The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Thurs, Aug 7, 2025 ■ י"ג אב, תשפ"ה
סימן ח' סעיף ו'-ט'

Overview

Siman 8 Seif 6:

On a *talis koton* one recites להתעטף בציצית. There are those who say that one should recite על מצות ציצית and this is the custom that should be followed.

- The beracha על מצות ציצית applies to a *talis koton* that is not wrapped around the person. *B'dieved*, if one made either beracha on a *talis gadol* or *talis koton* the mitzvah is fulfilled. (M.B. 17)

Siman 8 Seif 7:

One must separate the strings of his *tzitzis* from one another.

- Each string should stand by itself not twisted with others. One should not separate the *tzitzis* if it would cause him to miss davening with the tzibbur. (M.B. 18)

Siman 8 Seif 8:

One should have in mind when wrapping himself in his *talis* that Hashem commanded this mitzvah so that we should be reminded of his mitzvos so that we should do them.

- This intent recorded is in addition to the standard intent to fulfill the mitzvah of *tzitzis*. This additional intent is preferable but *b'dieved* as long as one had the intent to fulfill a positive command he has discharged his obligation. (M.B. 19)

Siman 8 Seif 9:

Before making the beracha one should examine the *tzitzis* to make sure they are kosher so that one should not recite a beracha in vain.

- One should also examine the strings by the hole to make sure that they have not ripped. (M.B. 21)
- The requirement to check the *tzitzis* rather than rely on the presumption that they are valid is due to the concern of making a beracha in vain. (M.B. 22)
- If checking the tzitzis would cause someone to miss davening with the tzibbur or if one was called for an *aliyah* he could wear his *talis* without pre-checking the *tzitzis*. When borrowing a friend's *talis* it is unnecessary to pre-check the strings. (M.B. 22)
- If one checks the *tzitzis* before he puts his *talis* away he does not have to pre-check them the following morning. (M.B. 22)

Halacha Highlights

Examining the *tzitzis* before making the beracha

Shulchan Aruch Siman 8 Seif 9

קודם שיברך יעין בחוטי הציצית אם הם כשרים

Before making the beracha one should examine the *tzitzis* to confirm that they are valid.

The Rosh (שו"ת הרא"ש כלל ב' סי' ט') noted that people do not commonly examine their tzitzis, neither before reciting the beracha nor before going into a public domain on Shabbos because they presume that their tzitzis are still valid. In another place Rosh (דיני עשיית ציצית) comments that someone who is careful in his fulfillment of mitzvos will examine his tzitzis. Shulchan Aruch codifies the latter ruling of Rosh and many commentators ask why we do not rely on the principle of *chazakah* – presumption - that tells us that if they were valid yesterday they are valid today. Taz (סק"ח) answers that although in general we rely upon presumptions, when it comes to the potential risk of making a beracha in vain we do not rely upon the presumption and we check the tzitzis before making a beracha. Magen Avrohom (ס"ק י"א) suggests that we do not rely on a presumption if the matter could be confirmed. Thus since it is easy for one to examine his tzitzis to confirm that they are valid he is obligated to do so. If, however, examining one's tzitzis would cause one to miss davening with the tzibbur, the requirement is pushed aside. Mishnah Berurah (ס"ק כ"ב) gives the explanation of Taz but also adds Magen Avrohom's ruling that one should not miss davening with the tzibbur to examine his tzitzis.

Since Mishnah Berurah explains that the requirement to examine tzitzis every day is out of concern that one may make a beracha in vain, one who does not make a beracha on his *talis koton* is not required to examine his tzitzis and could rely on the presumption that they are valid. Nevertheless, Poskim (ע' פסקי תשובות סי' ח' אות כ') write that one should examine his tzitzis every once in a while to confirm that they are still intact and valid.

Stories to Share

Remembering All the Mitzvos

ש"ע סי' ח', ח': "להתעטף בו כדי שנזכר כל מצותיו לעשותם..."

How do tzitzis remind us of the mitzvos?

The Alshich, zt"l, gives a famous parable to explain the concept. "This can be likened to someone who needed desperately to do something very important. One of the best ways to ensure that he will not forget is for him to tie a string around his finger to remind him that something important needs to be done. So too, seeing the tzitzis reminds us that it is incumbent upon us to do the mitzvos of Hashem.

"But of course this can only work if the person places the string in order to remember. If a string somehow got entangled on his finger, this will not serve as a reminder of anything! Similarly, we must think about the purpose of this mitzvah for it to be truly effective."

אלשיך על התורה, פרשת שלח

The Smag, zt"l, explains that tzitzis are actually meant to remind one of three things. "Firstly and obviously, we must remember Hashem. Secondly, we should recall all of His mitzvos. The word ציצית has a numerical value of six hundred. Add the eight strings and five sets of knots in each corner and you have six hundred and thirteen. Finally it should have techeiles to remind us of the splitting of the sea. As the gemara says, the color of techeiles is like the color of the sea."

סמ"ג, מצות עשה כ"ו

The Ibn Ezra, zt"l, commented on this mitzvah. "Many people are very careful to wear their tallis during davening but don't wear tzitzis throughout the day. But it seems clear to me that it is a greater mitzvah to wear tzitizis throughout the day than only during davening since tzitzis are meant to enable us to recall the mitzvos and avoid sinning. How likely is one to remember and be careful if he only wears tzitizis during davening?"

אבן עזרא, פרשת שלח