



Shut Rabbenu Tam Tefillin

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Putting on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin

Q: Who should put on both Rashi Tefillin and Rabbenu Tam Tefillin (the four Torah portions which mention the Mitzvah of Tefillin and are inside the boxes are placed in different orders according to these opinions)?

A: One who is known for his great piety (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 34:2-3. Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein made an innovative ruling that there is another condition that the Rabbenu Tam Tefillin must be "Mehudar" [of supreme halachic quality]. And when he fled Russia, his Rabbenu Tam Tefillin were damaged and lost their "Mehudar" status, until the Lubavitcher Rebbe arranged to get him a "Mehudar" pair of Rabbenu Tam Tefillin in America. Shut Igrot Moshe, Orach Chaim 4:9).

Beginning of Dispute regarding Rabbenu Tam Tefillin

Q: When was the beginning of the dispute regarding Rashi Tefillin and Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: This dispute certainly began before Rashi and Rabbenu Tam. They found both types Tefillin according to the opinion of Rashi and Rabbenu Tam in the Judean desert (from almost 2000 years ago). This is an ancient dispute, but it is known by their names since they had a dispute in this matter and on account of their opinions this subject became famous. Nonetheless, there are two ways of explaining how and when this dispute began: 1. Because of the Exiles, suffering, and so many hardships we forgot the correct order of placing the Parshiyot in the Tefillin. This is similar to the Rambam's explanation of why we have so many different Shofar blasts (Hilchot Shofar 3:2). 2. Hashem gave two opinions regarding

Tefillin and the authorities were to decide, similar to Rav Hai Gaon's opinion brought in the Rosh also regarding the Shofar blasts (Rosh Hashanah 4:10).

Q: Is it possible to decide which type of Tefillin is the correct one when ancient Tefillin is found?

A: The halachic authorities have already discussed this issue. The Semag (Mitzvat Aseh #22) wrote that there is proof that we should follow the opinion of Rashi since very old Tefillin according to his opinion were found at the grave of Yechezkel Ha-Navi. But the Derisha (34:1) comments that this is not conclusive proof since perhaps the Rashi Tefillin were buried because they themselves were invalid. And the Bach (ibid.) writes that we can reject the Semag's explanation since if the Parshiyot were in an incorrect order, they need not be buried, rather they could be replaced in the correct order.

Gedolei Yisrael and Rabbenu Tam Tefillin

Q: Did the Vilna Gaon put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: No. Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin asked his teacher, the Vilna Gaon: "Perhaps I should put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin? I am not asking for Ha-Rav since you wear Tefillin all day long and if you put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin, it would take away from the Mitzvah of wearing Rashi Tefillin which is the main Mitzvah. But I do not wear Tefillin all day, so perhaps it would be worthwhile for me to put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin at a time when I would not be wearing Tefillin anyway." The Vilna Gaon said: "Why are you asking specifically about Rabbenu Tam Tefillin? There are twenty-four [some say: sixty-four] different opinions on the proper way to make Tefillin. Are you going to put on twenty-four [sixty-four] different pairs?!" Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin said: "But Rabbenu Tam Tefillin is special and perhaps they will ask me in the World to Come: why didn't you put them on?" The Vilna Gaon responded: "We do not fulfill Mitzvot for the sake of the World to Come, we fulfill Mitzvot for the sake of serving Hashem." Orchot Chaim Keter Rosh (#11). And the Aderet related that he began to put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin after reading that the Chatam Sofer did so, but he regretted it after learning the Vilna Gaon's opinion. Since he started putting them on, he could not stop doing so. Nefesh David #41). And following the opinion of the Vilna Gaon, Reb Chaim Brisker did not put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin (Shut Teshuvot Ve-Hanhagot vol. 4, p. 425) nor did the Chazon Ish (Orchot Rabbenu vol. 3, p. 193).

Q: Did the Chafetz Chaim put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: Reb Leib, the son of the Chafetz Chaim, relates that the reason his father put on both Rashi and Rabbenu Tam Tefillin was not because he had lived among Chasidim during the First World War and wished to act as they did, but because of the tractate of the Jerusalem Talmud that had been "discovered" which mentioned Rabbenu Tam's position. When it later became known that this tractate of the Jerusalem Talmud was a forgery, he continued to put on

Rabbenu Tam Tefillin since he had already begun to do so (Michtavei Ha-Rav Chafetz Chaim, p. 27. But see other explanations in Meir Einei Yisrael pp. 419-420. A Chasid once asked Ha-Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky why he did not put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin, and he responded that it is not the Lithuanian Minhag. The Chasid said: But the Chafetz Chaim put them on? Ha-Rav Kamenetzky said that the Chafetz Chaim did not put them on until the age of 90, and if he reaches the age of 90 – he'll put them on as well. And that is exactly what he did on his 90th birthday. In the book "Rebbe Yaakov", pp. 424-425).

Q: Did Maran Ha-Rav Kook put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: Yes, but in private (Le-Sheloshah Be-Elul vol. 1, p. 32 and Tal Ha-Re'eiya, p. 58).

Q: Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah?

A: No, on account of "Yehirut" (religious arrogance – Shulchan Aruch 34:3. Mishnah Berurah #17), unless he did so inconspicuously.

Tefillin according to Other Opinions

Q: Why do some people put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin along with Rashi Tefillin but not Tefillin according to other opinions?

A: Because some Geonim hold like Rabbenu Tam. This not the case with Tefillin according to other opinions (only in extremely rare cases do some holy individuals put on other types of Tefillin. The Lubavitcher Rebbe put on four types of Tefillin: Rashi, Rabbenu Tam, Ra'avad [same order as Rabbenu Tam but placed the opposite way] and Shimusha Rabba [same as Rashi but opposite]. The Lubavitcher Rebbe was in doubt about this practice until the previous Rebbe, his father-in-law, Rebbe Rayatz, told him to put on the four types of Tefillin and he will take this practice "on his shoulders". Sha'arei Halachah U-Minhag vol. 1, pp. 73-77. See the correct order of putting them on in Ha-Yom Yom... 19 Menachem Av).

When Does One Begin

Q: One who puts on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin - when does he begin?

A: Some have the custom to begin to put them on immediately upon Bar Mitzvah just as Rashi Tefillin (Shut Divrei Yetziv 1:44). Some have the custom to put them on upon getting married (Piskei Teshuvot, Chapter 34 note #11). And some have the custom upon the end of the first year of marriage (Piskei Teshuvot ibid.).

Same Time or One after the Other

Q: Should one put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin together with Rashi Tefillin, or one after the other?

A: Some have the custom to put on Rashi Tefillin for the davening and Rabbenu Tam Tefillin at the end, since our Tefillin is large and there is not enough space on one's head and arm for

both (Shut Yabia Omer Vol. 1, Orach Chaim #3). Based on Kabbalah, some have the custom to be particular to put them on at the same time. And it is possible to find small Tefillin, since there is enough space on one's head for two pairs of Tefillin, as it says in the Gemara in Eruvin (95b. Shut Yashkil Avdi Vol. 8, Orach Chaim #22 and Yoreh Deah #8. And see Shut Divrei Chaim Vo. 2 Orach Chaim #6 and Shut Divrei Yoel, Orach Chaim #4).

Paragraphs to be said with Rabbenu Tam Tefillin

Q: What should one recite while wearing Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: People generally say the four paragraphs which mention the mitzvah of Tefillin (Shaarei Teshuvah 38:14. Pri Megadim 25:6 Ashel Avraham). And some add Parashat Tzitzit.

Blessing

Q: Should one recite the blessing for putting on Tefillin when putting on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: Some say that one should recite the blessing just as one does when putting on Rashi Tefillin (Sha'arei Teshuvah 25:1), but the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 34:2) rules that one only recites the blessing on Rashi Tefillin since the basic halachah follows Rashi, and therefore no blessing is recited for Rabbenu Tam Tefillin (Maharil brought in the Beit Yosef *ibid.*). One should have both pairs of Tefillin in mind when reciting the blessing over Rashi Tefillin (Ashel Avraham Mi-Botshatsh #34).

Accidentally Reciting Blessing on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin

Q: If someone accidentally says the blessing for Tefillin and puts on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin instead of Rashi Tefillin, does he have to say another blessing when putting on the Rashi Tefillin?

A: There is a dispute. Some say that one must recite a blessing, since one does NOT have intention for both pairs of Tefillin during his blessing (Shut Chaim She'al #1). And some say he need not recite another blessing since he DID have intention for both (Shut Divrei Chaim, Yoreh Deah 2:82 in the name of the Chozeh of Lublin. The Shamash of the Belzer Rebbe – Ha-Rav Aharon Rokeach – once accidentally gave the Rebbe Rabbenu Tam Tefillin instead of Rashi Tefillin. When it was discovered, the Shamash was greatly distressed. The Rebbe comforted him and said: Rabbenu Tam acts so that every Jew will also put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin and will once in his life accidentally recite the blessing over his Tefillin. Kedushato Shel Aharon, vol. 1 p. 579).

Rabbenu Tam Tefillin during Bein Ha-Shemashot of Rabbenu Tam

Q: One who was unable to put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin before sundown, is it permissible to put them on during twilight of Rabbenu Tam (which is later than the time accepted by most authorities), since they are both the opinions of Rabbenu Tam?

A: No. There are some Geonim who hold like the opinion of Rabbenu Tam in Tefillin but argue regarding the proper time of nighttime (Ha-Rav Shammai Kehat Gross, author of Shut Shevet Ha-Kehati. Eilim Li-Terufah – Gilyon 5748, Madur Alei Orach Ot #6).

Tefillin Bags

Q: Is it permissible to place both pairs of Tefillin in one Tefillin bag?

A: No. One should have two separate bags and specify the Tefillin on each bag so that one does not mix them up, since the basic halachah follows Rashi and we recite the blessing on them (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 34:4. Mishnah Berurah #18).

Q: Is it permissible to switch the Rashi Tefillin bag to a Rabbenu Tam Tefillin bag, or the other way around?

A: It is forbidden (Mishnah Berurah 34:20). Some authorities permit switching the Rabbenu Tam Tefillin bag to a Rashi Tefillin bag, since the basic halachah follows Rashi (Ha-Rav Shlomo Kluger. Sefer Sta"m Tefillin, p. 17).

Q: What is the law if the bags get mixed up and one does not know which is which?

A: Some say that they can be used for either type of Tefillin, but it is proper to only put Rashi Tefillin in them (Piskei Teshuvot 34:9 note #4).

Removing Rabbenu Tam Tefillin First

Q: If someone accidentally takes out Rabbenu Tam Tefillin before Rashi Tefillin, what should he do?

A: He should still put on Rashi Tefillin first, and it is not considered passing over a Mitzvah, since the basic halachah follows Rashi (Mishnah Berurah 34:20).

Different Tefillin at the Same Time

Q: What is the law if one puts on the hand Tefillin of Rashi Tefillin and the head Tefillin of Rabbenu Tam Tefillin, or the opposite?

A: He does not fulfill the Mitzvah (Mishnah Berurah 34:5).

Rosh Chodesh

Q: When does one put on Rabbenu Tefillin on Rosh Chodesh, since we remove Tefillin before Musaf?

A: Some say that one should put them on after Musaf (Pri Megadim 25:16 – Mishbetzot Zahav). But according to Mekubalim one should not put on Tefillin after Musaf, and one must therefore be careful to put them on before Musaf (Piskei Teshuvot 25 note #211).

Purim

Q: One who puts on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin - which Tefillin should he wear during the reading of the Megillah on Purim?

A: Some have the custom to wear Rashi Tefillin and some have the custom of Rabbenu Tam Tefillin (Nitei Gavriel – Purim, chapter 51 note #3).

Brit Milah

Q: For one with the custom to wear Tefillin during a Brit Milah for his son (Shach, Yoreh Deah 265:24. Magen Avraham 25:28) and who has the custom to put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin, which Tefillin should he wear during the Brit Milah?

A: The custom is to wear Rabbenu Tam Tefillin (Brit Avot of Ha-Rav Shabetai Lifschitz #6. Koret Ha-Brit in Petach Eliyahu #2).

Mourner

Q: Does a mourner put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: Some say that for the time a mourner is permitted to put on Rashi Tefillin, he is also permitted to put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin (Birchei Yosef 38:4). And others say that one should not put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin during the entire Shiva (Be'er Heitev 38:5). And both state their opinion in the name of the Arizal. Many therefore put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin in private (Nita'ei Gavriel – Avelut 82:16).

Sofer Stam who does not Put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin

Q: Can a Sofer Stam who does not put on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin write Rabbenu Tam Tefillin?

A: The basic Halachah is that there is no problem (Mikdash Meat 34:4). But some are strict to only buy Rabbenu Tam Tefillin from a Sofer Stam who puts on Rabbenu Tam Tefillin (Lishchat Ha-Sofer 26:1).

Rabbenu Tam Tefillin and Maaser Kesafim

Q: Is it permissible to buy Rabbenu Tam Tefillin with Maasar Kesafim?

A: No. Maaser Kesafim is for the poor (And this is also the ruling of Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski. Hilchot Maaser Kesafim, Chapter 14 #53).



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