שיהיו שווים, או מחמת שהיו ארוכים יותר מדי. [שם]

וכבר הבאנו לעיל (הלכה כה) שטוב לעשות החוטין בינונים, לא עבים ולא דקים, משום (שמות טו, ב): "זה אלי ואנוהו".

נב. כבר כתבנו לעיל (הלכה כ) שיש שנהגו לעשות בסוף כל חוט קשר, כדי שיעמוד בשזירתו [תמונה נ"ב], ושכך היה מנהג האר"י. ושיש אומרים שיותר טוב שלא לקושרם.

נג. קודם שמטיל החוטים בנקב הטלית, יאמר "לשם מצות ציצית". ויתבאר לקמן בסימן י"ד, עם שאר דיני "לשמה" בהטלת הציצית.

ויש הנזהרים מעת שהטילו החוטים בנקב, עד לגמר קשירת כל החוטים, ואינו מעיקר הדין אלא ממידת **חסידות.** [ראה מנח"י ח"ט סי' ח אות ו, ילקו"י עמ' קנו, הלכה ברורה עמ' רעג]

נד. קשר שנתרופף, אין להדקו בשבת [תמונה פ'], **מחשש קושר.** [שש"כ סי' טו אות נ, ועי' מראה האש על שלחן אש סי' ח הערה ח]

like threads or thick like ropes. After winding all the loops and tying all the knots of the tassel, one may cut the strands if they are longer than desired or if they are of uneven lengths. Nevertheless, the tzitzit are not disqualified if the strands are of different lengths.

Knots at the end of each strand

52) As mentioned above in halakha 20, many people have the custom of tying a knot at the end of each tzitzit strand to prevent them from unraveling. (Illustration № 52) The custom of the Arizal [and Harav Hayim Vital] was to tie these knots. Some *Poskim*, however, ruled that it is best not to do this [if the strands are well-made and are unlikely to come unraveled].

Declaring one's intentions

53) Before threading the tzitzit strands through the hole in the garment's corner, one must declare, "I am doing this for the sake of the mitzvah of tzitzit." This will be explained in full below in *Siman* 14, along with all the halakhot pertaining to one's intentions while fashioning tzitzit tassels.

Some people practice a stringency not to speak from the moment they thread the strands through the hole until they complete the tassel with all its knots. If it becomes necessary to speak during this time, however, one may be lenient.[149]

Tightening knots on Shabbat

54) If someone sees on Shabbat that the knots of his tzitzit tassels are beginning to come undone, he must not tighten them on Shabbat. (Illustration № 80) Tightening the knots might be an act of the *melakha* of *kosher* (tying).

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149. The responsa *Minhat Yitzhak* (Vol. IX, #8:6) taught that the practice of the devout is not to interrupt by speaking while tying tzitzit tassels onto a tallit. This is because the tassel represents the lofty concept of God's Unity, as the *Shulhan Arukh* (11:14) explains. In fact, there are those who refrain from unwinding a tzitzit tassel since it is like erasing God's Name, as mentioned above in halakha 46. Tying the tassel, therefore, is symbolic to writing God's Name, and the halakha is (*Y.D.* 276) that it is absolutely forbidden to speak while writing the Name.

In reality, however, tying tzitzit tassel is not the same as writing God's Name, nor is unwinding it the same as erasing the Name, as explained above in halakha 46. Nevertheless, it is meritorious to refrain from speaking while tying tzitzit tassels since it symbolizes God's Name and Oneness.

The *Ta'ame Haminhagim* (page 10) testifies that the tzaddik Harav Pinehas of Koritz was careful not to speak

נה. יש אומרים שצריך לדקדק שיתלה הציציות לאורך הטלית, דבעינן שתהא נוטפת ותלויה על הקרן, ואם היה ברחבו לא היה נוטף, שהרי כלפי קרקע היה תלוי. [תמונה פ״א] [ש״ע סעיף יא]

ויהיו הציציות נוטפים על הקרן בין בשעת התליה, או אחר כך. ואם נשמטו לצד מטה יחזירם. [משנ״ב ס״ק עג]. ואף בשבת יחזירם למקומם, ואין לחוש משום מתקן. [גן המלך סי׳ סו, הובא בכה״ח ס״ק נ]

וכל זה לכתחילה אבל בדיעבד אין קפידא בזה. [משנ״ב שם, כה״ח ס״ק נא]

נו. יזהר מאוד שלא יהיו הציצית תלויים באלכסון על קרן זויות [תמונה פ״ב], מפני שהוא מנהג הקראים שעושין כן. [משנ״ב ס״ק עג, כה״ח ס״ק נא]

Positioning the tassel loop

55) According to some *Poskim*, the loops of the tzitzit tassels should lie along the length [more correctly, the vertical sides] of the tallit so that when a person wears it, the tassel loops are horizontal and the tassels themselves droop down over the corners. If the loops would lay along the width [the horizontal sides] of the tallit, the tassels would hang straight down below the corners.[150] (Illustration №81)

It is important to pay attention to this and readjust the tassel loops if they fall onto the other side of the corners.[151] This may be done on Shabbat as well; it is not considered an act of repairing the tallit.[152] If someone wears his tallit with the tassel loops hanging from the wrong side of each corner, however, he still fulfills the mitzvah of tzitzit.

Tassels lying diagonally

56) It is very important to make sure that the tassel loop does not lay diagonally, reaching directly across the tip of the garment's corner. This is the manner of the Karaite sect.[153] (Illustration №82)

while tying tzitzit tassels. This is cited in the *Halakha Berura* (page 273). It could be that he was more stringent since he meditated on lofty kabbalistic concepts as he fashioned the tassels. Nevertheless, it is a commendable practice for other people as well.

150. The *Poskim* derived this halakha from the words of the verse, "on the corners of their garments," meaning that the tzitzit tassels should droop over the corners.

How it is done

The *Mishna Berura* (*Bi'ur Halakha*) cited the *Aharonim* asking that when a person drapes the tallit over his body, the two tzitzit tassels hanging behind him will be positioned correctly, but those in front will be hanging straight down and not on the corners. In light of this question, he recommended that the hind tassels be positioned along the tallit's length but that the front tassels be positioned along its width.

Apparently, the *Mishna Berura* pictured people putting on the tallit simply by draping it over the neck and shoulders without raising the two sides onto the shoulders. Therefore, if the tassel loops are hanging along the tallit's width, the front tassels would be hanging down from the tallit instead of hanging along the sides of the corners. Nowadays, the common way to wear a tallit is to raise the two sides onto one's shoulders. When worn this way, all four tassels lie in the correct manner, falling over each of the corners. Both the *Hazon Ish* (*O.H.* 3:12) and the *Piske Teshuvot* (32) reconciled this problem in this manner.

151. This is the ruling of the *Mishna Berura* (11:79). The *Peri Megadim* (*Eshel Avraham* 11:24) added that moving the tassel loop to the correct position does not infringe upon the rule of *ta'ase velo min he'asui* even if the tzitzit are rendered invalid while in the incorrect position. Sliding the tassel loop over to the other side of the corner is not considered a fullfledged act of fashioning. It is not worse than removing a hinged cover off a sukkah's roof, in which case the sukkah is kosher.

152. The *Ginat Veradim* (*Gan Hamelekh* #66, cited in the *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 11:50) states: "Some people refrain from adjusting the position of their tzitzit tassels on Shabbat, considering to be an act of repairing the garment, which is forbidden. In my opinion, there is nothing wrong with making this small adjustment. This is not an act of repairing the garment; we need only to adjust the position of the hanging tassels depending on how the person wears the tallit. It is no different than folding an ordinary garment when draping it on one's body so that it is worn correctly."

153. The *Magen Avraham* (11:24, cited in the *Mishna Berura* 11:73) explained that this is the practice of the Karaites and that this is why it is forbidden. The

נז. נכון שבשעה שקושר הקשר הראשון הסמוך לכנף הטלית, יהדקנו מעט, באופן שלא יזוזו הציציות אנה ואנה לאחר מכן, ותמיד תהא נוטפת על הקרן ולא גולשת כלפי מטה. [תמונה פ"ג].

וכבר ביארנו לעיל בהלכה ל"ה, שאף אם על ידי הקשירה נתקפל הבגד עד שהוא כעת פחות מקשר אגודל, אף על פי כן כשר, כיון שיש על כל פנים השיעור בהכנף.

נח. יש אומרים שאין לתת שום בגד בנקבי הטלית שמכניסים בה הציציות [ש"ע סט"ו], משום שצריך שיהיו הציצית מונח על הכנף, ולא על דבר שהוא מונח על הכנף. [משנ"ב ס"ק עד בשם המרדכי בב"י]. אולם העיקר להלכה כהמתירים בזה, שנותנים חתיכת בד לחזק את הכנף ואת הנקב שבה שלא יקרעו, ובטל הוא לגבי הבגד, ואפילו של עור מותר. וכן נהגו. [ש"ע שם ומשנ"ב ס"ק עה, כה"ח ס"ק נב]

Keeping the loop in the correct position

57) When tying the initial knot connecting the four strands to the corner of the tallit, it is recommended to make the loop slightly shorter than the distance from the hole to the edge of the material. This will help prevent the loop from slipping to the wrong side of the corner, so that while one wears the tallit the tassels are draped over the corners and not hanging from the bottom of the tallit.[154] (Illustration №83) As explained above in halakha 35, even if one makes the loop shorter than *kesher godal*, the tallit is still kosher since the actual measure of the material in the corner from the hole to the edge is *kesher godal* or more.

Adding material to the corners

58) Some *Poskim* ruled that it is forbidden to attach another piece of material to the corner of a tallit where the tassels are attached to it. They argued that the tzitzit must be in contact with the actual corner of the tallit, not with another piece of material attached to the corner.

The halakha, however, is that it is permissible to attach material to the tallit's corner. In fact, the common custom is to reinforce the corners of a tallit by attaching a patch to each one. This helps prevent the tallit from tearing. The patch, in the eyes of the halakha, becomes part of the tallit itself. This patch can even be made of leather.

Levush (11:15), however, offered a different explanation, suggesting that if the tassel is placed diagonally on the corner it is as if there are two tassels, one on either side of the corner. If someone would position his tzitzit tassels in this manner, he would be demonstrating that the garment really needs eight tassels. It is therefore invalid.

154. Some *Aharonim* ruled that one should purposely tie the tassel's loop to be shorter than the distance from the hole to the edge of the garment. This will help ensure that the tassel will remain on the correct side of the garment so that it lays across the corner instead of hanging below it. This follows the ruling of the *Leket Yosher* (page 9), explaining that this was the practice of the author of *Terumat Hadeshen*. This was the practice of the *Hazon Ish* and other *Aharonim*, as cited in the *Piske Teshuvot* (footnotes 154 and 158).

Other *Aharonim* questioned the correctness of this practice since it may be that by tying the loop in this manner it will be considered as if a section of the corner is missing, making the hole too close to the garment's edge. See the comment of the *Haye Adam* (*Nishmat Adam* 11:3) and the *Piske Teshuvot* (footnote 156). Mainstream halakha, however, does not consider this to be a problem, as explained above in halakha 35.