

## **They shall make for themselves Tzitzis on the corners of their garments ... that you may see it and remember all the mitzvos of Hashem. (15:38,39)**

The *mitzvah* of *Tzitzis* is of such primary significance that it enables the Jew to remember all the Torah's precepts. The corners of a garment are seen and accessible; otherwise, they cannot serve as much of a reminder of the *mitzvos*. Why is the reminder specifically on one's garments? *Horav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, zl (Michtav MeiEliyahu)*, explains that clothing is a person's vehicle for presenting himself to the world, highlighting the role that he wants to play and the manner in which he wishes to be perceived. Thus, it is important that the garments be sanctified with reminders about Hashem, so that these garments not be a vehicle for deluding a person to turn away from Hashem. We wear garments which convey the message: This is who I am. As long as the garments have a consecrated side to them, the message will be within the proper parameters of Jewish observance.

One of the strings of each *Tzitzis*, fringe, is to be dyed turquoise with the blood of the *chilazon*, an aquatic creature whose identity is presently undetermined. Why turquoise? It allows its wearer to focus his duty toward Hashem. *Techeiles*, the turquoise-dyed wool, is similar (in color) to the sea, which maintains a likeness to the sky – and the sky to Hashem's Heavenly Throne. Such a meandering way of focusing on Hashem teaches us that, if one seeks to spiritually elevate himself, he can discern opportunities in the most mundane circumstances. Hashem is everywhere, we just have to "look" for Him.

The question that weighs on one's mind: If the *mitzvah* of *techeiles* is so impacting, how did Korach rebel against Moshe *Rabbeinu* and the Torah so egregiously, even using the *mitzvah* of *Tzitzis* to buttress his apostasy? The *Koheles Yitzchak* explains that the *mitzvah* of *Tzitzis* elevates all Jews equally, *V'heyisem kedoshim*, "You shall (all) be holy." If so, Moshe was no more suitable for his position as leader than anyone else. All Jews are the same. What distinguishes Moshe, allowing him to lord over them? (Obviously, Korach's accusation was foolish. It was Hashem Himself who had selected Moshe *Rabbeinu* to be our nation's leader. Moshe did nothing on his own.)

At the end of the day, one can stare at his *Tzitzis* all day long and never once think of Heaven. Unless one looks for Hashem, the *Tzitzis* will not provide the necessary reminder. *Horav Eliezer HaLevi Turk, Shlita*, gives an inspiring analogy that he heard from his father. A man who had made *aliyah* many years earlier had not seen his father since he left. During this time, he raised a large family from whom he had experienced much *nachas*. The one thing that troubled him greatly was that he had not seen his father in ages. The day arrived when his father, who was well on in years, decided to come to *Eretz Yisrael*. (Not sure from which country his flight originated.) Understandably, the son came to the airport with his entire family to greet his father. This was, indeed, a homecoming for both father and son.

Pacing back and forth, the son was anxious to see his father. Finally, the airline announced that the plane had touched down and passengers would be deplaning from a specific gate. Immediately, father and family ran to the gate to meet the family patriarch. The passengers were arriving through the gate, and the son yelled, "There is my father!" Everyone ran to the shocked passenger only to discover that the son had made a mistake. Six times, the son jumped up and screamed, "There he is!" only to once again discover that it was not his father. Finally, his father came through the gate, and father and son embraced amid tears of joy.

As they were walking through the airport, a grandson asked his father, "*Abba*, do you not know how your father looks? Many times, you made a mistake and pointed to the wrong man." "Why do you not understand?" the father asked. "It has been many years since I have seen my father. I missed him so much and was so excited to greet him that any person whose likeness was anything like I remembered of my father, I immediately ran to him."

This is the secret behind *Tzitzis*. When someone yearns for closeness with Hashem, when he looks for every opportunity to fulfill *mitzvos*, then every little thing – even the slightest symbol – will excite him and remind him of all the *mitzvos*. Veritably, *Tzitzis* is one *mitzvah* and indeed an easy one to perform, but when one's love for Hashem and His *mitzvos* is overwhelming, every memento, every tribute to the Almighty, motivates him to seek more.