

Lesson #11

A. The Tallit

Background

- The tallit (yiddish: tallis) is the prayer shawl worn by married men (Orthodox), males past Bar Mitzvah (Conservative and Reform) and increasingly by women in Conservative and Reform shuls.
- The tallit is worn at morning services (Shacharit and Musaf); by the leader of the service; at Mincha; and some have the leader wear it for Maariv.
- On Yom Kippur we all wear a tallit at the Kol Nidrei and Maariv services.

History

- The tallit consists of two parts: the garment and the tzizit or fringes on the corners
- Originally the tallit was made out of either linen or wool (but not together-shatnetz). Silk is also acceptable and can be used with either linen or wool. Tallit Gadol (worn over the garments) and a Tallit Katan (Arba Kanfos) worn beneath the clothes with the tzizit visible: *"and you should see it and remember all of G-d's commandments and do them"* (Numbers 15:39). The Arba Kanfos is therefore not worn at night.

Putting on a tallit:

- Hold it spread out in front of you and say *"Baruch Ata.....Lehitateif Ba'Tzitzit* (Sim

Shalom for Shabbat pg 62)

- Some have the custom of kissing the ends of the crown.
- Bring the tallit around you like a cape and before resting it on your shoulders cover your head with it and allow yourself to be totally enwrapped, sheltered and protected.
- During prayer some congregants may draw their tallit over their head to inspire kavannah.

Tzitzit-Gematria (Separate pdf handout)