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Brachos Daf 24

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Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o"n

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Placing Tefillin Under a Pillow

The *Gemora* asks exactly where one places *tefillin* under his head when sleeping together with his wife.

Rabbi Yirmiyah says that he should place it between his pillow and sheet, but not directly under his head.

The *Gemora* clarifies: Although Rabbi Chiya taught that one should place them in their bag, implying that they are under his head, he meant that the bag's opening is under his head, but the actual *tefillin* section is not.

Bar Kappara used to place them on the canopy on top of his bed, with the *tefillin* bulge of the bag sticking outside.

Rav Shisha the son of Rav Idi would place them on the stool next to his bed, and cover them with a cloth.

Rav Hamnuna the son of Rav Yosef said that one time he was in front of Rava, who told him to get him his *tefillin*. He found them between Rava's pillow and sheet. He realized that last night Rava's wife had immersed (*and had marital relations*), and Rava therefore sent him to get the *tefillin*, to teach him the practical *halachah* of where one may place the *tefillin* when being intimate with his wife. (24a)

Reading Shema in a Bed with Others

Rav Yosef the son of Rav Nechunya asked Rav Yehudah whether two naked people in a bed can turn their backs to each other and read *Shema*.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel that they may, even if the two are husband and wife.

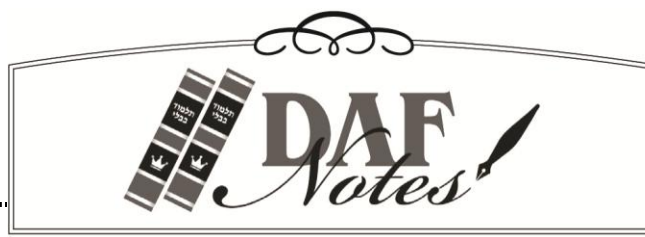
Rav Yosef challenged Shmuel's implication, that a husband and wife are less likely to be permitted. Rav Yosef says that only if the two are husband and wife may they read *Shema* this way, since one's wife is like himself, as he is accustomed to her, but any other two people may not.

The *Gemora* cites two seemingly contradictory *braisos*. The first *braisa* says that two people in a bed may face their backs to each other and read *Shema*, while the second one says that if someone is in a bed with someone else, he may not read *Shema* unless he separates between them with a garment, unless they are his small children. Rav Yosef can resolve this contradiction by saying that the first *braisa* refers only to a husband and wife, but how can Shmuel resolve them?

The *Gemora* explains that Shmuel would point out that Rav Yosef cannot resolve them this way, as the second *braisa* refers to one sleeping with someone "in his household," which includes his wife. Rav Yosef therefore must say that the two *braisos* disagree about a husband and wife. Shmuel can therefore similarly say that they disagree in all cases of two people.

The *Gemora* returns to the first *braisa*, which said that the two people may face their backs to each other and then read *Shema*. The *Gemora* notes that the fact that the *braisa* is not concerned about their buttocks touching supports Rav Huna, who says that buttocks do not have the status of *ervah* – the private area.

The *Gemora* suggests that we can also support Rav Huna from another *braisa*, which states that a naked woman may sit and separate *challah* with a *brachah*, but a naked man may not, as



his *ervah* is exposed. Even though the woman's buttocks may be revealed, the *braisa* allows her to make a *brachah*.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak deflects this, saying that the case of the *braisa* is where the woman has covered herself in the sand she is sitting in, thereby covering the buttocks as well.

The *Gemora* returns to the second *braisa*, which said that one may say *Shema* facing his little children, and asks until what age one may do this. Rav Chisda says this is until a girl is three, and until a boy is nine, as these are the ages at which physical relations are possible. Some say it is until the girl is 11 and the boy is 12, and have the signs of physical maturity.

Rav Kahana asked Rav Ashi if we follow Shmuel in the case of turning backs, just as Rava said that we follow him in the case of placing *tefillin* on one's bed, even though this was inconsistent with a *braisa*.

Rav Ashi answered that each case is different, and therefore we cannot extrapolate from Rava's statement in one case to this different case.

Rav Mari asked Rav Papa whether pubic hairs that are visible are considered *ervah*, and he said they are just hair, and not *ervah*. (24a)

Equivalent to *Ervah*

Rabbi Yitzchak says that a *tefach* uncovered on a woman is equivalent to *ervah*.

The *Gemora* explains that if one were to intentionally look at any part of a woman, even less than a *tefach*, it would be tantamount to looking at her genitals.

Rav Sheishes says that this is indicated from the fact that the verse listed together, in the loot from Midyan, jewelry worn on the genitals and jewelry worn on the visible parts of the body.

Rabbi Yitzchak is referring to an exposed *tefach* of one's wife, which is considered *ervah* for the purposed of reading *Shema*.

Rav Chisda says that an exposed thigh of a woman is tantamount to *ervah*, as the verse first says that "*you will reveal your thigh, and cross rivers,*" and then that "*you will reveal your *ervah*, and your shame will be visible,*" implying that the thigh itself is the *ervah*.

Shmuel says that a woman's voice is tantamount to *ervah*, as the verse in Shir Hashirim praises the woman by saying that "*your voice is pleasant, and your appearance is beautiful.*"

Rav Sheishes says that a woman's hair is tantamount to *ervah*, as the verse in Shir Hashirim praises the woman by praising her hair. (24a)

Testimony of Rebbi's Practices

Rabbi Chanina says that he saw Rebbe hanging his *tefillin*.

The *Gemora* challenges this from a *braisa* which says that if one hangs his *tefillin*, his life will hang in the balance. The Sages who expound on cryptic verses explain that the verse in the admonishment which says that "*your lives will hang in the balance,*" occurs to one who hangs his *tefillin*.

The *Gemora* answers by saying that the *braisa* is referring to one who hangs them by the straps, letting the actual boxes hang down, while Rebbe hung them by the boxes.

Alternatively, the *Gemora* says that the *braisa* applies to hanging by the straps or the boxes, but Rebbe first put them in a bag, and only hung the bag. We may have thought that one must place them down, like a Torah scroll, so Rabbi Chanina taught that Rebbe hung the bag.

Rabbi Chanina says that he saw Rebbe, while davening *Shemoneh Esrei*, burp, yawn, sneeze, spit, and rub himself with his clothing to remove a louse. He would not wrap himself in his *tallis*, and he would cover his mouth while yawning.

The *Gemora* challenges this from a *braisa*, which discusses objectionable activities during *Shemoneh Esrei*. The *braisa* says that if one prays audibly, he shows that he has little faith. If one prays loudly, he is acting like false prophets. One who burps or yawns is considered arrogant. If one sneezes, it is a bad sign, and some say that this indicates that he is disgusting. If one spits, it is like spitting in front of the king.

The *Gemora* says that we can answer the question about burping and yawning by saying that Rebbe did this involuntarily, while the *braisa* is referring to one who can control it but doesn't.



We can also answer the question about sneezing by saying that the *braisa* is referring to passing gas (“sneezing” below). Sneezing is considered positive, as Rabbi Zeira says that he considers precious the statement he learned from Rav Hamnuna, that if one sneezes, it is a good sign, as just as he got relief in this world, he will get relief from Heaven.

However, how can we answer the question about spitting?

The *Gemora* answers that Rebbe dealt with his spit like Rav Yehudah rules. Rav Yehudah says that if one has to spit in the middle of *Shemoneh Esrei*, he should do so into his clothing. If they are too fancy, he should spit into the bottom of his inner cloak.

Ravina was davening behind Rav Ashi. When Rav Ashi had to spit, he spat behind him. When Ravina asked him why he didn’t follow Rav Yehudah, he explained that is very sensitive, and can’t spit into any of his clothes.

Rav Huna says that one is only considered of small faith when praying audibly if he doesn’t need to do so to concentrate. However, if he does need to do so for concentration, it is permitted. However, if he is davening in public, he may not raise his voice, as it will confuse the others. (24a – 24b)

Passing Gas while Davening

Rabbi Abba used to avoid Rav Yehudah, as he forbade people from returning to *Eretz Yisroel*, and he wanted to return. He decided to hear words of Torah from Rav Yehudah and then exit the study hall. He heard the one teaching the *braisa* in front of Rav Yehudah say that if one passes gas while praying, he should wait until the odor subsides, and then continue. Some say that if he feels he must pass gas, he should move backwards four *amos*, pass gas, and then wait until the odor subsides. When he returns to pray, he should say a short prayer to Hashem, saying that You created us with our orifices and internal organs, and You know our shame and our end, and then return to where he interrupted. Rabbi Abba said that if he only came to hear this, it would be worth it. (24b)

Covering up for Shema

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* which discusses one who was sleeping naked under his blanket and wants to read *Shema* without poking his head out, since it is cold. He should use the blanket to make a separation at his neck, but some say that he

should make the separation at his heart. The *Gemora* explains that the first opinion says that one may read *Shema* even if his heart sees his genitals. (24b)

Reading Shema on a Dirty Street

Rav Huna quotes Rabbi Yochanan saying that if one was walking in a street with refuse in it, he should cover his mouth while reading *Shema*.

Rav Chisda challenged this, saying that even if Rabbi Yochanan himself told him this, he wouldn’t listen. Some say that Rabbah bar bar Chanah said this in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, and Rav Chisda challenged him.

The *Gemora* asks how Rav Huna could say this, as he also implied that one may not think about Torah in such a place, as he said that a Torah scholar should not stand in a dirty area, as he will definitely think about Torah.

The *Gemora* answers that walking is less severe than standing in such a place. The *Gemora* asks how Rabbi Yochanan could say this, as he says that one may think Torah thoughts anywhere besides a bathhouse and bathroom, implying that one may not even think of Torah in a dirty place.

The *Gemora* considers the possible answer that Rabbi Yochanan is more lenient when one is walking, but rejects it from a case of Rabbi Avahu, who interrupted his *Shema* while he was walking down a dirty street. When he asked Rabbi Yochanan if he must start again, Rabbi Yochanan told him that if he interrupted long enough to say the whole *Shema*, he must start again, implying that he agreed that Rabbi Avahu had to stop his *Shema* while on that street.

The *Gemora* deflects this, saying that Rabbi Yochanan was only telling Rabbi Avahu what to do, according to his assumption that he had to stop, but he himself would say that he could have continued.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* that rules like Rav Huna, and one that rules like Rav Chisda, prohibiting one from reading *Shema* in a dirty street, and requiring one to interrupt *Shema*, even if he started before.

The *Gemora* cites a number of verses that describe one who does not interrupt his *Shema*:

1. The verse which says that “*I gave them statutes, which were not good [for them], laws that they will not live by,*” as he caused himself harm through a *mitzvah*. (Rabbi Miasha, citing Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi)
2. The verse which says “*woe to those who drag the sin with ropes of nothing,*” as he is punished on a simple act of speech. (Rabbi Assi)
3. The verse which says “*he disgraced the word of Hashem,*” as he disgraced the word of Hashem by saying it in a dirty place. (Rav Adda bar Ahavah)

Rabbi Avahu says that one who does interrupt is described by the verse which says that “*and with this statement you will merit long life,*” as he performed a *mitzvah* by being careful with his speech. (24b)

Covering for Shema and Prayer

Rav Huna says that if one tied his garment around his waist, he may read *Shema*.

The *Gemora* supports this with a *braisa* which says that if one tied a garment of cloth, leather, or sackcloth around his waist, he may read *Shema*, but he may not daven until he covers his heart. (24b)

Tefillin in the Latrine

Rav Huna says that if one forgot and entered the latrine with his *tefillin*, he should cover them with his hands until he finishes relieving himself.

The *Gemora* asks whether he may really finish relieving himself, and therefore cites Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak who clarifies that he may only finish the feces or urine that has begun exiting his body. He need not interrupt before that, since Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel taught in a *braisa* that one becomes sick if he interrupts while in the process of expelling his waste. (24b – 25a)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Shema In Bed With One's Wife

The *Gemora* discusses reading *Shema* in bed with someone else at one's back, citing Rav Yehudah allowing it, and Rav Yosef allowing it only with a husband and wife.

The *Gemora* challenges Rav Yehudah with a *braisa* which prohibits it, but Rav Yosef says that the *braisa* is referring to someone other than a man's wife.

The Rambam and Rif rule like Rav Yosef, while the Rosh cites Tosfos ruling like the *braisa*, making it prohibited even with one's wife. The Rosh states that although

Rav Yehudah deflected the challenge from the *braisa* by amending it, we cannot rely on an amendment against a *braisa* that seems to be a clear disproof.

The Shulchan Aruch (73:2) rules like the Rambam, but cites Tosfos, and states that it is proper to be strict and follow their opinion.

Separating from ervah

The *Gemora* cited two *braisos* about where one must separate from his *ervah* when reading *Shema*. One *braisa* said he may do so at his neck, while the other said he must do so below his heart, to ensure that his heart be separated from the *ervah*.

The Rambam and Rif rule that one must separate between his heart and *ervah*, while the Ri says that we rule like the lenient *braisa*. The Shulchan Aruch (74:1) rules like the Rambam and Rif.

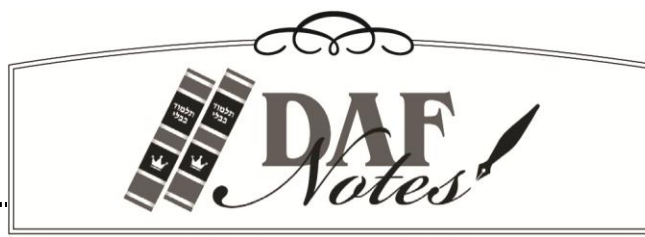
A Woman's Ervah

The *Gemora* discusses different aspects of a woman which are tantamount to *ervah*, listing an uncovered *tefach*, an uncovered thigh, hair, and voice.

The *Gemora* states that the uncovered *tefach* was listed in reference to *Shema*, prohibiting one from reading it even in front of an uncovered *tefach* of one's wife.

The Rosh explains that this *tefach* is in a part of the body which is usually covered, and the hair only refers to the hair of a married woman, who usually covers her hair.

Some Rishonim say that voice is listed only in reference to a prohibition to hear it (from a woman that is not one's wife), while Rav Hai (quoted in the Mordechai) says that it is also for the purposes of *Shema*.



The Shulchan Aruch (75:3) rules that it is proper to avoid reading *Shema* in the presence of a singing woman's voice.

The Chaye Adam states that if one is in a situation where it is unavoidable, he may still read *Shema*, but just concentrate intensely on the *Shema* he is saying.

Rebbe during Shemoneh Esrei

The *Gemora* discusses things Rebbe would do during *Shemoneh Esrei*. Rabbi Chanina says that Rebbe would sometimes yawn, and he explains that he would then cover his mouth.

The Rif's text is that Rebbe would *not* cover his mouth, as this is another of Rebbe's practices.

The Rosh explains that putting his hand on his mouth while davening would be a sign of arrogance.

The Tur (97) seems to follow both opinions, as he states that if one must yawn, he should cover his mouth, and he also states that one should not place his hand on his chin while davening.

The Bais Yosef explains that the Tur agrees with the Rif's ruling, but explains that if one must yawn, he should simply cover his mouth, as not doing so would itself be disrespectful.

The Shulchan Aruch (97:1) states that if one must yawn he should cover his mouth, and the Rama adds that one should not otherwise put his hand on his chin.

Rabbi Chanina also says that Rebbe would move his tallis around, but if it fell off, he would not pick it up.

Rashi explains that he would move his tallis to remove a louse that was biting him.

Rabbeinu Chananel says that if his tallis was falling off, he would adjust it, but if it fell off, he would not pick it up.

The Shulchan Aruch (97:3,4) rules like both explanations.

Rav Yehudah says that if one passes gas during *Shemoneh Esrei*, he should wait until the odor subsides, and then continue. Some say that Rav Yehudah said that if one feels he must pass gas, he should step back 4 amos, pass gas, wait for the odor to

subside, and then return and continue. When he continues, he says a prayer excusing himself.

Rashi explains that although this is an interruption of *Shemoneh Esrei*, it is permitted, as it has already been interrupted by the gas.

The Bais Yosef notes that this procedure is only allowed when one cannot control the gas, as otherwise one is not allowed to pass gas during *Shemoneh Esrei*.

The Gra and Prisha say that only in the second case, when one moved aside, does he say this prayer, while the Pri Chadash and Eliya Raba say that he says it in both cases.

The Shulchan Aruch (103:1,2) rules like both statements of Rav Yehudah, and only mentions the prayer in the second case.

The Rama adds that this procedure of moving and returning is only when one is davening privately. However, if one is davening along with others, it would be extremely embarrassing to do so, and therefore he may just wait and continue, without moving and without the prayer.

The Magen Avraham says that it is still proper for one to think the prayer without saying the words.

When Rabbi Akiva Eiger zt"l Visited a Museum

By: Meoros HaDaf HaYomi

It is recounted that Rabbi Shlomo Eiger zt"l, the son of the Gaon Rabbi Akiva Eiger, worried about his father's health and wanted to convince him to rest from his toil in Torah. When Rabbi Akiva was in Warsaw, his son took him to the local museum, thinking that it would distract him and relax his mind. The curator was excited to host such a famous personality and he honored him to sit on an ancient chair which served as an exhibit. Rabbi Akiva sat for a few minutes, thought and finally asked, "Where's the infant?" He was concentrating on the Torah and didn't notice at all that he was in a museum and thus thought that he was being honored to be the *sandek* at a circumcision.