הכשרים והפסולים להטיל ציצית בבגד

ח. ציצית שעשאו גוי פסול, דכתיב, דבר אל בני ישראל, לאפוקי גוים. [ש"ע סי' יד ס"א]. ואפילו ישראל עומד על גביו של הגוי ואומר "לשם מצות ציצית", אינו מועיל. [משנ"ב ס"ק א]

ואם הישראל הטיל הציצית בבגד וכרך החוליה הראשונה והשני קשרים שעל גבה, ואחר כך גמר הגוי שאר החוליות והקשרים, כשר, כיון שהם אינן רק למצוה בעלמא. [ראה משנ"ב ס"ק א, כה"ח ס"ק א]

ט. אף שמעיקר הדין אשה כשרה להטיל הציציות בכנף הבגד, וכדפסק מרן השלחן ערוך. [ראה ש"ע סי' יד ס"א], מכל מקום לכתחלה יש להחמיר שדוקא איש יטיל חוטי הציצית בבגד הטלית, ולא אשה. [הליכו"ע עמ' ח], ובדיעבד שכבר הטילה האשה הציצית בבגד, כשרה הטלית לברכה. [הליכו"ע עמ' ט]

וכבר נתבאר לעיל בסימן י"א הלכה ח' שאשה כשרה לטוות החוטים, וכל הדעות מסכימים לזה. [ראה כה"ח סי' יד ס"ק ג]

Day 74

Who May Attach Tzitzit Strands to a Tallit

A non-Jew

8) If a non-Jew fashions tzitzit tassels, they are not kosher. This is because the Torah states, "Speak to the people of Yisrael," excluding non-Jews.[185] Even if a Jew stands over the non-Jew and instructs him to attach the strands for the sake of the mitzvah of tzitzit, they are still not kosher.[186] If a Jew tied the initial two knots and the first set of loops on the tassel, and then a non-Jew continues tying the rest of the tassel, the tzitzit are kosher. This is because the Torah requires only the first section of the *gedil*; the balance of the *gedil* is far less important to the mitzvah [and does not need to be tied with intentions for the sake of the mitzvah].[187]

Women

9) According to the *Shulḥan Arukh*, a woman may attach tzitzit tassels to a tallit. Nevertheless, it is best to see to it that a man, and not a woman, attaches the tzitzit to the tallit.[188] If a woman attaches them, however, the tzitzit are kosher and the owner may recite a blessing over them. Above in *Siman* 11:8 it was explained that all the *Poskim* agreed that a woman may spin the threads to be used for tzitzit.

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185. This is the ruling of Rambam (*Hilkhot Tzitzit* 1:12) and the *Shulḥan Arukh* (14:1), based on the Talmud (*Menaḥot* 42a).

186. Regarding the act of spinning wool into thread for tzitzit strands, the halakha (see above in *Siman* 11:9) follows the ruling of *Rabbenu Asher* permitting having a non-Jew spin the wool as long as a Jew stands over him and instructs him to do it for the sake of the mitzvah. Regarding the act of attaching the strands to the tallit, however, the halakha is more stringent.

187. This is the ruling of the *Mishna Berura* (14:1) and the *Kaf Haḥayim* Sofer (14:1). See above in *Siman* 11:45 and the footnote there.

188. Rabbenu Tam, cited in Tosafot to *Gittin* 45b, ruled that a woman may not attach tzitzit tassels to a tallit. He explained that since women are not obligated to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzit they are not qualified to make tzitzit. Rabbenu Meir of Rothenberg (cited in *Hagahot Maimoniyot*) offered a different source for the halakha, deriving it from the verse's choice of words, "sons of Yisrael,"

י. לכתחילה יטיל גדול הציצית בבגד, ולא קטן מתחת לגיל מצוות. [ראה באו"ח פי לך לך ה"ב, וכ"מ בהליכו"ע ח"א עמ' ט].
ובדיעבד שכבר הטיל הקטן הציציות בבגד הטלית [ועשה לשמה, שהיה גדול עומד על גבו], כשרה הטלית לברכה. [הליכו"ע עמ' ט]

Children

10) It is best that an adult tie the tzitzit tassels to the tallit, and not a child under bar mitzvah age. Nevertheless, if a child under bar mitzvah age attaches tzitzit tassels to a tallit, they are kosher and one may recite the blessing over the tallit.[189]

suggesting that only males may make tzitzit on garments. The *Bi'ur Halakha* suggested that according to Rabbenu Tam's reason women should be disqualified from erecting a sukkah as well, whereas according to Rabbenu Meir they are qualified.

Most *Rishonim*, however, ruled that women may attach tzitzit to garments. In the *Bet Yosef*, Maran concluded his discussion by testifying that the common custom follows the lenient opinion since it is the majority opinion. This is his ruling in the *Shulhan Arukh* as well. The Rama agreed that this is the halakha technically, but he recommended being stringent and making sure that only men attach the tzitzit. The *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Lekh Lekha* halakha 2) ruled likewise that one should make sure that the tzitzit are attached by a man although he agreed that if a woman did it they are kosher. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* page 8) concurred with this ruling in practice.

Why not follow Maran's ruling?

Despite the recommendation of the *Ben Ish Hai, Kaf Hahayim* and *Holikhot Olam*, the *Halakha Berura* (footnote on page 306) ruled that if someone wishes to rely on Maran's leniency he may do so. Apparently, the stringent attitude of the other *Poskim* is simply a safeguard against the slight chance that the true halakha follows Rabbenu Tam's opinion. Besides, it is not a difficult stringency to observe.

Coaching a woman

Since Rama ruled that one should avoid having women attach tzitzit to a tallit, the *Mishna Berura* (14:2) added that this is the rule even if a man stands by and coaches the woman to perform the task for the sake of the mitzvah of tzitzit. If a woman does attach the tzitzit, they are kosher even if there was no one coaching her. She is believed to say that she did it with the correct intentions (ibid. 14:5).

If a man began the tassel

It was explained in halakha 8 that if a Jew ties the first section of a tzitzit tassel, it is kosher even if a non-Jew ties the rest of it. The language of the *Poskim* indicates, however, that this is not ideal and it should be avoided. The *Halakha Berura* (page 307) ruled that regarding women, if a man ties the first section, it is fine for a woman to take over for him and tie the rest.

189. The *Magen Avraham* (14:3) asserted that the halakha regarding a child attaching tzitzit to a tallit is the same as that of a woman, meaning that Maran permits it and the Rama recommends avoiding it. This seems to be the position of Maran the Rishon Letziyon as well, since in *Halikhot Olam* (Vol. I, page 8) he ruled that a thirteen-year-old boy may attach tzitzit to a tallit, inferring that we should not permit a child under bar mitzvah to do it.

The *Artzot Hahayim*, however, ruled that we may be more lenient regarding a child than regarding women, and it is perfectly permissible to have a child attach the tzitzit. He pointed out that the *Rishonim* offered two reasons not to allow women to attach tzitzit. Rabbenu Tam taught that since women are exempt from fulfilling the mitzvah of tzitzit, they are disqualified from making tzitzit tassels. This could apply to children as well since they are not obligated to fulfill the mitzvot. Rabbenu Meir of Rothenberg, however, taught that women are disqualified since the Torah prefaces the mitzvah of tzitzit with, "Speak to the sons of Yisrael," addressing the males only. There is no inference in the verse to exclude children, however. According to this a child would be permitted to attach tzitzit even if women are disqualified. Despite this, the *Mishna Berura* (*Bi'ur Halakha*) ruled that we should avoid allowing a child to attach tzitzit to a tallit. This is likewise the ruling of the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 182).

On the other end of the scale, the *Mishkenot Yaakov* (*O.H.* #21) ruled that although Rama ruled that if a woman attaches tzitzit the tallit is kosher, if a child attaches tzitzit the tallit is not kosher at all.

The child's intentions

The *Bi'ur Halakha* added that if a child attaches tzitzit to a tallit, it is kosher only if an adult coached the child, reminding him to have in mind that he is tying the tassels for the sake of the mitzvah of tzitzit. He added that although the *Haye Adam* (11:30) did not mention this specifically, his ruling that a child may tie the tzitzit to the tallit is true only

יא. נער שהגיע לגיל שלש עשרה שנה ויום אחד, אך לא נבדק אם הביא שתי שערות, כשר אף לכתחלה להטיל חוטי הציצית בבגד הטלית. [הליכו"ע שם, וכ"פ בבא"ח פ' לך לך ה"ב]. ולכתחילה צריך שיהיה ישראל עומד על גביו ומלמדו לעשות "לשמה". [שעה"צ ס"ק ז]

יב. קטן שהגיע לחינוך, רשאי לכתחילה להטיל ציצית בבגד של עצמו. [ביאור הלכה ד"ה להצריך]. ויכוין שעושה "לשמה". ואפילו אם כבר נעשה גדול, יכול להמשיך ללבוש טלית זו, ואין צריך להתיר הציציות ולחזור ולקושרם, שהרי נחשב כ"דיעבד", ובדיעבד מכשירים מעשה הקטן אף לגדול. [שם]

Thirteen-year-old boy

11) If a boy has reached his thirteenth birthday but it is not certain whether or not he has developed pubic hairs, he is nevertheless permitted to attach tzitzit tassels to a tallit.[190] In this case, it is best that an adult stand by and coach him, reminding him to have intentions for the mitzvah of tzitzit.[191]

Child attaching his own tzitzit

12) Once a child has reached the age of *hinukh*, he may be permitted to attach tzitzit on a tallit that he will wear himself,[192] as long as he is coached to have intentions for the sake of the mitzvah. He may continue to wear that tallit even after he becomes bar mitzvah, and it is not necessary for him to undo the tzitzit tassels and attach them again. This is because of the basic halakha that if a child attaches tzitzit to a tallit while being coached, the tallit is kosher even for adults.[193]

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if an adult coached him as explained here. Furthermore, he questioned the lenient ruling of the *Artzot Hahayim* since regarding baking matzo for the Seder night the *Poskim* ruled (*Siman* 460) that it is best not to have a child participate even if an adult is there coaching him to have the correct intentions.

In light of this, if a child ties tzitzit to a tallit, it is kosher only if an adult was coaching the child while he tied them, telling him to have the correct intentions. Otherwise, we must consider the tallit to have its tzitzit attached without the necessary intentions and it is forbidden to recite the blessing over it, as explained above in halakha 4. Instead, an adult should undo the tassels and tie them on again.

Now that this has been established, it is difficult to accept the ruling of the *Yalkut Yosef* (page 182) that if a child attached the tzitzit, the tallit is kosher even if there was no adult coaching him.

190. This is based on the Talmudic rule called *hazaka deRava*. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* page 8) demonstrated that in practice we may rely on this principle. Furthermore, there are some *Poskim* who ruled that a child is superior to a woman regarding the act of attaching tzitzit to a tallit, as explained in the previous footnote. Besides, Maran ruled that both women and children may attach tzitzit to a tallit. Therefore, if the child has reached his thirteenth birthday it is certainly permitted. For further research, see the comment of the *Yalkut Yosef* on page 184.

191. The *Mishna Berura* (*Sha'ar Hatziyun* 14:7) ruled that although a thirteen-year-old boy may attach tzitzit to a tallit, there must be an adult coaching him to have the correct intentions. If he did it without an adult coaching him and claims to have had the correct intentions, we may assume that the tallit is kosher. If a child younger than this attaches tzitzit without an adult coach and makes such a claim, however, we cannot assume that the tzitzit are kosher.

The *Halakha Berura* (page 308) stated that if a child attaches tzitzit to a tallit it is kosher only if an adult was coaching him. He failed to mention, however, that an adult coach is necessary even for a thirteen-year-old.

192. Although the halakha is that one should not allow a child to attach tzitzit to a tallit, that is true only if the tallit is meant to be worn by an adult. If the child plans to wear it himself, or if it is for another child, all *Poskim* agreed that he may attach its tzitzit as long as he has reached the age of *hinukh*. This is because the child's status regarding this task is equal to his obligation to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzit.

193. The *Mishna Berura* (*Bi'ur Halakha*) explained that the child may continue to use this tallit even after he becomes bar mitzvah and it is not necessary to undo the tassels

יג. מותר לסומא להטיל ציציות אף בטלית של אחרים, הואיל והסומא חייב במצות ציצית, וכפי שיבאר לקמן בסימן י"ז.

A blind man

13) A blind man may attach tzitzit on a tallit, whether it is for himself or for others, since a blind person is obligated to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzit. This will be explained below in *Siman* 17.

and tie them on the tallit again. Now that the tassels have already been attached, at a time when this was permissible, we no longer take Rabbenu Tam's opinion into account. Of course, he added, this is only if the boy knows that he had the proper intentions when he attached the tzitzit to his tallit.

According to the halakha as it was explained above, it is always necessary to have an adult coach a child who attaches tzitzit to a tallit, even according to the lenient opinion. If so, it is strange that the *Bi'ur Halakha* stated here that "the boy knows that he had the correct intentions." Since there must have been an adult coach, we should need the testimony of that adult and not rely on the boy's memory. If there was no adult coach, it would be necessary to undo the tzitzit tassels and attach them again. There is no logic to differentiate between a child attaching tzitzit to an adult's tallit and a child who attached tzitzit to his own tallit and then became bar mitzvah. The *Si'ah Halakha* (14:16) cited Harav Shelomo Zalman Auerbach suggesting that a child is trusted to say that he had the correct intentions if it is about his own tallit, but he is not trusted if he attached tzitzit for another adult's tallit. According to this, a child may attach tzitzit to his own tallit without an adult coach.

Preparing a tallit for a bar mitzvah

Based on the above discussion, it becomes clear that a child may not attach tzitzit to a tallit that he plans to wear only when he becomes bar mitzvah. If he plans to wear it before he becomes bar mitzvah it is permitted, and then he may continue using it after becoming bar mitzvah. In fact, it is likely that he can prepare the tallit even if he plans to wear it for the first time on the afternoon before his bar mitzvah.