need to be planted, not only are the halachic problems more severe, but there is no problem about loss for subsequent years [because the produce is for local consumption]. Therefore, it is worthwhile for us to make the effort to call out with a strong voice to our brothers who observe Torah and *mitzvot* with love, that they should make donations to strengthen the financial situation of those who will refrain from plowing and harvesting. If Hashem will give us success, it will be a wonderful start toward implementing the *mitzva* of the rest of the land within the Nation of Hashem who work the holy soil.

I hereby take leave of your "holy faces" with expectation for your pure response. May Hashem help us to bring honor to His Name, which is connected to His nation and His lot.



Tzofnat Yeshayahu - Rabbi Yosef Carmel

The Prophet Yeshayahu performed in one of the most stormy and dramatic periods of the Israeli nation's life, a period of anticipation for the Messiah that was broken by a terrible earthquake, and also caused a spiritual and political upheaval. The light at the end of the tunnel shone again only in the days of Chizkiyah.

"Tzofnat Yeshayahu – from Uziya to Ahaz" introduces us to three kings who stood at this crossroad in our nation's history: Uziya, a king who sought God but was stricken with leprosy because of his sin; Yotam, the most righteous king in the history of our people; And Ahaz, the king who knew God but did not believe in His providence.

In his commentary on the prophecies of Yeshayahu, Rabbi Yosef Carmel, Head of the Eretz Hemdah-Gazit rabbinical court and a disciple of Rabbi Shaul Israeli zt"l, clings to the words of Hazal, our sages, and to the commentaries of the Rishonim, the great Jewish scholars of the middle ages, and offers a fascinating way to study Tanach. This reading attempts to explain the Divine Plan in this difficult period and to clarify fundamental issues in faith. Tzofnat Yeshayahu reveals to the reader the meaning of the prophecies in the context of the prophet's generation and their relevance to our generation.

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P'ninat Mishpat

Was New Principal Properly Compensated? – part II

(based on ruling 82124 of the Eretz Hemdah-Gazit Rabbinical Courts)

Case: The defendant (=def) hired the plaintiff (=pl), an experienced educator, to start a girls' high school. Her responsibilities included recruiting to open the school and then serving as the principal. There was a written contract between them. Pl failed to recruit the minimum number of students to be a recognized school that receives government funding, but def opened the school. Pl did not find a full staff of teachers and therefore did significant teaching. Towards the end of the first year, after pl did some recruitment for the next year, def fired her. [We will deal with various elements of the dispute separately.] Pl demands 50,000 NIS for the work she did in recruitment for the next year based on def's request. Def states several claims for being exempt from such payment, including: 1. Pl was a bad recruiter, as seen by the weak results. 2. Recruiting is included in a principal's job, which is why she recruited for the first class; there is no need for a separate recruiter. 3. Pl accepted the money she received, showing that even if she deserved more, she was *mochelet* (waived rights) to any more.

Ruling: *Beit din* ruled that pl shall receive pay during the months she recruited, based on the following counters to def's claims of exemption:

1. Pl specified many activities she did and produced voluminous email communications she had as a recruiter. A worker is not judged on results, but by doing the job responsibly, unless specified otherwise. Additionally, in an email before the sides started quarreling, pl stated that she wanted to phase out her recruitment work, and def expressed disappointment and pressured pl to agree to do at least part of the job. This shows that def viewed pl as doing her job well or reasonably.

2. A principal is generally involved at least in setting standards for acceptance and supervising the recruiting, but not always does she do the day-to-day recruiting. This is confirmed by the facts that pl intended to continue as principal but not recruiter and that pl had looked for a recruiter and did not hire someone only because he demanded a high salary.

3. The rule is that one does not do work for free (Rama, Choshen Mishpat 264:4). The claim of *mechila* (waiving a right) against an established obligation is weak and does not get off the ground without significant proof (Shut Radbaz I:364). Also, here, pl spoke of her displeasure with not getting paid for recruitment, as def admitted at one point. Although pl continued to work even though she was not getting the pay for it month after month, sometimes a person sees that she is unable to, at that point, receive pay, and continues to work under protest because of a perceived lack of choice without being *mochelet*.

Two factors help determine how much pl should be paid for this work: 1. Part of the work was done during hours she served as principal. 2. When an amount is not agreed upon, the worker gets according to the lower scale. 3. There was an agreement on recruitment the previous year, and it was not altered. *Beit din* understands that pl did recruiting during her year as principal for seven months, and during that time she should get 1,750 NIS a month, as in the previous year.

Comments or questions regarding articles can be sent to: info@erezhemdah.org

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