מוסדות אור שמח מרכז טננבאום ע.ר.

58-00-21343-00

רח' שמעון הצדיק 22-28 ירושלים ת.ד. 18103

טל: 02-581-0315

Michtav Bracha

Av 5786

The mitzva of techeiles is very precious.When combined with the white strings of the tzitzis, the techeiles strands serve as a visual tangible reminder of God's Throne of Glory, connecting man to his Creator. At some point in our history, the precise source of the techeiles and details of its processing became lost. For centuries, klal yisreal was unable to fulfill this beautiful mitzva. The first modern attempt to rediscover and revive this commandment was by Rav Gershon Chanoch Leiner of Radzhin. While his particular identification of the chilazon was generally not accepted even by the proponents of techeiles, he unquestionably deserves the credit for bringing a virtually-forgotten mitzva to the forefront of Jewish consciousness. In recent decades, the murex trunculus has emerged as a more likely possibility. Some strongly maintain it IS techeiles; some maintain that it MIGHT be; others refuse to accept it at all.

It is of course true that most Gedolei HaPoskim have not called upon Yidden to wear murex or any other candidate for techeiles. Nevertheless, a number of them have stated that if one learns the sugya thoroughly b'iyun and comes to the conclusion that murex is or might be true techeiles, he certainly may and perhaps should incorporate techeiles into his tzitzis. But the decision must come from an in-depth limud.

Rabbi Yehuda Davis, a conscientious Ben Torah and mechanech, has given us a wonderful opportunity to engage in this limud. In a book of almost 500 pages, he very ably collects, translates and annotates the sources and carefully and respectfully marshalls the arguments for both sides. Although he is a wearer of murex techeiles, his goal is not to convince -it is to inform. It is clear that Rabbi Davis is seeking emes and as such, his work deserves to be disseminated and studied. Regardless of whatever conclusion you come to, techeiles is a sugya that should be learned. If you are persuaded, you will be able to fulfill a mitzvas aseh. And if you are not, the very process of learning about a mitzva that you are unable to presently fulfill is in itself a way to fulfill it.

We owe Rabbi Davis a debt of gratitude for the clarity and comprehensiveness of his exposition. May he have much hatzlacha in the dissemination of this work and in all of his avodas hakodesh.

With Admiration and Bracha,

Yitzchak A. Breitowitz

Rav, Kehillas Ohr Somayach