**יב.** כשלובש כל מלבושיו ילבש הכיפה שעל ראשו תחילה. [ראה באו"ח פי' וישלח הי"ז, כה"ח סק"ט]

**יג.** בפשיטת הבגדים, יפשוט צד שמאל תחילה, ואחר כך צד ימין, שזהו כבודו של ימין. [כה"ח ס"ק יב. ועי' משנ"ב סק"ה]



**Head first**

**12)** When a man gets dressed, his first step must be to place a yarmulke on his head.[80]

**Remove left first**

**13)** When undressing, one must first pull off the left sleeve of one's garment and afterward the right sleeve.[81]

**80. When bathing**

The Talmud (*Shabbat* 61a) teaches that if someone wishes to rub oil over his entire body, he must first rub it on his head since it is the "king of the body parts." The Talmud does not mention such a rule regarding bathing, but Rama (*Darkhe Moshe* 2:1) cited Harav Avraham of Prague ruling that the same applies when bathing the entire body, but he added that he had not witnessed people fulfilling this ruling. Rama made a reference to Rambam (*Hilkhot De'ot* 4:16). The *Bet David* (*Siman* 2) and the *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Vayishlah* halakha 16) both ruled that the halakha applies to bathing even though the Talmud is not specific about this. See the *Yafe Lalev* (Vol. II, 260:2).

The passage of Rambam cited by the *Darkhe Moshe* gives instructions how to bathe: "One should bathe the body in hot water, but not so hot that it scalds the skin. It is safe, however, to wash the head with water so hot that it would scald the skin of other body parts. Afterward, one should rinse the body with lukewarm water." It seems from the wording of this formula that one may bathe the rest of one's body before washing one's head. This may have been Rama's intention in citing this passage in this *Siman*. Nevertheless, the *Kiryat Melekh Rav* interpreted the Rambam's words differently, claiming that even according to Rambam one must wash one's head first.

The *Matte Yehuda* (2:5, cited by the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 2:8) explained the position of the *Darkhe Moshe*. In his society, it was important to display honor for the right side when putting on shoes since this was a daily activity. People bathed only once in many days, however. Therefore, it was less important to display honor to the right side when bathing. In the Talmud's times it was common to bathe and to rub one's skin with oil fairly often. Nevertheless, he concluded, if someone takes the care to bathe one's right side first in these times as well, he will receive a special blessing from Heaven.

The *Halikhot Shelomo* (*Tefilla* page 21) explained this further. In societies where people bathe daily, a bath is a luxury. When engaging in such an activity one must accord honor to the right side. In societies where people seldom bathed, a bath had only the mundane purpose of removing filth from the body's surface. When engaged in this activity, washing one part of the body before another does not display any honor to it.

At any rate, in modern Western society most people bathe every day, and according to this explanation people must take care to wash their right limbs before the left limbs.

**Donning hats**

The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Vayishlah* halakha 17, cited in the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 2:9) ruled that when a man dresses he must put on his head covering before his other outer garments, but it is sufficient to put on the small cap that is normally worn under one's hat or turban. If someone has no cap other than his fez, he must don the fez before his robe. See more about this in *sefer Homot Yerushalayim* (#20).

**81.** The Talmud teaches (*Shabbat* 61b) that one must take off the left shoe before taking off the right shoe. Rashi, cited in the *Mishna Berura* (2:8), explained that this displays honor for the right side. The *Kitzur Shulhan Arukh* Ganzfried, cited by the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 2:12), added that when taking off a garment, one should pull off the left sleeve first.

**Taking off a hat**

Logic dictates that, following the rules of these halakhot, when undressing one should remove the yarmulke from one's head only after taking off the other garments.

**יד.** כשרוחץ ידיו ירחץ של ימין תחילה. וכשרוחץ כל גופו ירחץ של ראש תחילה. [באו"ח פי' וישלח הי"ז]

**טו.** כשנועל את מנעליו, ינעל תחילה את מנעל ימין, ולא יקשרנו, ואחר כך ינעל את מנעל שמאל ויקשרנו. ושוב יחזור ויקשור את מנעל ימין. [ש"ע סי' ב ס"ד]

**Bathe right first**

**14)** When bathing, a person should first bathe his right arm and leg and then his left arm and leg. Likewise, one must give precedence to one's head before the rest of the body.[82]

**Right and left shoes**

**15)** When putting on one's shoes, one must first put on the right shoe. Then, before tying its lace, one must put on the left shoe and tie its lace first. Afterward, one ties the right shoelace.[83]

**82.** As explained above in the footnote to halakha 11, the Talmud teaches that we must always give preference to the right side. Although the *Darkhe Moshe* testified that people do not bathe their heads before bathing the rest of their bodies, the *Matte Yehuda* recommended stringency in this matter. The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Vayishlah* halakha 17) ruled likewise that one must bathe the head before the rest of the body. The *Sha'ar Hakavanot*, cited in the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (260:1), instructs us to prepare for Shabbat on Friday by washing our faces, followed by the right hand, the left hand, the right foot and finally the left foot. The *Halikhot Shelomo* (*Tefilla* page 21) likewise ruled that one may wash one's left arm before washing either of the legs.

**Drying**

The *Yafe Lalev* (Vol. V, 260:1) ruled that after bathing on Friday, one must first dry the face, then the hands and then the feet. He offered proof for this from the Talmud (*Shabbat* 147a).

**Left-handed people**

Even if one is left-handed, one must nevertheless give precedence to the right side in all these activities. See the responsa *Be'er Moshe* (Vol. II, #5:3).

**83. Source in the Talmud**

The Talmud (*Shabbat* 61a) teaches that according to Ribbi Yohanan one must put on the left shoe first, just as one ties tefillin on one's left arm. It then cites a *baraita* teaching that one must put on the right shoe first. Rav Yosef concluded that, in light of these two opinions, either procedure can be followed. Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak testified that a God-fearing individual honored both opinions. This was a reference to Mor son of Ravna. His practice was to put on the right shoe first without tying its lace. Then he put on the left shoe, tied its lace and then went back to tie the right shoelace. Rav Ashi testified that Rav Kahana did not care which shoe he put on or tied first.

**The *Rishonim***

The *Arba'a Turim* stated that one must follow the procedure of Mor son of Ravna, putting the right shoe on first but tying the left shoelace first so that one satisfies both the opinions of Ribbi Yohanan and of the *baraita*. Maran explained in the *Bet Yosef* that this is the opinion of Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak. He then challenged this. How could this procedure satisfy Ribbi Yohanan's opinion when he said specifically to put on the left shoe first? The fact that one ties the left shoelace first does not rectify the act of putting on the right shoe first.

He then explained that Ribbi Yohanan never meant that one must put the left shoe on first. He meant only to tie the left shoelace first since this is the act reminiscent of tefillin. Alternatively, he suggested that although Ribbi Yohanan ruled that one must put on the left shoe first, we fulfill the concept of "like tefillin" by tying the left shoelace before the right one. This second explanation is that of the Tosafot (*Shabbat* 61a). The Tosafot added that if the shoes are made without laces, one must then put on the right shoe first.

Maran pointed out that a number of *Poskim* did not mention this halakha at all, unlike the *Arba'a Turim*. He explained that they must have ruled like Rav Yosef's opinion that a person can choose either practice. This is because of Rav Ashi's testimony that Rav Kahana disregarded any rules of precedence regarding putting on shoes. Rav Ashi probably agreed with Rav Kahana, and since he lived during the last generation of Amora'im, the halakha follows his opinion.

Even so, in the *Shulhan Arukh* (2:4), Maran ruled that one must put on the right shoe first but tie the left shoelace first. This follows the opinion of the *Arba'a Turim* and Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak.

ויש להקדים קשירת השמאל, בכל הצורות שמהדק הנעל על רגלו, שרוכים, קרסים, סקוט׳ש, רוכסן (ריץ׳ רץ), וכיו״ב. [ראה פסקי תשובות עמ׳ כג, ודלא כמ״ש בהלכה ברורה עמ׳ כז]

This rule applies to all types of shoes, whether they are fastened with laces, snaps, Velcro, a zipper or anything else.[84]

**Tying the left shoelace first**

Since Ribbi Yohanan gave preference to the left shoe based on the mitzvah of tefillin, our practice is to tie the left shoelace before tying the right one, as explained above. The *Levush* (2:4) offered another reason for this: the Talmud teaches (*Hullin* 89a) that since Avraham Avinu told the king of Sodom that he would not take even "a thread or shoelace," his descendants are privileged with two mitzvot – the *tzitzit* threads and the tefillin straps (In antiquity, shoes were tied with leather straps.). This explains the relationship between tefillin and shoes. Just as we don the *tefillin shel yad* before the *tefillin shel rosh* although we normally give precedence to the head, we likewise tie the left shoe before the right shoe although we normally give precedence to the right side.

**Tying Other Garments**

The *Artzot Hahayim* (2:31) states that according to the first reason offered here, if someone wears some other garment that is tied together on the right and left sides, it is necessary to tie the left side first. Whenever the act of tying is involved, we must give precedence to the left side since it is reminiscent of the mitzvah of tefillin. According to the second reason, however, the concept of giving precedence to the left side applies to shoes only, since shoes are connected to the mitzvah of tefillin according to the Midrash about Avraham Avinu. Since this is a plausible assumption, in practice it is not necessary to tie the left side of a garment before the right side. This is likewise the ruling of the *Mishna Berura* (2:6). Harav Zalman (second *mahadura* 2:4) ruled, however, that one must first tie the left side of other garments as well. Harav Yaakov of Emden, the *Kitzur Shulhan Arukh* Ganzfried and the *Arukh Hashulhan* all concurred with Harav Zalman. Their argument is that the Talmud mentions shoes since that is when this issue usually comes up, but the halakha applies equally to all garments that are tied. This is the conclusion of the *Piske Teshuvot* (page 22) and the *Halakha Berura* (page 28). See below in halakha 21.

**Shoes with ties on both sides**

The *Halikhot Shelomo* (page 21) discussed the halakha regarding shoes that need to be tied on both the right and left sides of the foot. If we consider the left foot to correspond to the left arm [on which we place the tefillin], it would be proper to tie the lace on the right side of the shoe before tying the lace on the left side. If the intent of the halachah is to give precedence to a left side over the right side whenever performing the act of tying, we should always have to tie the left lace first. In his conclusion he leaned to the position that one should first tie the left side of each shoe. This is cited in the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 216).

**84.** The *sefer Netivot Hahayim* (Vol. I, page 29) discussed the halakha concerning shoes that are fastened with a zipper or some device other than laces. He debated whether one must fasten the left shoe first in these cases or if the rule giving precedence to the left shoe applies only to those with laces. He concluded that we give precedence to the left side only when performing the act of tying, in deference to the mitzvah of tefillin. Therefore, if the shoes are fastened with snaps or a zipper, there is no reason to fasten the left shoe first. Furthermore, the *Levush* taught that the connection between shoes and tefillin is based on Avraham Avinu's oath mentioning shoelaces, and if one's shoes have no laces there is no connection to tefillin whatsoever. The *Halakha Berura* (page 27) concurred with this decision and ruled that one gives precedence to the left shoe only if tying laces or straps, but not if the shoes are fastened with a zipper or some other method.

This line of reasoning is correct if we say that shoes and tefillin are connected because they both have straps or laces. If we say that the connection is that both are fastened to one's body, however, it should not matter how they are fastened. We do not tie knots when we put on tefillin; we only tighten the loops of the straps around the arm and the head. If so, however a person fastens his shoes on his feet, it can be compared to putting on tefillin. In fact, the *sefer Leket Kemah Hehadash* (#19) suggested that this issue depends on the reason for giving precedence to the left shoe. If it is because the Torah commanded us to fasten our tefillin on the left arm, then the halakha applies to any shoes regardless of how they are fastened. If it is because of Avraham Avinu's oath as the *Levush* taught, it should apply only to shoes with laces or straps.

Although the Torah uses the word *ukshartem* – tie – regarding the mitzvah of tefillin, the Tosafot (*Eruvin* 97a; *Hullin* 9a) explained that the intention of the Torah is to tighten the straps, not to actually tie any knot. Rabbenu Tam cited proofs for this interpretation from several

**טז.** אם נזדמן לו מנעל שמאל תחילה, ימתין עד שיביאו לו את מנעל ימין. [משנ"ב ס"ק ז]

**יז.** אף איטר יד, שמניח תפילין בידו הימנית, יקשור מנעל שמאל תחילה. ככל אדם. אבל אם הוא איטר רגל, יקשור מנעל ימין תחילה, וכל שכן אם הוא איטר יד ורגל. [ראה שע"ת בשם הבכור שור, ונפל בו ט"ס כמ"ש במנח"י ח"י סי' א ועוד]

**והמלביש** או מנעיל את חבירו, ואחד מהם איטר, אזלינן לענין קדימת ימין ושמאל בתר הלובש. [הליכות שלמה עמ' כב]

Day 26

**Ibid.**

**16)** If someone is handed his left shoe without the right shoe, he should not put it on until his right shoe is brought to him and he puts on the right shoe first.

**Left-handed people**

**17)** Although a left-handed person puts tefillin on his right arm, he should still tie his left shoe first, just like right-handed people. If he is left-legged, however, he should tie the right shoe first. This is certainly the rule if he is both left-handed and left-legged.

**Dressing someone else**

When someone dresses another person and one of them is right-handed and one left-handed, the precedence of right or left is determined according to the person being dressed, not the person dressing him.

passages in the Talmud. This is in contrast to Rabbeinu Eliyahu, who ruled that one must actually tie the tefillin onto one's arm. Rabbenu Asher (*Hullin* 1:12) concurred with Rabbenu Tam, and Maran wrote in the *Bet Yosef* (*Siman* 27) that all the *Poskim* agreed with Rabbenu Tam in this matter. See the *Bi'ur HaGr"a* (25:8). According to this, it should not matter how one fastens one's shoes. The rule giving precedence to the left shoe should apply regardless.

In support of this position, note that Harav Hayim Kohen (*Mekor Hayim* page 44a) wrote, "Since our shoes have no laces, the proper procedure is to put the right shoe on first but not to insert one's foot entirely until after putting on the left shoe." Apparently, he ruled that whether or not there are laces to tie, one must complete donning the left shoe before the right shoe. It is obvious that he would have issued the same ruling regarding shoes that are fastened with a zipper or any other device.

Although the *Poskim* did not cite this ruling of the *Mekor Hayim*, and Rama (2:4) wrote clearly that if one does not tie the shoes he should simply put the right shoe on first, it is likely that the *Poskim* would agree regarding shoes with other fasteners that the left shoe is to be fastened first.

The *Mishne Halakhot* (Vol. III, #13) suggested that this debate is parallel to another debate between Rashi and the Tosafot in *Shabbat* (61a). A close examination of that Tosafot, however, reveals that this is not necessarily the case.

In the previous footnote, it was mentioned that several *Aharonim* ruled that when tying some other garment on both sides, one should tie the left side first just like when tying one's shoes. As mentioned there, the *Artzot Hahayim* and the *Mishna Berura* disagreed with that ruling. At any rate, those *Aharonim* obviously did not subscribe to the opinion of the *Levush*. Since they subscribed to the other reason for giving precedence to tying the left shoe, they would agree that the same applies to all shoes with any type of fasteners. Likewise, when wearing a long sleeved shirt, one must button the left sleeve first and then the right sleeve.