Menachos 37 – Good Morning Raboisai

1️⃣ משמוש תפילין – Constant Awareness

A person is obligated to **feel and adjust** his תפילין periodically.

חייב אדם למשמש בתפילין כל שעה

The purpose is not necessarily to move them significantly, but:

- To avoid **היסח הדעת**
- To remain aware that one is wearing תפילין

The Gemara brings a **קל וחומר** from the **ציץ** of the כהן גדול:

- The ציץ contains Hashem's Name once.
- תפילין contain Hashem's Name **21 times**.

If the כהן גדול had to constantly be mindful of the ציץ,
certainly one must remain mindful of תפילין.

Even though the קדושה of the ציץ seems greater,
the קל וחומר establishes the concept of ongoing awareness.

2️⃣ Why תפילין on the Left Arm?

Three approaches are brought:

🔹 1. "יד" Means Left

Proof from pesukim:

When the Torah says:

יד

It refers to the **left hand**, unless otherwise specified.

Example:

- By Yael (killing Sisra) the peg was in her "יד" — meaning left.
- When right is meant, Torah specifies "ימין".

Thus:

וקשרתם לאות על ידך
means the left arm.

🔹 2. היקש to Mezuzah

Rebbi Nosson:

וקשרתם – וכתבתם

Just as mezuzah is written with the **right hand**,
so too tying תפילין is done with the right hand.

If tying is done with the right hand,
then placement must be on the **left arm**.

🔹 3. "ידכה" – The Weaker Hand

Rav Ashi:

The word "ידכה" can be read as:

יד כהה — the weaker hand.

For most people:

- The left is weaker → תפילין go on left.

3️⃣ What About a Lefty?

A left-handed person:

- His weaker hand is the right.
- Therefore he places תפילין on the **right arm**.

Ambidextrous person:

- Follows dominant writing hand.
- Writing determines halachic classification.

If someone writes with left but does everything else with right:

- This becomes a complex halachic case.
- Writing often determines status.

4️⃣ If Someone Has No Left Arm

Machlokes:

One opinion:

- If arm missing completely → exempt.

Another opinion:

- Places תפילין on remaining arm.

This can lead to:

- A person who originally wore on left,
- Lost that arm,
- Must now switch to the right.

📍 Placement of תפילין של יד

5️⃣ Must Be on the Biceps (שריר הזרוע)

"ידך" does not mean the palm.

It means:

The upper arm muscle — the biceps.

Reasoning:

- תפילין must be placed near the heart:

והיו הדברים האלה על לבבך

Therefore:

- Position slightly tilted toward the heart.

Below the muscle → invalid.

📍 Placement of תפילין של ראש

6️⃣ Must Be Above the Hairline

The תפילין של ראש must be placed:

במקום שמוחו של תינוק רופס

The soft spot area of a baby's skull —
i.e., the upper front region of the head.

Important clarification:

- It is not where your hair ends.
- It is where hair **begins to grow**.

Even a centimeter too low:

- Not יוצא.

The entire bayis must be in the hair-growth zone.

Many people unknowingly place it too low.

7️⃣ The Knot Must Be Centered

- The קשר must sit above the indentation at the back of the skull.
- Not below it.
- Aligned with the bayis in front.

🧠 Special Case – Two-Headed Child

A bizarre case is discussed:

If a child is born with **two heads**:

How much for פדיון הבן?

Conclusion:

- Each head obligates separately.
- Must give double.

The Torah says:

פדה תפדה את בכור האדם

Each "head" counts.

📍 Why Not Place תפילין on Forehead?

The Gemara compares to the prohibition:

לא תשימו קרחה בין עיניכם

“Between your eyes” refers to the top of the head,
not literally between the eyes.

Thus:

לטוטפות בין עיניך
also means the upper head area.

🤦 Rav Ashi’s Torn Sleeve

Rav Ashi tore his sleeve because:

- He had a wound.
- The pressure of the תפילין hurt.

Question:
Must תפילין של יד be covered?

Answer:

- Not strictly required.
- Better to cover.
- But Torah only requires placement in a place that *can* be covered.

Unlike תפילין של ראש, which is visible,
של יד ideally remains modestly concealed.

✨ Takeaway – Menachos 37

- Constant awareness of תפילין is required.
- תפילין של יד go on the weaker arm.
- Lefties reverse sides.
- Must be placed on the biceps, near the heart.
- תפילין של ראש must be entirely within hairline.
- Even slight misplacement invalidates.
- Order and position are precise and non-negotiable.
- קדושה requires accuracy in both awareness and placement.

לעילוי נשמת אמי מורתי רות בת הרב מנחם מנדל