מא. מי שנולד איטר, והרגיל עצמו בכתיבה ובשאר מלאכות לעשותם ביד ימין, יניח התפילין ביד שמאל, שכעת אינו נחשב עוד לאיטר. [וכ"ה פסקי תשובות ריש אות טו]

ואפילו אם האיטר רק הרגיל את עצמו לכתוב ביד ימין, ושאר מלאכתו עדיין עושה ביד שמאל, גם בזה העיקר כהפוסקים שמניח התפילין ביד שמאל. אולם כיון שיש חולקים יניח התפילין שוב לאחר התפילה ביד ימין. ונכון שלא יביא עצמו למצב זה שמרגיל עצמו לכתוב בימין, שאם כותב ועושה כל מלאכתו בשמאל, ימשיך להתנהג כן. [ראה הלכה ברורה עמ' קיג, פסקי תשובות אות טו]

Day 61

Training oneself to become righthanded

41) In the opposite case: If someone who was born lefthanded trained himself to write and to perform all skilled tasks with his right hand, he should now wear his tefillin on his left arm. He is no longer considered to be lefthanded.[165] In fact, as long as he trained himself to write with his right hand, but he still performs other skilled tasks with his left hand, the halakha follows the opinion of the *Poskim* that he must now wear his tefillin on his left arm. Nevertheless, since this halakha is debated among the *Poskim*, he should wear tefillin every day after the prayers on his right arm. It is recommended that no lefthanded person place himself in this situation, and therefore it is best that a lefthanded person should remain as such and not try to change his status.[166]

165. The *Piske Teshuvot* (27:15) stated that this ruling seems obvious since even a righthanded person who trains himself to become lefthanded regarding all skilled tasks becomes halakhically lefthanded, as explained in the previous halakha. Certainly someone who was born lefthanded and trains himself to be the same as the majority of the population can do so.

166. Someone who trained himself to write with his right hand

Harav Shelomo Kluger (responsa *Ha'elef Lekha Shelomo* #11) ruled that once a lefthanded person trains himself to write with his right hand, he is no longer considered lefthanded and he must now wear his tefillin on his left arm. This is because he has now trained himself to write in the manner of most people.

The responsa *Igrot Moshe* (Vol. III, #2) disagreed, arguing that this person is just like a righthanded person who trained himself to write with his left hand. In that case, we follow the ruling of the *Magen Avraham* that he is still considered righthanded since he performs other skilled tasks with his right hand. In this case as well, he is still considered lefthanded since he performs other skilled tasks with his left hand, and he must wear his tefillin on his right arm. There is a *safek sefeka* supporting this ruling: Perhaps the halakha follows the opinion that a person's status is determined by the hand with which he performs most skilled tasks and not by the hand with which he writes. Even if we determine his status by the hand with which he writes, perhaps it never helps to train oneself to change handedness.

The responsa *Har Tzevi* (Vol. I, #26) asserted that the *Magen Avraham's* ruling applies only to a righthanded person who trains himself to use his left hand in an attempt to give himself a status different than the majority of people. If he succeeds only in changes his writing hand but not the hand he uses for other skilled tasks, he has not removed himself from the majority righthanded sector of the population. If, however, a lefthanded person trains himself to write with his right hand in order to join the majority sector of the population, it may very well be that he can reach that goal even though he still uses his left hand for other skilled tasks.

All this is true according to the *Poskim* (including the *Shulḥan Arukh* and Rama) who ruled that a person's status is determined by the hand with which he writes. Many other *Poskim*, including Harav Eliyahu of Vilna, ruled that his status is determined by the hand with which he performs most skilled tasks and not necessarily the hand with which he writes. According to them, this person has not changed his status at all.

Because of the complexity of this issue, the author of *Har Tzevi* instructed the youngster who had asked this question to cease forcing himself to write with his right hand, and to continue in his natural status as a lefthanded person.

There is reason to suggest that the halakha would be different for Sefardic Jews who follows Maran's ruling that a person's status is determined by the hand with which he writes regardless of how he performs other skilled tasks. In

שיעור אורך ורוחב הרצועות

מב. אורך רצועה של יד, יהיה בשיעור כדי שתקיף את הזרוע ויקשור ממנה הקשר על הזרוע, ותמתח הרצועה על אצבע אמצעית (האמה) ויכרוך ממנה על אצבעו שלשה כריכות, ויקשור. (תמונה מ"ב). [ש"ע סי' כז ס"ח]. ונוהגים העולם לכרוך על הזרוע שבע כריכות, וכמו שיבואר לקמן הלכה נ"ו.

ושיעור אורך רצועות של ראש, שיגיעו עד הטבור או למעלה ממנו מעט. [ראה ש"ע שם סי"א]. ויש אומרים שרצועה של ימין עד הטבור ושל שמאל עד החזה (תמונה מ"ג). [משנ"ב ס"ק מא], וכן דעת המקובלים. [כה"ח ס"ק נב, ובסי' כה ס"ק סט]. וכן איטר ינהג בדרך זו. [כה"ח שם]

Sizes for Tefillin Straps

Tefillin shel yad

42) The minimum necessary length of the strap connected to *tefillin shel yad* [not counting the portion used to form the knot] is: enough to encircle the upper arm and then stretch down the arm to the middle finger, form three coils around the middle finger, and to be tucked in so that it stays in place. (Illustration № 42) The common custom is to wind the strap around the forearm, forming seven coils, as will be explained below in halakha 56 [and therefore the strap used must be long enough to form these coils].

Tefillin shel rosh

The minimum necessary length of the strap connected to *tefillin shel rosh* is: enough to [form a loop around the person's head and form the knot and for the two ends to] descend down the person's chest to his navel, or to just above it. According to the kabbalists, the end on the right side must reach the navel, while the end on the left side must reach the person's breast. (Illustration № 43) It makes no difference whether the person is righthanded or lefthanded.

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fact, the *Piske Tosafot* (*Menahot* #124) recommended that lefthanded people train themselves to write with the right hand so that they can wear tefillin in the same way as everyone else even if they continue to perform other skilled tasks with their left hands.

The *Halakha Berura* (page 113), however, pointed out that this halakha is not clear for Sefardic Jews either. Therefore, he ruled that if someone places himself into this situation he must wear his tefillin on his left arm during the prayers, and then put tefillin on his right arm after the prayers. The truth is that any person who writes with his right hand and performs most other skilled tasks with his left hand should follow these instructions, but in this case it is even more imperative since this person is naturally lefthanded. Furthermore, it is difficult to determine at what point a person successfully changes himself from one hand to the other, since it involves not only learning to write with the opposite hand but also forgetting how to write with one's naturally "stronger" hand. This is likewise the ruling of the *Piske Teshuvot* (27:14).

While on the way to retraining one's hands

Harav Shelomo Zalman Auerbach (*Halikhot Shelomo Tefilla* page 43) ruled that if a lefthanded person trains himself to write with his right hand but he still feels more comfortable writing with his left hand, he is still considered lefthanded. In a similar vein, the *Halakha Berura* (page 113) ruled that as long as it is easier for this person to write quickly with his left hand than with his right hand, he has not changed his status and he must wear his tefillin on his right arm.