וכל זה בתנאי שלא הסיח דעתו מהתפילין, אולם אם שהה בשתיקה הרבה באופן שהסיח דעתו מהתפילין, יש לו לחזור ולברך על תפילין של ראש. [שעה"צ ס"ק ל]

מד. לכתחילה צריך ליזהר בשעת ברכה שיהיה גם תפילין של ראש מונח לפניו במקום שמברך. ובדיעבד שהניח תפילין של יד בבית אחד, והלך להניח תפילין של ראש בבית אחר, לא יחזור לברך על התפילין של ראש, דספק ברכות להקל. [כה"ח ס"ק נט, ועי"ע יבי"א ח"ה סו"ס ד שהביאו]

מו. לכתחילה אסור להפסיק בין הנחת תפילין של יד לתפילין של ראש אף שמפסיק במעשה ולא בדיבור, ולכן אפילו לרמוז ולקרוץ בעיניו ולרמוז באצבעותיו אסור. [באי"ח וירא ה"י, הליכו"ע ח"א עמ' יח, ילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' לג-לד]. והוא הדין שלכתחילה יש להחמיר אפילו בנתינת צדקה לעני, וכיוצא בזה, שיש בזה משום היסח הדעת, ואנן בעינן הויה אחת לתרוייהו. וכן לכתחילה אין להפשיל שרוולי בגדו על ידו השמאלית

attention to some other matter in the meantime, then it is necessary to recite an extra blessing even though he did not speak.

Keep *shel rosh* at hand

45) One should make sure that one's *tefillin shel rosh* is within arm's reach when one recites the blessing of *lehani'ah tefillin*. Even so, if someone put on his *tefillin shel yad* in one room and then went to another room to put on his *tefillin shel rosh*, he does not recite an additional blessing when putting it on, based on the principle of *safek berakhot lehakel*.[64]

Day 25

Interrupting with an action

46) Our Sages taught that one must put on the *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh* as if in one single act – *havaya ahat*. Therefore, not only is it forbidden to interrupt by speaking, but one must also avoid performing any other action between putting on the *tefillin shel yad* and the *tefillin shel rosh*, even without speaking. In fact, it is even forbidden to communicate by signaling to others with one's eyes or hands. For the same reason, it is forbidden to give charity to a beggar between putting on the *tefillin shel yad* and the *tefillin shel rosh*. This is because one must concentrate one's thoughts on putting on the tefillin at this time, and any of these actions detract from one's concentration.

64. The *Birkat Avraham*, cited in the *Shi'ure Kenesset Hagedola*, ruled that it is necessary to recite an additional blessing when putting on the *tefillin shel rosh* in another room even if the person had this in mind when he recited the blessing of *lehani'ah* on the *tefillin shel yad*. His position is that the act of moving to another room automatically constitutes an interruption. Not all the *Poskim* agreed with this, however. Therefore, although we must avoid getting into this situation, if it happens we must not recite an additional blessing, in deference to those *Poskim* who ruled that it is not an interruption. See the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (25:59), and responsa *Yabia Omer* (Vol. V. #4).

בין תפלין של יד לתפלין של ראש, ורק לאחר הנחת תפלין של ראש יפשילם. [יביע"א ח"ה סו"ס ד, ובתוכן הענינים, ילקו"י שם]

Pulling down one's sleeve

Even an act connected to the mitzvah of tefillin is forbidden at this time. Therefore, one must not pull down one's sleeve to cover the arm bearing the *tefillin shel yad* until after putting on one's *tefillin shel rosh*.[65]

65. Is an act considered an interruption

The Rosh Yeshivah of Porat Yosef, Harav Ezra Attia, asked Maran the Rishon Letziyon whether an action is considered an interruption, and whether it is forbidden wherever interrupting with speech is not permitted. His responsum to this question is published in his *Yabia Omer* (Vol. V, #4). He began with a proof from Rashi's comment to *Eruvin* 50a, demonstrating that an action is considered an interruption, no less than speaking. He then cited the responsa *Sede Ha'aretz* (Vol. III, #38) dealing with someone who recited the blessings for kindling his Hanukka lights and then kindled the *shammash* light first. The ~~qu~~estion is whether or not the act of kindling that light is considered an interruption making it necessary to repeat the blessings before kindling the real Hanukka light. The author's discussion is whether the kindling of the *shammash* can be considered part of the mitzvah. If the action performed was totally unrelated to the mitzvah for which the blessing was recited, and he spent more than one second performing it, it would definitely be considered an interruption

Maran the Rishon Letziyon suggested a third proof from a comment of Harav Akiva Eiger on the *Magen Avraham*'s ruling that if someone's arm is bandaged and he must put on his *tefillin shel yad* over the bandage, he should not recite the blessing of *lehani'ah* before putting on the *tefillin shel yad*. Instead, he should recite both the blessings of *lehani'ah* and *al mitzvat tefillin* before putting on his *tefillin shel rosh* as if he was not putting on *tefillin shel yad* at all. Harav Akiva Eiger asked, since he is going to recite both blessings anyway, why not recite the blessing of *lehani'ah* before putting on his *tefillin shel yad* as usual? He answered his question by saying that since his arm is bandaged, he does not perform any mitzvah by putting on the *tefillin shel yad* over the bandage. Therefore, since he is supposed to recite the blessing of *lehani'ah* for the mitzvah of *tefillin shel rosh* only, the act of putting on the *tefillin shel yad* over the bandage would be an interruption between the blessing and the act of putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*.

This is not a valid proof, Maran the Rishon Letziyon concluded. It could be that it is forbidden to interrupt by performing an unrelated action, but that does not mean that if someone performs such an action he would need to repeat the blessing.

Based on this, Maran the Rishon Letziyon turned to the ruling of the responsa *Kol Eliyahu* (Vol. II, #25) regarding the common practice on Sukkot of one person giving his set of *arba'a minim* to someone else on condition that the second person return it after fulfilling the mitzvah with it. The way most people do this is that the owner holds the *lulav* while the other person recites the blessings, and then he hands the *lulav* to him. The recipient takes the *lulav*, acquiring it as his possession, and then performs the mitzvah with it. The *Kol Eliyahu* questioned the validity of this practice. Since the recipient must acquire the *lulav* first, it turns out that he interrupts with this act of acquisition between his blessings and fulfilling the mitzvah. Perhaps, the author wondered, this interruption invalidates his blessing.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon suggested that the *Kol Eliyahu* was apparently certain that in other cases an action constitutes an interruption and invalidates the blessing. In this case, however, he was uncertain, suggesting that there might be room for leniency since the acquisition is a prerequisite for fulfilling the mitzvah.

Harav Shemuel Garmizan (responsa *Mishpete Tzedek* #94) dealt with the question of someone who had two barrels of wine. One was definitely *tevel* and needed to have *teruma* and *ma'aser* separated from it, but he could not ascertain whether or not he still needed to separate *teruma* and *ma'aser* from the second barrel. After reciting the blessing for the mitzvah of separating the necessary tithes, he separated *teruma* and *ma'aser* from the second barrel before tending to the first barrel. Rav Shemuel ruled that this was the incorrect procedure, since the second barrel might not have needed any separating. If so, the act of separating from that barrel constituted an interruption between his blessing and the real mitzvah of separating tithes from the first barrel.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon's conclusion is that the *Poskim* are basically uncertain whether an action is considered an interruption invalidating the blessing. Therefore, one must make sure not to interrupt with any action between putting on the *tefillin shel yad* and the *tefillin*

ובדיעבד אם עשה איזה מעשה, שרמז באצבעותיו או קרץ בעיניו וכיו״ב, בין לצורך חול בין לצורך מצוה, אינו צריך לחזור ולברך על תפלין של ראש, כל שלא הפסיק בדיבור ממש. [ניבי״א ח״ה סו״ס ד, הליכו״ע ח״א עמ׳ יט]

If someone performs any of these actions (i.e., signaling with his eyes or hands, whether for the sake of a mitzvah or any other purpose), however, it does not become necessary to recite another blessing before putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*, as long as he did not speak.[66] If a beggar approaches him while he is putting on his tefillin, he may make a

shel rosh. Even if it is to perform another mitzvah such as giving charity to a beggar, one must not interrupt with any act. Even if one refrains from speaking while performing that mitzvah, it is nevertheless forbidden since our Sages taught that we must put on both parts of the set of tefillin as if it is one act. Any other action performed between them definitely detracts from fulfilling that rule. As the *Ben Ish Hai* ruled (*parashat Vayera* halakha 10): One must refrain from any action, even to signal with one's eyes or fingers, while putting on one's tefillin.

If a *sefer* falls to the floor

The responsa *Kinyan Torah* (Vol. VI, #2) ruled that if someone was putting on his *tefillin* and noticed a *sefer* that had fallen to the floor before he put on his *tefillin shel rosh*, he must not pick it up until after he puts on the *tefillin shel rosh*. If he did interrupt by picking it up, he will not need to recite an additional blessing when putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*, as explained in this halakha. Harav Hayim Kanyevski (cited in *Da'at Note*), however, ruled that if someone would become agitated at the thought of ignoring the *sefer* lying on the floor, he may interrupt to pick it up.

66. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. V, #4) concluded that although it is forbidden to interrupt with another act while putting on tefillin, if someone interrupted by performing some act it is not necessary to recite an additional blessing for the *tefillin shel rosh*, as long as he did not interrupt by speaking.

Pulling down one's sleeve

Maran the Rishon Letziyon added that, following these rules, it is apparent that one must not pull down one's sleeve after putting on the *tefillin shel yad* and before putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*. If someone would do that, he would be guilty of interrupting with an act. This is likewise the ruling of Harav Eliyahu David Rabinowitz-Teumim in *Kuntras Over Orah*. He explained that although it is proper to pull one's sleeve over the *tefillin shel yad* so that it will not be visible to others, one can accomplish that by bending over so that one's tallit is draped over one's arm.

The *Netivot Hahayim* (Vol. II, page 28) took issue with this ruling. The act of pulling down one's sleeve is for the sake of the mitzvah of tefillin itself. This is because the Torah states "וְהָיָה לְךָ לְאוֹת עַל יָדֶךָ – it shall be a sign for you," meaning that it is a private sign meant to be noticed by the person wearing it only, and not by others. Therefore, one should have the *tefillin shel yad* covered while wearing it. Since it is important for the mitzvah of tefillin to pull down one's sleeve, it cannot be considered an interruption. This can be compared to mixing water into one's cup of wine while reciting *Birkat Hamazon*. Although it is forbidden to perform any act while reciting *Birkat Hamazon*, this is permitted since it is necessary for the mitzvah of *Birkat Hamazon* itself. This does not contradict the ruling of Rav Rabinowitz-Teumim, since he was referring to inserting one's arm into one's jacket sleeve. That is an extra act unnecessary for the mitzvah of tefillin, but the act of pulling down one's shirt sleeve is necessary and therefore is not an interruption at all. Harav Meir Mazuz concurred with this ruling.

The *Yalkut Yosef* (*Siman* 25, footnote 64) countered this ruling, arguing that the halakha does not demand that the *tefillin shel yad* be covered from the view of others; it is only a stringency following the instructions of the Arizal. Therefore, pulling down one's sleeve is considered an unnecessary interruption. Furthermore, it is incorrect to perform this act since there are *Poskim* who ruled that even if someone interrupts by performing an action without speaking he must then recite an additional blessing. It is best, therefore, to avoid a situation that places one into this controversy. The *Halakha Berura* (Vol. II, *Otzerot Yosef* page 10) firmly concurred with this argument. The *Netivot Hahayim* (*Meshovev Netivot* Vol. IV, page 124) defended his ruling permitting one to pull down one's sleeve. Nevertheless, Maran the Rishon Letziyon ruled stringently in this matter since pulling down one's sleeve is not a real necessity, and in any case it can be done after putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*.

This needs some explanation. The *Yalkut Yosef* ruled that it is permissible to signal to a beggar to wait until after

ובמקום צורך קצת, כגון לרמוז לעני שימתין לו עד שיניח תפילין של ראש ואחר כך יתן לו צדקה, מותר להפסיק ברמז בין הנחת תפילין של יד להנחת תפילין של ראש, ואפילו לכתחלה. [הליכו"ע שם, יבי"א ח"ה סי' ד אות ו], וכל זה דוקא כשאי אפשר בענין אחר. [יבי"א ח"ט סי' פב אות ב]

small gesture signaling to the beggar to wait until he finishes. Since this is for the sake of a mitzvah, there is room for leniency. This is the case only if he would lose the opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah of giving him charity if he did not signal to him.[67]

one puts on the *tefillin shel rosh*. That act is totally unrelated to the mitzvah of tefillin, and yet it is permissible since it is for the sake of a mitzvah. If so it certainly should be permissible to pull down one's sleeve, since that is directly connected to the mitzvah of tefillin. Furthermore, signaling to others demonstrates that one is thinking about something other than the mitzvah of tefillin, whereas pulling down one's sleeve is an act connected to the mitzvah of tefillin.

Apparently, Maran the Rishon Letziyon saw these things from a different perspective. First of all, signaling to a beggar is not really an action, although it should be avoided unless necessary for a mitzvah. Furthermore, it is permissible to signal to him only if he would leave otherwise and one would miss the opportunity of giving him charity altogether. When someone fails to pull down his sleeve until after putting on his *tefillin shel rosh*, nothing is lost. He can pull down his sleeve a minute later. See the following discussion about kissing the *tefillin shel rosh* before putting it on.

67. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. V, #4) cited the responsa *Halakhot Ketanot* (Vol. I, #57) ruling that if someone communicates to someone else between putting on his *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh* by signaling with his eyes or hands, it constitutes a genuine interruption since he turned his mind to another subject while putting on his tefillin. Therefore, he must recite an additional blessing. This ruling is cited by the *Tefilla leDavid* (#74) and the *Shalme Tzibbur* (page 40b).

The *Kaf Hahayim* Palachi (10:14) also cited this ruling, but he commented that this is true only if the person communicated by signal for the sake of some mundane purpose. Maran the Rishon Letziyon deduced from this that if the person signaled to someone else for the sake of a mitzvah, it would not be necessary to recite an additional blessing. We cannot deduce from this, however, that it is permissible to communicate with such signals; we know only that if he did, it is not a fatal interruption.

The *Me'ore Or* (*Od Lamo'ed* page 157a) likewise cited the *Halakhot Ketanot* and commented, "No one agrees with the ruling that such an interruption necessitates an additional blessing. Furthermore, none of the earlier *Poskim* suggested such a stringent ruling. In fact, even while reciting the *Shema* it is forbidden to communicate by signaling, but no one suggests that if someone makes a signal he must repeat the *Shema*. Just like it is permissible to interrupt the *Shema* for the sake of a mitzvah, it should be permissible in this case as well.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon commented that we cannot bring any proof from the rules of reciting the *Shema*, since one may even interrupt by speaking for an important mitzvah such as responding to kaddish or *Kedusha*. When putting on tefillin, however, one may not respond to kaddish or to *Kedusha* at all, as Maran ruled in *Siman* 25:10. Furthermore, if someone mistakenly interrupts the *Shema* and speaks to someone for any reason, it is not necessary for him to repeat the *Shema* at all, whereas by tefillin if someone speaks all the *Poskim* agree that he must recite an additional blessing. Therefore, it is likely that it is forbidden even to signal to someone else while putting on tefillin, and even for the sake of a mitzvah.

Nevertheless, Maran the Rishon Letziyon pointed out that the *Me'ore Or* is not alone in ruling leniently about this. The author of *Heshek Shelomo* wrote an appendix to the *Divre Emet*, called *Kuntras Bet Shelomo*. There (#25) he cited the *Halakhot Ketanot's* ruling and strongly disagreed with it. He ruled that it is never necessary to recite an additional blessing unless the person interrupted by actually speaking. This lenient ruling is cited by the *Yafe Lalev* (25:21) and the *Pekudat El'azar* (Vol. I, page 31a). The *Ma'amar Mordekhai* (25:8) also cast his doubts on the *Halakhot Ketanot's* stringent ruling.

Although the *Kaf Hahayim* Palachi did not state clearly whether or not it is permissible to signal for the sake of a mitzvah while putting on tefillin when he first discussed the issue (10:14), later (18:2) he ruled unequivocally that it is forbidden. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* Vol. I, page 19), however, ruled that it is permissible to signal to a beggar to wait until one finishes putting on one's tefillin. He based this ruling on the *Me'ore Or* cited above and the *Sheyare Tahorat Hamayim* (page 55d) who ruled that when necessary it is permissible to perform a minor act, as long as

מז. לכתחילה לא ינשק התפילין של ראש קודם הנחתן. וכן היה נוהג מרן הראש"ל זצ"ל שלא לנשק אז התפילין מחשש הפסק בין תפילין של יד לתפילין של ראש. [אורחות מרן עמ' סט]

Day 26

Kissing the *shel rosh*

47) One should refrain from kissing the *tefillin shel rosh* upon taking it from the *kuracha* before putting it on. Maran the Rishon Letziyon did not kiss his *tefillin shel rosh* when he took it from his *kuracha* since he felt that this would be an interrupting action between putting on his *tefillin shel yad* and his *tefillin shel rosh*.[68]

one does not turn one's attention away from the mitzvah of tefillin and as long as one does not speak.

It is difficult to understand why Maran the Rishon Letziyon chose to rule leniently and ignore the stringent ruling of the *Halakhot Ketanot*. Almost all the *Aḥaronim* ruled stringently and forbade signaling even for the sake of a mitzvah. Maran the Rishon Letziyon was aware of this. In fact, in responsa *Yabia Omer* (Vol. IX, #82:2) he cited the stringent ruling of the *Kaf Haḥayim* Palachi and he still commented that in practice one may signal to someone else if it is for the sake of a mitzvah. He explained that really all the *Aḥaronim* disagreed with the *Halakhot Ketanot*, except that they ruled that one should play it safe and avoid interrupting through any action. Therefore, it makes sense to say that it is permissible to signal to someone else if it for the sake of a mitzvah.

It is important to point out that in his *Yabia Omer*, Maran the Rishon Letziyon permitted signaling only if one would lose the opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah otherwise. In his *Halikhot Olam* he did not point out this limitation. In most cases, if a beggar comes over while one is putting on tefillin, he will understand by himself that he must wait until the person finishes. Therefore, it is rare that a case will arise justifying a person signaling to the beggar to wait.

68. The responsa *Igrot Moshe* (Vol. IV, #10) dealt with the question of kissing the *tefillin shel rosh* before putting it on, and he compared it to the act of winding the strap of the *tefillin shel yad* around one's forearm. Rabbenu Asher, cited in the *Arba'a Turim*, ruled that one must put on the *tefillin shel rosh* immediately after tightening the strap of the *tefillin shel yad* on one's upper arm, even before winding it around one's forearm. This is because the practice of coiling the strap around one's forearm is not an essential part of the mitzvah. Maran followed this opinion in the *Shulḥan Arukh* (25:11). The Arizal (cited by the *Magen Avraham* (25:18), however, ruled that one must wind the strap seven times around one's forearm before putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*, because he felt that this is an essential aspect of the mitzvah.

Kissing the *tefillin shel rosh* is only an expression of one's love for the mitzvah; it is definitely not part of the mitzvah itself. Despite this, the *Igrot Moshe* ruled that it is permissible to kiss it before putting it on. This is because the simple act of bringing the tefillin to one's lips does not cause any delay in putting it on. Maran the Rishon Letziyon disagreed, explaining that any act is an interruption even if it takes no time. Therefore, he did not kiss his *tefillin shel rosh* before putting it on, according to the testimony in *Oraḥot Maran* (page 69). The *Netivot Haḥayim* (*Meshovev Netivot*, page 4) ruled that it is permissible to kiss it, explaining that this act is for the sake of the mitzvah of tefillin. Maran the Rishon Letziyon, however, felt that any unnecessary act will be considered an interruption, just as he ruled regarding the act of pulling down one's sleeve.

There is a similar dispute regarding the practice of kissing the tzitzit threads while reciting the *Shema*. For more information about that, see HaKeter's edition of *Yafe Lalev* (*Siman* 24, footnote 21).

Removing one's wristwatch

The *Halakha Berura* (page 46) added that it is forbidden to take off one's wristwatch between putting on one's *tefillin shel yad* and *tefillin shel rosh*. If one wishes to remove it, one should do so before putting on the *tefillin shel yad* or after putting on the *tefillin shel rosh*. This needs some explanation, for one would think that this act is necessary for the mitzvah of tefillin, so that the tefillin strap will rest directly on one's arm and not on the watchband. Of course, this should have been taken care of before the person began, but if he forgot to remove the watch until he was winding the strap on his arm, he should be able to do so at this time.

Actually, the *Halakha Berura* (page 101, *Sha'ar Hatziyun* 45) ruled that it is technically unnecessary to remove the watch altogether; one may simply wind the strap over the watchband and leave it that way. This is likewise the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. II, #2). Nevertheless, if someone wishes to follow the more stringent ruling of other *Poskim*, the act of removing the watch is a necessary act, unlike the act of pulling down one's sleeve. The *Kaf Haḥayim* Palachi (18:2) ruled that any act that is necessary for the fulfillment of the mitzvah of tefillin is not considered an interruption and is permitted.