

Techelet - Tzitzit And Woman In The Talmud

The Blue Color Is Called Techelet (te khe'let)...

**Our Rabbis taught:
"All must observe the law of Tzitzith, priests, Levites,
and Israelites, proselytes,
women and slaves."**

Talmud - Mas . Menachoth 43a

Techelet is a very special Mitzvah that is once again within our grasp. The Gemara tells us that Rabbi Chanina b. Dosa , when he prayed on behalf a sick individual, he was able to say, "this one will live or this one will die." He was asked how he could tell and he answered that it depended upon whether his prayer flowed freely from his mouth or not. Why is this? It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit one knows this. When a praying man or woman pray the prayer of faith wearing the **Techelet** G-d is pleased . This article is in response to the one question I am often asked. "Can a woman wear Tzitzit and can the blue thread be part of it?" The answer I always give is "YES, they can!"

The Torah commands us to wear tzitzit (fringes) at the corners of our garments as a reminder of the Commandments. (Num. 15:37-41). This Commandment only applies to four-cornered garments, which were common in Biblical times but are not common anymore. Yet observant Jewish men commonly don a special four-cornered garment, similar to a poncho, its called a tallit katan . By doing this they will have the opportunity to fulfill this very important Commandment. The tallit katan is worn under a shirt, with the tzitzit hanging outside so they can be seen. It is in the "seeing of them" they can remember and do the Commandments. A four-cornered prayer shawl called a Tallit is worn by adult men and women during morning services. Tefillin are also worn by mostly men.

There is a complex procedure for tying the knots of the tzitzit , and you can tie them more than one way. The knots and windings are filled with religious and numerological significance. I wrote about this numerological significance in my second book entitled, **"The Mystery Of The Tzitzit On The Hebrew Prayer Shawl - A Provocative Study on the Value of the Tzitzit "** which you can receive by request it from Mayim Hayim for a love gift of \$30.00 for the work of the ministry.

Archaeological Discovery

An archaeological has found mounds of Murex snails at coastal dyeing sites, as well as literary evidence from the ancient world of dyeing and chemical analysis of the Murex dye, are all strong evidence in support of this conclusion of the color used today. More importantly, the growing number of Rabbinic personalities and halachic communities wearing Tekhelet today, lends further credence to its authenticity. The results of the "real" test, however, will only be validated by its acceptance in the years, if not generations to come.

In Greek and Roman times a special purpose rectangular prayer shawl, the Tallit, was adopted and mostly used when reciting prayers in public or private. It seemed to satisfy the need to have

four corners as stated in Deuteronomy 22:12. Some individuals wore the tallit when studying Torah or beneath their outer garments. Eventually a special garment came to be worn beneath other clothes. The arba kanfot (or tallit katan today) was a rectangle of cloth with an opening for the head and with fringes at the four corners.

By the way, Yeshua speaking tells us to go prayer in our prayer closets. What is this prayer closet?

"When you pray, go into your closet, close your door and pray to your Father who is in Secret, and your Father who sees what is done in Secret will reward you. Remember when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles from the Nations do, for they suppose that they will be heard of G-d for their many words." Matthew 6:6-7.

This prayer closet was a Jewish "prayer shawl." Just pop it over your head, and you have your closet, your very own [secret place](#) to speak to your [Father in secret](#) . It is still used this way today by the Jewish people.

Tzitzit Halachah

It is established as a direct command of G-d. Ordained by YHVH as a way to cause people to "remember His commands." Read Numbers 15:38 -41:

38 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: "Throughout the generations to come you are to make fringe [ציצית](#) on the corners [א-ב-ג-ד](#) of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. 39 You will have these fringes to look at and so you will remember all the commands of YHVH, that you may obey them and not prostitute yourselves by going after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes. 40 Then you will remember to obey all my commands and will be consecrated to your God. 41 I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am YHVH your God."

Then Deuteronomy 22:12 tells us: "Make [fringes](#) on the four corners of the garment you wear."

Requirements & Prohibitions

There must be four, and they must be worn on a four-cornered garment (arbah kanfot).

a. Specified in the book of Deuteronomy 22:12 "Make [fringes](#) (tassels - gedilim , gedil , ghed - eel') on the four corners of the garment you wear." This word is not that same as tzitzit in Numbers 15:38-41.

Its Strong's #434; from a Hebrew root #1431 meaning: (in the sense of twisting); thread, i.e. a tassel or festoon, fringe, wreath or a chain. See also I Kings 7:17, these are the only two placed in the Scriptures this word appears. The root word #1431 is "great or magnified." So what the fringes really do, is make great and magnify the Commandments of the L-RD to ones own eyes.

b. The requirement to wear a four-cornered garment is an inherent component of this command. The alternative, which would be to only wear the tzitzit when one wears a four-cornered

garment, would defeat the purpose of the command. The purpose of the command is clearly to wear them "always," since we are to "remember to follow His commands always."

c. They must be worn so that they can be seen by you: "You will have these tassels to look at."

1. We reject the idea of wearing them to observe the Mitzvah without wearing them "outside."

Since the command specifically indicates that they are to be worn so that they can be seen and thereby remind each person of His commands, they must be worn so as to be "seen" regularly throughout the day.

2. The tzitzit may be attached to a four-cornered outer garment or a four-cornered inner garment in such a way so that the tassels show out of the other garments at all times.

d. They must be worn at all times when a person is "dressed."

We also reject the idea that they need not be worn at night, since when one is not in complete darkness there is enough light to see one's tzitzit .

e. The garment on which the tzitzit are attached must truly be a garment - i.e., made of kosher cloth and covering a reasonable percent of the person body.

f. Each of the four fringes must have one chord of **blue (Techelet)** in it to be kosher. Today we can fulfill that command because once again **Techelet** is now available in Israel .

g. The tzitzit are for woman as well as men. Men must wear them, were as woman can choice to fulfill this positive command.

From the Talmud - Mas. Menachoth 42b/ ...our Rabbis taught, there is no real manner of testing the blue thread. Therefore it should be bought only from an expert... R. Judah used to test it (the blue thread) by using to mix together liquid alum, juice of fenugreek, and urine.

Talmud - Mas . Menachoth 43a/ ...of a forty-day old child , 1 and soak [the blue thread] in it (must mean the above mixture) overnight until the morning; if the colour faded it is invalid, 2 but if not, it is valid. Moreover, R. Adda stated the following test before Raba in the name of R. 'Avira: One should take a piece of hard leavened dough of barley meal and bake it with [the blue thread] inside; if the colour improved 3 it is valid, but if it deteriorated it is invalid; and in order to remember this, think of the phrase 'a false change, a true change!' 4 - The statement 'There is no manner of testing the blue thread' refers to the test quantity. 5

Mar of Moshke once obtained in the time of R. Ahai some blue thread; on testing it by the test submitted by R. Isaac the son of R. Judah its colour faded, but on testing it by R. Adda's test its colour improved. He was about to declare it invalid when R. Ahai said to him, This is neither genuine blue nor imitation blue! We must therefore say that one test 6 supplements the other thus: if the test of R. Isaac the son of R. Judah had been applied and the colour had not faded it is certainly valid, but if its colour had faded we should then test it by R. Adda's test by [baking it in] a hard piece of leavened dough; if its colour improved it is valid, but if it deteriorated it is

invalid. A message was sent from there [Palestine] saying, The tests supplement each other.

R. Mani was most particular when buying [the blue thread]. in accordance with the restrictions of the above Baraita; [7](#) whereupon a certain old man said to him, Those who long preceded you acted so, and they were successful in their business.

Our Rabbis taught: If a man bought a garment furnished with zizith from an Israelite in the market, the presumption is [that it is valid]; [8](#) if he bought it from a gentile, who was a merchant, it is valid, [9](#) but if he was a private individual it is invalid. [10](#) And [this is so] notwithstanding that they said, A man may not sell a garment furnished with zizith to a gentile unless he removed the zizith. [11](#) What is the reason for this? - Here it was explained, on account of a harlot. [12](#) Rab Judah said, It is to be feared that [an Israelite] might join him on the road and he might kill him. [13](#)

Rab Judah attached fringes to the aprons of **[the women of] his household** ; [14](#) moreover, he used to say every morning the blessing [‘. . . and hast commanded us] to enwrap ourselves with the fringes’. But since he attached [the fringes to the womens ’ garments], obviously he is of the opinion that it is a precept not dependent on a fixed time; [15](#) why then did he say the blessing every morning? [16](#) - He follows Rabbi's view; for it was taught: Whenever a man puts on the tefillin he should make a blessing over them, says Rabbi. But if so, at any time [of the day whenever he puts on the garment he should say the blessing]? - Rab Judah was a most decorous person and would not take off his cloak the whole day long. Then why [did he say the blessing] in the morning? [17](#) - That was when he changed from night clothes into day clothes.

Our Rabbis taught: **ALL must observe the law of zizith, priests, Levites, and Israelites, proselytes, women and slaves.** R. Simeon declares women exempt, since it is a positive precept dependent on a fixed time, [18](#) and women are exempt from all positive precepts that are dependent on a fixed time.

The Master said, ‘ **ALL** must observe the law of zizith, priests, Levites, and Israelites’. Is not this obvious? For if priests and Levites and Israelites were exempt, then who would observe it? - It was stated particularly on account of priests. For I might have argued, since it is written, Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together, and [it is followed by,] Thou shalt make thee twisted cords, [19](#) . that only those who are forbidden to wear mingled stuff must observe the law of zizith, and as priests are permitted to wear mingled stuff [20](#) they need not observe [the law of zizith]; we are therefore taught [that they, too, are bound], for although while performing the service [in the Temple] they may wear [mingled stuff] they certainly may not wear it when not performing the service.

R. Simeon declares women exempt’. What is R. Simeon's reason? - It was taught: That ye may look upon it: [21](#) this excludes a night garment. You say it excludes a night garment, but perhaps it is not so, but it excludes rather a blind man's garment? The verse, when it says, Wherewith thou coverest thyself, [22](#) clearly includes a blind man's garment; how then must I explain the verse, That ye may look upon it? As excluding a night garment. And why do you choose to include a blind man's garment and to exclude a night garment? [23](#) include a blind man's garment since it is looked upon by others, whilst I exclude a night garment since it cannot be looked upon by others.

- (1) 'that had been kept for forty days'.
- (2) For it is not genuine blue.
- (3) Lit., 'changed for the better'.
- (4) Where the change was for the worse, i.e., the colour deteriorated, it is spurious and is invalid; but where the change was for the better it is genuine and is valid.
- (5) I.e., there is no manner of testing the blue thread so as to ascertain whether it was dyed in the vessel with the dye or in the quantity taken out as a test.
- (6) Lit., 'the teachings' referring to the teachings of R. Isaac and R. Adda.
- (7) That it should be bought only from an expert who knows the law.
- (8) I.e., the blue thread in the zizith is deemed to be genuine.
- (9) For the merchant would not risk his reputation as an honest dealer by passing off the imitation blue for the genuine.
- (10) For the gentile may have dyed the thread himself, in which case it obviously could not have been dyed for the purpose of the precept.
- (11) Nevertheless if one bought it from a gentile merchant it is valid, for it is almost certain that a Jew sold it to him.
- (12) A gentile harlot, receiving this garment with the fringes from a gentile as hire, might spread an evil report against a Jew, producing the garment in support of her words.
- (13) A Jewish wayfarer would unhesitatingly join the gentile on the way, believing him to be a Jew since he is wearing a garment with fringes, and would have no suspicion against him so as to guard himself against attack.
- (14) For he held that women are also bound to wear zizith.
- (15) For women must observe only those positive precepts that do not depend upon the time of the year or of the day for their performance; therefore by imposing the precept of zizith upon women Rab Judah obviously holds that night as well as day is the proper time for the fringes.
- (16) Surely the blessing should be said only once, and that when the garment is put on for the first time.
- (17) Which presumably means at dawn; he should, however, have recited the blessing even earlier than dawn, as soon as he rose.
- (18) For the night is not the proper time for zizith.
- (19) Deut. XXII, 11, 12.
- (20) For the girdle which was part of the Priests' robes consisted of wool and linen.
- (21) Num. XV, 39.
- (22) Deut. XXII, 12.
- (23) The verse surely is not required to include a blind man's garment; since they declare that a night garment is subject to zizith - for according to them the precept is not limited to time, a fortiori a blind man's garment is subject to zizith.