SHEIMOT: HOW TO DISPOSE OF

Sheimot: Disposal

These holy writings (*tashmishei kedusha*) may not be thrown directly into the trash, but should ideally be buried with like items (*sheimot*):

- Holy writings that contain God's name.
- Parts of *Tanach* (24-book Jewish Bible).
- Explanations of the *Torah* or commandments.

However, if a printed or written page (in contrast to parchment scrolls such as *tefilin*, *Torahs*, or *mezuzas*) contains God's name plus secular content, it must be double wrapped in plastic before being thrown in the trash.

REASON It would be a disgrace to bury *Torah* words with secular content.

NOTE You may find collection boxes (marked "*sheimot/sheimos*" or "*geniza*") at a local Jewish school or *synagogue* into which you can deposit your *sheimot* items.

NOTE *Tashmishei mitzva*—items used to do a *mitzva* (such as *talit* or *tzitzit)*—must be wrapped in:

- One layer of plastic if they will be thrown away in dry trash, or
- Double layer of plastic if they will be thrown away into wet garbage.

Sheimot/Bury

Do not throw into trash, even if double wrapped:

- Handwritten scrolls of *Torah*, *tefilin*, *mezuza*.
- Printed *Torah*, *Talmud*, *siddur*, books of *halacha*, or *Torah* commentaries.

Rather, put them into a *sheimot* collection box or wrap in plastic and bury in a place where they will not be dug up. It does not need to be a cemetery.

Double Wrap and Throw into Trash

Double wrap and throw into trash:

- Newspapers and flyers that have *Torah psukim* or *Torah* commentaries and also have non-*Torah* content.

  REASON Non-*Torah* material should not be buried as *sheimot*.

- Children's school handouts with *psukim* from the *Torah* or *halachot* that also contain non-*Torah* content (if they ONLY contain words of *Torah*, they should be buried as *sheimot)*.

Single Wrap and Throw into Trash

For disposal of items used for *mitzvot* (*tashmishei mitzva*), you may wrap in one layer of plastic and throw it in normal garbage:

- *Lulav*,
- *Etrog*, or
- *Talit*/*tzitzit* (but NOT *tefilin*!)

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