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]

Day 52

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

לב. בחור ישיבה שלומד בישיבה של אשכנזים, וחבריו כולם מוציאים הציציות בחוץ, ינהוג כמותם, ולא יהיה כיוצא דופן מכל חבריו. [יבי"א ח"ט סי' קח אות יח, אול"צ ח"ב עמ' כז בהערה]. ולאחר נישואיו ינהג כמנהג אבותיו. [אול"צ שם]

לג. בעלי תשובה המתחזקים בשמירת התורה והמצוות, הרוצים להוציא את הציציות מחוץ לבגדיהם כדי להיבדל מהסביבה החילונית בה הם נמצאים, רשאים לעשות כן. אבל אחר שיתחזקו בתורה

Sefardic student of Ashkenazic yeshivah

32) If a Sefardic yeshivah student is enrolled in an Ashkenazic yeshivah and all his peers display their tzitzit tassels outside their clothes, he may adopt the same practice. He does not have to be different from everyone else.[32] Once he is married and independent, he should revert to the traditional practice of Sefardic Jews.

Newly observant people

33) People who have recently become observant Jews might want to display their tzitzit tassels in order to place a barrier between themselves and the secular society where they live. They may do this if they feel it is helpful. Once they have established themselves as Torah Jews, or if they move to a neighborhood where

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the mitzvot. Someone who wishes to observe this halakha cannot be accused of acting haughtily or improperly. This is especially so in our times when this practice has become so widespread. This issue is one that depends on the society in which one lives.

In an unpublished responsum, Maran the Rishon Letziyon cited the responsa *Yaskil Avdi* (Vol. VIII, #2; #17:11) who mounted an attack on the *Mishna Berura's* ruling that one must display the tzitzit tassels. He accused those who wear the tzitzit tassels over their clothes of haughty behavior, adding that there is no basis to rationalize this practice. Maran the Rishon Letziyon defended the practice of the Ashkenazic Jews, however, and testified that many true Torah scholars observe the practice of displaying them and their intentions are pure and holy. After all, the *Ma'amar Mordekhai* (24:1) explained that according to Maran the best way to fulfill this mitzvah is to wear the *tallit katan* over one's garments. Therefore, either practice is legitimate, but it is best for Sefardic Jews to wear the *tallit katan* with the tzitzit tucked in underneath their clothes.

32. This is the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. IX, #108:18) and the *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, footnote on page 27). The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 95), however, ruled: "The proper procedure for Sefardic yeshivah students is to keep their tzitzit tassels tucked inside their clothes even if they are enrolled in yeshivot where the majority of the students are Ashkenazic boys who observe the practice of wearing them over their clothes. The prohibition of *lo titgodedu* does not apply to this issue. Therefore, the staff of these yeshivot should not demand that their Sefardic students go counter to their traditional practice, especially since it was established by great Sefardic Torah scholars. If there is a practical reason for it, such as if the student lives in a secular neighborhood and he would be reinforced to maintain his high standards if he displays his tzitzit tassels, the staff should encourage him to do so until his marriage." In the footnote on that page, the *Yalkut Yosef* explained at length why the prohibition of *lo titgodedu* does not apply to this practice.

This ruling is a direct contradiction to that of Maran the Rishon Letziyon and the *Or Letziyon*. It is true that the prohibition of *lo titgodedu* does not apply here, but we are dealing with the issue of a boy who feels conspicuous if he does not observes the same practices as his peers. In this case, he is permitted to change his personal practice to conform with that of the others. As our Sages taught (*Derekh Eretz* 4:5), "One should not stand where everyone is seated or sit down where everyone is standing up."

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yehave Da'at* Vol. III, #4; *Yabia Omer* Vol. IX, #88:2) ruled, based on the same principle, that if a Sefardic Jew is praying in an Ashkenazic congregation where everyone stands up while the cantor recites kaddish and *Barekhu*, he should stand up as well. In fact, the *Yalkut Yosef* cited this ruling in bold letters in his footnote to *Siman* 8:46. Here, however, he seems to contradict himself.

ובמצוות, או אחר שיעברו להתגורר בסביבה של אנשים יראי שמים, יחזרו למנהג רבותינו הספרדים ויכניסו את הציציות מתחת לבגדיהם. [ילקו״י עמ׳ צה שכן השיב מרן הראש״ל זצ״ל לבעל תשובה הלכה למעשה]

הפרדת חוטי הציצית

לד. קודם שיברך צריך להפריד בידיו את חוטי הציצית זה מזה, שיהיה כל חוט וחוט בפני עצמו [תמונה ט״ז], ולא יהיו החוטין מסובכים זה בזה [תמונה י״ז] (ש״ע ס״ז, בא״ח ה״ג). ונתנו סימן בשם האר״י ז״ל: ציצ״ת ראשי תיבות, צדיק יפריד ציציותיו תמיד. [הובא במשנ״ב ס״ק יח ועוד]

ואפילו בשבת אם רואה שהחוטים מסובכים זה בזה רשאי להפרידם, ואין בזה משום מתקן מנא, ולא שאר חששות. ורק כשהם חדשים בפעם הראשונה לאחר תליית וקשירת חוטי הציצית בטלית,

everyone is observant, they should revert to following the Sefardic tradition and wear the tzitzit tassels inside their clothes.[33]

Day 53

Keeping the Strands Untangled

Untangle tzitzit before reciting the blessing

34) Before reciting a blessing on the tallit, it is important to make sure that the tzitzit strands are each hanging separately (Illustration № 16) and not tangled with one another. (Illustration № 17) According to tradition, the Arizal taught that this halakha is alluded to in the word *tzitzit*, since the letters of this word form the initial letters of *tzaddik yafrid tzitziyotav tamid* – a tzaddik keeps his tzitzit strands separated at all times.[34]

It is permissible to untangle tzitzit strands on Shabbat. This is not considered a violation of the *melakha* of *metaken mana* (making a utensil), nor does this activity violate any other of the rules of Shabbat. Nevertheless, if the *tzitziyot* tassels were recently tied onto the tallit and this is the first time they are being worn, one may not untangle the

33. The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 95) testified that these are the instructions of Maran the Rishon Letziyon to such a person who asked for practical instructions. The *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, footnote on page 28) ruled likewise.

34. Rabbenu Yaakov (*Arba'a Turim Siman* 8) commented that the Hebrew word *tzitzit* implies that each thread of the tassels hangs separately and is not tangled with the others, based on the verse (*Yehezkel* 8:3). Therefore, we must make sure to separate any strands that become tangled. The *Bet Yosef* (8:5) cites the source for this halakha as *Menahot* (42a): Abaye taught, "One must separate [them] like a non-Jew's hairstyle." Rashi describes this to be bunching the hair and tying it on the crown of the head, but the hair spills out from above the knot in all directions since the hairs are separated from one another.

Knotted Tzitzit Tassels

The *Piske Teshuvot* (8:17) explained that if someone ties the tzitzit strands to one another intending to leave them tied together, the tzitzit are rendered invalid. Likewise, if the strands became tangled up by themselves making it nearly impossible to separate them, or if they become glued to one another, they are invalidated. The term tzitzit means tassels with strands that hang loose and independent from one another.