

# SIMAN 24: THE MANNER OF WEARING THE TZITZIS AND ITS REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

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**24:1.** If a man does not wear a four-cornered garment, then he is not obligated to wear Tzitzis. But it is good and proper for every person to be careful to wear a "tallis katan" [the small garment with tzitzis that is worn under a shirt] all day, (1) in order that he remember the commandment[s] every second. This is why each corner has five knots representing the five Books of the Torah, and the garment has four corners so that in any way one turns, one remembers [the commandments]. And it is proper to wear this garment (2) over one's clothes. At the very least, one should be careful to wear tzitzis (3) for prayer.

**MB 1:** *In order that he remember etc. - An example of this concept: When a person reminds his friend to do something, and the friend ties a knot in his belt to help him remember.*

**MB 2:** *Above one's clothes - See the Mishnah Berurah Siman 8 [MB 25 & 26, where he emphasizes the importance of wearing tzitzis hanging outside of one's clothes].*

**MB 3:** *For prayer - [i.e. the Amidah] and also when reciting the Shema. The Zohar in Parshas Shelach says that one who recites the Shema without tzitzis is giving false testimony about himself, for he reads the commandment of tzitzis and is not fulfilling it. The Hayye Adam writes that it is not good that the masses pray without a "tallis gadol" [large Tallis] when travelling; for usually the "tallis katan" [worn under the clothes] is not made properly according to all the relevant halachos, and so one cannot properly recite the blessing [over the mitzvah of tzitzis] on it, and also, people sleep in the "tallis katan" at night - see the MB on Siman 8 Paragraph 16 [which deals with the question of whether one can make a bracha over tzitzis that he slept in, and concludes that one should not]. [So one who travels without his "tallis gadol" cannot fulfill the mitzvah of reciting a bracha on tzitzis.]*

**24:2.** It is a mitzvah to grasp the tzitzis (4) with the left hand, over the heart, when reciting the Shema. This is hinted by the verse: "And these words shall be ... (5) upon your heart." [Devarim 6:6]

**MB 4:** *With the left hand - In the writings of the AR"l Z"L it is written that one should grasp the tzitzis between the ring finger and pinky, and when one reaches the paragraph which contains the*

*commandment of tzitzis [i.e. the third paragraph of Shema] he should also grasp them with his right hand and look at them, and they should remain in his hand until he reaches the words "ne'emanim venechamadim la'ad" ["faithful and delightful forever" - contained in the paragraph following the Shema], and then he should kiss the tzitzis and release them.*

**MB 5:** *Upon your heart - and the heart is on the left side. And this mitzvah [of tzitzis] saves a person from sin, as it is written [Bamidbar 15:39-40] [about the tzitzis: "and you shall see them and remember ...] and you shall not stray [after your heart and after your eyes] ... So that you remember ... and you shall be holy." And even though no other mitzvah has this ability to save a person from his evil inclination, tzitzis are more effective than the average mitzvah, as demonstrated by the story in Menachos 44a of a certain man etc. [who was about to fall into sin when he was reminded by his tzitzis at the last minute; see the gemara.]*

**24:3. It is good to look at the tzitzis [i.e. the strings] when putting on the tallis, (6) at the time that he is saying the bracha.**

**MB 6:** *When saying the bracha - as it is written [Bamidbar 15:39] "and you shall see them and you shall remember" - seeing leads to remembering, and remembering leads to action.*

Assaf Bednarsh sha-24.4

Siman 24: The Manner of Wearing Tzitzis, and its Reward and Punishment (continued)

**24:4. There are those that are accustomed to look at the Tzitzis when reading the verse (in Shma) of "Ure'isem oso" (and you shall see it) and to place them (7) on the eyes, and this is a fine custom and shows love for the Mitzvah. [Rema: There is also a few that have the custom to kiss the Tzitzis when they look at them - all customs demonstrating love for the Mitzvah.]**

**MB 7:** *On the eyes - It is found in the names of the earliest commentators, that anyone who passes the Tzitzis over his eyes when reading the section of Tzitzis (the third section of Shma) is guaranteed not to go blind. Blind men should hold the Tzitzis while reciting Shma even though it says "and you shall see it," because others can see them, but blind men should not pass the Tzitzis in front of their eyes so as not to make a joke out of it.*

**24:5. When looking at the Tzitzis (while reciting Shma) one should look at the two Tzitzis that are on the front of the garment because they have ten knots as a reminder for the (8) "Ha-va-yos" and there are also 16 strings, and (together) with the ten knots this totals 26 like the numerical value of the name of G-d (Yud, then Hei, then Vov, then Hei). [Letters in Hebrew have numerical value, the first ten running from one to ten, the next from ten to 100, etc. Yud is the tenth letter of the alef- bais, Hei is five, and Vov is 6.  $10+5+6+5=26$ . -- YM]**

**MB 8:** *"Ha-va-yos" - this means the countings [The "countings" are words that refer to different attributes of G-d. There are 10 of these words. The first seven of these countings are well known because they recited by many people after the counting of the Omer. By using seven of the phrases in pairs we get 49 pairs of phrases, one for each night of the Omer. However, there are 10 of these phrases.] that are tied and attached one to the other.*

**24:6** The punishment for ignoring the Mitzvah of Tzitzis is very great and it says (Iyov [Job] 38:13) about this "to grasp the corners of the earth etc." (the end of the passage is "and to shake the evil people from it." Rashi explains that this means that the way people shake the corners of their Tzitzis, so also will G-d "shake" the earth and remove the evil people from it.). (9) Those that are careful about the Mitzvah of Tzitzis will merit to see the Divine Presence.

**MB 9:** *Those that are careful about the Mitzvah of Tzitzis - There is a Mitzvah to make a beautiful Tallis and beautiful Tzitzis. The same is true for all other Mitzvos that we should make them as beautiful as possible, as it says "This is my G-d and I will beautify Him" - [which the Rabbis explain as] "Become beautiful in front of Him with Mitzvos." However, it is forbidden to embroider phrases from the Torah in the Tallis, but nevertheless, if it was already embroidered it is permissible to make a blessing over it. Even on tapestries we don't give permission in advance to embroider words of Torah on them.*

Binyamin Rudman sha-25

My, how time flies! We have now completed the Laws of Tzitzis, the fringes on the corners of our garments, and are now moving forward into the laws of Tefillin, the phylacteries that men wear on their left arm and head during morning prayers. G-d willing, I should be a married man by the time we finish. To all those women getting bored out there: we will soon reach Halachos with practical implications for you!

Again, it is a great honor and pleasure to be working on this list, and to watch it grow at an astounding rate. I know that this would be impossible if not for the efforts of certain individuals from NY to Philadelphia, across the country and around the world, who have publicized this list to their friends; I would like to thank them again for their assistance. -- Yaakov Menken