ואף שהציציות נוגעות בבשר הירכים וכדומה, אין בזה כל איסור, ואין צריך להחמיר בזה. [ילקו"י עמ' צג, אוליי"צ עמ' כט בהערה]

וטוב שלא ילבש הטלית קטן על בשרו ממש, אלא על בגד אחר. ומכל מקום מעיקר הדין יש להקל בזה. [הלכה ברורה עמ' קסז בשם מרן הראש"ל זצ"ל. וכ"פ באוליי"צ ח"ב עמ' כח]

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and not to change their families' traditions. Although their tzitzit tassels will then be resting against the bare skin of their legs, the halakha does not prohibit this and there is no need to be stringent about it. Nevertheless, it is commendable to arrange the tzitzit tassels to be resting on another of one's garments and not on one's bare skin.[29]

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the custom of hiding the tzitzit underneath their clothes. Rav Gustman saw the author, known as the Hafetz Hayim, a number of times since he served as a judge on the *bet din* of Harav Hayim Ozer Grodzenski. Furthermore, my grandfather, for whom I am named, was a leading disciple of his uncle, Harav Barukh Ber Leibovitz, the author of *Birkat Shemuel*. He spent all his time together with his uncle, as Harav Reuven Grozovski testified. My grandfather never allowed his tzitzit to show out of his clothes, since he had never seen any of his great mentors display their tzitzit.

"Furthermore, Harav Yaakov Edelstein told me that in the European yeshivot no one displayed their tzitzit over their pants. I also asked Harav Refa'el Shmulevitz and Harav Aharon Chadash about their fathers' custom, and they both replied that their fathers always tucked the tzitzit inside their pants, even after they immigrated to Eretz Yisrael.

"Harav Michel Shurkin spent many years together with the generation's leading *Posek*, Harav Moshe Feinstein, and he saw that Rav Moshe wore his tzitzit inside his pants. My father also testified that Rav Moshe wore his tzitzit inside his clothes.

"It used to be that all Jews, both Ashkenazic and Sefardic, wore their tzitzit hidden completely underneath their clothes. In fact, we have clear testimony that even the Hafetz Hayim wore his tzitzit in that manner – he did not behave differently from everyone else. His erudite grandson, Harav Hillel Zacks, likewise wore his tzitzit hidden under his clothes. They did not do this simply because they feared the taunts of non-Jews. This is obvious since all these Torah scholars continued this practice even after immigrating to Eretz Yisrael."

The merit of looking at the tzitzit tassels

The *Piske Teshuvot* (#22) states that although the established custom of Sefardic Jews is to wear the *tallit katan* under their clothes, it is still highly meritorious to expose the tzitzit tassels every now and then in private and to look at them. He cited the *Sha'ar Hakavanot* stating, "Be aware that a person must look at the tzitzit at every opportunity, even every minute, since the Torah states, "you will see it." This is very good for one's soul, and anyone who is careful to observe this practice will be protected from all sins." He cited another source, the *Kav Hayashar* (chapter 45), stating, "I have a tradition from devout people who, when they had nothing else to do, would handle their tzitzit tassels and look at them, explaining that by looking at one's tzitzit one helps raise the Shekhina from its exile."

Despite this, there are no reports of Torah scholars in later generations who observed this practice. They spent every spare moment in Torah study and review, and they looked at their tzitzit tassels only while reciting the *Shema* in the morning.

29. Wearing the *tallit katan* on one's bare chest

In the previous footnote, it was related that the Arizal's personal practice was to wear his *tallit katan* under his robe but over his undergarment. This does not necessarily mean that it would be forbidden to wear it underneath all one's clothes. The responsa *Rivevot Efrayim*, however, cited a number of *Aharonim* who ruled that it is forbidden to wear a *tallit katan* on one's bare skin, since that would be disrespectful to the mitzvah. It is particularly a problem if the garment used as the *tallit katan* doubles as an undershirt whose purpose is to absorb the body's perspiration. In fact, it might be that someone wearing such a garment in this manner does not fulfill the mitzvah at all. This is because the *baraita* (*masekhet Tzitzit* #5) teaches that the *Tanna'im* debated whether it is possible to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzit with a garment called *apikarsin*. Rabbenu Asher (comment to *Mo'ed Katan* 3:43) translated *apikarsin* as a garment made for the purpose of absorbing the body's perspiration. The *Piske Teshuvot* (footnote 197) testified that the *Hazon Ish* and Harav Yisrael Yaakov Kanyevski always made sure to wear the *tallit katan* over an undershirt, and one reason they gave for this is so that the *tallit katan* should not serve them as a garment meant to absorb their perspiration.

Harav Shelomo Zalman Auerbach (*Halikhot Shelomo* 3:11), however, countered that wearing a *tallit katan* directly on one's bare skin is not considered a disgrace to the

כט. אברכי הישיבות הספרדים ובני עדות המזרח, לא ישנו ממנהג אבותיהם ורבותיהם הקדמונים להוציא את הציציות החוצה, אלא יהיו מתחת למדיהם. וכן דעת מורינו הגאון רבי עזרא עטייה זצ"ל, ואמר שבן ספרד שמוציא את ציציותיו נחשב כעין מוציא לעז על הראשונים. [ראה אוליצ חי"ב עמי כז, ילקוי עמי צה]

ל. בני ישיבות צעירים מעדות המזרח הרוצים להוציא את הציציות מחוץ לבגדיהם, וחשים בזה חיזוק ביראת שמים במקום מגוריהם, בכך שהם מתבדלים משכניהם שאינם הולכים בדרך התורה והמצוות, ומשייכים את עצמם למחנה בני התורה, רשאים לעשות כן, אך כאשר יינשאו ויתחזקו בתורה ויראת

The Sefardic tradition

29) Sefardic Yeshivah students and members of *kollel* must not wear the *tallit katan* with the tzitzit displayed over their clothes, since this practice ignores the traditions of their fathers and Torah guides of previous generations. They should keep the tzitzit tassels tucked into their clothes. This was the ruling of the Rosh Yeshivah, Harav Ezra Attiya. He remarked that any Sefardic Jew who displays the *tzitziyot* of his *tallit katan* might be guilty of disgracing all the Torah scholars of previous generations.

Teenagers displaying tzitzit

30) The Sefardic students of a high school yeshivah might want to wear their *tallit katan* with the tzitzit tassels displayed over their clothes, feeling that this strengthens their sensitivity to observe the mitzvot and cultivate the fear of Heaven. They wish to demonstrate, to themselves and to others, that they are different

mitzvah, as long as one wears it in the manner it is normally worn. The *Sefer Hatzitzit* (page 45) and the *Halakha Berura* (page 167) concurred with this lenient ruling. Even if someone would argue that a garment worn for the purpose of absorbing the body's perspiration is exempt from having tzitzit tassels attached to it, there is no reason to say that a *tallit katan* worn directly on one's skin has the status of such a garment. When someone puts on his *tallit katan*, his main objective is to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzit. He does not want to wear an additional garment under the *tallit katan*, however, because that would make him uncomfortably hot. The fact that the *tallit katan* absorbs the body's perspiration is incidental, since it was not manufactured for that purpose and it is not being worn for that purpose. Besides, it is not at all clear that a garment worn to absorb the body's perspiration is exempt from the mitzvah of tzitzit. The *Halakha Berura* testified that Maran the Rishon Letziyon ruled that one may be lenient in this matter.

Undershirt tzitzit

In recent years, it has become popular to wear a *tallit katan* made of the same soft cotton as a regular undershirt, but it is open on both sides so that it has four corners. It is meant to be worn in place of an undershirt so that one accomplishes both purposes – absorbing the body's perspiration and the mitzvah of tzitzit – with one garment. It could be that there is more reason to refrain from using such a garment, either because its purpose is to absorb perspiration or because it is a disgrace to the mitzvah. The responsa *Even Yisrael* Fisher (Vol. IX, #1) ruled that such "undershirt tzitzit" garments are forbidden, since they are a disgrace to the mitzvah. The *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, page 28), however, ruled that it is permissible to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzit by wearing an undershirt that is open on both sides. Apparently, he was not bothered by either of the considerations cited above.

Furthermore, one must take into account that the garment is made of cotton and not wool, and therefore according to Maran one is definitely not obligated by the Torah to have tzitzit attached to it. When someone wears a cotton *tallit katan*, he fulfills only a mitzvah instituted by our Sages, but not the Torah's mitzvah of tzitzit. Someone who possesses true fear of Heaven will make sure to wear a woolen *tallit katan* so that he can fulfill the Torah mitzvah of tzitzit. If he wishes to wear it without an undershirt underneath it, that is permissible.

שמים, יחזרו למנהג אבותינו ורבותינו הספרדים, שלא היו מוציאים את הציציות מחוץ לבגדיהם. [ילקו"י עמ' צה]

לא. מנהג רבים מאחינו האשכנזים לילך עם הציציות בחוץ. ויש להם על מה שיסמוכו, ואין לחוש בזה ליוהרא. [יחו"ד ח"ב סי' א]

אולם אם הולכים בבית הקברות, יש להכניס את הציציות מתחת לבגדיהם. ומכל מקום אין להלך ברחובות קריה במשך שעות היום שלא בזמן תפלת שחרית, עם טלית גדול מעל המעיל, שלעולם לא ישנה אדם ממנהג הבריות. [ילקו"י עמ' צג]

from their neighbors who have chosen to forsake a life of Torah and mitzvot. By displaying their tzitzit tassels, they demonstrate that they belong to the camp of those devoted to Torah.

It is permissible for them to do this while they are young. Once they are married and established in Torah wisdom and the fear of Heaven, they should return to their tradition and follow the hallowed practice of Sefardic Torah scholars who never displayed the tzitzit over their garments.[30]

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Ashkenazic custom is valid

31) Many Ashkenazic Jews have the custom of going about with their tzitzit displayed over their clothes. This is a halakhically permissible practice and it does not make them guilty of acting superior to others.[31]

When visiting a cemetery, however, they must make sure to hide the tzitzit tassels inside their clothes. Furthermore, it is incorrect for someone to walk through the streets wrapped in his *tallit gadol* over his jacket, unless it is early in the morning when everyone goes to the synagogue for *shaḥarit*. It is forbidden to purposely do things differently than the great majority of observant Jews.

30. The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 95) cited Maran the Rishon Letziyon issuing this ruling for young yeshivah students, especially when the students return to their home towns for the holidays and meet their neighbors, boys their age, who have ceased observing the mitzvot. The yeshivah students feel that by displaying their tzitzit, they place a natural barrier between themselves and these neighbors and bolster their own fear of Heaven. Maran the Rishon Letziyon permitted this since it is only a temporary measure and their intentions are pure and holy.

The responsa *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, page 27) likewise ruled that an unmarried yeshivah student who lives in an area where not many people are Torah-observant should display his tzitzit tassels to separate himself from any negative influences. Likewise, someone who had been nonobservant and now has returned to Torah Judaism may display his tzitzit tassels for this reason. See below in halakha 33.

31. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yeḥave Da'at* Vol. II, #1) ruled that Ashkenazic yeshivah students who display their tzitzit tassels over their clothes are permitted to continue this practice. They cannot be accused of displaying superiority to others.

Mahar"i Brona (responsa #96) testified that in his times laymen did not wear a *tallit katan* over their other garments in public; only the rabbis had such a practice. If someone else would imitate the rabbis' method of dress, it would not be viewed by others favorably. It is wrong, he contended, for someone to adopt pious practices unless he is known to be an individual for whom such a practice is natural, as we are taught in *Berakhot* 17b and *Bava Kama* 81b.

Despite this ruling, the current practice of Ashkenazic yeshivah students is acceptable. This is because there are *Poskim*, including Maran in the *Shulḥan Arukh*, who ruled that the principal purpose of wearing a *tallit katan* is to display the *tzitziyot* at all times so that one will remember all