כ. הנוהגים לכרוך הטלית על צוארם, וכל ארבע כנפות הציצית מול פניהם [תמונה ס"ו], אינם יוצאים ידי חובת המצוה, ומברכים ברכה לבטלה. ויש להעיר למוסר אזנם. ולמוכיחים ינעם, ועליהם תבוא ברכת טוב. [יחו"ד ח"ה סי' א]

ויש לקנות טלית גדול המכסה רוב ככל גופו, ולאחר שיתעטף בו כנ"ל, יחזיר שתי ציציות לפניו, ושתים לאחוריו כדי שיהיה מסובב במצות [תמונה י"ז]. [שם בסוף התשו']

כא. השומע קדיש או קדושה בעודו מתעטף בטלית כעטיפת הישמעאלים, קודם שיוריד הטלית על גופו (שנוהג בעיטוף לעטוף תחילה הראש בלבד כדעת הבן איש חי, שהבאנו לעיל הלכה י"ז), צריך לענות עם הצבור, ואפילו "אמן" דברכות. ואפילו הניחו על ראשו כדי להתעטף בו, ולא הספיק לעשות העטיפה, ושמע

Wearing folded tallit on the shoulders

20) Some people wear the tallit on their neck with both sides hanging down in front of their chest, as if it was an ornamental scarf. (Illustration № 15) This is an incorrect practice. Whoever does this does not fulfill the mitzvah of wearing tzitzit at all, and the blessing they recite on the tallit is a blessing recited in vain. These people should be told in a gentle, convincing manner that they must wear the tallit on their entire backs and around their shoulders. Those who succeed in persuading them to correct this error will be greatly blessed and rewarded.[21]

When purchasing a tallit, one should make sure that it is large enough to cover most of one's body, if not all of it. One should wear it with two of its *tzitziyot* hanging in front of him and two behind him. In this way, one's body is surrounded with mitzvot. (Illustration № 10)

Speaking during *atifa Yishmaelit*

21) [Anyone who follows the first procedure described above in halakha 17 when putting on the tallit must keep in mind that he does not complete the mitzvah and validate the blessing until he lowers the tallit onto his body. Therefore, he should not speak until he lowers it onto his body. Likewise] he should not recite the customary verses that appear in our prayer books (*ma yakar hasdekha*) until after he has draped the tallit over his body. If someone does recite the verses before lowering the tallit onto his body, he does not have to repeat the blessing. Once he has begun the mitzvah [by placing the tallit on his head] speaking is not a fatal interruption. Maran the Rishon Letziyon testified that his personal custom was to think the words of these verses while standing in the position of *atifa Yishmaelit*, without pronouncing the words verbally.[22]

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21. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yehave Da'at* Vol. V, #1) voiced this complaint, citing Harav Zalman in his *Shulhan Arukh* (8:8), the *Yalkut Me'am Lo'ez* (*parashat Shelah*) and the *Nehar Mitzrayim* (*Tzitzit* #4). He concluded, whimsically, that some people kiss their tzitzit two or three times before putting on the tallit in this incorrect manner, as if they are begging the *tzitziyot* to forgive them for their improper practice.

22. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. VII, #1) explained that even if someone follows the instructions of the *Ben Ish Hai* and then recites the verses while in the position of *atifa Yishmaelit* it is not a fatal interruption, since he has at least begun the act of the mitzvah. Even so, he concluded that one should rely on this leniency only when it is necessary to respond to kaddish, *Kedusha* or to a blessing. There is no obligation to recite the customary

קדיש או קדושה, יענה עם הצבור, הואיל והתחיל במצוה, ולא נחשב הפסק אלא כשמפסיק בין הברכה למצוה. [יביע"א ח"ז סי' א]

ונכון להחמיר שלא יאמר הפסוקים "מה יקר חסדך וכו'" אלא לאחר שיוריד הטלית על כל גופו, בגמר העיטוף. ובדיעבד אם אמר הפסוקים אחר שהניח הטלית על ראשו, אינו צריך לחזור ולברך, כיון שעל כל פנים התחיל כבר בעשיית המצוה. [הליכו"ע ח"א עמ' ג]

ומרן הראשון לציון זצ"ל כתב (בהליכות עולם ח"א עמ' ג בהערה): "ואני אומר הפסוקים בהרהור בלבד".

If this person happens to hear someone reciting kaddish or *Kedusha* while he is still performing the *atifa Yishmaelit*, he must respond together with the congregation even though he has not yet draped the tallit over his body. Likewise, he must respond Amen if he hears someone recite a blessing. This is true even if he has only placed his tallit on his head and has not yet cast the corners over his shoulder. Once he has recited the blessing and begun to perform the mitzvah, it becomes permissible to interrupt for the sake of a mitzvah. It is forbidden to interrupt only if he has recited the blessing and has not yet begun to perform the mitzvah by placing the tallit on his head.[23] If he hears someone recite a blessing at that time, even if it happens to be the blessing of *lehit'atef betzitzit*, he must not respond Amen. If someone does respond Amen in such a case, however, he must not repeat his blessing.

verses, however, and therefore it is better to refrain from reciting them until after draping the tallit over one's body.

It appears that the *Ben Ish Ḥai* himself permitted one to recite the verses even before draping the tallit over one's body, and therefore this is a legitimate practice for anyone who insists on following it. The *Yalkut Yosef* (8:33) likewise admitted that this practice has a legitimate halakhic basis. Maran the Rishon Letziyon, however, recommended that one not recite the verses at that time.

The practice of Maran the Rishon Letziyon

In the *Halikhot Olam* (Vol. I, footnote on page 3) Maran the Rishon Letziyon testified that his personal custom was to think the words of these verses while standing in the position of *atifa Yishmaelit*, without pronouncing the words verbally. This is because his practice was to follow the instructions of the *Ben Ish Ḥai* to perform *atifa Yishmaelit* before draping the tallit over his body. Although he justified interrupting with speech at that point, he relied on this only to perform a mitzvah like responding to kaddish, *Kedusha* or someone's blessing. He did not wish to rely on it simply to comply with the custom of reciting these verses. He ruled that one should recite them only after draping the tallit over one's body. Alternatively, one may simply think the words of the verses without saying them, and this was the preferred choice of Maran the Rishon Letziyon for himself.

23. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. VII, #1) testified that although Maran ruled in the *Shulḥan Arukh* according to the opinion of *sefer Ha'itur* that it is not necessary to perform *atifa Yishmaelit* when putting on a tallit, the common custom follows the opinion of the *Ge'onim* to wrap oneself in the manner of *atifa Yishmaelit* and remain in that position for as long as it takes to walk four cubits (approximately two seconds). As explained above in halakha 17, these are the instructions of the *Ben Ish Ḥai* as well.

According to the opinion of the *Ge'onim*, one completes the mitzvah of tzitzit as soon as one performs *atifa Yishmaelit* even before one lowers the tallit over one's body. If so, there is certainly nothing wrong with responding to kaddish or *Kedusha* at that time. Even according to *sefer Ha'itur*, once a person has begun the mitzvah of tzitzit by performing *atifa Yishmaelit*, he may already interrupt if necessary to respond to kaddish or *Kedusha*. Although Harav Zalman explained that even though we perform *atifa Yishmaelit* we still must wrap the tallit around our bodies in order to fulfill the mitzvah, he would still agree to this principle allowing a necessary interruption after beginning the mitzvah.

The same principle is used by the *Roke'aḥ* (#367), citing a ruling by Rabbenu Tam that if someone spoke after hearing only some of the shofar blasts, it is not a fatal

כב. הנוהג לעטוף כל גופו תחלה (כדעת השלמי צבור שהבאנו לעיל בהלכה י״ז), רשאי מיד לאחר מכן לומר הפסוקים ״מה יקר חסדך״ וכו׳, ואינו צריך להמתין עד שיסיים העיטוף בטלית. [הליכו״ע ח״א עמ׳ ג]

As above **22)** Anyone who follows the instructions of the *Shalme Tzibbur* and drapes the tallit over his body before performing the *atifa Yishmaelit* may recite the customary verses while performing the *atifa* (*ma yakar hasdekha*). It is not necessary for him to wait until after he finishes the *atifa* and drapes the tallit over his body once more.[24]

interruption and the blessing can still be validated afterward. He compares it to someone who recited the blessing for the mitzvah of searching one's home for *hametz* – the halakha does not forbid him to speak until he completes the entire search. Likewise, the Rashba (responsa Vol. I, #244) ruled that if someone spoke in the middle of his reading of *Megillat Esther*, he may simply continue reading. It is a fatal interruption only if he interrupts after reciting the blessing and before he begins the mitzvah. Once he has begun, his blessing has been validated and need not be repeated. Therefore, once a person has placed his tallit on his head he has validated his blessing although he has not completed the mitzvah, and he may then respond to kaddish and *Kedusha* and then continue the procedure of putting on the tallit.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon cited the *Ot Hi Le'olam* explaining that the act of placing the tallit on one's head is the start of the fulfillment of the mitzvah, and therefore one may already respond to kaddish at that point. Maran the Rishon Letziyon then pointed out that the author of *Ot Hi Le'olam* had the practice of placing the tallit over his head and body before performing *atifa Yishmaelit*, whereas we follow the instructions of the *Ben Ish Hai*, as explained above in halakha 17. Nevertheless, the concept holds true – once a person has begun performing the mitzvah, speaking is no longer a fatal interruption. Therefore, even if someone has not yet lowered the tallit onto his body he may respond to kaddish or *Kedusha*.

The *Ot Hi Le'olam*, cited in the *Petah Hadevir*, agreed that it is permissible to respond to kaddish at this point, but the *Geza Yishai* declared that he is not sure whether or not one may respond. The *Petah Hadevir* commented that there is no disagreement between these *Poskim*, explaining that the *Ot Hi Le'olam* refers to a case where the person had already covered his body with the tallit, whereas the *Geza Yishai* refers to a case where he had covered his head only.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon refuted this esplanation, however, demonstrating that the *Ot Hi Le'olam* based his ruling on the Rashba cited above that the blessing is validated as soon as he began performing the mitzvah. He then demonstrated that this is the opinion of Harav Yosef Hayim, since in the *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Bereshit* halakha 5) he insists that one must perform *atifa Yishmaelit* before covering one's body with the tallit, and yet in the *Od Yosef Hai* (*parashat Bereshit* halakha 3) he instructs us to recite several verses while in the position of *atifa Yishmaelit*. He did not consider these verses to be an interruption.

The *Ma'ase Nissim* (page 56) states that there is no proof from the *Ben Ish Hai*, since he followed the opinion of the *Ge'onim* that one fulfills the mitzvah of tzitzit entirely by performing *atifa Yishmaelit*. Maran the Rishon Letziyon refuted this assumption, arguing that it is impossible that Harav Yosef Hayim would have ignored all the *Poskim*, including Maran, and followed the opinion of the *Ge'onim*.

Several *Aharonim* pointed out that we cannot compare this case to that of searching one's home for *hametz*. In that case, once someone has searched through one room, or even part of a room, he has completed his mitzvah of searching in that area. That certainly validates the blessing he recited. In the case of someone putting on his tallit, however, he has not completed the mitzvah at all until he lowers the tallit to cover his body. Until that point, it may be that his blessing is not validated. See the footnotes on HaKeter's new edition of the *Petah Hadevir*. Nevertheless, the proof from the Rashba's ruling regarding the reading of *Megillat Esther* seems to be irrefutable.

24. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (*Halikhot Olam* Vol. I, page 3) explained that once someone has draped the tallit over his body he has completed the mitzvah according to the *sefer Ha'itur*. Even though he has not yet fulfilled the *Ge'onim's* instructions to perform *atifa Yishmaelit*, he may now recite the customary verses. They do not constitute an interruption in such a case.

A groom at the *Huppa*

The *Yalkut Yosef* (8:32) wrote that during a [daytime] wedding ceremony the groom recites the blessing of *lehit'atef betzitzit* and then covers his head with the tallit. If the cantor immediately begins to recite the *huppa* blessings before the groom has finished performing the *atifa Yishmaelit*, the groom may respond Amen to the cantor's blessings. This is not considered an interruption.

The *Yalkut Yosef* cited, as the source for this halakha, the *Ot Hi Le'olam* quoted in responsa *Yabia Omer* (Vol.