**ח.** יש אומרים שבשעת הברכה יש לאחוז הטלית בידו הימנית לבד [תמונה ו']. אולם להלכה, רשאי לאחוז הטלית בשתי ידיו. וכן המנהג.

**ט.** נוסח הברכה על הטלית: "ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להתעטף בציצית". [ש"ע ס"ה].

**ואם** טעה ובירך על טלית גדול "על מצות ציצית", יצא ידי חובתו. [משנ"ב ס"ק יז, כה"ח ס"ק כ]. וכן אם בירך "להתלבש בציצית", יצא בדיעבד [כה"ח שם]

Day 39

**Holding tallit in the right hand**

**8)** Some *Poskim* ruled that one must hold the tallit in one's right hand only while reciting the blessing. (Illustration №6) In practice, however, it is permissible to hold it with both hands, and this is the common custom.[8]

**Text of the blessing**

**9)** The text of the blessing we recite on the tallit is בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִתְעַטֵּף בְּצִיצִית – May You be blessed, God our Master, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to envelop ourselves with tzitzit.[9]

If someone mistakenly ends the blessing with the words "עַל מִצְוַת צִיצִית – about the mitzvah of tzitzit," or if he used the words "לְהִתְלַבֵּשׁ בְּצִיצִית – to dress with tzitzit," his blessing is valid.

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**8.** The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (22:9) ruled that one should hold the tallit with the right hand only. He compared this to the halakha regarding reciting blessings over food. In that case the halakha is to hold the food in one's right hand while reciting the blessing. This is the ruling of the *Shulhan Arukh* (206:4) as explained in the *Yalkut Yosef Berakhot English Edition*, *Siman* 206:9. The *Kaf Hahayim* testified that this was the custom in *Yeshivat Bet El*, unlike the practice of others to hold the tallit in both hands. This is likewise the ruling of the *Divre Shalom* Afjin (Vol. I, page 160). The *Piske Teshuvot* (page 75, footnote 46) testified that the Rebbe of Toledot Aharon held his tallit in his right hand while reciting the blessing.

The *Netivot Hayim* (Vol. I, page 457) differentiated between the blessings over food and the blessing for the mitzvah of tallit. It is normal to hold food in one hand while eating it, and therefore the halakha prescribes holding it in the right hand while reciting the blessing rather than in the left hand. When putting on a tallit, however, most people use both hands. Therefore, it is permissible to hold it with both hands while reciting the blessing. He pointed out that the wording of the *Sheyare Kenesset Hagedola* suggests this as well, and that this was the practice of Harav Matzli'ah Mazuz. The *Od Yosef Hai* (*parashat Bereshit* halakha 8) and the *Kitzur Shulhan Arukh* Ganzfried (9:8) likewise instructed us to hold the tallit in both hands while reciting the blessing. Although the *Mishna Berura* (8:2) uses the term "his hand" it does not appear that he meant that one should hold it with only one hand.

The *Yalkut Yosef* (8:21) and the *Halakha Berura* (page 142) both agreed that one may hold the tallit in both hands, and this is the conclusion of the responsa *Avne Levi* (#1) and responsa *Elyashiv Hakohen* (Vol. III, footnote on page 201). This was likewise the practice of Maran the Rishon Letziyon.

The *Leket Yosher* (page 8) wrote that he remembered his mentor (author of the *Terumat Hadeshen*) holding his tallit in his right hand and assisting it with his left hand while reciting the blessing. Perhaps it is best to hold the tallit mainly in the right hand while using the left hand to assist in holding it. Nevertheless, the common custom is to use both hands equally.

**9.** The Arizal taught (*Sha'ar Hakavanot*) that the initial letters of the words *lehit'atef betzitzit* are *lamed bet*, which have the numerical value of 32. This alludes to the 32 Pathways of Wisdom (a kabbalistic concept). The *Hesed La'alafim* (cited in the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 24:12) added that this likewise alludes to the fact that the mitzvah of tzitzit helps to protect a person from toothaches, since an adult normally has thirty-two teeth.

**י.** מנהגינו לברך "להתעטף בְּציצית", בשוא תחת הבי"ת, ולא בפת"ח. [עי' בא"ח בראשית ה"ב, משנ"ב ס"ק י, כה"ח ס"ק יט]. ואם טעה ובירך "להתעטף בַּציצית" בניקוד פת"ח תחת הבי"ת, יצא.

**יא.** כתב הגרי"ח בעוד יוסף חי (בראשית הלכה ה): בכל יום כשמוציא הטלית גדול מן הכיס ללבשו, ינשק בתחלה את הציציות של ארבע כנפות ביחד, ואחר כך פותחו ומברך ומתעטף [תמונה ב']. והוא הדין בעת שפושטו מעליו ומקפלו, דגם כן אחר הקיפול יאחז בידו ארבעת הציציות וינשקם ואחר כך יניחנו בכיס. וכן יעשה בטלית קטן כשפושט הישן ינשק הציציות, וכשלובש החדש גם כן ינשק הציציות, וכל זה משום חיבוב מצוה.

וכן האשה כשהיא מכינה לבעלה טלית הקטן עם בגדים התחתונים שמחליפם בערב שבת, גם כן תזהר לנשק הציציות, ואחר כך תקפלנו ותכין אותו עם בגדיו. [עוד יוסף חי בראשית הלכה ה]

**יב.** מה שיש מנשקים את הציציות בין ברכת "להתעטף בציצית", למעשה העטיפה בטלית, אינו מנהג נכון, שיש לחוש בזה להפסק בין הברכה למעשה המצוה, ויש לבטל מנהגם. [ילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' יט, ועי' יבי"א ח"ה סי' ד]. ובדיעבד שעבר ונישק את הציציות בין הברכה לעטיפה, אינו חוזר לברך. [ילקו"י הלכה כ"ג]

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***Betzitzit*, not *batzitzit***

**10)** The custom of Sefardic Jews is to say *lehit'atef betzitzit* with the vowel schwa under the letter *bet*, and not the vowel *patah*. Nevertheless, if someone mistakenly recites the words *lehit'atef batzitzit*, pronouncing it with a *patah*, his blessing is valid.[10]

**Kissing the *tzitziyot***

**11)** Harav Yosef Hayim (*Od Yosef Hai parashat Bereshit* halakha 5) instructed us to kiss the four *tzitziyot* of the tallit as soon as we remove it from the *kuracha* before we put it on. Then we unfold it and recite the blessing. (Illustration № 2) After folding up the tallit and before inserting it into the *kuracha*, we likewise should kiss the *tzitziyot*. Likewise, when changing out of one *tallit katan* to put on another, we should kiss the *tzitziyot* of the one we take off and kiss those of the fresh one. This practice demonstrates our love for the mitzvah.

When a housewife prepares a set of clothing for her husband, including a *tallit katan*, she should kiss the *tzitziyot* and then lay it down with the rest of the garments.[11]

**Kissing tzitzit after reciting the blessing**

**12)** Some people observe the custom of kissing the *tzitziyot* after reciting the blessing but before putting on the tallit. This is an incorrect practice since the act of kissing interrupts between the blessing and the act of performing the mitzvah, which is to put the tallit on. These people should be taught to discontinue this practice. If someone does kiss the *tzitziyot* after reciting the blessing, however, it is not necessary for him to repeat the blessing.[12]

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**10.** This minor variation does not constitute a violation of the text instituted by our Sages. It is far less of a change than someone who uses the word *lehitlabesh* or the text of *al mitzvat tzitzit*, and even with those variations the person's blessing is valid. In fact, some *Aharonim* ruled that the correct pronunciation is *batzitzit* with a *patah*.

**11.** This entire halakha is taken from the *Od Yosef Hai*. This practice is not obligatory; it is an act of piety that demonstrates one's love for the mitzvah. Some people, notably Lubavitcher Hassidim, kiss the hem of the tallit before putting it on, as mentioned in the *Yalkut Yosef* (footnote on page 52).

We might add that when a woman irons a *tallit katan* for her husband or son, she should kiss the *tzitziyot* before putting it away.

**12.** This is the ruling of the *Yalkut Yosef* (first edition, page 19) based on the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. V, #4) that it is forbidden to per-

**יג.** אם שנים שלשה מתעטפים בטלית כאחת, כל אחד בטלית שלו, כל אחד מהם יברך לעצמו, ואם רצו אחד מברך ומכוין להוציא האחרים, והם יכוונו לצאת ממנו ויענו "אמן". [ראה ש"ע סעיף ה]. ובכל באופן אפילו לא ענו השומעים "אמן" אחר ברכת המברך, בדיעבד יצאו ידי חובת הברכה, ובלבד שהיתה כוונת שומע ומשמיע. [עי' ש"ע סי' ריג ס"ב], ונתבאר בילקוט יוסף ברכות חלק ג' (סימן ר"ג הלכה ה').

Day 40

**One person reciting the blessing for others**

**13)** If two or three people wish to put their *tallitot* at one time, each one should recite the blessing for himself. If they wish, one can recite the blessing on behalf of the others while the others have in mind to fulfill their obligation by listening to his blessing and by responding Amen.[13] Actually, even if they would fail to respond Amen, they would still fulfill their obligation as long the person reciting it had them in mind and they had the proper intentions while they listened. This was explained in *Yalkut Yosef Berakhot III English Edition* (213:5).

form any other act after reciting a blessing over a mitzvah. One must immediately perform the mitzvah after reciting the blessing.

The responsa *Igrot Moshe* (Vol. IV, #10), however, ruled that it is permissible to kiss the *tefillin shel rosh* before placing it on one's head. He explained that the small act of kissing it does not constitute an interruption since it does not delay the fulfillment of the mitzvah at all. The *Yalkut Yosef* (footnote on page 51) argued that this does not contradict his ruling, explaining that in that case the person has already validated his blessing by putting on his *tefillin shel yad*. In our case, however, the person has not yet put on the tallit at all. This resolution does not seem to fit in with the wording of the *Igrot Moshe*, however, since he explained that it is not considered an interruption since it does not take any time. If it is not considered an interruption, the halakha should be the same even if the person had not yet validated his blessing. Furthermore, putting on the *tefillin shel rosh* is a separate mitzvah and the person kisses it before he begins to fulfill that mitzvah.

Several *Aharonim* disagreed with the *Igrot Moshe* and ruled that it is forbidden to kiss the *tefillin shel rosh* after recting the blessing of *lehani'ah tefillin*. See the *Piske Teshuvot* (page 226). According to them, it should certainly be forbidden to kiss the *tzitziyot* before putting on the tallit.

The truth is that it is hard to imagine how someone could kiss the *tzitziyot* immediately after reciting the blessing. If he is holding the tallit in the manner described above in this *Siman*, his hands have no access to the *tzitziyot* to bring them to his mouth. He would have to rearrange his grasp of the tallit to kiss them, and that is certainly more than a momentary interruption. It could be, therefore, that Maran the Rishon Letziyon and the *Igrot Moshe* do not disagree, even if the *Yalkut Yosef's* resolution is incorrect. Whatever is the case, it is best to refrain from kissing the *tzitziyot* until after one has put on the tallit.

**13.** The *Shulhan Arukh* (8:5) offers these two choices. The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 52) wrote that it would be best if, when a group of people are about to put on their *tallitot* at the same time, one person would recite the blessing on behalf of the entire group. In that way, their mitzvah would have the added element of a mitzvah performed by a group, thus enhancing God's honor that much more. Nevertheless, he admitted, this is not the common custom. Everyone recites the blessing for himself since not everyone is familiar with the procedure of one person reciting a blessing for others and what each person has to think while the blessing is being recited. Besides, some people might not listen well or might miss some of the words. We cannot compare this to the mitzvah of kiddush, since in that case people are used to the idea of listening to the leader's blessing and intending to fulfill their obligation in that manner. This position is that of the *Haye Adam*.

In the *Yalkut Yosef Berakhot I English Edition* (footnote to 167:34), this issue is discussed at length. It demonstrates that Maran the Rishon Letziyon felt that regarding the blessing of *hamotzi* or *borei peri hagefen*, a group of people should have one person recite it for everyone seated at the table. Regarding other blessings for food or beverages, however, the common custom is for each person to recite them for himself even though the *Shulhan Arukh* ruled that it is best that one recite them on behalf of the group. If they wish, they can have the leader recite any of these blessings on their behalf. Regarding the blessing of *bore peri ha'adama* for the *karpas* during the Seder, Maran the Rishon Letziyon ruled that it is preferable for the leader to recite it on behalf of the group since it is a mitzvah to eat *karpas*.