הלכה יומית

Daily Halacha

Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Yomi: the whole Kitzur in a year, a few paragraphs a day

CLEANLINESS OF THE PLACE USED FOR A SACRED PURPOSE · KITZUR 5:9-16

Sunday • 30 Tishrei

9. If excrement is found, in a house in which a congregation prays even though it is found behind the chazzan and is distant from him, four amohs from the point at which the odor ceases, he nevertheless must remain silent and wait until it is removed or covered, because it is impossible that one of the congregation should not be within four amohs from the place where the odor ceases, and this man is forbidden to listen and to pay attention to what the chazzan is saying.

10. If you prayed and later found that the place contained excrement— if it was a place that should have been inspected for possible excrement and you neglected to inspect it, since the prayer of the Shemoneh Esrei is in place of a Sacrificial offering, this Scriptural verse is applicable, "The sacrifice of the wicked is abominable" and you are therefore required to repeat the Shemoneh Esrei. Similarly, in regard to Shema which is a Biblical command; since there is no problem of reciting a berachah in vain you must again recite the Shema, without the berachos. Likewise other berachos recited there, and even the Birkas Hamazon, need not be repeated. If the place is one that did not require inspection for excrement, you are not considered negligent, and even in regard to Shemoneh Esrei your obligation is fulfilled. If urine is found, even in a place where its existence should have been suspect, your obligation is fulfilled even in regard to Shemoneh Esrei.

11. If a person flatulates, he is forbidden to utter anything holy until the odor evaporates. If his neighbor flatulates, he also must wait untilthe odor evaporates. But if he is engaged in studying Torah, it is not necessary for him to wait for the odor to evaporate when it is emitted from his neighbor.

12. In the case of a lavatory, even if it has partitions and has no excrement, we must keep a distance from it [when praying]. Therefore, a seat in which there is a hole under which a container is placed to retrieve excrement, even if the container is removed and the hole is covered with a board, this seat nevertheless is regarded halachically as a lavatory, and must be removed from the house [i.e. room] or completely covered. However, there are chairs designated for sitting and covered with a cushion, and when the need arises the pillow is removed and the chair is used as a toilet. The pillow is then returned to its place. In this case we may be lenient.

13. A bed pan for holding excrement or a urinal, if they are made of earthenware or wood are regarded as a lavatory. Even if they are clean and have no foul odor, and even if water was poured into them or they were inverted, it is to no avail. Even if they were placed under a bed, it is of no avail (because our beds do not serve as partitions), rather they must be removed from the house or covered. If they are made of metal or of glass, if they are washed well and have no foul odor, there is no need to keep a distance from them. With regard to the mouth of a hog, since it pecks at excrement, it has the status of a bed pan. Even if it [the hog] emerges from a river, the washing does not change its status.

14. In a bathhouse it is also forbidden to speak or think about sacred matters. It is also forbidden to mention the specific Names of the Holy One, Blessed is He, even in a secular language, (for example Gott in German, or in any other language) in a bathhouse or in a filthy alley. Similarly it is forbidden to extend shalom to your friend there, because Shalom is the

Name of the Holy One blessed is He. As it is said: "And he called it Hashem Shalom." Regarding a person whose name is Shalom, some authorities forbid calling him by his name in the above-mentioned places. Others permit it since the intent is not the concept of peace but merely to mention the name of that particular person. Our practice is to be lenient. However, a God-fearing person should preferably adopt the stricter view.

15. It is forbidden to speak words of Torah or other sacred words in the presence of nakedness, whether your own or another's. Even a small child's nakedness is included. (An exception is for the mitzvah of milah, when a berachah may be recited in the presence of the child's nakedness.) Even closing your eyes in order not see the nakedness does not suffice, since it is in front of you, but you should turn your face and body away from the nakedness.

16. With regard to the body of a woman, any place that is customarily covered for modesty, of which a tefach is revealed, [is considered nakedness]. The hair of a married woman should be covered, and if part of her hair is revealed, it is in the same category as nakedness as far as a man is concerned. There is no distinction between his wife or any other woman. However, [when it is exposed] in the presence of another woman, it is not considered nakedness. The voice of a woman while singing, is also considered nakedness. Nevertheless, in unavoidable circumstances when you hear women singing and cannot prevent it, you should not refrain from reciting the Shema, prayers, or Torah. Rather, you should concentrate intensely upon the sacred subjects in which you are engaged, and pay no attention to their singing.

CLEANLINESS OF THE PLACE USED FOR A SACRED PURPOSE · LAWS RELATING TO BERACHOS, THE RESPONSE OF BARUCH HU UVARUCH SHEMO AND AMEIN · KITZUR 5:17-6:3

Monday • 1 Cheshvan

17. If your heart sees your own nakedness, even if your private parts were covered, as when wearing a robe, it is also forbidden to recite any sacred text. You must either wear trousers, which cling to your body, or put on a belt, or place your arms against your robe, in order to create a separation between your heart and your nakedness. A woman is not required to do this.

1. Before reciting a berachah you must be sure which berachah you are required to recite, so that when you mention Hashem's Name which is the principle part of the berachah, you will know how to conclude the berachah. It is forbidden to do anything else while reciting a berachah. Do not recite the berachah hurriedly but think of the meaning of the words. The Sefer Chassidim states: "When you wash your hands or recite the berachah on fruit or on the performance of a mitzvah,—berachos which everybody knows— you should direct your attention to recite them in the Name of your Creator Whose goodness is bountiful, Who granted you the fruit or bread for your pleasure, or commanded you to perform the mitzvah.

You should not recite the berachah automatically, out of habit, spouting words from your mouth without thinking of their meaning. On account of such practice Hashem's anger was kindled, and He sent us word through the prophet, Isaiah, saying: "Because this people approaches [Me] [only] with their mouths and honor Me [only] with their lips and their heart is distant from Me and their reverence for Me is merely perfunctory." The Holy One Blessed is He said to Isaiah, See how the deeds of My children are merely external and they adhere to them [only] as a person adheres to and practices a custom of his forbearers; they enter My house and pray to Me the designated prayers merely as a custom of their fathers but not with their whole hearts.

They wash their hands, and recite the berachah over the washing and then break bread and recite the hamotzi, they drink and recite the berachah out of habit. When they recite the berachos they have no real intention of praising Me. Therefore, His anger was fierce and He swore by His great Name to destroy the wisdom of their Sages who know Him and still praise Him perfunctorily, without sincerity as it is written thereafter: "Therefore I shall do yet more ... and the wisdom of their Sages will be lost." Therefore our Sages warned us regarding this and said: "Fulfill [your] obligations for the sake of the Creator etc."

This concludes his [Sefer Chassidim's] remarks. It is proper to accustom yourself to recite the berachos aloud because the voice arouses concentration.

2. When you recite a berachah your mouth should be free of saliva nor should anything else be in your mouth, as it is said: "My mouth shall be full of Your praises."

3. It is forbidden to utter the Name of God in vain. Whoever utters the Name of God in vain violates a positive commandment, as it is written: "You shall fear Hashem, your God." It is also written: "If you will not heed etc. to fear this glorious and awesome Name." Included in the concept of fear is not mentioning His great Name except in praise of Him or when reciting a berachah whenever required, or when studying Torah.

You should fear and tremble when you mention the Name of Hashem, Blessed Be His Name, but you should not utter it God forbid in vain. This not only applies to the ineffable Name but includes all Names that are ascribed to Hashem, Blessed be He. It is not only forbidden in Hebrew but is forbidden in any language.

He who curses his friend or himself in the Name of Hashem, Blessed be He or in one of the allusions to Hashem, (the allusions refer to the adjectives that are used to praise the Holy One Blessed is He, e.g., the Great, the Powerful, the Awesome, the Faithful, the Glorious, the Mighty, the Valiant, the Strong, the Gracious, the Merciful, the Zealous, Prolonger of Wrath, and Bestower of Kindness) in any language, incurs the penalty of lashes. In our sinfulness many people are careless and say: "God should punish him" or something similar to that, thereby violating a prohibition of the Torah. If one curses without using Hashem's Name or without the allusion to Him or if the curse was implied from something else that was said, for example: May that person not be blessed by Hashem or a similar statement, even though there is no penalty of lashes there is still a violation (see Choshen Mishpat ch. 27).

Similarly it is forbidden to write His Name Blessed be He, in any letter, in any language. Many people mistakenly write His Name, Blessed be He, in German or write the word, adieu which in French means "with God," and this constitutes a clear violation since after a while the letter will be thrown away with trash. When the Name of God is mentioned frequently, especially when mentioned disdainfully, God forbid it causes poverty among Jews. Wisdom and effort are required to halt this practice (See Urim there).

When saliva accumulates in your mouth, you should remove it and then say the Name of Hashem, and not say the Name and then spit. Similarly, when kissing the Torah, remove any saliva before kissing the Torah and not afterwards. When you wish to mention the Name of Hashem you should say the word Hashem, and not as the common people who say Adoshem, because this reference is undignified when referring to Heaven. (See Turei Zahav, Chapter 621).

Tuesday • 2 Cheshvan

4. You must be careful never to recite a berachah in vain God forbid, or cause yourself to recite a berachah which is unnecessary. If you recited a berachah in vain, or if you uttered the Name of Hashem in vain, you should immediately say: Boruch sheim kevod malchuso le'olam va'ed ["Blessed [is His] Name, Whose glorious kingdom is forever and ever."] If immediately after pronouncing Hashem's Name you remember that the berachah is unnecessary, you should conclude [with]: lamdeini chukecha, (teach me Your laws), which is a complete verse. Thus it is considered as learning [Torah] and [the Name] was not mentioned in vain.

If you began the word Elokeinu [our God], and immediately recall after saying Elokei and have not said the suffix nu you should conclude by saying: Yisrael Aveenu meolam ve'ad olam [Israel our father forever and ever] (which is also the syntax of a verse in Chronicles I, Chapter 29). Nevertheless you should also say: Boruch sheim kevod malchuso le'olam va'ed (See Tzlach, Maseches Berachos, Page 39).

5. If you recited a berachah over water and heard there was a corpse in the vicinity, and the custom in your community is to pour out the water in the vicinity of the dead person, (as mentioned later in Chapter 194) because such water is considered dangerous, nevertheless, since you recited the berachah you should drink a bit of it so that the berachah not be in vain, and do not worry about the health hazard, because "One who performs a mitzvah will not suffer adverse consequence." (See later Chapter 109 par. 9). [However,] after drinking a bit of the water you should pour out the rest.

6. With regard to all berachos (except for Birchas Hamazon which will be elaborated upon, God willing in Chapter 44, par. 11), if you are in doubt whether you said them or not, you should not repeat them.

7. A man must recite at least one hundred berachos each day. King David instituted this obligation. A hint to this effect is found in Scripture: "[These are the words] of the man [David] who was raised high." The numerical value of עַל is one hundred. Support for this is found in the Torah: "And now Israel, what does Hashem, your God request of you but to fear Hashem etc." Do not read the word mah, [what] but rather read me'ah [one hundred] which refers to the hundred berachos which will cause us to fear God, and to love Him, and constantly remember Him through the berachos we recite.

The curses in the book of Deuteronomy number ninety-eight, and then it is stated: "All sicknesses and plagues etc." bringing the total to one hundred. The hundred berachos we recite each day shield us and save us from these curses. On Shabbos and Yom Tov and on fast days which lack the hundred berachos, we compensate by concentrating on the berachos recited by the chazzan when he repeats the Amidah, and on the berachos recited over the Torah reading and the reading of Maftir, after which we answer Amein. Similarly berachos over foods add to the total.

8. Upon hearing any berachah made by someone, when you hear the words: Baruch Attah Hashem, [Blessed are you Hashem] you should say: Baruch Hu Uvaruch Shemo [Blessed is He and Blessed is His Name] and when he completes the berachah you should say Amein. Amein means it is true, and you should have in mind: "The berachah which was recited is true and I believe in its truth." In the berachos which also include prayer such as the berachos of the Shemoneh Esrei beginning with Atah Chonein until Hamachazir Shechinaso Letzion and also the berachah of Sim Shalom, you should have in mind these two things when saying Amein: The berachah is true and that it be the will [of God] that the prayers be fulfilled speedily. When answering Amein to the Kaddish which is a prayer for the future, you should have in mind only that the prayer be fulfilled soon.

9. If you are are reciting prayers where an interruption is forbidden, you should not say Baruch Hu Uvaruch Shemo. Similarly if you hear a berachah which you must hear to fulfill your obligation, so that it be considered as though you recited it yourself, as for instance the berachah over the Shofar, or the berachah over the Megillah, you should not say Baruch Hu Uvaruch Shemo because this constitutes an interruption in the middle of the berachah. (See Dagul Merevavah Chapter 124). The laws of answering Amein when you are reciting prayers where interruption is prohibited, will be explained, God willing, later in special chapters. (Chapter 14 and Chapter 16).

LAWS RELATING TO BERACHOS, THE RESPONSE OF BARUCH HU UVARUCH SHEMO AND AMEIN · LAWS RELATING TO THE MORNING BERACHOS · KITZUR 6:10-7:8

Wednesday • 3 Cheshvan

10. You must be very careful to say the word Amein properly, and not say the Aleph hastily nor "swallow" the Nun. You also should be careful not to answer Amein before the one reciting the berachah has concluded the entire berachah, because this is termed a hasty Amein. You also should not delay the answering of Amein because this is an orphaned Amein. Rather, immediately upon the conclusion of the berachah, you should answer Amein. You should not raise your voice louder than the one who recites the berachah, as it is said: "Declare the greatness of Hashem with me and let us exalt His Name together."

11. You must not answer Amein to your own berachah (except in the Birchas Hamazan, after the berachah to rebuild Jerusalem). Even if you conclude a berachah simultaneously with the chazzan you should not answer Amein. However, if you are reciting one berachah and the chazzan is reciting another berachah and you conclude the berachah simultaneously you should answer Amein to the berachah of the chazzan. If you concluded the berachah of Yishtabbach, or the berachah of Shomer Amo Yisroel La'ad, or the berachah Yehalleluchah, which concludes the Hallel prayer, together with the chazzan you should also answer Amein (Since according to numerous opinions even after your own berachah in these instances you may answer Amein).

1. There is a dispute among the authorities if the listener should answer Amein after hearing [the berachah] La'asok B'divrei Torah. Some maintain that this is not the conclusion of the berachah but rather that Veha'arev nah etc. [please make pleasant] is a continuation of the above, thereby making the entire text one berachah, and therefore you should not answer Amein. Others maintain that this is the conclusion of the berachah and Veha'arev nah begins another berachah and therefore you should answer Amein. Therefore you should recite this berachah in an undertone, so no one should hear it, and become involved in doubt.

2. The berachah, Hanosein lasechvi vinah, should not be recited until the light of the day appears.

3. The berachah, Poke'ach ivrim, may be said even by a blind person, because he also benefits from others who show him the way. If you recited the berachah, Zokeif kefufim, before you recite the berachah, Mattir asurim, You should not recite the berachah, Mattir asurim, since it is included in the berachah of Zokeif kefufim, because the uprighting of posture includes the free movement of the limbs.

4. After [the berachah], Hama'avir sheinah mei'einai usenumah mei'afapoi, you should not answer Amein, because this is not the conclusion of a berachah, for Vihi ratzon etc. [may it be Your will] is also part of this berachah, and the actual conclusion of the berachah is Hagomeil chasadim tovim le'amo yisrael.

5. [Even] If you are awake the entire night, in the morning, you should recite all of the morning berachos, except for the berachah of Netilas yadayim, which you do not recite. There is a question if the berachah of Elokai neshamah, and the berachah Hama'avir sheinah, and also the

berachos on the Torah should be said, and therefore it is best to hear them from another person and to answer Amein. (See Chapter 6: 9 and Chapter 2: 8)

6. If you did not say all the morning berachos, before the morning prayers, you may say them after prayers, except for the berachah of Netilas yadayim, (some authorities hold that washing the hands in the morning was instituted as a preparation for prayers; if so, after the prayers are concluded there is no need for this berachah), and the berachah of Elokai neshama (for which the obligation was fulfilled with the berachah of Mechayei hameisim.)

7. Regarding the berachos on the Torah, if they were not said before the morning prayers, there is a controversy among the authorities if they are to be said after the prayers. Some maintain not to say them because they were exempt with the saying of Ahava rabbah [With unbounded love] (or Ahavas olam) [With an everlasting love] which are berachos whose contents are also similar to those of the Torah berachos: "Grant into our hearts the ability to understand to listen, to learn, and to teach etc." And, others maintain that saying Ahava rabbah does not exempt the reciting of the Torah berachos unless one learns after the Amidah immediately without any interruption. Therefore, initially, you should be careful to recite the Torah berachos before the morning prayers. In the event, however, that you forgot to recite [the Torah berachos] before morning prayers, you should study a Torah text immediately after the Amidah.

If you also forgot to do this, then because of doubt you are not required to recite the berachos on the Torah.

8. If you are called to the Torah before having recited the berachos on the Torah, if it is possible before the Aliyah to recite all the Torah berachos and also to say at least one Torah verse, for example Yevarechecha etc, [May He bless you], you should do so and then go to the Torah and recite the berachos. If, however, it is impossible to follow this procedure you should go to the Torah anyway. Since at the Torah you will have recited Asher bachar banu etc, [Who chose us] you should say afterwards, only the berachah of Asher kiddeshanu etc. [Who sanctified us] and Veha'arev nah etc. [Please make pleasant] until Le'amo yisrael [to His people Israel] and then say Yevarechecha etc.

ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE FORBIDDEN FROM DAYBREAK UNTIL AFTER MORNING PRAYERS · KITZUR 8:1-5

Thursday • 4 Cheshvan

1. As soon as the day dawns, when a ray of light shines from the sun in the east, since this begins the time when prayers may be said, (for if you had prayed then, your obligation, would have been fulfilled) it is forbidden to begin work or indulge in your affairs or set forth on a trip before praying, as it is said: "Righteousness will precede him and he will set his footsteps upon the way." "Righteousness" refers to prayer for we declare the righteousness of our Creator, and then afterwards we may set our footsteps on the road to our personal endeavors.

2. You may not eat or drink [before praying] as it is said: "You shall not eat anything with blood," [which means] You shall not eat before you pray for your blood (life and welfare). Whoever eats or drinks and then prays, of him, the Scripture says: "And hast cast Me behind your back." Do not read gavecha [your back] rather gei'echa (your pride); said the Holy One, Blessed is He,"After this person catered to his pride, he accepted the yoke of Heaven."

It is forbidden even to drink coffee or tea with sugar or milk before praying. An old or weak person who cannot wait for his food until the time the congregation leaves the synagogue, especially on Shabbos or Yom Tov when the prayers are very prolonged, may pray the Shacharis service in his home, slowly, then recite Kiddush and eat something. Afterwards he should go to the synagogue and listen intently as the congregation prays the Shacharis service, and then pray the Musaf

prayers with them. [This is more appropriate than permitting him] to drink coffee with sugar or something similar without first accepting God's kingship.

However, for reasons of health, it is permissible to eat or drink before prayers, since this is not an act of pampering one's ego. Similarly, one who is unable to concentrate properly during prayer without eating or drinking, may eat or drink if he wishes before praying.

3. Some [authorities] maintain that even if you arise at midnight it is forbidden to taste anything before prayer and it is proper to follow this stricter opinion. However, if you feel weak you may eat or drink something to strengthen yourself for Torah [study].

4. Water, coffee, or tea without sugar or milk may be taken before prayers even after daybreak because, there is no egotistic indulgence in doing this. Even on Shabbos or Yom Tov when you are obligated to recite Kiddush, you may drink these liquids before praying, without saying Kiddush, because before prayers there is no obligation to recite Kiddush, as Kiddush is said only at a meal and immediately prior to that meal. Thus, since you may not eat before Shacharis prayers there is no requirement of Kiddush.

5. [Before praying] It is forbidden to go to a friend to meet him, or greet him with Shalom, or even to say good morning; to him as it is said: "Withdraw yourselves from man whose breath is still in his nostrils; because for what is he to be esteemed." This means: what is his importance that you honor him before honoring Me? If you meet him by chance, according to the strictness of the law, it is permissible to say Shalom. However, it is proper to alter your usual form of greeting, in order to remember that it is forbidden to engage in other matters before praying.

ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE FORBIDDEN FROM DAYBREAK UNTIL AFTER MORNING PRAYERS · THE LAWS OF TZITZIS · KITZUR 8:6-9:3

Friday • 5 Cheshvan

6. It is even forbidden to begin learning Torah after daybreak. However, if you are accustomed to go to the synagogue and there is no likelihood that the time [for prayer] will elapse, it is permissible to begin learning. Similarly one who studies with others and if they do not study now they will not study later, it is permissible to study with them because the collective merit of a group is very great. They must take care however not to overlook the time for prayer.

1. The mitzvah of tzitzis is very great for according to the Scriptures all the mitzvos depend on it, as it is said: "And you will look upon it and you will remember all the mitzvos of Hashem." The numerical value of the word, tzitzis equals 600, and the eight fringes and five knots make a total of 613.

Therefore every Jew should endeavor to have a tallis katan which he should wear the entire day. It should be [made] of white sheep's wool measuring three quarters of an amah in length and a half amah in width. Others maintain that it should be an amah by an amah. Those who make the tallis katan, sewing its sides together [making it like a shirt], should take care that both sides of the garment are left open, i. e. the greater part of the visible sides are left open. Even hooks may not be used to join the open parts.

Also, every Jew should endeavor to have a large garment with tzitzis [attached] to wear during prayer. He should endeavor to have a beautiful garment. Similarly, all mitzvos should be performed with as much splendor as possible, as it is said: "This is my God and I shall glorify Him," and we learn from this be adorned before Him with mitzvos.

You should take care to purchase tzitzis from a trustworthy person to be sure that they were spun and twisted specifically for the purpose [of tzitzis,] and according to the prescribed laws. (The tzitzis) should also be adequately long.

2. If only a linen garment is available, in which it is prohibited to tie tzitzis of wool because of the prohibition of sha'atneiz, according to one opinion, the corners [of the garment] should be made of leather to which woolen tzitzis can be tied. Others, however, dispute this view, and maintain that this should not be done.

3. The Torah writes (Deut. 22,12) גְּדִלִים תַּעֲשֶׂה־לְּךָ עַל־אַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת כְּסוּתְךָ—"Make for yourself bound tassels (tzitzis) on the four corners of your garment." Among the laws the Sages learned from this verse are: 1) "תַּעֲשֶׂה" —the tzitzis must be "made" i. e. the attaching of the tzitzis is the final act which makes the garment fit for the fulfillment of the mitzvah. If, however, after attaching the tzitzis there is something else to be done to complete the mitzvah then it is invalid because the tzitzis were not "made" but came into being. We call this "תַּעֲשֶׂה וְלֹא מִן הֶעָשׂוּי" —"make" and not that which came into being by itself (v. para. 6).

2) "עַל אַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת" —"on the four corners" —The mitzvah is to attach the tzitzis at the "corners." It is considered the corner [when it is] no more than three thumb breadths (agudlin) and not less than the distance between the thumb's middle knuckle to the end of the nail from the edge of the garment. The hole through which the tzitzah is inserted should be no further than three thumb-breadths from the edge of the garment, whether along its length or width.

THE LAWS OF TZITZIS · KITZUR 9:4-9

Shabbat • 6 Cheshvan

4. If at the time of tying the tzitzis the hole was at the proper distance, but afterwards the hole tore slightly or the edge of the garment tore so that the tzitzis are then less than the proper distance from the edge, it is not invalid, because the Torah insists that the tzitzah be placed under the corner only at the time of attaching [the tzitzis] as is stated in Scripture: "They shall make for them tzitzis on the corners of their clothes etc." Nevertheless, it is preferable to make a hem around the hole and at the edge of the garment so that it does not [tear and] diminish [the distance to less than] the knuckle of the thumb [to the end of the nail].

5. The custom is to tie the tzitzis [into] five double knots so that between them there will be four links. This [is done in the following manner:] the four strings are inserted into the hole and are tied in a double knot and are wound around seven times with the long string called the shamash. Again a double knot is made and again [the string] wound around eight [times] [with the shamash] [followed by] a double knot and wound around eleven [times] [followed by] a double knot, and wound around thirteeen [times] [followed by] a double knot.

Since the beauty of the tzitzis is the equal dimension of all its links, therefore, in the first link, where the windings are few they should be a distance, one from another, and in the second link they should be brought closer. [This should] also [be done] in the third and fourth [links.

] The proper length for each tzitzah, that is from the first knot until the end of the strings, should be at least twelve thumb-breadths. The preferable adornment [would be] that all the links together should comprise a third of the tzitzah and the hanging strings the [remaining] two thirds. Therefore care should be taken that each link should be the width of a thumb so that all of the links should total four thumb-breadths, and the hanging threads should be eight thumb-breadths.

If the tzitzis are longer, then the links should also be made slightly longer. It is preferable that all of the knots be made with the [same] four strings [always remaining] on one side, with the [other] four strings

[always remaining] on the other side, so that each [individual] string is divided, half on one side [of the four], and half on the other side.

6. If the strings were not cut from each other but, rather, one very long string was taken and folded to make four [strings], and in this manner inserted into the hole and then made into knots, and afterwards cut, [separating them into individual strings,] it is invalid; this is based on the verse in Scripture: "You shall make tzitzis for yourself." We infer from this that you must make the tzitzis, and not tzitzis that come into being, meaning: it is required that the tzitzis be valid when they are attached to the garment. They may not be invalid at the time of attachment and become valid [afterwards] through another action which would cause them to be valid.

This [entire procedure] is invalid. Similarly if the tzitzah were made properly on another garment and that garment tore, and you wish to place the tzitzah in the same way on another garment, or even on this same garment, for example: if the garment tore from the hole until the edge of the garment causing the tzitzah to fall, and you want to put it back to its proper place and then restitch the garment until the hole, this is also invalid because of Ta'aseh velo min he'asui. Similarly, if you tied the tzitzis when the garment was exempt from tzitzis, for example when most of the garment was sewn, and afterwards you undid some stitches causing the garment to open most of the way, and [as a result became] obligated to have tzitzis, [then,] if the tzitzis remain as they were,they are invalid because of Ta'aseh velo min he'asui.

Rather,the tzitzis must be untied and then tied again properly. The same applies in any similar circumstance.

7. Before putting on the tallis the tzitzis should be checked as to their validity. You must also check the strings that go through the hole as well as the shamashim (revolutions.) The strings should also be separated so that they must not be entangled with each other. If you are late in coming to the synagogue so that if you [take the time] to separate the tzitzis and check them you will be prevented from praying together with the congregation, you are not required to check them or separate them.

8. All mitzvos require a berachah oveir la'asiyasan; that is, the berachah must be made before the performance [of the mitzvah.] Immediately after the berachah the mitzvah must be performed without any interruption. Therefore, you should hold the tallis with both hands and think consciously that the Holy One, Blessed is He, commanded us to enwrap ourselves with tzitzis so that we remember to do all His mitzvos, as it is said, [in Scripture:] "And you will look upon them (the tzitzis) and you will remember all the commandments of Hashem." While standing recite the berachah lehisa'teif ba'tzitzis (with the vowel pasach under the beis.)

You should then immediately cover your head [with the tallis] so that the tallis extends below the mouth, and then bring the corners [of the tallis] up to your neck and wrap yourself in the manner of the Arabs. You should remain standing like that for [the length of time] it takes to walk four amos and recite the verses: Mah Yakar etc. After this you may remove the tallis from your head.

You should take care not to drag the tzitzis along the floor for [this would constitute] disrespect for the mitzvah. Therefore, you should lift them (the tzitzis), and you may tuck them into your belt.

9. The berachah over the tzitzis is recited only during the daytime and not at night. It is preferable not to recite the berachah over the tzitzis until the [light of] day is sufficient to distinguish between blue and white. If you put on the small tallis while it was still night, and did not recite the berachah, or if you put it on before your hands were washed and thus did not recite the berachah, then, when reciting the berachah on the large tallis you should have in mind that this berachah [should also include] the small tallis.

If you do not have a large tallis, and you put on the small tallis during the day, and your hands were [already] washed, you should recite the berachah: Al mitzvas tzitzis on it (the letter vav with the vowel pasach). If you put it on while still unable to recite the berachah, then, afterwards, when daylight arrives and your hands are washed, you should take the tzitzis in your hands and recite the berachah: Al mitzvas tzitzis.

If you slept while wearing a small tallis you do not recite a berachah after [daybreak] at all; but, [should instead,] when reciting the berachah on the large tallis, have intention to include [the small tallis].

Translation: Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, trans. Rabbi Avrohom Davis, Metsudah Pub., 1996 (CC-BY), via Sefaria

