

Tallit

TALLIT = the Jewish prayer shawl. This is a rectangular mantle that looks somewhat like a blanket worn by Israelites, both in ancient times and now. At the four corners of the tallit, tassels called **tzitzit** are attached, in fulfillment of the biblical commandment of **zizit** in **NUM 15:38–41**. Ancient **Tallitot** (plural) are usually made either of **wool or of linen** and probably resembled the *abbayah* ("blanket") still worn by Bedouin for protection against the weather. The **tallit** of finer quality was similar to the Roman *pallium* and was worn mostly by the wealthy and by distinguished rabbis and scholars. The length of the mantle was to be a handbreadth shorter than that of the garment under it. After the exile of the Jews from **Erez Israel** and their dispersion, they came to adopt the fashions of their gentile neighbors more readily. The **tallit** was discarded as a daily habit and it became a religious garment for prayer; hence its later meaning of prayer shawl. Modern **tallitot** are usually white and made either of wool, cotton, or silk, although Maimonides and Alfasi objected to the use of the latter. Strictly observant Jews prefer **tallitot** made of coarse half-bleached lamb's wool. In remembrance of the blue thread of the **zizit** (see **techelet**), most **tallitot** have several blue stripes woven into the white material. Until recently, however, they only had black stripes.

Frequently the upper part of the **tallit** around the neck and on the shoulders has a special piece of cloth sewn with silver threads (called **atarah**, 'diadem' or 'crown'), to mark the upper (i.e., the 'collar') and the outer parts of the four-cornered prayer shawl. Some **tallitot** have the benediction, recited when putting on the **tallit**, woven into the **atarah**. Others, especially those made of silk, are often richly embroidered and some have the benediction woven into the entire cloth of the **tallit**. The minimum size of a **tallit** is that which would suffice to clothe a small child able to walk.

The **tallit** is worn by males during the morning prayers (except on the Ninth of Av, when it is worn at the afternoon service), as well as during all Day of Atonement services. The **hazzan**, however, according to some rites, wears the **tallit** also during the afternoon and evening services (as does the reader from the Torah during the *Minhah* prayer on fast days). Before putting on the prayer shawl the following benediction is said: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments, and hast commanded us to wrap ourselves in the fringed garment." When the **tallit** is put on, the head is first covered with it and the four corners thrown over the left shoulder (a movement called *atifat Yishme'elim*, "after the manner of the Arabs"). After a short pause, the four corners are allowed to fall back into their original position: two are suspended on each side. On weekdays, the **tallit** is donned before putting on the **tefillin**. Among strictly observant Jews, it was the custom to put on **tallit** and **tefillin** at home and to walk in them to the synagogue (Isserles, to Sh. Ar., OH 25:2). They also pray with the **tallit** covering their head; to be enfolded by the **tallit** is regarded as being enveloped by the holiness of the commandments of the Torah, denoting a symbolic subjection to the Divine Will (see also RH 17b). Generally, however, people pray with the **tallit** resting on their shoulders only. The **kohanim**, however, cover their heads with the **tallit** during their recital of the Priestly Blessing. It is customary in the morning service to press the fringes to the eyes and to kiss them three times during the recital of the last section of the *Shema* (Num. 15:37–41) which deals with the commandment of **zizit** (Sh. Ar., OH 24:4).

The custom of wearing the **tallit** differs in many communities. In the Ashkenazi ritual, small children under **bar mitzvah** age dress in **tallitot** made according to their size, whereas in the Polish-Sephardi ritual only married men wear them (Kid. 29b). In most oriental rites, unmarried men wear **tallitot**. In Reform synagogues, the **tallit** is part of the synagogue service garments of the rabbi and the cantor. For male congregants, the wearing of a small prayer shawl, resembling a scarf and worn around the neck, is optional. Those called to the reading from the Torah, however, always don a **tallit**. In some communities, it is customary for the bridegroom to dress in a **tallit** during the *huppah* ceremony. It is likewise customary to bury male Jews in their **tallit** from which the fringes have been removed or torn (see Burial).

The **zizit** worn by men with their daily dress is known as **tallit katan** ("small **tallit**").

TALLIT KATAN; "small **tallit**"; a rectangular garment of white cotton, linen, or wool with **ziziyot** ("fringes") on its four corners. Whereas the ordinary **tallit** is worn only at the morning service, strictly observant Jews wear the **tallit katan** under their upper garment the whole day, so as constantly to fulfill the biblical commandment of **zizit** (Num. 15:39), a reminder to observe all the commandments of the Torah. The **tallit katan** is, therefore, often worn in a manner that it may be seen; if not, that at least the **ziziyot** hang freely and are visible (Sh. Ar., OH 8:11). The minimum size of a **tallit katan** ought to be 3/4 ell long and 1/2 ell wide (15 in. X 10 in.). According to another opinion, it should be one square ell (20 in. X 20 in.). The **tallit katan** is put on in the morning, and the following benediction is said: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments and commanded us [to wear] the **zizit**." The **tallit katan** must always be clean and, in reverence for its sanctity, should not be worn on the bare flesh but over an undershirt. If one of the **ziziyot** is torn, the whole **tallit katan** becomes ritually unfit (*pesulah*) until the torn **zizit** is replaced.

See *Zizit, Tallit*.

ZIZIT "fringes", name of the tassels attached to the four corners of special (four-cornered) garments worn by men in fulfillment of the biblical commandment in **Numbers 15:37–41** and **Deuteronomy 22:12**. It has been suggested that the **zizit** served as a talisman (amulet) or that it was instituted in order to distinguish between male and female garments which were very similar in biblical times. In the latter case it served as a protection against immoral conduct (an interpretation derived from Numbers 15:39). Talmudic literature invests the commandment of **zizit** with exalted symbolism. The rabbis regarded the **zizit** as a reminder to the Jew to observe the religious duties, giving it a function similar to that of the *mezuzah* on the doorposts and to the **tefillin** on the head and arm. The **Talmud** brings the parable how a person was saved from sensual sin because he wore fringes (Men. 44a).

The biblical commandment prescribing the entwining of a blue cord in the fringes is regarded as essential because blue, the color of the sky, was also supposed to be the color of the "throne of glory" (Men. 43b). Difficulties in obtaining the dyeing material for this purpose caused rabbinic authorities in the second century C.E. to waive this requirement.

In modern times, each *zizit* consists of one long and three short white threads which are passed through the holes in the four corners of the garment and folded so as to make eight threads. They are then fastened with a double knot. The long thread (called *shammash*) is wound around the other threads seven, eight, 11, and 13 times and the four joints are separated from one another by a double knot. The *zizit* thus consists of five double knots and eight threads (a total of 13). This number, together with the Hebrew numerical value of *zizit* (600), amounts to 613, the number of the biblical commandments of which the *zizit* are to remind the wearer (Num. 15:39). *Ziziyyot* of wool or linen are ritually fit for a *tallit* of whatever material. A silk or cotton *tallit*, however, should have *ziziyyot* of only the same fabric. The minimum length of the *zizit* threads should be four thumb lengths. If one of the *zizit* threads is torn, it is customary to replace the whole fringe. A person not wearing a four-cornered garment is exempt from the *mitzvah* of *zizit* since the religious duty of wearing *zizit* is not a personal one (*hovat gavra*). In order to fulfill this biblical commandment, however, pious Jews always wear a (*tallit katan*) "small four-cornered garment."

Women are exempt from the duty of *zizit* as the fulfillment of this commandment relates to a specific time and women are exempt from such obligations: *ziziyyot* have to be worn only during the day, based on the Bible verse "ye may look upon it" (Num. 15:39 which excludes the night).

It is customary to kiss the *ziziyyot* while reciting the last section of the *Shema* (Num. 15:37–41) in the morning service. The *ziziyyot* of the *tallit* in which males are buried are torn to make them ritually unfit.

SHEMA, READING OF, the twice daily recitation of the declaration of God's unity, called the *Shema* ("Hear") after the first word in Deuteronomy 6:4; also called *Keri'at Shema*, ("the reading of the *Shema*"). As it had developed by at least as early as the second century C.E. the *Shema* consisted of three portions of the Pentateuch—Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Deuteronomy 11:13–21; and Numbers 15:37–41, in this order—together with the benedictions of the *Shema*, two to be recited before the *Shema* and one after, in the morning, and two before and two after, in the evening (Ber. 1:1–5, 2:2). The morning benedictions before the *Shema* are: "Who formest light and createst darkness..." (*Yozer Or*, Hertz, Prayer, 108–14) and "With abounding love..." (*Ahavah Rabbah*, *ibid.*, 114–6), and "True and firm..." (*Emet Ve-Yaziv*, *ibid.*, 126–8), after it (see *Shaharit*). The evening benedictions before the *Shema* are "Who at Thy word bringest on the evening twilight..." (*Ma'ariv Aravim*, *ibid.*, 304), and "With everlasting love..." (*Ahavat Olam*, *ibid.*, 306), and "True and trustworthy..." (*Emet ve-Emunah*, *ibid.*, 310–2), and "Cause us to lie down in peace..." (*Hashkivenu*, *ibid.*, 312), after the *Shema* (see *Arvit*).

Development of the Practice

It is difficult to determine the stages through which this development took place. At a very early period the Deuteronomic injunction "And these words which I command thee this day... and thou shalt talk of them" (6:6–7 and 11:19) were understood as a commandment to read the *Shema*, perhaps in response to the challenge of Zoroastrian dualism, though as late as the third century C.E. some held the view that the duty of reciting the *Shema* is rabbinic and the verses refer not specifically to the *Shema* but to the "words of Torah" in general (Ber. 21a). The Nash papyrus, dating from the Hasmonean period, contains the Ten Commandments and the first portion of the *Shema*. The Mishnah (Tam. 5:1) records that in the Temple all three portions of the *Shema* were recited together with the Ten Commandments, and explicit reference is made here to the benediction after the *Shema*, *Emet ve-Yaziv*, and to another benediction before the *Shema*, which is identified at a later period (Ber. 11b) with *Ahavah Rabbah*. At a later period, too, there are indications that special significance was attached to the first verse of the *Shema* (Ber. 13b; *Suk.* 42a). It is not implausible, therefore, to see the successive stages as:

- (1) the reading of the first verse;
- (2) the reading of the first portion;
- (3) the reading of all three portions, together with *Emet ve-Yaziv* and *Ahavah Rabbah*;
- (4) the addition of the other benedictions.

In any event, it was a long established practice at the beginning of the present era to read the *Shema* in the evening and morning as can be seen from the fact that the schools of Hillel and Shammai (see Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai) debated as to how it should be read. The school of Shammai took the words "when you lie down and when you get up" literally, and ruled that the evening *Shema* should be recited while reclining and the morning *Shema* while standing upright. The school of Hillel ruled that "when you lie down..." refers to the times of reading, i.e., in the evening and in the morning, but that no special posture is required. The ruling followed is that of the school of Hillel (Ber. 1:3).

There was much debate in the tannaitic period as to the times of reciting the *Shema*. The eventual ruling is that the evening *Shema* can be recited from nightfall until dawn, though ideally it should be recited before midnight; the morning *Shema* can be recited from the first traces of the dawn until a quarter of the day (Ber. 1:1–2; Ber. 2a–3a, 9b).

INCLUSION OF THE BARUKH SHEMA

After the first verse of the *Shema* it has been customary from rabbinic times to recite under the breath the doxology, uttered as a response in the Temple, "Blessed be the name of His glorious Kingdom for ever and ever" (*Barukh SHEMA*). The midrashic explanation is that this was recited by the patriarch Jacob on his deathbed when his sons declared their loyalty by reciting the *Shema*. Since Jacob said it, we too repeat it, but since Moses did not say it we recite it *sotto voce* (Pes. 56a). Another midrashic explanation is that when Moses went up on high he heard the ministering angels saying *Barukh SHEMA*, and he brought it down for Israel to use. Since it was stolen from the angels, Israel recites it silently, but on the Day of Atonement, when Israel is pure as the angels, it is recited in a loud voice (Deut. R. 2:36).

Various suggestions have been made to account historically for the insertion of *Barukh Shem*. Thus it may have been introduced by the Pharisaic opponents of Herod and the Sadducean priesthood in order to emphasize the belief in the sole sovereignty of God as against the aristocratic tendency to admit the sovereignty of the caesars (see Abrahams, Companion, iii); or as a response at a time when the *Shema* was read verse by verse led by the reader (Elbogen, Gottesdienst, 26); or as a substitute for the Temple response after the destruction of the Temple (H. Albeck (ed.), *Shishah Sidrei Mishnah, Zera'im* (1958), 328), which might explain why the later custom is to recite *Barukh Shem* in a loud voice on the Day of Atonement, since this was the day on which it was especially recited in Temple times (Yoma 3:8, 4:1, 6:2).

RECITATION OF SHEMA BEFORE RETIRING

In addition to the twice daily reading of the *Shema* as part of the morning and evening prayers the practice was introduced in the amoraic period of reciting the first section before retiring (*Keri'at Shema al ha-Mittah*). The source in the Talmud (Ber. 4b) is the saying of R. Joshua b. Levi: "Though a man has recited the *Shema* in the synagogue, it is meritorious to recite it again on his bed." The proof text was given as: "Tremble and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah" (Ps. 4:5). Later on in the same passage (Ber. 5a) the practice is connected with the fear of demons, whom it is said to drive away, but it is uncertain whether this was the true origin of the custom. Maimonides (Yad, Tefillah, 7:2), as usual in such circumstances, makes no mention of the demon motif but simply records the duty of reciting the first paragraph of the *Shema*, and he takes "on the bed" literally.

OTHER RITUAL USES OF THE SHEMA

The first verse of the *Shema* is also recited in the early morning (Hertz, Prayer, 30); when the Torah scroll is taken from the ark on Sabbaths and festivals (*ibid.*, 480); during the *Kedushah* in the *Musaf* on Sabbaths and festivals (*ibid.*, 530, 816, etc.); and on the deathbed (*ibid.*, 1064). The first verse of the *Shema* is recited once, and *Barukh Shem*, three times, at the conclusion of the services on the Day of Atonement. The portions of the *Shema* from Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21 are included in the parchments enclosed in the *mezuzah* and *tefillin*. The remains of *tefillin* for the head found in Qumran (XQ Phyl. 1–4) were acquired by Y. Yadin in 1969 and proved to contain, among additional biblical texts, Deuteronomy 6:4–9. It is presumed that the original fourth scroll from these remains, which is now lost, contained Deuteronomy 11:13–21.

The Laws of the Shema

The *Shema* should be recited with full concentration on the meaning of the words; if, however, it was recited without concentration it is unnecessary to repeat it, provided the first verse was recited with concentration. If the *Shema* is recited while walking, it is necessary to stand still for the recitation of the first verse. It is customary to place the right hand over the eyes while reciting the first verse as an aid to concentration, and, for the same reason, the first verse should be recited in a loud voice. One should not wink or gesticulate while reading the *Shema* but should recite it in fear and trembling. The *Shema* should be recited sufficiently loudly for it to be heard by the ear, since it is said: "Hear, O Israel." Care must be taken to enunciate the words clearly, and this applies especially to two consecutive words the first of which ends and the second of which begins with the same letter. The *Shema* can be recited in any language but with the same clarity of enunciation one is expected to use for the Hebrew. If one is in doubt as to whether he has recited the *Shema*, it is necessary to recite it in order to make sure. It is forbidden to interrupt the recitation of the *Shema*. It is forbidden to recite the *Shema* in a place that is not scrupulously clean, or in front of the naked body. Women (who are exempt from carrying out precepts dependent on a given time) and little children have no obligation to recite the *Shema* but may do so if they wish. It is customary for women, nonetheless, to recite the *Shema*.

The total of the words of the *Shema* together with *Barukh Shem* is 245. It is customary for the reader to repeat the last two words of the *Shema* and the first word of the following benediction thus bringing the total up to 248, corresponding to the limbs of the body and the number of positive precepts. When the *Shema* is recited in private the total is made up by reciting before the *Shema* the three words *el melekh ne'eman* ("God, faithful King!"). The usual translation of the first verse of the *Shema* is "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one." Other translations are "The Lord our God is one Lord" (AV); "The Eternal, the Eternal alone, is our God" (Moffatt); "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone" (new Jewish translation, JPSA (1962), following Ibn Ezra).

The Shema in Jewish Thought

The *Shema* is in Jewish thought the supreme affirmation of the unity of God and is frequently called "the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven." The original meaning of the first verse may have been that, unlike the pagan gods who have different guises and localities, God is one. At first the main emphasis in the *Shema* was seen to be in opposition to polytheism; there is only one God, not many gods. R. Akiva is reported to have recited the *Shema* just before his execution by the Romans (Ber. 61b), and generally Jewish martyrs recited it as they went to their death. Perhaps from earliest times (see S. R. Driver, *Deuteronomy*, ICC (1902), 89–91), but certainly from later, the word *ehad* ("one") was understood also to mean "unique." God is not only one and not many, but He is totally other than what paganism means by gods. Seen in this light, the *Shema* is not only an affirmation that there are no other gods, but that God is the Supreme Being. God is different from anything in the universe He has created. This was the general view of the medieval Jewish philosophers and kabbalists (see e.g., Bahya ibn Paquda, *Hovot ha-Levavot*, 1:9–10). In hasidic thought, the further idea is read into the *Shema* that there is only God, the whole universe existing in Him, as it were, and only enjoying an independent existence from the human standpoint (pantheism; see Menahem Mendel of Lubavich, *Derekh Mitzvotekha* (1953), 118–24). This doctrine was treated as heresy by opponents of Hasidism.

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FIRST VERSE

Christian exegesis in the Middle Ages interpreted the three divine names in the first verse of the *Shema* as referring to the Trinity (see JE, 12 (1905), 261 and J. Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance* (1961), 19). Jewish commentators were naturally at

pains to contradict this, and a current interpretation was that, in fact, the *Shema* asserts the opposite, that there is only one God and no three persons in the Godhead (see e.g., *Da'at Zekenim* and Bahya ibn Asher to Deut. 6:4 and Leon de Modena *Magen va-Herev* ed. S. Simonsohn (1960), 31–32). Very curious are the references in the Zohar to the three divine names in the first verse of the *Shema*. These represent the unity of three powers in the Godhead, that is the *Sefirot* of Lovingkindness, Judgment, and Beauty (*Hesed, Gevurah, Tiferet*), symbolized by the colors white, red, and green, or the *Sefirot* of Wisdom, Understanding, and Beauty (*Hokhmah, Binah, Tiferet*; Zohar 1:18b; 3:263a). The Zohar is strongly anti-Christian in intent and repeatedly stresses that all the Ten *Sefirot* are a unity with *Ein Sof*, so that it is absurd to read the Christian doctrine into it, as some of the Christian kabbalists have done. The possibility, however, that the formal zoharic interpretation was influenced by Christian exegesis of this verse cannot be ruled out (see I. Tishby, *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 2 (1961), 278–80).

The word "Israel" (in "Hear, O Israel") is understood by the Midrash as referring to the patriarch Jacob (Deut. R. 2:35). The devout Jew addresses himself to his ancestor to declare that he has kept the faith. Abudraham understands it to mean that each Jew addresses his fellow. In hasidic thought (Dov Baer of Lubavich, *Kunteres ha-Hitpa'alut*, in *Likkutei Be'urim* (1868), 54a), the idea is put forward that each Jew addresses the "Israel" part of his soul, speaking to the highest within him. Abudraham also remarks that the letter *ayin* of the word *Shema* and the letter *dalet* of the *ehad* are traditionally written larger than the other letters in the Torah scroll so as to form the word *ed* ("witness"): the Jew testifies to God's unity when he recites the *Shema*.

Jewish devotional manuals sometimes advise the worshiper to have in mind while reciting the *Shema* that if he is called upon to suffer martyrdom for the sanctification of God's name he will do so willingly and with joy (see e.g., Alexander Suskind of Grodno, *Yesod ve-Shoresh ha-Avodah* (19652), 97–99). This author also advises the worshiper after he has recited the first verse of the *Shema* to have in mind the following: I believe with perfect faith, pure and true, that Thou art one and unique and that Thou has created all worlds, upper and lower, without end, and Thou art in past, present and future. I make Thee King over each of my limbs that it might keep and perform the precepts of Thy holy Torah and I make Thee King over my children and children's children to the end of time. I will, therefore, command my children and grandchildren to accept the yoke of Thy Kingdom, Divinity, and Lordship upon themselves, and I will command them to command their children, in turn, up to the last generation to accept, all of them, the yoke of Thy Kingdom, Divinity, and Lordship.

[Louis Jacobs] Also: Phylacteries

TEFILLIN (Heb. NyZpG; usually translated "phylacteries"; sing. *tefillah*—see Men. 4:1; Mik. 10:3), two black leather boxes containing scriptural passages which are bound by black leather straps on the left hand and on the head and worn for the morning services on all days of the year except Sabbaths and scriptural holy days (see below). In four passages of the Bible (Ex. 13:1–10, 11–16; Deut. 6:4–9 and 11:13–21) there occurs the almost identical passage requiring the Jew to put "these words" (of the Law) for "a sign upon thy hand and a frontlet between thine eyes." (Only in the first does "*zikkaron*" "memorial" occur instead of *totafot*, "frontlets.") Both the passages of Deuteronomy state explicitly, "and thou shalt bind them" where the two passages in Exodus merely say "and they shall be."

Of all the commentators on the Bible only the 12th-century commentator Samuel b. Meir takes this command as a figurative one. In his commentary on Exodus 13:9 he says: "according to the essence of its literal meaning it means 'it shall ever be as a memorial as though it were written upon thy hand,' as in the verse: 'Set me as a seal upon thy heart as a seal upon thine arm'" (Song 8:6; Abraham ibn Ezra suggests the same explanation but rejects it). Apart from this it was accepted that the verse had to be taken literally and that the words of the Scripture had to be bound on the hand and placed (on the forehead) between the eyes. The portions selected for the fulfillment of this commandment were the four above-mentioned passages which constitute the *tefillin*. The rabbis were aware of the fact that apart from these verses there is no explicit reference to this ceremony, or the manner in which it was to be fulfilled, in the Bible, and they regarded it as the classic example of a biblical law whose details are wholly "of the Scribes" and immutable (Sanh. 88b); it is, indeed, a perfect example of an injunction the method of whose performance is the result of the Oral Law. The Samaritans did not wear them (Men. 42b).

The *tefillin* are first mentioned in the Letter of Aristaeus (159) but only the *tefillah* of the hand "and upon our hands too, He [God] expressly orders the symbols to be fastened." Josephus (Ant. 4:213) mentions both, that of the head before the hand. The rabbis regarded them as having been instituted at the earliest times, and in a discussion as to whether the incident of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dead Bones was a vision or a fact, "Judah b. Bathyra stood up and said, 'I am one of their descendants and these are the *tefillin* which my grandfather handed down to me from them'" (Sanh. 92b).

Tefillin are mentioned once in the New Testament under the peculiarly inappropriate name of "phylacteries" (Gr. *fulakthron*, "amulet") and this name has been universally adopted as the English equivalent of the word. (For the meaning of the word, see later.) It is part of the diatribe against the Pharisees, "But all their works they do to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries" (Matt. 23:5). This charge of the demonstrative nature of the commandment is, in fact, confirmed by the rabbis, who interpret the verse "and all the peoples of the earth shall see that the name of the Lord is called upon thee" (Deut. 28:10) to refer to "the *tefillin* of the head" (Ber. 6a).

The *tefillin* were worn by day, but not at night; it is even stated that "he who wears *tefillin* at night transgresses a positive commandment" (TJ, Ber. 2:3, 4c) but it is doubtful whether they were generally worn all day. Both of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai (Suk. 28a) and his disciple Eliezer b. Hyrcanus (TJ, Ber. 2:3, 4c) in Erez Israel, as well as of Ada b. Ahavah in Babylon (Ta'an. 20b) it is stated that they "never walked four cubits without wearing phylacteries," suggesting that this was an act of special piety. They were worn only by men, but according to a *baraita* "Michal the daughter of the Cushite [i.e., Saul, cf. MK 16b] wore *tefillin* and the sages did not protest" (Er. 96a).

There is evidence of a certain laxity in the fulfillment of this commandment during the talmudic period. It is stated that, because the Jews did not risk martyrdom for them during the Hadrianic persecution "the precept is still weak with them" (Shab.

130a). It is, however, certain that the injunction was largely disregarded both in France and in Spain in the 12th and 13th centuries. This is specifically stated (Tos. Shab. 49a), and Jacob Tam actually quotes the talmudic passage in extenuation of this laxity (*ibid.*), contending that the statement that "a head which does not wear *tefillin* is of a willful sinner of Israel" (RH 17a) refers only to one who refuses to wear them out of defiance or contempt. Little more than half a century later Moses of Coucy states: "In the year 1236 I was in Spain to reprove them...and there was a wholesale repentance and thousands and tens of thousands accepted the duty of donning *tefillin*... and so it was in other lands, and afterward my admonitions were accepted in all these places" (*Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*, Positive Commandment 3). Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to regard the difference of opinion between Rashi and his grandson Tam as to the correct order of the paragraphs in the *tefillah* of the head as proof that it was a re-innovation at the time, as the discovery of the *tefillin* in the Dead Sea area shows (see later).

Order of Passages

As stated, both the *tefillin* of the hand and of the head contain the four paragraphs. Whereas, however, in the *tefillah* of the hand they are written on one piece of parchment and in the order of their occurrence in the Bible, the *tefillah* of the head is divided into four compartments, and the four paragraphs, each written on a separate piece of parchment and tied, are inserted in them. Only according to Rashi are they inserted in the order of their occurrence; according to R. Tam the passage from Deuteronomy 11:13–21 precedes that of Deuteronomy 6:4–9. This is practically the only difference of opinion found with regard to the *tefillin*. Rashi's order has been universally accepted, although a small but diminishing number of individuals of especial piety, in view of possible doubt, substitute "R. Tam's *tefillin*" for those "of Rashi" for the concluding part of the service. Apart from that there is a remarkable uniformity of custom and procedure which applies to all rites and communities, and, with a few differences which will be noted, the details which follow are universal.

Both the *tefillin* are cubical boxes ("square") of leather painted black (Men. 35a). The parchment must be made from the skins of ritually clean animals (*ibid.*, 42b, Sanh. 48b), preferably of a calf (OH 32:44), and the scriptural passages written on them in square ("Assyrian") script, like that of the *Sefer Torah*. The aperture into which the parchment is inserted is closed with a square piece of thick leather (*titora*) and stitched with 12 stitches of gut made from clean animals (Shab. 8b). Protruding from the back of the *tefillin* case is a hollow extension (*ma'barta*) through which the straps are passed. These straps must also be made from the hide of clean animals and be black on the outside. The arrangement of the straps is conditioned by the purpose to which they are put. That of the hand *tefillah* is in the form of a noose to enable it to be tightened on the arm; that of the head has a circlet, tied with a knot, its size adjusted to the circumference of the head, the two ends hanging loosely.

Under the influence of the Kabbalah the word yVQ (*Shaddai*; Almighty) is represented on both *tefillin*. In the case of the *tefillin* of the head by the letter S inscribed on the box on both sides, that on the right having the normal letter with three strokes, that on the left with four. The knot is made in the shape of a d while the y is represented by the end of the strap. In the case of the hand *tefillah* the strap is wrapped on the hand in the shape of the S and the r and the knot at the end is in the shape of the y.

The order of donning the *tefillin* is meticulously laid down. They are put on after the *tallit*. That of the hand is put on first, placed on the upper arm ("opposite the heart") and the noose tightened when the blessing to lay the *tefillin* is recited. The plain spelling of the word "thy hand" (hkdy) in Exodus 13:16 was interpreted to mean "the weak hand" (hhi dy) and a left-handed person therefore places it on his right hand, though it is not "opposite the heart"; the strap is wound seven times round the arm between the elbow and the wrist. The *Ashkenazim* wind it anti-clockwise, in an inward manner, the *Sephardim* (followed by the Hasidim) clockwise. The head *tefillah* is then put on, care being taken that it lies above the middle of the forehead and all on the hair of the head, the knot resting on the nape of the neck, the two loose ends being made to hang down in front. The blessing "on the commandment of the *tefillin*" is recited at the time. Since, however, according to one opinion, the second blessing is superfluous, it was instituted that after reciting it, it be, so to speak "neutralized" by adding the words "blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever." The remaining part of the strap of the hand *tefillah* is then wrapped in a prescribed manner on the hand and the middle finger of the hand to form the above-mentioned S and d, while Hosea 2:21–2 is recited. Palestinian scholars in the talmudic period were accustomed to recite a benediction (*Lishmor hukkav*—to observe His commandments) when they took off the *tefillin* (Ber. 44b). However, *tosafot* (*ibid.*) point out that they used to wear *tefillin* all day and recite the benediction at night.

Tefillin are worn on all weekdays, but not on Sabbaths and festivals. The reason given in the *Talmud* (Men. 36b) is that they are called "a sign" but the Sabbath itself is so called (Ex. 31:17) and the same rule was applied to festivals. In the *Diaspora* Hasidim do not don *tefillin* during the intermediate days of the festivals while *Mitnaggedim* do; in Israel it is the universal custom not to wear them on the intermediate days. The duty of laying *tefillin* begins when a boy reaches his religious majority, i.e., at the age of 13 years and a day, but he usually begins to do so a few weeks earlier for practice. Among oriental communities a special ceremony is held to celebrate it. Since the *tefillin* are a "*pe'er*" (a "diadem of glory"; see later) they are not worn on the morning of *Tishah be-Av*, their donning being postponed to the *Minhah* service (in some German congregations this applies to other fast days also), nor by a bereaved person before the burial; various other categories are temporarily exempt, either because of inability to concentrate (e.g., a bridegroom on his wedding day) or because the body is unclean (Shab. 49a). Similarly they must not be worn in a cemetery, in an unclean place (Ber. 18a), or while asleep.

The *Talmud* stresses the supreme importance of the *tefillin*. Even God dons them (Ber. 6a), hearing the verse, "who is like thy people Israel, one people on earth (I Chron. 17:21)" (Ber. 62). A person who does not put them on is a willful transgressor. God surrounded Israel with seven precepts, including "*tefillin* on their heads, *tefillin* on their arms," and "whosoever has the *tefillin* on his head, the *tefillin* on his arm, *zizit* on his garment and the *mezuzah* on his doorpost is fortified against sinning" (Men. 43b). Their sanctity was stressed by regarding them as "rendering the hands unclean" as is the case with the *Sefer Torah* (Yad. 3:3) and if they are accidentally dropped the person responsible is obliged to fast for that day.

The wearing of *tefillin* induces a serious frame of mind, preventing levity (Ber. 30b). According to Bet Hillel the *tefillin* had to be examined every year, but Bet Shammai disagreed (Mekh., Pisha, 17, p. 157, vol. 2; cf. TJ, Er. 10:26a, where other rabbis are mentioned) but the law was later established to examine them once (or twice) every seven years (Tos. Men. 43a).

The kabbalists instituted a meditation before putting on the *tefillin* which is a perfect example of the spiritualization of a ceremonial precept. It includes the statement "He hath commanded us to lay the *tefillin* upon the hand as a memorial of His outstretched arm; opposite the heart to indicate the duty of subjecting the longings and designs of our heart to His service; and upon the head, over against the brain, thereby teaching that the mind, whose seat is in the brain, together with all senses and faculties, is to be subjected to His service."

The word *tefillah* is identical with the word for prayer, but it may be a homonym, and some have interpreted it as derived not from the root of this word *llp* ("to intercede") but from *hlp* (to "separate," "distinguish") indicating that thereby the Jew is distinguished from the non-Jew. One *mishnah* (Mik. 10:2) mentions the *tefillah* together with an amulet, but does not suggest any connection between them. Some scholars have suggested that the phylacteries derive from some form of amulet or charm (see Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstitions* (19612), 145–6), but others feel that there is no evidence that it was regarded as an amulet, as the word "phylacteries" suggests.

The main exposition in the Talmud on the laws of *tefillin* is found in Men. 34a–37b, in a discussion of the statement of the Mishnah 3:7 that if one of the four paragraphs is missing the *tefillin* are invalidated. All references, except where otherwise stated, are from this passage. The small tractate called Tefillin is a late composition which merely assembles the material scattered in the Talmud and belongs to the geonic period.

The Tefillin of the Dead Sea

Before 1968 a number of fragments of *tefillin* found in the various caves of the Dead Sea were published (for a list see bibl., Yadin, 7, n. 1). All apparently belonged to the *tefillin* of the hand, and were found without their original containers or capsules. (Previous fragments, however, include *tefillin* of the head, and some empty capsules of head *tefillin* have been found.) They did, however, reveal one important point, namely that the difference of opinion between Rashi and his grandson Jacob Tam as to the order of the scriptural passages did not originate with them, but they transmit different traditions which go back to the first century at least, both systems being found among those fragments, and both were therefore in use concurrently. In point of fact the *Piskei Tosafot* to Men. 34b has the statement that "In Nehardea and in Jerusalem they found two sets of *tefillin*, one according to the order of Rashi and the other according to that of Tam."

In 1968, however, Yigael Yadin acquired the only known capsule of the head *tefillin* of this period, found together with the portions of the text. It was almost certainly found in one of the Qumran caves, probably Cave 4, and its importance lies in the fact that exhaustive scientific tests proved that of the four passages, all tied, three were in the original positions in the capsules in which they were found, and they thus afford undeniable evidence of both the manner in which the slips had been folded, and tied, and the materials used for the tying. Of additional importance is the fact that they include the text of the Decalogue. This last discovery confirms an assumption which was made on the basis of certain passages in the Talmud. According to the Mishnah (Tam. 5:1) in the Temple the priests used to recite the Decalogue together with the three paragraphs of the *Shema*, but the addition of the Decalogue to the *Shema*, although "according to the law should be part of the daily service" was discontinued "because of the errors of the sectarians that they should not say 'these alone were given to Moses in Sinai'" (TJ, Ber. 1:8, 3c; cf. also TB, *ibid.*, 12a). The Nash Papyrus of the second century (JQR, 15 (1902–03), 392–408), contains the Decalogue with the first paragraph of the *Shema*. The *Sifrei* to Deuteronomy 4:6 which deals with the *tefillin* used two exegetical interpretations to justify the exclusion of the Decalogue from the *tefillin*, and it was plausibly assumed that originally, or in some quarters, the *tefillin* actually included the Decalogue but it was excluded for the same reason as from the daily service, the exegetical justifications for the exclusion being merely a rationalization. The order of the passages in those *tefillin*, apart from their additions, follow the order given by Rashi, with one exception, that the order given by him for the second and third paragraphs is transposed, a change which is expressly permitted in the Talmud (Men. 34bf.).

S. Goren (see bibl.) has examined the *tefillin* of the Dead Sea Scrolls from the point of view of the *halakhah*, and has established that whereas the *tefillin* of Murabba'at accord with the *halakhah*, those of Qumran 1 and 4 are sectarian in nature.

It therefore seems probable that during the first century there were considerable variations and differences of custom as to the order, and additions to, the four basic paragraphs of the *tefillin*, but by the beginning of the second century uniformity was established as to the text, while two traditions remained and persisted as to the order in which these paragraphs were to be written. The form of the *tefillin*, and the materials used, both the parchment and the tendons used for tying the passages, not only confirm the regulations given in the Talmud, but in many cases throw new light on obscure passages.

[Louis Isaac Rabinowitz]

MEZUZAH (Heb. מְזוּזָה *hzbzm*), parchment scroll affixed to the doorpost of rooms in the Jewish home. The original meaning of the word *mezuzah* is "doorpost" (cf. Ex. 12:7). Its etymology is obscure; it has been suggested that it is derived from the Assyrian *manzazu*, but this is by no means certain. The Bible twice enjoins (Deut. 6:9 and 11:20) "and ye shall write them (the words of God) upon the *mezuzot* of thy house and in thy gates"; by transference, the word was made to apply not to the doorpost, but to the passages which were affixed to the doorpost in accordance with this injunction. The *mezuzah* consists of a piece of parchment, made from the skin of a clean animal, upon which the two passages in which the above-mentioned verses occur (Deut. 6:4–9 and 11:13–21) are written in square (Assyrian) characters, traditionally in 22 lines. The parchment is rolled up and inserted in a case with a small aperture. On the back of the parchment the word *yVQ* ("Almighty," but also the initial letters of *ladRy TvTIV dmvQ* "Guardian of the doors of Israel" (Kol Bo 90, 101:4)), is written, and the parchment is so inserted that the word is visible through the aperture. It is affixed to the right hand doorpost of the room, or house, or gate,

where it is obligatory (see below), in the top third of the doorpost and slanting inward. A blessing "Who hast commanded us to fix the *mezuzah*" is recited when affixing it. The earliest evidence for the fulfillment of the commandments of the *mezuzah* dates from the Second Temple period. A *mezuzah* parchment (6.5 cm. X 16 cm.) has been found at Qumran (Cave 8) in which are written some sentences from Deuteronomy (10:12–11:21) but not from the *Shema* (*Discoveries in the Judean Desert of Jordan* (1962), 158–61). The Samaritans make their *mezuzot* out of large stones and attach them to the lintel of the main door of their houses or place them near the doorway. They carve on them the Ten Commandments or the "ten categories by which the world was created." Sometimes they use abbreviations and initial letters of the ten or single verses in praise of God. *Mezuzah* stones of this sort are found in Israel dating from the early Arab and perhaps even Byzantine era. The Karaites do not make the *mezuzah* obligatory. Nevertheless, the *mezuzot* that they do attach are made of a tablet of blank plate in the form of the two tablets of the law but without writing on them and they fix them to the doorways of their public buildings and sometimes to their dwelling places.

In the Middle Ages the custom obtained of making kabbalistic additions, usually the names of angels, as well as symbols (such as the *magen david*) to the text. The custom was vigorously opposed by Maimonides. He declared that those who did so "will have no share in the world to come." With their "foolish hearts" "they turn a commandment" whose purpose is to emphasize the love of God "into an amulet" (Yad, Tefillin 5:4). Despite this, there is one clear reference in the Talmud to the efficacy of the *mezuzah* as an amulet, though from the context it need not be regarded as doctrine. In return for a material gift sent by Ardavan to Rav, the latter sent him a *mezuzah*, and in answer to his surprised query replied that it would "guard him" (TJ, Pe'ah 1:1, 15d; Gen. R. 35:3). To a similar context belongs the story of the explanation of the *mezuzah* given by Onkelos the proselyte to the Roman soldiers who came to arrest him: "In the case of the Holy One, blessed be He, His servants dwell within, while He keeps guard on them from without" (Av. Zar. 11a).

Maimonides' decision prevailed, and the *mezuzah* today contains only the two biblical passages. However, at the bottom of the obverse side there is written the formula $\nu\lambda\kappa \quad \text{I} \text{skvmb} \quad \nu\lambda\kappa$, a cryptogram formed by substituting the next letter of the alphabet for the original, it thus being the equivalent of $h\nu\upsilon h \nu\eta\eta\lambda a \quad h\nu\upsilon h$ ("the Lord, God, the Lord"). This is already mentioned by Asher b. Jehiel in the 13th century in his commentary to the *Hilkhot Mezuzah* of Alfasi (Romm-Vilna ed. p. 6b).

The *mezuzah* must be affixed to the entrance of every home and to the door of every living room of a house, thus excluding storerooms, stables, lavatories, and bathrooms, and must be inspected periodically (twice in seven years) to ensure that the writing is still readable. The custom has become widespread and almost universal at the present day to affix the *mezuzah* to the entrance to public buildings (including all government offices in Israel) and synagogues. There is no authority for this, unless the building or room is also used for residential purposes (Levi ibn Habib, Resp. no. 101), and the Midrash (Deut. R. 7:2) actually asks the rhetorical question, "Is then a *mezuzah* affixed to synagogues?" As the scriptural verse states, it is also to be affixed to "thy gates." It is thus obligatory for the entrances to apartment houses. On the gates of the suburb Yemin Moshe in Jerusalem, which stand since their erection in 1860, the *mezuzot* are still to be seen. After the Six-Day War *mezuzot* were affixed to the gates of the Old City of Jerusalem. In the responsa *Sha'ali Ziyon* of D. Eliezrov (1962, pt. 2, nos. 9–10), who served as rabbi to the Jewish political prisoners at Latrun during the British Mandate, there are two responsa from him and Rabbi Ouziel, Sephardi chief rabbi of Israel, as to whether *mezuzot* were obligatory for the rooms and cells of the camp.

In the Diaspora the *mezuzot* must be affixed after the householder has resided in the home for 30 days; in Israel, immediately on occupation. If the house is sold or let to a Jew the previous occupier must leave the *mezuzah*. It is customary, among the pious, on entering or leaving to kiss the *mezuzah* or touch it and kiss the fingers (Maharil, based on the passage from Av. Zar. 11a quoted above).

The Talmud enumerates the *mezuzah* as one of the seven precepts with which God surrounded Israel because of His love for them. Of the same seven (the *zizit* being regarded as four) R. Eliezer b. Jacob stated, "Whosoever has the *tefillin* on his head, the *tefillin* on his arm, the *zizit* on his garment and the *mezuzah* on his doorpost is fortified against sinning" (Men. 43b). The *mezuzah* is one of the most widely observed ceremonial commandments of Judaism. In modern times the practice developed of wearing a *mezuzah* around the neck as a charm. Some of the cases in which the *mezuzah* is enclosed are choice examples of Jewish art, and the artistic *mezuzah* case has been developed to a considerable extent in modern Israel.

TEKHELET (Heb. טֵכֵּהֶלֶת ; "blue"), *argaman* ("purple"), and *tola'at shani* ("crimson worm") are frequently mentioned together in the Bible as dyestuffs for threads and fabrics, including the curtains of the Tabernacle (Ex. 26: 1), the veil (Ex. 26:31), the veil for the tent (Ex. 26: 31) and the ephod (Ex. 28:6). A thread of *tekhelet* had to be included in the fringes (Num. 15: 38). Princes and nobles wore garments of *tekhelet* (Ezek. 23:6) and it was used for the expensive fabrics in the royal palace (Esth. 1:6). The Tyrians were expert dyers with these materials (II Chron. 2:6; cf. Ezek. 27:7). According to the talmudic *aggadah* the dwellers in Luz (a legendary locality) were experts in dyeing *tekhelet* (Sanh. 12a; Sot. 46b). *Tekhelet* was extracted from the *hillazon*—a snail found in the sea between the promontory of Tyre and Haifa (Shab. 26a; Sif. Deut. 354). Members of the tribe of Zebulun engaged in gathering it (Meg. 6a), and according to the Midrash it is this which is referred to in that tribe's blessing that their inheritance would include "the hidden treasures of the sands" (Deut. 33: 19). The *baraita* notes that the *tekhelet* multiplies like fish, i.e., by laying eggs, "and comes up once in 70 years, and with its blood *tekhelet* is dyed, and that is why it is expensive" (Men. 44a; cf. Sif., *ibid.*). The statement reflects the fact that the snail reaches the shore in shoals infrequently and the extraction of the dye is a very expensive process. For this reason "a garment made wholly of *tekhelet*" was considered expensive and rare (Men. 39a, etc.).

The color of *tekhelet* was between green and blue and was thus described: "*Tekhelet* resembles the sea, the sea resembles grass, and grass resembles the heavens" (TJ, Ber. 1:5, 3a). It is like the color of the leek. *Tekhelet* was usually dyed on wool (Yev. 4b). The color was fast and withstood oxidization (Men. 42b–43a). The best dye was obtained when extracted from live

snails (Shab. 75a) and to make it fast various materials were added (Men. 42b). In the time of the Mishnah another dye, *kela ilan*, extracted from the Indian indigo plant, was introduced into Erez Israel. This dye is very similar in color to *tekhelet* but is much cheaper. Thenceforth indigo was frequently used to counterfeit, and was sold as, *tekhelet*. Ways of testing to distinguish them were indeed suggested, but the *baraita* concluded that "There is no way of testing the *tekhelet* of *zizit*, and it should be bought from an expert" (Men. 42b). It is worthy of note that dyed *zizit* were discovered in the Bar Kokhba Caves. The testing of them by modern methods proved almost with certainty that they were in fact dyed with indigo—the aforementioned *kela ilan*. For all these reasons—the high cost of *tekhelet*, the difficulty of gathering the snails and extracting the dye, and because of the fear of counterfeiting with *kela ilan*—some *tannaim* permitted *zizit* made without a thread of *tekhelet* (Men. 4:1; cf. Men. 38a). It is probable, however, that many continued to fulfill the biblical precept. In the time of the *amora* Abbaye, Jews still engaged in dyeing with the *tekhelet* and Samuel b. Judah, a Babylonian *amora* who had resided in Erez Israel, explained the dyeing process to him. In the time of the *savora* Ahai the differences between *tekhelet* and *kela ilan* were tested (Men. 42b). The Midrash, however, notes that "nowadays we only possess white *zizit*, the *tekhelet* having been concealed" (Num. R. 17:5).

Gershon Hanokh Leiner, the hasidic rabbi of Radzin, proposed in his books *Sefunei Temunei Hol* (1887) and *Petil Tekhelet* (1888) that the precept of the *tekhelet* in *zizit* be reintroduced. He came to the conclusion that *tekhelet* had been extracted from the cuttlefish, *Sepia officinalis (vulgaris)*, which has a gland in its body that secretes a blue-black dye, and his suggestion was adopted by his followers. From the sources, however, it seems that the *tekhelet* dye was much lighter, nor do the descriptions of *tekhelet* in rabbinical literature fit this creature, which is common on the shores of Israel, its dye being neither expensive nor fast. It is also difficult to identify it with the *hillazon*. *Hillazon* in rabbinical literature is a land or sea snail (Sanh. 91a). Among the latter there are species in whose bodies is a gland containing a clear liquid, which when it comes into contact with the air becomes greenish: this is *tekhelet* which, after the addition of various chemicals, receives its purple color, the "royal purple" of literature. The Phoenicians in particular specialized in it, Phoenicia in Greek meaning the land of purple. Around Tyre and Ras-Shamra—the site of ancient Ugarit—large quantities of shells of the purple snail have been found. These belong to the species *Murex trunculus* and *Murex brandaris*, which are found along the length of the eastern shore of the Mediterranean and whose quantities change from time to time. A modern investigator extracted 1.4 gram of the purple dye from 12,000 such snails, thus explaining the high cost of the *tekhelet* and purple dyes. Isaac Herzog, in a study of *tekhelet* (unpublished dissertation: "The Dyeing of Purple in Ancient Israel," 1919), reached the conclusion that it was extracted from the snails *Janthina pallida* and *Janthina bicolor* that are found a considerable distance from the shore and only reach it at long intervals. This in his opinion explains the statement that the *tekhelet* comes up once in 70 years (Men. 44a). The dye extracted from these snails varies between violet blue and the blue of the heavens. Most investigators incline to the view that *tekhelet* and *argaman* were extracted from the *Murex* snails.

[Jehuda Feliks] Also: Purple worm (dye); Tola'at shani

CRIMSON WORM, biblical *tola'at shani* (Heb. ינ"ק טל"ג), which yields a dye, called in the Bible *shani*, *tola*, *karmil*, and in rabbinic literature *zehorit*, which was extracted from the body of the "crimson worm" (*carmine*), the *Kermes biblicus*. A brilliant, beautiful, and fast red dye, it was used for dyeing the curtains of the Tabernacle (Ex. 26:1) and the garments of the high priests (*ibid.*, 39:2); in the purification rites of a leper (Lev. 14:4–6) and of a house affected by leprosy (*ibid.*, 51–52); and it was added to the ashes of the red heifer (Num. 19:6). Crimson-dyed clothes were costly (Lam. 4:5). The Tyrians were experts in the art of crimson dyeing (II Chron. 2:6). Neither the Bible nor rabbinic literature describes the insect from which the crimson dye was extracted. The *Tosefta* (Men. 9:16) merely states that the best kind of crimson comes from "a mountain worm." Its color is "neither red nor yellow... it is crimson" (Pd-RK 98). According to Josephus crimson symbolizes fire (Ant., 3:183; Wars, 5:213). The "crimson worm" is the "shield louse" which generally lives on a species of oak *Quercus coccifera*. In Israel, where this tree does not grow, the shield louse is found on the branches of the oak *Quercus ithaburensis*. There are two species of the insect, *Kermes nahalali* and *Kermes greeni*. In the early spring, when the females filled with red eggs and became pea-shaped, the red dye was squeezed out of them. The use of crimson dye was widespread in Erez Israel until the cactus from Mexico was introduced at the end of the 17th century. The coccus, which lives on this plant, yields a red dye in larger quantities. Up to the end of the 19th century crimson dye was still used, but with the invention of synthetic dyes, it became obsolete.

[Jehuda Feliks] Also: Arba kanfot; Tsidekel

TALLIT KATAN (Heb. ארבע קנפות ט"ז; "small tallit"; *Yid. tales koten*, *arba kanfot*, or *arba kanfes*; and *tsidekel*, from the Ger. *Leibzudeckel*), a rectangular garment of white cotton, linen, or wool with *ziziyyot* ("fringes") on its four corners. Whereas the ordinary *tallit* is worn only at the morning service, strictly observant Jews wear the *tallit katan* under their upper garment the whole day, so as constantly to fulfill the biblical commandment of *zizit* (Num. 15:39), a reminder to observe all the commandments of the Torah. The *tallit katan* is, therefore, often worn in a manner that it may be seen; if not, that at least the *ziziyyot* hang freely and are visible (Sh. Ar., OH 8:11). The minimum size of a *tallit katan* ought to be 3/4 ell long and 1/2 ell wide (15 in. X 10 in.). According to another opinion, it should be one square ell (20 in. X 20 in.). The *tallit katan* is put on in the morning, and the following benediction is said: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments and commanded us [to wear] the *zizit*." The *tallit katan* must always be clean and, in reverence for its sanctity, should not be worn on the bare flesh but over an undershirt. If one of the *ziziyyot* is torn, the whole *tallit katan* becomes ritually unfit (*pesulah*) until the torn *zizit* is replaced.

See *Zizit*, *Tallit*. **[Editorial Staff Encyclopaedia Judaica]**