



TERUMAH

THE ARGUMENT THAT NEVER ENDS

Judaism Is a Lot Less Dogmatic Than You Think

PARSHAH OVERVIEW

Terumah

The people of Israel are called upon to contribute thirteen materials—gold, silver, and copper; blue-, purple-, and red-dyed wool; flax, goat hair, animal skins, wood, olive oil, spices, and gems—out of which, G-d says to Moses, “They shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I shall dwell amid them.”

On the summit of Mount Sinai, Moses was given detailed instructions on how to construct this dwelling for G-d so that it could be readily dismantled, transported, and reassembled as the people journeyed in the desert.

In the sanctuary’s inner chamber, behind an artistically woven curtain, was the ark containing the Tablets of Testimony engraved with the Ten Commandments; on the ark’s cover stood two winged cherubim hammered out of pure gold. In the outer chamber stood the seven-branched menorah and the table upon which the “showbread” was arranged.

The sanctuary’s three walls were fitted together from forty-eight upright wooden boards, each of which was overlaid with gold and held up by a pair of silver

foundation sockets. The roof was formed of three layers of coverings: (a) tapestries of multicolored wool and linen, (b) a covering made of goat hair, and (c) a covering of ram and tachash skins. Across the front of the sanctuary was an embroidered screen held up by five posts.

Surrounding the sanctuary and the copper-plated altar that stood before it was an enclosure of linen hangings, supported by sixty wooden posts with silver hooks and trimmings, and reinforced by copper stakes.

The Torah describes how the menorah should be designed and decorated.



TEXT 1

Exodus 25:31-34

לא. וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרֶת זָהָב טָהוֹר,
מְקֻשָּׁה תַּעֲשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה יְרֻכָה וְקִנָּה,
גְּבִיעֶיהָ כַּפְתָּרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ מִמְּנָה
יְהִיוּ.

לב. וְשֵׁשׁ קָנִים יֵצְאוּ מִצְדֵיהָ,
שְׁלֹשָׁה קָנֵי מְנֹרָה מִצְדָּה הָאֶחָד
וְשְׁלֹשָׁה קָנֵי מְנֹרָה מִצְדָּה הַשֵּׁנִי.

לג. שְׁלֹשָׁה גְּבַעִים מְשֻׁקָּדִים בְּקִנָּה
הָאֶחָד כַּפְתָּר וּפְרָח, וְשְׁלֹשָׁה גְּבַעִים
מְשֻׁקָּדִים בְּקִנָּה הָאֶחָד כַּפְתָּר וּפְרָח,
כֵּן לְשֵׁשֶׁת הַקָּנִים הַיֵּצְאוּ מִן
הַמְּנֹרָה.

לד. וּבַמְּנֹרָה אַרְבָּעָה גְּבַעִים
מְשֻׁקָּדִים כַּפְתָּרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ.

31. And you shall make a menorah of pure gold.
The menorah shall be made of hammered work;
its base and its stem, its goblets, its knobs, and its
flowers shall [all] be [one piece] with it.

32. And six branches coming out of its sides:
three menorah branches from its one side and
three menorah branches from its second side.

33. Three decorated goblets on one branch, a
knob and a flower, and three decorated goblets
on one branch, a knob and a flower; so for the six
branches that come out of the menorah.

34. And on [the stem of] the menorah [shall be]
four decorated goblets, its knobs and its flowers.

משקדים—Decorated

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| כַּפְתֹּרֵיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ | מְשֻׁקָדִים | גְּבֵעִים |
| <i>kaftoreha u-fracheha</i> | <i>meshukadim</i> | <i>gevi'im</i> |
| Knobs and flowers | Decorated | Goblets |

Does it mean only the goblets are decorated or that all the elements—the goblets, knobs, and flowers—are decorated?

TEXT 2

Talmud, Yoma 52a-b

אִי־סִי בֶּן יְהוּדָה אָמַר: חָמֵשׁ מְקַרְאוֹת
בַּתּוֹרָה אֵין לָהֶן הֶכְרַעַ . . . "מְשׁוּקָדִים".

Isi ben Yehudah says, "There are five verses in the Torah whose meaning cannot be decided. . . . The second uncertain case is the term meshukadim."

QUESTION

Many important mitzvah practices are still debated because the original instructions became unclear or were lost over time. How did this happen?

TEXT 3

*The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, Likutei
Sichot 26, p. 187*

ס'איז ידוע די שקלא וטריא בנוגע די
מצות וועלכע מ'האט שטענדיק מקיים
געווען מזמן משה רבינו — ווי אזוי
זיינען אין זיי נולד געווארן ספיקות
ופלוגתות באופן קיומן.

ומהדוגמאות המפורסמות — פלוגתת
רש"י ורבינו תם בתפילין, דלכאורה:
ווי איז שייך אין דעם א פלוגתא —
מ'האט דאך דאס געקענט און
געדארפט גרינג מברר זיין דורך
אריינקוקן אין די תפילין של אבותיהם
און זען צי זיי זיינען מסודר לויט דער
דעה אדער לויט דער צווייטער!?

It's well known that there is a long-standing question regarding mitzvot that have been observed continuously since the time of Moses: How could doubts and disputes have arisen over the proper way to fulfill them?

One of the classic examples is the disagreement between Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam about the order of the parshiyot [individual scrolls] in tefilin. At first glance, how could there possibly be a dispute here? Surely it should have been simple to clarify by opening up the tefilin inherited from their fathers and seeing whether they were arranged according to one opinion or the other!



There's a famous dispute over the order of the scrolls placed inside the *tefilin*.

TEXT 4A

*Talmud, Menachot
34b*

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: כִּיצַד סִדְרוֹ?

קִדְשׁ לִי, וְהָיָה כִּי יָבִיֵאֵךְ
— מִיָּמִין. שְׁמַע, וְהָיָה
אִם שָׁמוֹעַ — מִשְּׂמָאל.

וְהִתְנִיחַ אֵיפֹכָא?

אָמַר אַבְיִי לָא קִשְׂיָא:
כָּאן מִיָּמִינוּ שְׁל קוֹרָא,
כָּאן מִיָּמִינוּ שְׁל מְנִיחַ,
וְהִקוֹרָא קוֹרָא כְּסִדְרוֹ.

The sages taught in a Baraita: How does one arrange the four passages inside the tefilin?

The passage of “Sanctify unto Me (Kadesh)” (Exodus 13:1–10) and the passage of “And it shall be when He shall bring you (Vehayah ki yevi’acha)” (Exodus 13:11–16) are placed on the right; the passage of “Listen, O Israel (Shema)” (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) and the passage of “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently (Vehayah im shamo’a)” (Deuteronomy 11:13–21) are placed on the left.

But isn’t it taught in a Baraita that one places them in the opposite manner?

Abaye said that it is not difficult: Here [in our Baraita] it means to the right of the reader, whereas there [in the other Baraita] it means to the right of the one who is donning the tefilin. And in this manner the reader reads the passages in their order [starting with Exodus 13:1–10 to his right].

TEXT 4B

Rashi, ad loc.

"וְהַקּוֹרֵא קוֹרֵא כְּסֵדְרוֹ." כִּסְדֵּר לְשֵׁהֵן כְּתוּבִין
בַּתּוֹרָה: מוֹקֵדִם מוֹקֵדִם, וּמֵאוֹתָר מֵאוֹתָר.

"The reader reads the passages in their order."
As they appear in the Torah—the earliest
passage first, and the latest passage last.

RASHI



The four passages are placed from right to left, as seen by the person wearing the tefilin, in the order they appear in the Torah.

1. קדש
Kadesh
2. והיה כי יביאך
Vehayah ki yevi'acha
3. שמע
Shema
4. והיה אם שמוע
Vehayah im shamo'a

TEXT 4C

Tosafot, ad loc.

וּמְפָרֵשׁ רַבֵּינוּ תָּם "קַדֵּשׁ" וְהָיָה כִּי יִבְיָאָךְ מִיְמִין שֶׁל קוֹרָא, וּמִשְׁמָאל שֶׁל קוֹרָא
הָיָה "שְׁמַע" מִבְּחוּץ וְאַחֲרֶיהָ "וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמוּעַ" מִבְּפְּנִים . . .

וְכֵן רַב הָאֵי גָאוֹן "וְהָיָה מִנִּיחַ סִימָן — הַנְּיוֹת לְהַדְדִי". פִּירוּשׁ: "וְהָיָה כִּי יִבְיָאָךְ"
"וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמוּעַ" פְּנִימִיּוֹת זֶה אֶצֶל זֶה.

וְכֵן בְּתִשְׁבֹּת הַגְּאוֹנִים שֶׁכָּתַב הָרַב יוֹסֵף טוֹב עֲלֵם.

Rabbeinu Tam explains that in the order of the parshiyot of tefilin, “Kadesh” and “Vehayah ki yevi’acha” are placed to the right of the one reading them, while to his left is Shema on the outside, followed by “Vehayah im shamo’a” on the inside.

Similarly, Rav Hai Ga’on wrote that “Vehayah ki yevi’acha” and “Vehayah im shamo’a” are set next to each other on the inner side of the tefilin.

This is also recorded in the responsa of the ge’onim, in the writings of Rav Yosef Tov Elem.

RABBEINU TAM



Rabbeinu Tam disagrees and argues that Rashi's order doesn't fit the text. He places the passages in a different order.

1. קדש
Kadesh
2. והיה כי יביאך
Vehayah ki yevi'acha
3. והיה אם שמוע
Vehayah im shamo'a
4. שמע
Shema

How could this happen?
Why didn't they simply
follow the practices of
their predecessors?



TEXT 5

*Rabbi Chaim Eliezer
Spira, Ot Chayim
Veshalom, Hilchot
Tefilin 34:2*

הָאֵיךְ הָיָה שְׂיִיךְ בְּאַמַּת פְּלוּגְמַת רַש"י וְרַבְנּוּ תָם בְּתַפִּילִין?

הֲלֹא הָיוּ יְכוּלִים כָּל אֶחָד לִפְתּוֹחַ הַתַּפִּילִין שְׁלוֹ שְׁהֵם מֵאָבִיו וְאָבִי אָבִיו לְרֹאוֹת אֵיךְ
מְסוּדָרִים הַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת . . . שְׁהָיָה לָהֶם הַתַּפִּילִין מְדוּרוֹת הַקּוּדְמִים, וְהִיתְכּוֹן לִזְמַר
שְׁנִשְׁתַּבַּח אֲזִי תוֹרָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל כָּל כַּף עַד שְׁגַם הַסּוּפְרִים לֹא יָדְעוּ אֵיךְ לְהַנִּיחַ
הַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת בְּתַפִּילִין וְאֲזִי הִתְחִילוּ לְהִסְתַּפֵּק מִחֲדָשׁ אֵיךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת זֹאת כְּאִילוּ מֵעוֹלָם לֹא
הִנִּיחוּ תַפִּילִין?

How could there even be a dispute between Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam about the order of the parshiyot in tefilin?

After all, each one could simply open up the tefilin he inherited from his father and grandfather and see how the parshiyot were arranged. . . . They surely had tefilin passed down from earlier generations. Is it really possible to suggest that the Torah was forgotten from Israel to such an extent—that even the scribes no longer knew how to place the parshiyot inside tefilin and that they had to start doubting anew, as if tefilin had never been put on before?

TEXT 6

Rabbi Reuven
Margolis, Notes to
She'elot Uteshuvot
Min Hashamayim #3

וְהִנֵּה הַפְּלִיאָה גְלוּיָהּ, אִיךָ אֶפְשֶׁר לְשָׁבוּם מִן
הַיָּמִים תַּתְּהַנֶּה מַחְלוּקַת בְּדָבָר יְדוּעַ וְנִהוּג בְּחַיֵּי
יוֹם יוֹם? רָאֵה בְּרִכּוֹת כַּב רִישׁ עֲמוּד ב' גְּבִי
תִּקְנַת עֲזָרָא, לְשִׁקְשׁוּ בְּגִמְרָא וְנִחְזִי עֲזָרָא הֵיכִי
תִּיקֹן, וְכִתְבוּ בַתּוֹסְפוֹת: אַף עַל גַּב דְּבַהֲרָבָה
מְקוֹמוֹת גְּבִי לְשָׂאָר תִּקְנוֹת לֹא פָּרִיךְ בְּגִמְרָא הֵכִי,
לְשָׂאֲנֵי הֵכָא דְדָבָר הֶרְגִיל בְּכָל יוֹם הוּא, עַל כֵּן
אֲנִי זוֹכְרִים.

וְגַם אִם נֹאמֵר לְשָׂאֶפְשֶׁר לְשִׁתְּחַדֵּשׁ מַחְלוּקַת עַל
דְּבָר לְשִׁהְיָה נִהוּג פְּעַם אֶבֶל בְּנִתְיִים נִתְבַּטַּל
לְתַקּוּפָה אַרוּכָה מְאִיזוּ סִיבָה לְשִׁהְיָה . . .
בְּתַפִּילִין לְשִׁהְיָה יוֹם יוֹם, אִיךָ אֶפְשֶׁר לְשִׁבְזָמֵן
מִן הַזְּמַנִּים תַּתְּחַדֵּשׁ מַחְלוּקַת בְּאַפְּנֵי סְדוּר
פְּרִנְשִׁיּוֹתֶיהָ — הֵרִי בְּמוֹחֲשׁ הַמְתַּקְנִים דוֹר
דוֹרִים וְנִרְאֶה לְעֵינֵינוּ אִי אֶפְשֶׁר לְשִׁתְּקוּם
פְּלוּגְתָא בְּמִצִּיאוֹת?

The question is obvious: How could a dispute suddenly arise over something so well known and practiced daily? In Berachot 22b, regarding Ezra's decree, the Talmud asks, "Let us see what Ezra established!" Tosafot explain that although the Talmud doesn't normally pose such a question about other enactments, here it does—because this is something people do every single day, and therefore they would surely remember.

Even if we suggest that disagreements could arise over practices once observed but later discontinued for some time . . . still, with tefilin, which Jews wear every single day, how could a new dispute about the order of its parshiyot possibly emerge? This is a reality passed down from generation to generation, visible to the eye, not something about which uncertainty could arise!



TEXT 6

*Rabbi Reuven
Margolis, Notes to
She'elot Uteshuvot
Min Hashamayim #3*

כְּמוֹ שֶׁמְצִינּוּ בְּסִנְהֶדְרִין (צב, ב), שֶׁאָמַר רַב
יְהוּדָה בֶּן בְּתִירָא: "הֲלוֹ תְּפִלִּין שֶׁהֵנִיחַ לִי אָבִי
אָבָא, וּמִמֵּתִים שֶׁהִחְיָה יְחִזְקֵאל הֵי"ה",
וּבִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירוֹבִין (י, א) שֶׁאָמַר הֵלֵל הַזֶּקֶן:
"אֵלוֹ תְּפִלִּין מֵאָבִי אָבָא".

וּמִימֹת דּוֹר וָדוֹר עָטְרוּ אָבוֹת אֶת בְּנֵיהֶם
בְּטוֹטְפוֹת וְהִנְחִילוּ לָהֶם תְּפִלִּין שֶׁבִידֵיהֶם
מֵאָבוֹת אָבוֹתֵיהֶם, וַיִּזְדַּע לְשִׁמּוֹר תְּפִלָּיו קוֹנִים
לוֹ תְּפִלִּין. וְכֵן נִהְגוּ הוֹרֵי רַבֵּינוּ תָּם בְּהִגְיעוֹ
לְמִצְוֹת בְּחַיֵּי סָבוּ.

וְאֵיךְ זֶה יַעֲמוֹד בְּיוֹם מִן הַיָּמִים וַיִּשְׁנֶה סֵדֶר
מִקּוֹבֵל בְּכָל תְּפִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיָּמֵים קְדוּמִים?!

Indeed, in Sanhedrin 92b, Rabbi Yehudah ben Beteira says, "These are the tefilin my grandfather left me, from among those who were revived by Ezekiel." And in Jerusalem Talmud, Eruvin 10:1, Hillel the Elder said, "These are the tefilin from my grandfather."

For generations upon generations, fathers adorned their sons with tefilin, passing them down as an inheritance. Anyone who knew how to guard his tefilin would eventually acquire tefilin of his own. And so it was certainly with Rabbeinu Tam himself, who received tefilin upon becoming bar mitzvah from his grandfather Rashi during his lifetime.

How then could it be that one day the long-accepted order of tefilin, preserved throughout the Jewish people from ancient times, suddenly came into dispute?



The debate about *tefilin* spans centuries and predates *Rashi* and *Rabbeinu Tam*.

TEXT 7

*Rabbi Mordechai ben
Hillel, cited in Beit
Yosef, Orach Chayim 34*

וְנֶהוּג עֲלֵמָא כְּרַשׁ"י וְרַמְבַּ"ם, וְגַם שְׁלַחוּ כְּתַב מֵאֶרֶץ
יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנִּפְלָה בִּימָה שְׁעַל קֶבֶר יְחִזְקִאל וּמָצְאוּ שָׁם
תְּפִילִין יְשָׁנִים כְּסֵדֶר רַשׁ"י זְכוֹרֵנוּ לְבִרְכָה.

The universal custom follows Rashi and Maimonides. It was even reported in a letter sent from Israel that a landslide occurred at the site of Ezekiel's grave, and there they discovered old tefilin arranged according to the order of Rashi, of blessed memory.

TEXT 8

Talmud, Menachot 41b

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: כַּמָּה חוֹטֵיִן הוּא נוֹתֵן?
בֵּית שְׁמַאי אוֹמְרִים ד', וּבֵית הֵלֵל אוֹמְרִים ג'.

The sages taught in a Baraita: How many strings (tzitzit) does one place on a garment?

Beit Shamai says, "Four strings [are inserted into the hole in the garment, so that there are eight strings hanging down altogether]," and Beit Hillel says, "Three strings [are inserted into the garment]."

There is a similar debate over the number of strings on *Tzitzit*. Once again, they could have simply looked at the precedent of Moses and Jews throughout history.



ANSWER 1

G-d gave two options at Sinai as a unique, one-time case.

TEXT 9A

*Rabbi Yosef Chaim of
Baghdad, Ben Ish Chai,
Parshat Vayera*

וְהִנֵּה בַּתְּחִילָה הָיוּ חוֹשְׁבֵינָם מְחֻלְוֹקֵת זֶה כְּנִשְׂאָר מְחֻלְוֹקֵת, שֶׁסְּבָרָה אַחַת בְּטֻלָּה, אֲדָּהּ בָּא רַבֵּינוּ הָאָרִיז"ל וְהִגִּיד
בְּקַבְלָה מִפִּי אֱלִיָּהוּ זְכוּר לְטוֹב שְׁשֵׁנֵי הַסְּבָרוֹת אֵמֶת, וְצָרִיד לְמַעַבְדַּת תְּרוּנֵיהוּ, וּמִיָּמֹת מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ עָלָיו
הַשְּׁלוֹם וְעַד הַגְּאוֹנִים הָיוּ מְנִיחִים שְׁנֵי זִוְגוֹת, וְכֵן אֵימָא בְּגִמְרָא: מְקוֹם יֵשׁ בְּרֵאשׁ לְהִנִּיחַ בּוֹ שְׁנֵי זִוְגוֹת.
וּבְזוֹהַר חֲדָשׁ אֵימָא עַל קִצָּת בְּנֵי אָדָם דְּמְנִיחִין שְׁנֵי זִוְגוֹת מְסַפְקָ, "דְּלֹא יִדְעִינוּ בְּרִזָּא דָּא דְתְרוּנֵיהוּ
אַצְטְרִיכוּ".

עַל כֵּן יֵרָא שָׁמַיִם יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁנֵי זִוְגוֹת תְּפִילִין: אֶחָד כְּסְבָרַת רִש"י וְאֶחָד כְּסְבָרַת רַבֵּינוּ תָּם.

At first, this dispute was treated like any other Halachic disagreement—one opinion accepted, the other dismissed. But then the Arizal revealed, based on a tradition he received from Elijah the prophet, that both views are true. One must fulfill them both. In fact, from the time of Moses our teacher until the ge'onim, people would wear two pairs of tefilin. The Talmud itself states that there is space on the head to place two sets.

The Zohar Chadash also mentions certain people who wore two pairs out of doubt, saying, "We do not know the secret, but both are necessary."

Therefore, a G-d-fearing person should wear two pairs of tefilin—one according to Rashi's opinion, and one according to Rabbeinu Tam's.



This debate exists even
in the Heavenly court.

TEXT 9B

*Rabbi Yaakov Halevi of
Marvège, She'elot
Uteshuvot Min
Hashamayim #3*

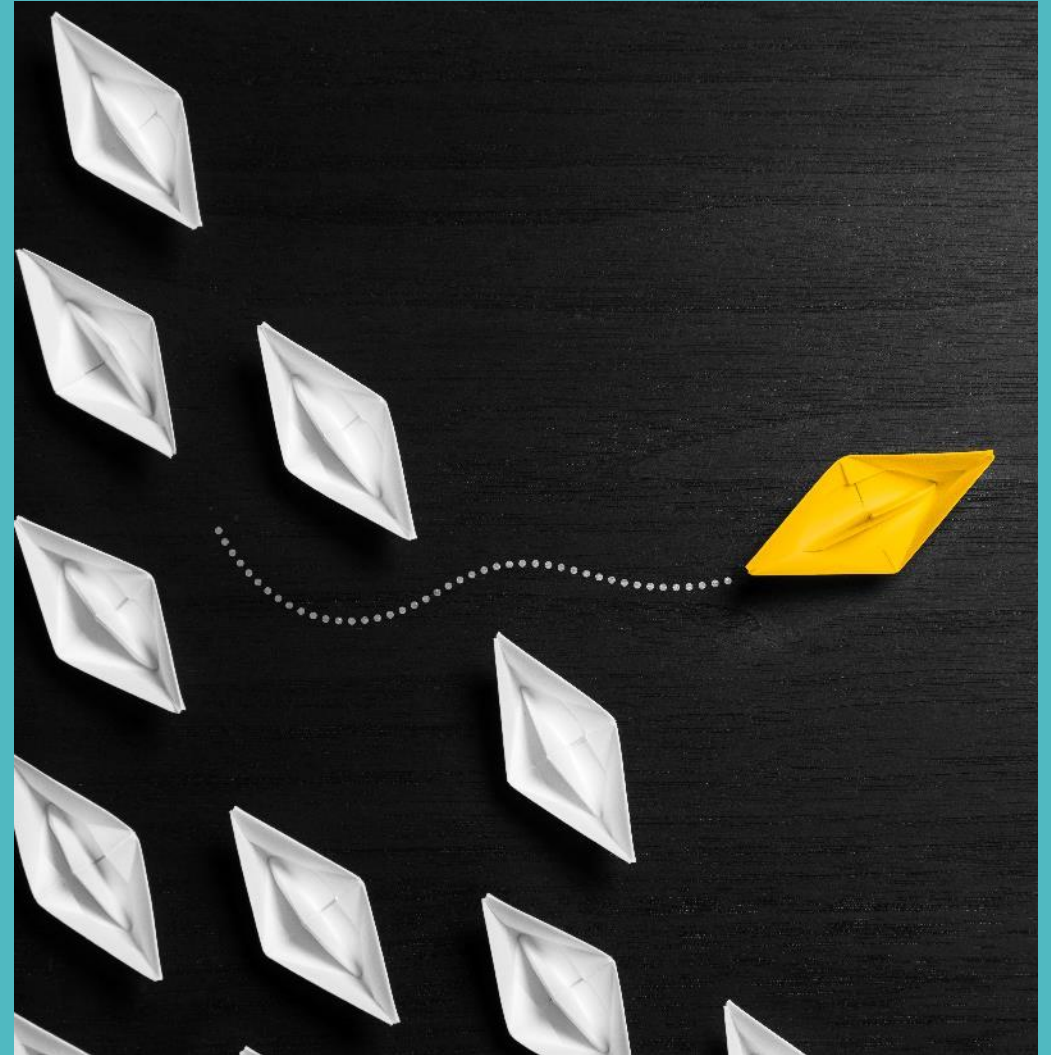
וְעַל סֵדֶר פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת שֶׁל תְּפִילִין, כִּי הִיָּתָה שְׂאֵלָתִי, אֲנִי מֶלֶךְ הַגְּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא חַכֵּם הַרְזִים מְגִלָּה נִסְתָּרוֹת
שׁוֹמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֲסֵד, הַגְּדֹל נָא תִסְדֵּךְ עִמָּנוּ הַיּוֹם וְצִוֵּה לְמַלְאָכֶיךָ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים לְהוֹדִיעַנִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר
נִסְתַּפְּקוּתִי בְּפְרָשִׁיּוֹת שֶׁל תְּפִילִין, כִּי יֵשׁ מִן הַחֲכָמִים הָאוֹמְרִים הַנְּיּוֹת בְּאֲמֻצָּע וְאִם הַחֲלִיף פְּסוּלוֹת, וְעַתָּה
מֶלֶךְ מְלָכִים צִוֵּה לְמַלְאָכֶיךָ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים לְהוֹדִיעַנִי הַלְכָה כְּדַבְּרֵי מִי, וְדַבְּרֵי מִי אַתָּה מְחַבֵּב.
וְהַשִּׁיבּוּ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ דַּבְּרֵי אֱלֹקִים חַיִּים, וְכַמְחַלְוֹקֶת לְמַטָּה כִּי מַחְלְוֹקֶת לְמַעְלָה, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר
הַנְּיּוֹת בְּאֲמֻצָּע, וְכֹל פְּמִלְיָא שֶׁל מַעְלָה אוֹמְרִים הַנְּיּוֹת כְּסֻדְרָן.

I asked the Heavens regarding the order of the parshiyot in tefilin: "Please, great and awesome King, Knower of secrets, Revealer of hidden things, Guardian of the covenant and kindness—show us Your kindness today and command Your holy angels to reveal to me the truth in this matter of tefilin. For some sages say that the two Vehayah passages must be placed in the middle, and if they are switched, the tefilin are invalid. Now, King of kings, command Your angels to tell me: According to whom is the Halachah, and whose words do You favor?"

And the reply came: "These and those are the words of the living G-d. Just as there is a dispute below, so too is there a dispute above. The Holy One, blessed be He, says: Vehayah passages in the middle. But the entire Heavenly host says: Vehayah passages in order."

OPTIONAL

Rashi's opinion is mainstream,
while *Rabbeinu Tam* represents
the 'silent tradition' for those
worthy of following both.



OPTIONAL

TEXT 9C

*Rabbi Aviad Sar Shalom
Basilea, Emunat
Chachamim, ch. 30*

הַאֱמֶת הוּא כָּךְ: שְׁמֵלֶבֶד הַטַּעַם הַמְפּוֹרָסִים, יֵשׁ עוֹד טַעַם אַחֵר עָמוּק וְנִעְלָם. וּמַעֲתָה הוֹרָה מֹשֶׁה לְהַמּוֹן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל [אִיךָ] שְׂצָרֵיךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת הַתְּפִלִּין, וְלִשְׂרִידִים אֲשֶׁר ה' קוֹרָא, לִמַּד בְּצִנְעָה הַטַּעַם הַנִּסְתָּר.

וּמִמֶּנּוּ יָדְעוּ בְּיַחּוּד שְׁמֵי שְׂרָצָה לְהִיּוֹת מִן הַמְּהַדְרִין לֹא יִסְפִּיקוּ לוֹ הַתְּפִלִּין הַיְדוּעִים, אֲלָא יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ עוֹד תְּפִלִּין אַחֲרֵיהֶם וַיְכוּוֹן בָּהֶם אֶל דְּבַר נִעְלָם.

The truth is this: Beyond the well-known reason, there is another deeper, hidden reason. From the beginning, Moses taught the people of Israel how to make their tefilin. But to the select few, “those whom G-d calls” (Joel 3:5), he privately revealed the hidden reason.

From this they understood that anyone who wishes to be among those who go beyond the basic requirement cannot be satisfied with the standard tefilin alone. He must also make for himself another pair, with the intention of aligning them to that hidden teaching.

ANSWER 2

The order of the scrolls is not legally binding, so doing it differently does not invalidate the tefilin. Historically, Jews may have followed either order. Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam sought to standardize the practice, each making their preference the exclusive option.

TEXT 10

*Rabbi Menachem
Kasher, Torah
Shelemah, Milu'im,
Parshat Bo, vol. 12, #44*

מְפוֹרֶסֶמֶת קוֹשִׁיית הָעוֹלָם: אִיךָ נוֹלָדָה
מַחְלּוֹקֶת כָּזוֹ בְּאַיִזָּה זְמַן מִן הַזְּמַנִּים
בְּמִצְוֵה הַנוֹהֶגֶת בְּכָל יוֹם וַיּוֹם שְׁאֵפְשָׁר
לְבַרֵּר אִיךָ מְנַהֵג הָעוֹלָם?

וְלִכְאוּרָה אֶפְשָׁר לְפָרֵשׁ הַדָּבָר שְׁהָיוּ
זְמַנִּים שְׁהַמְלָכוֹת גָּזְרוּ שְׁלֹא לְהַנִּיחַ
תְּפִילִין, וּמִצְוֹת תְּפִילִין נִתְרַשְׁלָה מְרוֹב
הַצָּבוּר . . . אֲבָל זֶה דוֹחֵק גְּדוֹל
שְׁהַתְּפִילִין שֶׁל כָּל הַצָּבוּר יֵאבְדוּ בְּבַת
אַחַת וְלֹא יִשָּׂאֵר מֵהֶם מְסַפֵּר יְדוּעַ
שְׁאֵפְשָׁר יִהְיֶה לְבַרֵּר מֵהֶם סֶפֶק זֶה . . .

A famous question is asked: How could such a dispute arise, at some point in history, about a mitzvah practiced every single day—something that could easily be clarified by looking at the common custom?

At first glance, one might suggest that there were times when the ruling powers forbade the wearing of tefilin, and as a result the mitzvah was neglected by much of the community. . . . But this explanation is very forced. It is hard to imagine that the tefilin of the entire community would vanish at once, leaving nothing at all from which to resolve the uncertainty.

TEXT 10

*Rabbi Menachem
Kasher, Torah
Shelemah, Milu'im,
Parshat Bo, vol. 12, #44*

לְכֹן נִרְאָה לִי לְבָאָר עֲנִין זֶה, מוּבָא
בְּרֵאשׁוֹנִים שְׁמִנְהֵגִים שׁוֹנִים הָיוּ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
. . . אֶלָּא שָׂרַב בָּא וְתִקֵּן שְׁכוּלָם יַעֲשׂוּ
בְּאוּפֹן אֶחָד וְאִם הִחְלִיף פְּסוּל, וְעַל זֶה
פְּלִיגֵי אַבְיֵי וְרָבָא בְּאַיְזָה אוּפֹן הִיְתָה
הַתְּקִנָּה שְׁל רַב לְפִסּוּל.

וְאִם הִדְבָּר כֵּן, אֶפְשָׁר לְהִבִּין אִיךָ נוֹלְדָה
אַחַר כֵּן מִחִלּוּקַת בְּסִידוּרָן, מִפְּנֵי שְׁנִשְׁאָרוּ
בִּיַדֵיהֶם שְׁל הַצְּבוּר הַרְבֵּה תְּפִילִין
מֵאַבוֹתֵיהֶם שֶׁהָיוּ מְסוּדְרִין בְּאוּפֹן אַחֵר,
וְאַלֶּה הַבָּאִים הִחְזִיקוּ בְּמִנְהַג אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם אַף
אַחֲרֵי הַתְּקִנָּה שְׁל רַב, וְכִכָּה עָבַר הַמִּנְהַג
שְׁלָהֶם גַּם לְדוֹרוֹת הַבָּאִים.

It seems more reasonable to explain, as some of the Rishonim note, that there were in fact different customs among the Jewish people. Later, Rav came and established a single uniform practice, ruling that if one deviated from it, it would be invalid.

If this is the case, we can understand how the later disagreement about the order of the parshiyot developed. Many Jews still had tefilin inherited from their fathers, arranged according to the older customs. They continued to follow the tradition of their ancestors even after Rav's decree, and so these divergent practices carried forward into future generations.



The Rebbe clarifies the role of Halachic debates in Jewish tradition.

TEXT 11A

Rabbi Yechiel Halperin,
Seder Hadorot, Year
4930

שאל הרב רבי יעקב אל הנביא, ואמר לו:
"אדוני תשאל אל מוריניו הרב רבי אליהו
מפריש ואל רבינו תם (שכבר נתבקשו
לישיבה של מעלה באותה עת) האף קושרין
קושר של תפלין — אם צריך לקשרו בכל יום,
או די בהידוק, או אם צריך הידוק או קשירה
(וכלומר שדי באחד מהם)".

והנביא קרב מיד לפניהם את מט"ט (הוא אחד
משרי מעלה) וכו' אמר לו, "מט"ט מט"ט רד
בכאן לפנינו". והשיב לו מט"ט, "מה תרצה,
לא ארד, כי משה לפניך ונראתי לילה. אבל
שאל מה שתרצה ואשיב לך".

והנביא כעס ואמר לו פעם שנית "רד ותביא
עמך הרב רבי אליהו מפריש ורבינו תם!"

אמר לו (מט"ט), "רבי אליהו אינו יכול לירד
כי הוא מקריב קרבנו לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא".

Rabbi Yaakov once turned to the prophet [a reference to one of his teachers since passed] and asked him, "Master, please inquire of our teachers Rabbi Eliyahu of Paris and Rabbeinu Tam [both of whom by then had already passed]: How is the knot of the tefilin to be made? Must it be tied anew each day, or is tightening enough? Or perhaps one requires either tying or tightening but not both?"

The prophet then summoned Metatron, one of the great ministers on high, saying: "Metatron, Metatron, descend here before us."

Metatron replied, "Why should I descend? Moses our teacher is present before you, and I fear to come in his place. Ask me what you wish, and I will answer."

The prophet grew angry and said a second time, "Descend—and bring with you Rabbi Eliyahu of Paris and Rabbeinu Tam!"

Metatron answered, "Rabbi Eliyahu cannot descend, for he is offering his sacrifice before the Holy One, blessed be He."



TEXT 11A

Rabbi Yechiel Halperin,
Seder Hadorot, Year
4930

אָמַר לוֹ הַנְּבִיא, "מִכֹּל מְקוֹם יֵרֵד, כִּי אָנוּ
צָרִיכִין לְתַלְמוּדוֹ".

The prophet insisted: "Nevertheless, he must descend, for we need his Torah teachings."

אָמַר לוֹ מֵט"ט, "אִם יֵרֵד שְׁכִינָה תֵרֵד עִמּוֹ".

Metatron responded: "If he were to descend, the Shechinah itself would descend with him."

אָמְרוּ כָּל הַרְבָּנִים, "אִינוּ מִן הַרְאוּי לְהַטְרִיחַ
לְשְׁכִינָה".

At this, all the rabbis present said, "It is not fitting to trouble the Shechinah."

הִשְׁיב רַבֵּינוּ יַעֲקֹב, "תִּשְׁאַל אֶת מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ
עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם שֶׁהוּא בְּכָאן".

Rabbi Yaakov then said, "In that case, let us ask Moses our teacher, who is here with us."

וְכֵן עָשָׂה הַנְּבִיא וְשָׂאל מִמֶּנּוּ, "הֵאֵיךְ קוֹשְׁרִין
קֶשֶׁר שֶׁל תְּפִלִּין?"

And so the prophet asked Moses, "How should the knot of the tefilin be tied?"

אָמַר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם, "אֵין אַתֶּם
קוֹשְׁרִין כְּדָת, כִּי הַקְּשִׁירָה לֹא בְּשֵׁל יָד הוּא,
אֶלָּא בְּשֵׁל רֹאשׁ, וְקוֹשְׁרִין כָּל יוֹם".

Moses our teacher answered, "You are not tying it correctly. The true knot is not on the arm-tefilin but on the head-tefilin, and it must be tied anew each day."

וַיֵּרֵד רַבֵּנוּ תָּם כְּאַרְיֵי וְאָמַר, "מִנְּשָׂה טְעִיתָ, כִּי
הַקְּשֶׁר אֵין צָרִיךְ כָּל יוֹם אֶלָּא הַיְדוּקָה, וְלֹא
בְּשֵׁל רֹאשׁ הִיא אֶלָּא בְּשֵׁל יָד, דְּכַתִּיב:
'וְקִשְׂרֶתֶם לְאוֹת עַל יַדְיֶךָ'".

At that moment, Rabbeinu Tam descended like a lion and declared, "Moses, you are mistaken! The knot does not need to be retied daily—tightening is enough. And it is not on the head-tefilin but on the arm-tefilin, as it says: 'And you shall bind them as a sign upon your arm' (Deuteronomy 6:8)."

Another tradition holds that this debate occurred during *Rabbeinu Tam's* lifetime.



TEXT 11B

*Rabbi Yechiel Halperin,
ibid.*

וְקִבַּלְתִּי מִתַּלְמִיּוֹדֵי הַגָּאוֹן רַבִּי לֵיֵאוֹן דְּמוֹרִיאֵל וּמַג' זְקַנֵי הַדּוֹר וְאָמְרוּ וְשִׁקְבְּלָהּ אֲצִלָּם מִזְקֵנֵיהֶם שְׁכֹן הָיָה הַמַּעֲשֵׂה בְהֵיאוֹת רַבֵּינוּ תָּם וְרַבֵּינוּ אֶפְרַיִם הַגָּדוֹל בֶּן רַבִּי יִצְחָק מִרְגֵנְשְׁבוֹרְק וְהָיוּ מְפַלְּטִים עַל קִשְׁרַת תְּפִלִּין. כִּי רַבִּי אֶפְרַיִם אָמַר שְׁצַרִּיד לְקִשְׁרָם בְּכָל יוֹם שְׁנֵאָמַר "וְקִשְׁרְתֶם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ", וְרַבֵּינוּ תָּם אָמַר שְׁלֹא יֵשׁ חוֹב לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ בְּכָל יוֹם.

וְכֵן פִּלְפְּלוּ הַרְבֵּה עַד שֶׁחָרָה אַפּוֹ שֶׁל רַבֵּינוּ תָּם וַיַּעֲמוֹד עַל רַגְלָיו וַיִּקְרָא בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל וַיֹּאמֶר: "מִנְשֵׁה רַבֵּינוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם רֵד!" וְכֵן צָעַק ג' פְּעָמִים, עַד שֶׁיָּרַד מִנְשֵׁה רַבֵּינוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם בִּישִׁיבָה.

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ רַבֵּינוּ תָּם: "אֲנִי אוֹמֵר שְׂאִין לְקִשּׁוֹר קִשְׁרַת שֶׁל תְּפִלִּין בְּכָל יוֹם, וְשְׁלֹא צוּיֵת זֶה בַּתּוֹרָה שִׁקְבַלְתָּ מִהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא."

וְהוֹדָה מִנְשֵׁה רַבֵּינוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם לְדַבְּרָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ לוֹ.

I received a tradition from my teacher, the ga'on Rabbi Leon de Murial, and from three elders of the generation, who in turn had received it from their own elders. They related the following incident: Once, Rabbeinu Tam and Rabbi Ephraim the Great, son of Rabbi Yitzchak of Regensburg, were debating the matter of the tefilin knot. Rabbi Ephraim argued that it must be tied anew each day, as it says, "And you shall bind them as a sign upon your arm." Rabbeinu Tam maintained that there is no obligation to tie it daily.

They debated at length until Rabbeinu Tam's anger was stirred. He rose to his feet, cried out in a loud voice, and declared: "Moses our teacher, come down!" He repeated this three times until Moses our teacher appeared in the study hall.

Rabbeinu Tam said to him, "I say that the knot of the tefilin does not need to be tied daily, and that you were never commanded this in the Torah you received from the Holy One, blessed be He."

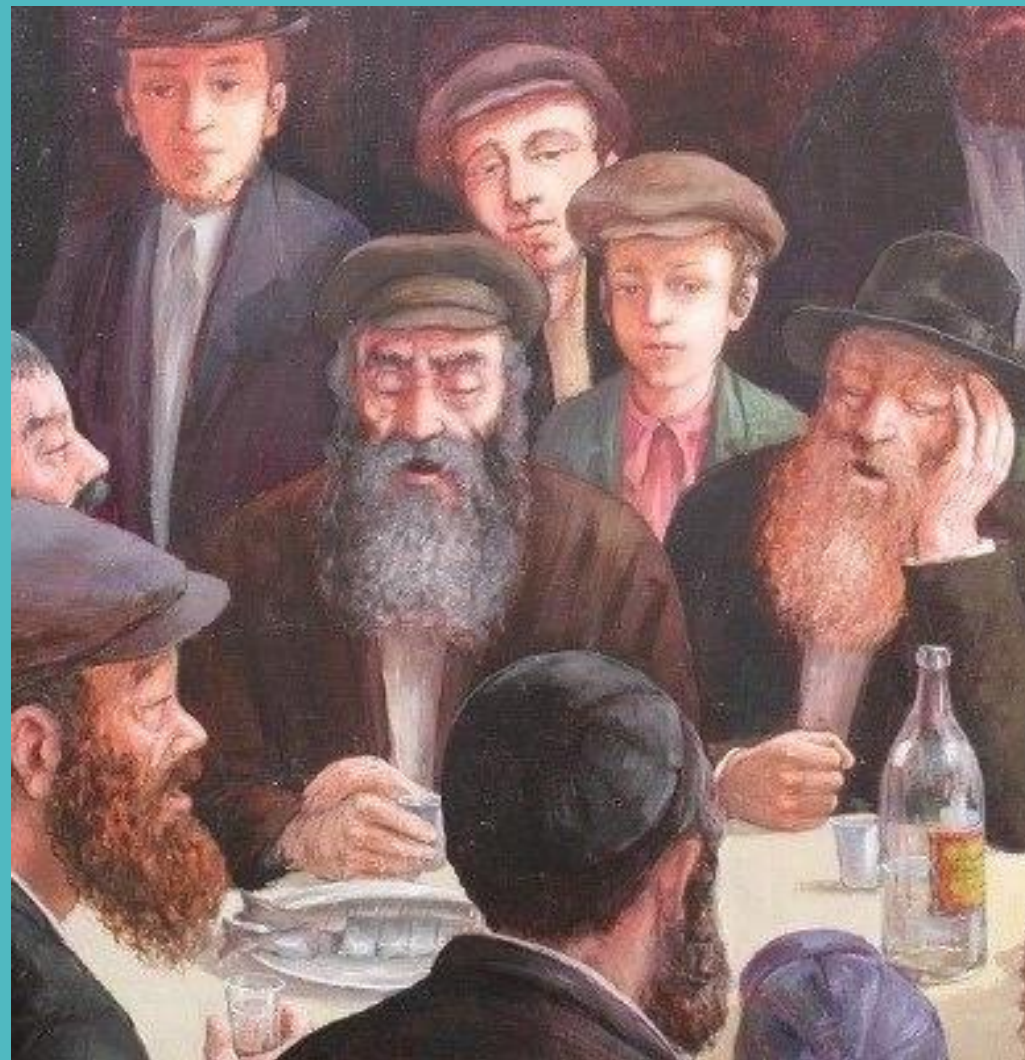
Moses our teacher admitted that Rabbeinu Tam was correct, and then departed.



How could *Rabbeinu Tam* argue with Moses, and Moses even concede to him?

How is this possible?

A similar story happened
between the *Tzemach*
Tzedek and his disciples.



TEXT 12A

*The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, Torat
Menachem 5742:3 (4),
p. 1931*

פעם הָיָה וויכוח בין ה"חזורים" בביאור ענין
מסויים במאמר של הצמח צדק. רבי הלל
מפאריטש אמר באופן כף, ושאר ה"חזורים"
אמרו באופן אחר.

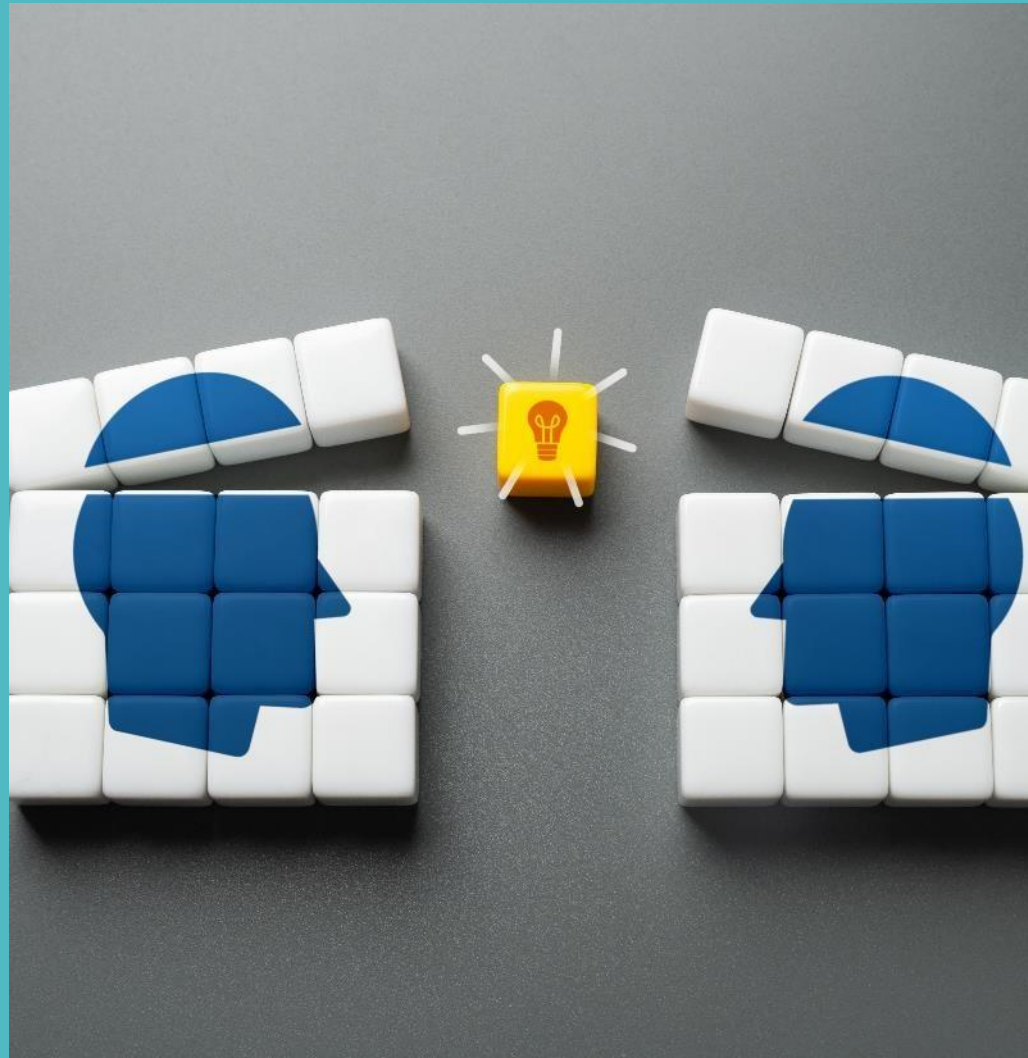
כאשר נכנסו ה"חזורים" לתזור את המאמר
בפני הצמח צדק, ושאלו אותו מהו הביאור
בענין זה, והשיב הצמח צדק שהביאור בזה
הוא כפי שאמרו שאר ה"חזורים", ולא כפי
שאמר רבי הלל.

נענה רבי הלל ואמר: "ווען א רבי זאגט א
מאמר חסידות, איז דאס פנתינתה מסיני",
אבל לאחרי אמירת המאמר, כאשר מדובר
אודות ביאור במאמר זה, כאשר כל אחד
ואחד צריך ללמוד את המאמר בשכלו הוא,
יכול וצריך הוא (רבי הלל) ללמוד את הפשט
באופן המתקבל בשכלו, למרות שהצמח צדק
לומד את הפשט בדבר באופן אחר!

Once there was a debate among the chozrim (those who reviewed and memorized the Rebbe's discourses) over how to explain a certain point in a maamar (discourse) of the Tzemach Tzedek. Rabbi Hillel of Paritch gave one explanation, while the other chozrim explained it differently.

When they repeated the maamar before the Tzemach Tzedek, they asked him which explanation was correct. The Tzemach Tzedek replied that the explanation was as the other chozrim had said, and not as Rabbi Hillel had understood it.

Rabbi Hillel responded, "When a Rebbe says a maamar of Chasidut, it is as if it were given at Sinai. But once the maamar has been said, and it comes to explaining it—when each of us is meant to study it with his own mind—then I am both permitted and obligated to understand the meaning as it makes sense to me, even if the Tzemach Tzedek himself explains it differently."



When G-d gave us the Torah, it became ours to debate. Within tradition, legitimate authorities may express their opinions.

TEXT 12B

*The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, ibid.*

ועל דרך זה בנוגע לענייננו: כַּאֲשֶׁר מִשָּׁה רַבֵּינוּ
מָסַר לַבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁשָּׁמַע מִפִּי
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, הִיָּה הַדְּבָר בְּגֵדֵר שֶׁל תּוֹרָה
מְסִינִי, וְעַד לְעִנְיָן שֶׁל גְּבוּאָה. אָבָל לְאַחֲרֵי זֶה,
כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיוּ צְרִיכִים לְלַמּוֹד עִנְיָן מְסוּיָּים, צָרִיךְ
כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד לְלַמּוֹד בְּאוֹפֵן הַמוּבֵן בְּשִׁכְלוֹ,
וְאִז יָכוֹל מִשָּׁה רַבֵּינוּ לְבַאֵר עִנְיָן מְסוּיָּים
בְּאוֹפֵן כָּךְ, וִיהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן נוּן בְּאוֹפֵן אַחֵר כְּפִי
הַמוּבֵן בְּשִׁכְלוֹ הוּא.

וְכַמוּכָן בְּהִתְאָם לְכָלֵּי לִימּוּד הַתּוֹרָה
(שְׁנֵאָמְרוּ עַל יְדֵי מִשָּׁה רַבֵּינוּ): י"ג או ל"ב
מִדּוֹת שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה נִדְרָשֶׁת בָּהֶם.

זֹאת אוֹמְרֵת: יְשָׁנֵם עִנְיָנִים בַּתּוֹרָה שְׁנֵאָמְרוּ
בְּאוֹפֵן כָּלְלִי, וּבְאוֹפֵן כְּזֶה שִׁיכוּלִים לְלַמּוֹד זֹאת
בַּתּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה (שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה בְּפִירוּשָׁה נִתְּנָה)
בְּב' אוֹפְנִים, וּשְׁנֵיָהֶם אֶמֶת (מֵאַחֵר שֶׁב' אוֹפְנִים
אֵלוֹ הֵם בְּהִתְאָם לְכָלֵּי לִימּוּד הַתּוֹרָה).

We can apply the same logic: When Moses our teacher conveyed to the Jewish people what he heard directly from G-d, that was Torah from Sinai, even a level of prophecy. But afterward, when it came time to study a specific matter, each person was required to learn it in a way that made sense to his own mind. Thus, Moses our teacher might explain an idea one way, while Joshua ben Nun could explain it differently, each according to how he understood it.

Of course, this is only within the parameters of the general principles of Torah study that Moses himself taught—the thirteen methods by which the Torah is expounded.

That means: Some parts of Torah were given in a general way, leaving room in the Oral Torah for more than one interpretation. If both approaches are developed according to the proper rules of interpretation, both are true.



TEXT 12B

*The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, ibid.*

ועל דרך זה בנוגע לתפילין: שב' השיתות
שפדבר (שיתת רש"י ושיתת רבנו תם) הם ב'
אופנים בלימוד מצות תפילין בתורה, וב'
אופנים אלו היו מאז ומקדם, גם בזמנו של
משה רבינו.

ולכן מניחים ב' זוגות תפילין, הן כשיתת
רש"י והן כשיתת רבנו תם, מאחר ששניהם
אמת. וכמוכא בתקוני זוהר שפדורות
האחרונים (קודם ביאת משיח צדקנו) צריכים
להניח הן תפילין דרש"י והן דרבנו תם.

The same applies to tefilin. The two approaches—
Rashi's and Rabbeinu Tam's—are two valid ways of
understanding the mitzvah of tefilin in the Torah.
Both existed from the very beginning, even in Moses
our teacher's time.

That is why we put on two pairs of tefilin, both
according to Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam, since both are
true. As the Tikunei Zohar teaches, in the later
generations, before the coming of Mashiach, we are
meant to wear both Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam tefilin.

OPTIONAL

Wearing Rabbeinu Tam tefilin is the customary practice of many Chasidim.



OPTIONAL

TEXT 13

*Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac
Yehudah Yechiel Safrin
of Komarno, Shulchan
Hatahor, Laws of
Tefilin, ch. 34*

כָּל אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂיֵשׁ בּוֹ יְהוּדוֹת חַיִּיב לְהִנִּיחַ מִן הַתּוֹרָה שְׁנֵי תְּפִילִין
דְּרַשׁ"י וְרַבֵּינוּ תָּם. וּמִי שְׂאִינוּ מְנִיחַ דְּרַבֵּינוּ תָּם . . . אִם עוֹשֶׂה
בְּמִזִּיד וּבְשָׂט נֶפֶשׁ הוּא . . . קַרְקַפְתָּא דְּלֹא מְנַח תְּפִילִין.

Every Jew who possesses a connection to his Jewish identity is obligated by the Torah to wear both pairs of tefilin—those of Rashi and of Rabbeinu Tam. . . . One who neglects to put on Rabbeinu Tam tefilin—if he does so deliberately and with disregard—is included in the category of “a skull that has not worn tefilin” (Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 17a).



The Torah empowers us to question, analyze, and engage with it, making it a living inheritance to explore and own.

KEY POINTS

1. There are various verses and practices related to critical mitzvah observance that remain subject to debate.
2. One example is the debate between Rashi and his grandson Rabbeinu Tam vis-à-vis the order in which the four scrolls are placed inside the tefilin.
3. This debate didn't originate with Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam in the eleventh century. It goes all the way back to ancient times and is only attributed to them.
4. There are various explanations as to how this and other such debates ever arose in the first place. Some suggest it's an anomaly unique to tefilin, while others suggest it's a less-critical detail in the mitzvah observance.
5. The Rebbe explains that once the Torah was given to us at Mount Sinai, it became ours, to the extent that we are entitled—within certain parameters—to argue with even Moses himself!
6. The Torah is ours, inviting—indeed obligating—us to inquire and probe.

