Tying Your Own Tzitzit

A package of Tzitzit contains 16 strings, four for each corner. Out of all of these strings, four will be longer and these are used to wrap around the others when tying. The longer string is called the shamash, the servant. If you are using tekhelet (blue), then the tekhelet thread is the shamash and it will be the longest. Using the Ra’avad approach to tekhelet, there will be two shamash strings, one tekhelet and one white. These are wound together.

1. Separate the strings into four bunches, each with one shamash and three shorter strings.

2. Take one bunch and feed it through the hole on the corner of the Tallit. Make sure they are even at one end and then double them (making eight strings, four on each side of the hole).

3. Make a double knot about two inches from the hole, with four strings on each side. Prior to making this knot, recite

woman: הרイ アニמקשתאתجعلשודפייוי
man: הרイ アニמקשתאתجعلשודפייוי

I am tying these knots for the sake of the mitzvah of tzitzit.

4. Wind the shamash around the other seven strings, making 7 windings. The top winding should be white, as should the last.

5. Tie a double knot.

6. Wind the shamash around the other strings, making 8 windings. The top winding should be white, as should the last.

7. Tie a double knot.

8. Wind the shamash around the other strings, making 11 windings. The top winding should be white, as should the last.

9. Tie a double knot.

10. Wind the shamash around the other strings, making 13 windings. The top winding should be white, as should the last.

11. Tie the final double knot.

(You should now have 5 knots and four groups of windings, totaling 39 windings.)

Prepared by Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson