Menachos 33 – Good Morning Raboisai

1️⃣ Where Exactly Is the Mezuzah Placed?

The Gemara continues clarifying the precise placement of a **mezuzah**.

Shmuel says:

מצוה להניחה בתוך חללו של פתח
The mezuzah should be placed **within the doorway itself**, not on the outer face of the wall.

Meaning:

- Not flush on the outside of the building.
- Rather, embedded within the doorpost area.

Even though placing it closer to the street might seem preferable (so one encounters it immediately), the mitzvah is:

Inside the doorway frame.

2️⃣ Writing a Mezuzah on Two Columns

Rav Yehudah in the name of Shmuel:

If one writes a mezuzah in **two columns** → פסול.

A Beraisa seems to imply:

- If written in two rows and placed in two separate cases → פסול,
- Mashma that two rows in one case might be valid.

The Gemara clarifies:

- The problem is not the casing.
- The **formatting itself** (two columns) invalidates the mezuzah.

Mezuzah must be written:

In a single continuous column.

3️⃣ Determining the "Right Side" of a Door

Case:

- Two rooms connected by a door.
- Each room also has independent access from outside.
- Which side gets the mezuzah?

The Gemara introduces a key rule:

הולכים אחר היכר ציר
We follow the **hinge direction**.

Meaning:

- Determine which direction the door opens.
- The mezuzah is placed on the **right side of entry into the primary room**.

The hinge indicates:

- Which room is considered the "main" destination.

This becomes the halachic determinant.

4️⃣ A Door Used by Only One Person

Case:

- A private side entrance used only by one individual.

The Gemara implies:

- If a doorway is not regularly used (לא רגיל) → it may be exempt.

However:

- If others use it regularly → it requires a mezuzah.

This suggests:

Regular usage impacts obligation.

5️⃣ Vertical or Horizontal Mezuzah?

If the mezuzah is placed **like a bolt (נגר)** — horizontally:

- פסול.

Yet:

- In Rav's house, mezuzos were seen angled.

This reflects a famous dispute:

- **Rashi**: Mezuzah stands upright.
- **Rabbeinu Tam**: Mezuzah lies horizontally.

Ashkenazic practice:

- Place it on a **slant** (compromise).

Sephardic and Teimani custom:

- Completely vertical.

6️⃣ Height Placement on the Doorpost

Three opinions:

1. **Upper third** (our common practice)
2. Anywhere except top and bottom extremes
3. Very high near the ceiling

Halacha:

Mezuzah is placed at the **beginning of the upper third**.

Reason:

- Hekesh to tefillin (placed high on the body).
- Also symbolic: one encounters it upon entering.

7️⃣ Closer to the Public Domain

Rava explains:

- Mezuzah should be positioned toward the **outer side** of the doorway.

Two reasons:

1. One should encounter it immediately.
2. It provides **protection** (שמירה).

Famous teaching:

Unlike a human king who stays inside and is guarded outside,
Hashem guards us from outside.

פסוק:

ה' ישמור צאתך ובואך

8️⃣ Embedding the Mezuzah in the Wall

If the mezuzah is recessed too deeply (טפח בתוך הכותל):

- פסול.

If covered by a decorative beam:

- If thickness is significant (טפח) → requires another mezuzah.
- If not → no need.

9️⃣ Two Doorways in One Corner

Case:

- Two entrances built into one thick corner beam.

Rule:

- If the dividing post is at least **one tefach wide** → requires **two mezuzos**.
- If less → considered one opening.

Width determines whether they are distinct entrances.

🔟 "Taaseh V'lo Min HaAsui" in Mezuzah

If one inserts a mezuzah into a doorframe **before** installing the frame:

- פסול.

Parallel to:

- Tzitzis cut from a pre-fringed garment.
- Sukkah built by hollowing under existing schach.

Principle:

The mitzvah must be performed actively, not retroactively created.

1️⃣1️⃣ Irregular Doorways

If a doorway lacks:

- A proper lintel (משקוף),
- Or proper sideposts (מזוזות),

It may be exempt.

Later authorities debate:

- Whether partial framing suffices.

Structure must resemble a proper **צורת הפתח**.

1️⃣ 2️⃣ Porches and Open Structures

An **אכסדרה**(open porch):

- If mostly enclosed → חייב.
- If mostly open → debated.

If its beams are structural only (supporting ceiling), not forming walls:

- May be exempt.

Each case depends on:

- Whether it qualifies as a defined dwelling space.

✨ Takeaway – Menachos 33

- Mezuzah belongs **inside the doorway frame**.
- It must be written in a single column.
- Hinge direction determines right-side placement.
- Common Ashkenazic practice: angled mezuzah.
- Placed at beginning of upper third.
- Positioned toward outer edge of doorway.
- Must not be deeply embedded.
- Doorway structure determines obligation.
- Mezuzah requires active placement — not passive setup.
- Architectural details shape halachic status.

לעילוי נשמת אמי מורתי רות בת הרב מנחם מנדל