

HALOCHOSCOPE TOI PE

Correction to last issue: page 3, section c, paragraph 3, sentence beginning "Add eight Musafin ... an additional three for Shabbos (three Shabbosos in the first thirty days, excluding Shabbos on Pesach) and two more for two days Rosh Chodesh, then subtract two ..."

Someone is hospital bound with an ailment that involves having waste residue in his vicinity. Should he wear his *Tzitzis* while in bed at this time?

The issues:

(A) *Tzitzis*; the meaning of the Mitzvah

(B) Wearing *Tzitzis* in bed

(A) *Tzitzis*

This is a fundamental Mitzva, though it does not apply constantly and is only incumbent on males. It is considered equal in stature to all the other Mitzvos in the Torah. It was worth redeeming the Jews from Egypt for this Mitzvah alone. The color of *Tzitzis* is meant to symbolize Hashem's throne of glory. Some say that the Hebrew root of the word *Tzitzis* is the same as the word to peck. When a person wears *Tzitzis* Hashem is watching over him from His throne.

The interpretations given on why the Mitzvah is considered so fundamental touch on esoteric discussions on the purpose of the creation and the like. One part of the esoteric meaning in this Mitzvah is important to understand for performance of the basic Mitzvah. The Torah rarely gives reasons for Mitzvos. When reasons are found, they are not necessarily meant to be the intent one should have when performing the Mitzvah. Usually, one is required to have intent to fulfil the will of Hashem, whatever that may be. One should not perform a Mitzvah for ulterior motives. Though the Poskim and Mitzvah-counters offer explanations for the Mitzvos, these are either interpreted as one possible meaning, to satisfy the person performing it, or as a flavor for the Mitzvah, though not its purpose. Some Poskim maintain that all Mitzvos refine people. Though we might not know a Mitzvah's true meaning or its total purpose, we can often see the type of refinement that the Mitzvah will achieve. However, if one did Mitzvos for the reasons that are given for them, one might adjust Halacha according to his reasons. This could lead to wrong rulings, such as those of Ko-

rach. [He argued that if a *Mezuza* is to protect a home, a total *Sefer Torah* should also work. If *Techeiles*, the blue strand, is the purpose of *Tzitzis*, and is to remind one of the throne of glory, a *Techeiles Talis* should not need *Tzitzis*. As we shall see, *Tzitzis* does have a purpose, spelled out by the Torah. Furthermore, the symbolism given by Korach has a sound basis. However, it is not the reason for the *Mitzvah*, to be used to determine when and where it applies.]

Tzitzis is different. Three *Mitzvos*, *Tefilin Tzitzis* and *Sukah*, include the word "*Lema'an*" in their wording. This means "in order that". It implies that the *Mitzvah* has the purpose referred to. For these three *Mitzvos* one must have intent to fulfil them for the specified purpose. Most *Poskim* say that one fulfils his obligation even if he did not have this intent, but the intent tells us something about the *Mitzvah*.

The way the Torah words this *Mitzvah* is: You shall see them, then you shall remember all of the *Mitzvos* of Hashem, and you shall perform them. And you shall not wander after [the temptations of] your hearts and [the attractions of] your eyes, that you stray after them. **In order that** you remember and perform all My *Mitzvos*, and you shall become holy to your G-d.

Seeing leads to remembering, which, in turn, leads to performing. Clearly, the purpose of this *Mitzvah* is that by looking at the *Tzitzis* we can prevent transgressions and feel the urgency to perform *Mitzvos*. Either one views it as an inherent quality invested in *Tzitzis* by Hashem, or in the knowledge of this obligation, the *Tzitzis* are a sign to remind us of it. The commentaries discuss why it is that some people do not seem to be afforded the protection. One answer is that it only works for those who are willing to admit that they need guidance. Such people will look to anything to see if there is something to be learned from it.

Tzitzis only applies by day. (Despite the inclusion of the *Parsha* in *Krias Shema*, by night as well, which is due to five reasons, including *Tzitzis* as one.) It also only applies if one wears the garment. One need not wear it and he would not be in violation. Why is this true of such a fundamental *Mitzvah*? It is because its very fundamentalism is not automatic, but requires thought.

Tzitzis are strands of wool, tied in knots, on the four corners of a garment. Eight strands are tied, by threading four strands through and tying their ends. At least one of them must be *Techeiles*. This is a bluish dye taken from the *Chilazon*, a creature of the sea. Some say two of the threads must be this color. The others should be white, although some say that they may be the color of the garment. The garment must be big enough to "cover" the wearer. There must be at least four corners. If one wears such a garment without *Tzitzis*, he has violated this *Mitzvah*. However,

there is no direct obligation to wear *Tzitzis*. Yet, the Talmud says that Hashem is likely to punish those who do not wear them.

The Talmud debates whether the *Techeiles* is essential for the proper fulfillment of the *Mitzvah*. The *Poskim* debate on the final conclusion. Accordingly, the question is raised, how can we wear four cornered garments without *Techeiles* today. [Its use seems to have stopped around the end of the Gaonic period.] It would be like wearing a four cornered garment without *Tzitzis*. One answer is that the *Poskim* debate the nature of the *Mitzvah*. In one view, the Torah forbids wearing a four cornered garment if it does not have *Tzitzis*, i.e., a negative *Mitzvah* comes from a positive one. The other view is that the Torah does not forbid wearing, but obliges one to attach the *Tzitzis* if he wears it. When this is impossible, such as if a strand snapped off on Shabbos, one may continue wearing the garment. The view that considers *Techeiles* essential to the *Mitzvah* would follow this view, permitting one to wear them when none is available, satisfying the Rabbinical requirement.

The *Mitzvah* is to attach the *Tzitzis*, but does not apply to the garment. [This is actually debated in the Talmud.] It applies to the wearer. Thus the *Mitzvah* is to wrap oneself in the garment with the *Tzitzis*. This is the form the *Brocha* takes. On a *Talis Katan*, small garment, one either recites no *Brocha*, relying on the *Brocha* on his regular *Talis*, or recites a generic *Brocha* on the *Mitzvah*. Some say he should rather wrap in them and recite the normal *Brocha*.

Though the *Mitzvah* does not require one to wear the garment, the Talmud relates how an angel appeared to a sage warning him to wear one at all times. Elsewhere the Talmud considers one who does not wear *Tzitzis* one of six who are excommunicated by Heaven. Therefore, it is customary to wear a *Talis Katan* at all times to remind one of the *Mitzvos*. [See *Parshas Shelach* 15:38 etc. *Rabeinu Bachaye*, *Darash Moshe*, *Meshech Chochma*, commentaries. *Menachos* 38a 44a, *Psachim* 113b, *Poskim*. *Tur Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 8:1 5 8 11 17 (*Mishna Berura*, *Yeshuas Yaakov*) 11:12 16:1 17:2 19:1 24:1 commentaries.]

(B) Tzitzis in bed

Scripturally *Tzitzis* are only required on wool or linen garments. Rabbinically, it applies to any fiber. However, one should only use wool *Tzitzis*. They are good for all clothing, including linen, which would otherwise pose the problem of *Shatnez*, forbidden mixed fibers. Since the *Mitzvah* specifies seeing them, the Talmud says that it does not apply by night, hence the dispensation for women (who are not obliged to observe time-bound *Mitzvos*.) If one attaches wool *Tzitzis* to a linen

night garment, he is in violation of Shatnez. The Rabbis instituted a prohibition to attach Tzitzis to sheets because of a "garment of the night." [Sheets were usually linen.] The Poskim debate the meaning of this. Some say it refers to wearing a night garment during the day, when one is otherwise obliged to wear Tzitzis. Others say it refers to wearing any garment by night. Accordingly, even when wearing Tzitzis by night, one does not recite the Brocha. Should one wear them by night anyhow, as a reminder of the Mitzvos? After all, during the day one is also not obliged to wear them.

Another issue is raised, dealing more generally with lying down wearing Tzitzis. It is forbidden to sleep or to enter a rest room with Tefilin on. If they are covered it is less of an issue. This is an aspect of their *Kedusha*, sanctity. However, it is permitted to enter with Tzitzis on. The Poskim forbid entering wearing a Talis normally specially worn for davening. A Talis Katan may be worn. The issue is one of *Bizuy Mitzvah*. Tzitzis do not have Kedusha, but since they are used only to perform a Mitzvah, one treats them with respect. This is actually considered a Scriptural precept, learned from the Mitzvah to cover blood of a slaughtered animal. One should not feel that the Mitzvos are to be taken lightly. Sleeping in the Talis Katan raises the same issue. However, apart from the fact that many Poskim permit sleeping in it, some actually recommend it, due to Kabbalistic reasons. They even recommend it by night, even though it is no Mitzvah. Some suggest that one can wear them with intent not to add a Mitzvah but to remember all the Mitzvos. Thus, one fulfils the reason but not the Mitzvah. Some have a special garment to be worn by night. Another case of *Bizuy Mitzvah* is allowing Tzitzis to drag along the ground. [See Menachos 40a-b, Poskim. Tur Sh. Ar. O.C. 18:1-2 21:3-4, commentaries (Yeshuos Yakov 24:1).]

In our case, the person is wearing them while awake in bed. This would normally not pose a problem. While awake, there is no question of *Bizuy Mitzvah*. However, in our case there is the presence of the waste matter. If this is confined in a way that the Tzitzis can be protected from it, this should be no worse than entering a rest room, which is permitted. If it can not be confined, the patient may not wear the Talis Katan, due to the possibility of *Bizuy Mitzvah*.

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This issue of Halocheoscope is sponsored by Rabbi and Mrs. Mordechai Rosenberg, in honor of the birth of their daughter Elisheva Gitel Mazel Tov.

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