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### ***Tzitzis and Shatnez***

The Gemora cites a *braisa*: Regarding a linen garment and the obligation of *tzitzis* on it, Beis Shammai states that it is exempt (*and, according to Rashi, it is forbidden, for Beis Shammai maintains that the prohibition against wearing shatnez -- wool and linen together, applies to tzitzis as well*), while Beis Hillel states that it is. The law follows Beis Hillel. Rabbi Eliezer the son of Rabbi Tzadok says: Anyone who puts *tzitzis* on a linen garment in Yerushalayim astonishes all who observe him (*for he is wearing shatnez*)! Rebbe remarked: If the law is like Beis Hillel, why are people astonished? This is because we suspect that people will not realize why it is permitted in this case alone (*this mixture of wool and linen is only permitted because the linen clothing is obligated in tzitzis, and they will come to permit wearing wool and linen mixtures in clothing in general*).

Rava bar Rav Chana said to Rava: Why don't ten people wear wool *tzitzis* on linen clothing, go out to the marketplace, and publicize the matter (*that this is permitted due to the fact that this is linen clothing that requires tzitzis*)?

Rava answered: This will confuse matters even more (*as people will say that even righteous people started to wear wool and linen mixtures*).

The Gemora asks: Why isn't this lesson taught in the public discourses?

The Gemora answers: We are concerned that people might use indigo (*to dye the wool instead of techeiles – the dye from*

*the sea creature, known as the chilazon*). [They will have violated the prohibition against wearing shatnez without fulfilling the mitzvah of tzitzis.]

The Gemora asks: But let it be like an ordinary white wool thread (*which also pushes aside the prohibition against shatnez, and the mitzvah of tzitzis is fulfilled*)!?

The Gemora answers: Being that for the ordinary white threads one can use threads of linen (*to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzis*), one may not use wool threads on a linen garment (*which will therefore constitute shatnez*). This is as Rish Lakish states: Whenever there is a positive and negative commandment, if possible, they should both be fulfilled. If they conflict, the positive commandment should push aside the negative commandment.

The Gemora asks: Why don't they test these threads to determine if the *techeiles* is genuine?

The Gemora answers: Rather, the reason we make the decree is because we are concerned that the *techeiles* thread was used as a quality test (*and since the thread was not dyed for the sake of the mitzvah, it would be deemed invalid; and since one cannot ascertain whether or not this is the case, they disallowed the use of techeiles threads on linen garments*).

The Gemora asks: Why don't they write this information down on a document and send it to all places where *techeiles* is dyed (*and they will therefore know it is invalid and not use these threads for the mitzvah*)?



The *Gemora* answers: We cannot rely on these documents (*for people pay no attention to them*).

Rava asks: If we see that we rely on such documents regarding (*the prohibition of eating*) *chametz* on *Pesach* and (*the obligation of fasting on*) *Yom Kippur* (*as stated in Sanhedrin 11a that messengers were sent out to inform people when they declared a leap year*), where, if violated, there is a penalty of *kares*; shouldn't we certainly rely on this regarding an ordinary positive commandment?

Rather, Rava answers: I (*in Bavel*) give the following answer, and in *Eretz Yisroel* it was stated in the name of Rabbi Zeira that the decree is on account of a concern that the linen garment will tear within three fingerbreadths of the corner (*which is the place that the tzitzis are placed*), and one might sew it back up with linen thread (*and leave it there to serve as the white threads for tzitzis; he will then add woolen techeiles strings to it*). This is invalid, for the Torah states: *you shall make tzitzis*, indicating that you cannot use something that was already made (*i.e., the tzitzis must be placed on the corner for the sake of the mitzvah; he cannot, after the fact, designate that these "hanging" threads should be used for the tzitzis fringes*).

Rabbi Zeira took off the *tzitzis* from his linen garment (*due to this decree*).

Rav Zeira states a different reason for the decree: They were concerned that a person will wear his linen garment at night when he is not obligated to do so (*for we will learn later that a night garment is exempt from the obligation of tzitzis*). [*This will result in his wearing shatnez without fulfilling any mitzvah of tzitzis.*]

Rava said: I (*in Bavel*) said the following, and in *Eretz Yisroel* it was stated in the name of Rabbi Zeira If a garment was made of cloth and its corners were made of leather, it is obligated in *tzitzis*. If the garment was made of leather and

the corners were made of cloth, it is not obligated in *tzitzis*. This is because we require that the main part of the garment be cloth for the garment to be subject to the obligation of *tzitzis* (*and leather is not obligated in tzitzis*).

Rav Achai argues and states that we consider the corners (*to see if the garment is subject to the obligation of tzitzis, and therefore gives the opposite ruling in both cases*).

Rava says in the name of Rav Sechorah in the name of Rav Huna: If there was a three corner garment with *tzitzis* on its three corners, and then a fourth corner was added and *tzitzis* was put on it, the *tzitzis* are invalid, for the Torah states: *you shall make tzitzis*, indicating that you cannot use something that was already made.

The *Gemora* asks a question on this from a *braisa*, which states: The pious people of old (*in their zeal to perform the mitzvah of tzitzis*) would place *tzitzis* on their clothing after weaving just three fingerbreadths of their garment. [*This indicates that there is no prohibition against making tzitzis when the corners are not yet made. In order for a garment to be subject to the tzitzis obligation, it must be large enough to cover one's body. In this case, the garment would need to be made much larger yet, so at this point, only two of the corners are ready, and affixing the tzitzis to these two corners before all four are made is premature and it would be invalid.*]

The *Gemora* answers: The *braisa* means that when they would be about to finish the last three fingerbreadths of the garment, they would affix the *tzitzis* to it (*since tzitzis must be placed within three fingerbreadths of the corner, it was regarded as the correct place and the tzitzis are valid*).

The *Gemora* asks: Do we generally say this law that you cannot use something that was already made? Didn't Rabbi Zeira say that if a garment had *tzitzis*, and then a person put on entirely new *tzitzis* and then proceeded to cut off the old ones, the garment is valid? [*This is despite the fact that the new tzitzis originally had no purpose when they were*



attached to the clothing, and only become valid when the originals are detached!]

Rava answers: Being that putting on the second set of *tzitzis* transgressed the prohibition of “not adding to a *mitzvah*” (the transgression against adding to a specified number of an item commanded by the Torah), it is not considered as if it was put on originally at all. This is why it is valid when the first set is detached.

Rav Pappa asks: How do we know that the person in this case intended to add a forbidden set? Perhaps he merely intended to nullify the first set, and this means that he did not transgress the prohibition of “not adding to a *mitzvah*” and did do an action by putting on the second set? [This means the *Gemora’s* question remains.]

Rabbi Zeira says in the name of Rav Masna who says in the name of Shmuel: There is no prohibition of *shatnez* (*techeiles fringes and linen fringes*) when it comes to *tzitzis*, and this is even regarding a garment that is exempt from *tzitzis*.

The *Gemora* asks: What does this mean? It cannot mean a garment that is smaller than the minimum amount required for the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis*, for it was taught in a *braisa* regarding a garment that a minor can cover his head and the majority of his body with, and an adult would go out with such a garment (*at least*) on a temporary basis, it is subject to the obligation of *tzitzis*. However, if a minor cannot cover his head and the majority of his body with, it is not subject to the *tzitzis* obligation. And the same is true regarding *kilayim* (*shatnez*). And Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak explained this to be referring to a linen garment with *tzitzis*. [If it is smaller than the required amount, and a person affixes woolen *tzitzis* to it, he will be violating the prohibition against wearing *shatnez*.]

The *Gemora* answers: It is referring to a case where a garment had *tzitzis*, and then a person put on entirely new

*tzitzis* (there will be no violation of *shatnez* on account of the new set of fringes). (40a – 41a)

## DAILY MASHAL

### A Walking Shas

When people complained to the Chafetz Chayim about the defects of different communities, he was displeased and responded with the following tale. In the era of HaGaon Rav Chayim of Volozhin zt"l there was a simple person in his town who learnt a great deal. People said that he learnt the *Shas* several times and knew it by heart. Rav Chayim would stand up whenever he entered the yeshivah. Some wondered that though he knew the words of the *Shas*, in many places he didn't understand the simple meaning. Rav Chayim replied, "We can get two types of *Shas* in our era: the Amsterdam *Shas*, expensive, checked and corrected, and the Sulzbach *Shas*. The latter's pages are not so white and contain many errors. But would anyone think that a Sulzbach *Shas* does not have the sanctity of a *Shas*?" (*Michtevei Chafetz Chayim*).