

Overview

Halacha Highlights

Siman 16 Seif 1:

The correct size of a garment that is obligated to have *tzitzis* is one that is large enough in its length and width to cover the head and majority of the body of a minor who is old enough to walk in the market without someone watching him. Such a garment is obligated in *tzitzis* if an adult would occasionally wear such a garment in the market.

- ❖ The minor to which Shulchan Aruch refers is a nine-year old. (M.B. 1)
- ❖ Poskim agree that one should not recite the beracha on a garment that is large enough for a minor but an adult would be embarrassed to wear outside. (M.B. 4)
- ❖ It is preferable for one's *talis koton* to be an amah in front and an amah in back but at the very least it should not be smaller than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an amah in front and in back. The hole for one's head is not included in this calculation. (M.B. 4)
- ❖ Arizal maintains that it is preferable that one's *talis koton* does not have sleeves. (M.B. 4)

The Minimum size of a *talis koton*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 16 Seif 1

שיעור טלית שחייב בציצית וכו'

The size of the *talis* that is obligated in *tzitzis* etc.

Mishnah Berurah (סק"ד) writes that the minimum size for one's *talis koton* is $\frac{3}{4}$ of an *amah* on each side and anything less than that raises a concern about a *beracha l'vatala*. Chazon Ish (חזו"א סי' ג' סעי' ל"א) explains this to mean that the length of the *talis koton* may be $\frac{3}{4}$ of an *amah* on each side but the width of the garment must be one *amah*. In other words the total length of the *talis koton* must be 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ amos and the total width must be 1 *amah*. According to the measurements of the Chazon Ish, this means that the minimal width of one's *talis koton* should be no less than 58 cm or 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches and the total length should be 88 cm or 34 $\frac{10}{16}$ inches. According to the measurements of Rav Avrohom Chaim Na'eh the minimum width of a *talis koton* must be 48 cm or 18.9 inches and the total length is 72 cm or 28.3 inches. The preferred measurements, however, is for each side of one's *talis koton* to be an *amah* long and an *amah* wide. In practical measurements this would be according to Chazon Ish 58 cm or 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide and a total length of 116 cm or 45 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. According to Rav Avrohom Chaim Na'eh the preferred size is 48 cm wide and a total of 96 cm or 18.9 inches by 37.8 inches.

Mishnah Berurah (סק"ד) mentions that the neck hole is not included in the measurement of the length of the garment and since he does not qualify that statement it seems that he maintains that the neckhole is never included. Chazon Ish, however, maintains that as long as the material of either side of the neckhole is wider than the hole itself, then the hole is included in the measurement.

gation? At least one should be careful not to go out with this tallis katan on Shabbos where there is no eiruv or if he is careful not to rely on the eiruv!

"There is also another compelling reason to keep one's *tzitzis* clean: this is clearly a part of doing the mitzvah b'hidur. Since if it were to be revealed he would be embarrassed at its filth, why not fulfill this mitzvah b'hidur and clean it?

"Even if this reason is not enough, if he would be embarrassed to go out with a shirt in the same state as his tallis katan, he should definitely refrain from wearing it, since it seems plausible that it is a garment that is not obligated in *tzitzis* for this reason..."

תשובות והנהגות, ח"ד, סי' ד'

Stories to Share

A Respectable Garment

רמ"א סי' ט"ז, סעי' א': "ודוקא כשהגדול לובשו פעמים עראי ויוצא בו לשוק"

The Brisker Rav, zt"l, was very careful about never carrying on Shabbos. Before he went outside, he would remove his tallis katan so as not to violate the prohibition of carrying into the public domain. Many wondered what motivated this apparently strange chumrah. Since the Brisker Rav often tried to satisfy even minority opinions, some thought he was careful to also fulfill the demands of the approach that if there is no techeiles it, it does not discharge his obligation, and if it does not fulfill the mitzvah then it does not constitute a garment that can be carried on the body in regular wear on Shabbos when moving from one reshus to another.

But Rav Moshe Sternbuch, shlit"a, explained the Brisker Rav's conduct differently. "He did this because we find in the Rama in siman 16 that a garment that an adult would never wear to the market is not obligated in *tzitzis*. But this halachah actually has a very practical application that many have missed. Surely, if one's tallis katan is filled with stains he would not go out into the marketplace while wearing it? So why does such a garment discharge his obli-