יג. נמצא בשם הקדמונים שכל המעביר ציצית על עיניו כשקורא פרשת ציצית, יהא מובטח שלא יבא לידי סימוי עינים. [משנ"ב סק"ז, כה"ח ס"ק יד]

הסומא יש לו לאחוז הציצית בידו בשעת קריאת שמע, אעפ"י שנאמר 'וראיתם אותו', כיון שישנו בראיה אצל אחרים, אבל להעביר הציצית על עיניו לא, דמחזי כחוכא ואיטלולא. [משנ"ב ס"ק ז].

אולם על פי הקבלה, אף הסומא יעביר הציציות על עיניו. [עוד יוסף חי פ' וארא סוף ה"ג, כה"ח ס"ק טז]

ומי שמרכיב משקפיים, יעביר הציציות על עיניו ממש.

Day 101

Protection from blindness

13) Tradition maintains that whoever steadfastly observes the practice of passing the tzitzit tassels over his eyes while reciting the passage of tzitzit in the *Shema* can rest assured that he will never suffer from blindness.[298]

Formula for a blind person

Even a blind person should hold onto his tzitzit tassels while reciting the *Shema*. Although he cannot see his tzitzit, others can see them. He should not pass the tassels over his eyes, however, since his eyes do not function and this gesture appears to be meaningless. Nevertheless, according to the Kabbalah even a blind person should pass his tzitzit over his eyes.[299]

The practice of passing the tzitzit over the eyes means to touch the tzitzit strands to the eyelids. Therefore, those who wear eyeglasses should make sure to observe the practice properly.[300]

298. The source for this halakha is the *Matzat Shimurim*, cited in the *Eliya Rabba* (24:3), the *Be'er Hetev* and other *Aharonim*. The responsa of Rabbenu Shelomo ben Shim'on (#26) likewise mentions this tradition in the name of *Rabbanan Savorai* (Torah leaders of Babylonia in the first generations after the Talmud was published).

299. The responsa *Shevut Yaakov* (Vol. II, #38, cited by several *Aharonim* including the *Mishna Berura* 24:7) ruled that a blind person should not touch the tzitzit to his eyes. He explained that since this practice is meant to demonstrate one's love for the mitzvah, as the *Shulhan Arukh* states explicitly, it would be silly for someone without functioning eyes to touch the tzitzit to his sightless eyes. Furthermore, since this person is already blind, he cannot gain any protection from blindness by observing this practice.

On second thought, the merit of the blind person observing this practice might protect his descendants from blindness. Be that as it may, it is sufficient for him to hold onto the tzitzit and to kiss them to display his love for the mitzvah.

The *Shalme Tzibbur* (cited in *Od Yosef Hai parashat Va'era* halakha 3) commented that although the *Shevut Yaakov's* arguments are sensible, the Arizal's instructions are meant for both sighted and blind people. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (24:16) concurred with the *Shalme Tzibbur*.

300. It appears from the language used by the *Poskim* that it is necessary to touch the eyelids with the tzitzit. In the Torah journal *Kovetz Bet Aharon veYisrael* (Kislev 5755, page 86), Harav Yaakov Hayim Sofer testified that Harav Yehuda Tzadka always took off his eyeglasses when he recited the *Shema* so that he could touch the tzitzit to his eyelids.

דיני פשיטת וקיפול הטלית

יד. נכון שלא יסיר הטלית מעליו עד אחר "עלינו לשבח". [ראה שו"ת תורה לשמה סי' קמח. וע"ע בכה"ח סי' כה ס"ק פח]. אלא אם כן מי שממהר למקום עבודתו וכיו"ב, רשאי להסיר מעליו הטלית קודם "עלינו לשבח". [ילקו"י עמ' יד]

טו. הטלית יש לפשוט מעומד, כמו שהתעטף בו מעומד. [כה"ח סופר ס"ק ט]. ואין להסיר הטלית, כי אם לאחר חליצת התפילין. [שם]

טז. יזהר כשיחלוץ הטלית, וכן התפילין, יחלוץ ביד שמאל שהיא יד כהה, להראות שקשה עליו פרידתו. [בן איש חי פ' נח הט"ז]

יז. כל אדם יקפל טליתו כל יום אחר תפלה בידו, ולא יתננו לשמש לקפלו, משום שקשה למזל. [בן איש חי פ' נח הט"ז]

Taking Off and Folding a Tallit

Only after *Alenu leshabe'ah*

14) The proper practice is to wait until completing the final prayer of *Alenu leshabe'ah* before taking off one's tallit. If someone is in a great hurry to rush off to work, however, he may take off his tallit before reciting this prayer.[301]

While standing

15) One should stand up to take off the tallit just as one stands up to put it on. One should not take off the tallit until after he has taken off his tefillin.

Removing with left hand

16) When taking off one's tallit or *tefillin shel rosh*, one should always use one's weaker hand, which is usually one's left hand. In this way, the person demonstrates his reluctance to part with the mitzvah.

Fold your own tallit

17) Each person should fold his own tallit after using it, and he should not have his attendant or anyone else fold it for him. If someone else folds up the tallit, it might adversely affect the owner's success in his affairs.

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301. The responsa *Torah Lishmah* (#148) cited Harav Hayim Vital in *Sefer Hakavanot* testifying that the Arizal never took off his tefillin and tallit until he had completed the entire prayer service through *Alenu leshabe'ah* and *Al ken*. This is important according to the Kabbalah, he explained. The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 14) offered other possible explanations.

Harav HIDA (*Mahazik Berakha* 132) cited a manuscript stating that Rav Hai Ga'on taught that must keep one's head enwrapped while reciting the prayer of *Alenu leshabe'ah* since it is an unequalled expression of praise. With this in mind, it only makes sense that we should be careful not to take off the tallit until after reciting this prayer.

יח. אין נכון להניח הטלית בלא קפול בלילה. ואם שכח ולא קפלו ועבר עליו הלילה, אז כשילבשנו למחרת ינערינו תחלה. [בן איש חי פי נח הט"ז]

יט. אין נכון לקפל הטלית באמצע שאומרים קדיש, ובפרט בחצי קדיש, דמאוד יש לכוין בעניית "אמן יהא שמיה רבה", דאמן יהא שמיה רבה" הוא במדרגה יותר גבוה מקדושה. ובודאי שלא גרע משאר ברכות דרבנן, דאסור לעשות אפילו תשמיש קל בשעה שהוא מברך. [משנ"ב סי' כה ס"ק נו]. ועיין מה שכתבנו בילקוט יוסף השכמת הבוקר בסימן ו' הלכה ד'.

Don't leave it unfolded

18) It is incorrect to leave one's tallit unfolded overnight. If someone mistakenly forgot to fold it and found it disheveled the following morning, he should make sure to shake it before putting it on again.

Not while reciting kaddish

19) No one may fold up his tallit while reciting kaddish, and especially not while reciting the first half of kaddish. It is extremely important, both for the person reciting kaddish and for those responding to it, to concentrate on the meaning of the words of *Amen, yehe shemeh rabba mevarach*. In fact, this part of kaddish is a more exalted prayer than *Kedusha*. As explained in *Yalkut Yosef Hashkamat Haboker English Edition*, *Siman* 6:4, it is forbidden to engage in any activity while reciting a blessing. Certainly, this prohibition applies while reciting kaddish as well.[302]

302. Folding the tallit while reciting kaddish or a blessing

The *Yalkut Yosef* (page 287) stated, based on his father's teachings, that technically it is permissible to fold one's tallit while reciting kaddish, but he recommended that one not do so. Apparently, he was referring to responsa *Yabia Omer* (Vol. IX, #95:8). In the *Yalkut Yosef Hashkamat Haboker English Edition* (*Siman* 6:4), it was demonstrated that this leniency applies only to someone engaged in an activity related to the blessing he is reciting, such as wiping one's hands dry while reciting the blessing of *al netillat yadayim*. Furthermore, a close reading of the *Yabia Omer* shows that although the Rishon Letziyon suggested this reasoning as a possibility, he did not rule definitely that one may rely on this leniency. Several *Aharonim* (*Hesed La'alafim*, *Ben Ish Hai*) ruled quite stringently in this matter, forbidding any activity while reciting a blessing. They certainly would rule stringently regarding someone reciting kaddish or responding to it. The *Peri Hadash* ruled that it is forbidden to think about Torah subjects while the cantor recites kaddish, since he must place all his concentration on responding to the cantor. This is repeated by the *Mishna Berura* (56:1). According to this, it is certainly forbidden to fold one's tallit while reciting kaddish.

Once the person has completed the half-kaddish, however, there is room for leniency to fold the tallit while he continues with the final passages. See the *Halikhot Shelomo* (*Tefilla*, page 81).

Folding a tallit while reciting *Alenu Leshabe'ah*

The *Yalkut Yosef* ruled likewise that it is technically permissible to fold one's tallit while reciting *Alenu Leshabe'ah*. It appears, however, that one must not rely on this leniency. The Rama (*Siman* 132) warns us to make sure to recite this prayer with great concentration. Harav HIDA (*Mahazik Berakha* 132) cited a responsum from Rav Hai Ga'on in which he ruled that one must keep one's head covered with the tallit while reciting this prayer. One must give it one's full concentration, for there is no greater praise of God composed anywhere at any time. According to this, it is certainly improper to engage in another activity such as folding the tallit while reciting *Alenu*. We should always do everything we can to increase our concentration on our prayers; we must not seek leniencies that make it more difficult to concentrate.