Praying as a Jew
Prayers

Prayer is called many things in the Torah. Jacob has an "encounter" on Mount Moriah; Pinchas conducts a "judgment" with G-d; Isaac and Rebecca "entreat" for a child; Jonah "cries out" from the belly of the fish. The Midrash surveys the Five Books of Moses, the Book of Psalms and the Prophets, and finds 13 ways to say "prayer": cry, howl, groan, stricture, song, prostration, encounter, judgment, entreaty, standing, appeal and beseeching.

As no two people cry alike, no two people pray exactly alike. Judgment can be the judgment of self, of our place in the world, or of our relationship with G-d. And certainly the tone and timbre of our prayers varies with the time and place of our beseeching, the reason for our entreating, and the object of our appeals.

Tonight we will discuss some of the most fundamental elements of Praying as a Jew.
Tefilah: Prayer

- The Hebrew word for prayer is tefilah. It is derived from the root Pe-Lamed-Lamed and the word l'hitpalel, meaning to judge oneself. This surprising word origin provides insight into the purpose of Jewish prayer. The most important part of any Jewish prayer, whether it be a prayer of petition, of thanksgiving, of praise of G-d, or of confession, is the introspection it provides, the moment that we spend looking inside ourselves, seeing our role in the universe and our relationship to G-d.

- The Yiddish word meaning "pray" is "daven," which ultimately comes from the same Latin root as the English word "divine" and emphasizes the One to whom prayer is directed.

- For an observant Jew, prayer is not simply something that happens in synagogue once a week (or even three times a day). Prayer an integral part of everyday life. In fact, one of the most important prayers in Judaism, the Birkat Ha-Mazon, is never recited in synagogue!
Observant Jews are constantly reminded of G-d'-s presence and of our relationship with G-d, because we are continually praying to Him. Our first thought in the morning, even before we get out of bed, is a prayer thanking G-d for returning our souls to us. There are prayers to be recited before enjoying any material pleasure, such as eating or wearing new clothes; prayers to recite before performing any mitzvah (commandment), such as washing hands or lighting candles; prayers to recite upon seeing anything unusual, such as a king, a rainbow, or the site of a great tragedy; prayers to recite whenever some good or bad thing happens; and prayers to recite before going to bed at night. All of these prayers are in addition to formal prayer services, which are performed three times a day every weekday and additional times on Shabbat and festivals.
The Need for Prayer

Many people today do not see the need for regular, formal prayer. "I pray when I feel inspired to, when it is meaningful to me," they say. This attitude overlooks two important things: the purpose of prayer, and the need for practice.

One purpose of prayer is to increase your awareness of G-d in your life and the role that G-d plays in your life. If you only pray when you feel inspired (that is, when you are already aware of G-d), then you will not increase your awareness of G-d.

In addition, if you want to do something well, you have to practice it continually, even when you don't feel like doing it. This is as true of prayer as it is of playing a sport, playing a musical instrument, or writing. The sense of humility and awe of G-d that is essential to proper prayer does not come easily to modern man, and will not simply come to you when you feel the need to pray. If you wait until inspiration strikes, you will not have the skills you need to pray effectively. Before I started praying regularly, I found that when I wanted to pray, I didn't know how. I didn't know what to say, or how to say it, or how to establish the proper frame of mind. If you pray regularly, you will learn how to express yourself in prayer.
Kavanah: The Mindset for Prayer

- Liturgical melodies are often used as an aid to forming the proper mindset. Many prayers and prayer services have traditional melodies associated with them. These can increase your focus on what you are doing and block out extraneous thoughts.

- Many find it useful to move while praying. Traditional Jews routinely sway back and forth during prayer, apparently a reference to Psalm 35, which says "All my limbs shall declare, 'O L-rd, who is like You?'" Such movement is not required, and many people find it distracting, but many find that it help to concentrate and focus.
Kavanah: The Mindset for Prayer

When you say the same prayers day after day, many expect that the prayers become routine and would begin to lose meaning. While this may be true, this is not the intention of Jewish prayer. The most important part of prayer is the introspection it provides. Accordingly, the proper frame of mind is vital to prayer.

The mindset for prayer is referred to as kavanah, which is generally translated as "concentration" or "intent." The minimum level of kavanah is an awareness that one is speaking to G-d and an intention to fulfill the obligation to pray. If you do not have this minimal level of kavanah, then you are not praying; you are merely reading. In addition, it is preferred that you have a mind free from other thoughts, that you know and understand what you are praying about and that you think about the meaning of the prayer.
Hebrew: The Language for Prayer

- The Talmud states that it is permissible to pray in any language that you can understand; however, traditional Judaism has always stressed the importance of praying in Hebrew.

- A traditional Chasidic story speaks glowingly of the prayer of an uneducated Jew who wanted to pray but did not speak Hebrew. The man began to recite the only Hebrew he knew: the alphabet. He recited it over and over again, until a rabbi asked what he was doing. The man told the rabbi, "The Holy One, Blessed is He, knows what is in my heart. I will give Him the letters, and He can put the words together."
Hebrew: The Language for Prayer

There are many good reasons for praying in Hebrew: it gives you an incentive for learning Hebrew, which might otherwise be forgotten; it provides a link to Jews all over the world; it is the language in which the covenant with G-d was formed, etc. To me, however, the most important reason to pray in Hebrew is that Hebrew is the language of Jewish thought.

Any language other than Hebrew is laden down with the connotations of that language's culture and religion. When you translate a Hebrew word, you lose subtle shadings of Jewish ideas and add ideas that are foreign to Judaism. Only in Hebrew can the pure essence of Jewish thought be preserved and properly understood. For example, the English word "commandment" connotes an order imposed upon us by a stern and punishing G-d, while the Hebrew word "mitzvah" implies an honor and privilege given to us, a responsibility that we undertook as part of the covenant we made with G-d, a good deed that we are eager to perform.
Hebrew: The Language for Prayer

- This is not to suggest that praying in Hebrew is more important than understanding what you are praying about. If you are in synagogue and you don't know Hebrew well enough, you can listen to the Hebrew while looking at the translation. If you are reciting a prayer or blessing alone, you should get a general idea of its meaning from the translation before attempting to recite it in Hebrew. But even if you do not fully understand Hebrew at this time, you should try to hear the prayer, experience the prayer, in Hebrew.
Group Prayer

Most of our prayers are expressed in the first person plural, "us" instead of "me," and are recited on behalf of all of the Jewish people. This form of prayer emphasizes our responsibility for one another and our interlinked fates.

In Judaism, prayer is largely a group activity rather than an individual activity. Although it is permissible to pray alone and it fulfills the obligation to pray, you should generally make every effort to pray with a group, short of violating a commandment to do so.

A complete formal prayer service cannot be conducted without a quorum of at least 10 adult Jewish men; that is, at least 10 people who are obligated to fulfill the commandment to recite the prayers. This prayer quorum is referred to as a minyan (from a Hebrew root meaning to count or to number). Certain prayers and religious activities cannot be performed without a minyan. This need for a minyan has often helped to keep the Jewish community together in isolated areas.
Berakhot: Blessings

A berakhah (blessing) is a special kind of prayer that is very common in Judaism. Berakhot are recited both as part of the synagogue services and as a response or prerequisite to a wide variety of daily occurrences. Berakhot are easy to recognize: they all start with the word barukh (blessed or praised).

The words barukh and berakhah are both derived from the Hebrew root Beit-Reish-Kaf, meaning "knee," and refer to the practice of showing respect by bending the knee and bowing. See animation at right. There are several places in Jewish liturgy where this gesture is performed, most of them at a time when a berakhah is being recited.

According to Jewish tradition, a person should recite 100 berakhot each day! This is not as difficult as it sounds. Repeating the Shemoneh Esrei three times a day (as all observant Jews do) covers 57 berakhot all by itself, and there are dozens of everyday occurrences that require berakhot.
Who Blesses Whom?

Many English-speaking people find the idea of berakhoth very confusing. To them, the word "blessing" seems to imply that the person saying the blessing is conferring some benefit on the person he is speaking to. For example, in Catholic tradition, a person making a confession begins by asking the priest to bless him. Yet in a berakhah, the person saying the blessing is speaking to G-d. How can the creation confer a benefit upon the Creator?

This confusion stems largely from difficulties in the translation. The Hebrew word "barukh" is not a verb describing what we do to G-d; it is an adjective describing G-d as the source of all blessings. When we recite a berakhah, we are not blessing G-d; we are expressing wonder at how blessed G-d is.
There are basically three types of berakhot: ones recited before enjoying a material pleasure (birkhot ha-na'ah), ones recited before performing a mitzvah (commandment) (birkhot ha-mitzvot) and ones recited at special times and events (birkhot hoda'ah).

Berakhot recited before enjoying a material pleasure, such as eating, drinking or wearing new clothes, acknowledge G-d as the creator of the thing that we are about to use. The berakhah for bread praises G-d as the one "who brings forth bread from the earth." The berakhah for wearing new clothing praises G-d as the one "who clothes the naked." By reciting these berakhot, we recognize that G-d is the Creator of all things, and that we have no right to use things without first asking his permission. The berakhah essentially asks permission to use the thing.
Berakhot recited before performing a mitzvah (commandment), such as washing hands or lighting candles, praise G-d as the one "who sanctified us with his commandments and commanded us..." to do whatever it is we are about to do.

Reciting such a blessing is an essential element of the performance of a mitzvah. In Jewish tradition, a person who performs a mitzvah with a sense of obligation is considered more meritorious than a person who performs the same mitzvah because he feels like it. Recitation of the berakhah focuses our attention on the fact that we are performing a religious duty with a sense of obligation. It is worth noting that we recite such berakhot over both biblical commandments and rabbinical commandments. In the latter case, the berakhah can be understood as "who sanctified us with his commandments and commanded us to obey the rabbis, who commanded us to..." do whatever it is we are about to do.
Berakhot recited at special times and events, such as when seeing a rainbow or a king or hearing good or bad news, acknowledge G-d as the ultimate source of all good and evil in the universe. It is important to note that such berakhot are recited for both good things and things that appear to us to be bad. When we see or hear something bad, we praise G-d as "the true Judge," underscoring the fact that things that appear to be bad happen for a reason that is ultimately just, even if we in our limited understanding cannot always see the reason.
Form of a Berakhah

- Many of the berakhot that we recite today were composed by Ezra and the Men of the Great Assembly nearly 2500 years ago, and they continue to be recited in the same form.

- All berakhot use the phrase "Barukh atah Ha-shem, Elohaynu, melekh ha-olam," Blessed art thou L-rd, our G-d, King of the Universe. This is sometimes referred to as shem u'malkut (the name and the sovereignty), the affirmation of G-d as king.

- The use of the word "thou" is worth discussing: in modern English, many people think of the word "thou" as being formal and respectful, but in fact the opposite is true. Thou (and the corresponding Hebrew atah) is the informal, familiar second person pronoun, used for friends and relatives. This word expresses our close and intimate relationship with G-d.
Form of a Berakhah

- Immediately after this phrase, the berakhah abruptly shifts into the third person; for example, in the birkhot ha-mitzvot, the first two phrases are blessed art thou, L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe, who sanctifies us with his commandments and commands us... This grammatical faux pas is intentional.

- The use of the third person pronoun while speaking to a person in Hebrew is a way of expressing extreme respect and deference. This shift in perspective is a deliberately jarring way of expressing the fact that G-d is simultaneously close to us and yet far above us, intimately related to us and yet transcendent. This paradox is at the heart of the Jewish relationship with G-d.
Birkat Ha-Mazon: Grace After Meals

- One of the most important prayers in Judaism, one of the very few that the Bible commands us to recite, is never recited in synagogue. That prayer is birkat ha-mazon, grace after meals.
- In Deuteronomy 8:10, we are commanded that when we eat and are satisfied, we must bless the Lord, our God. This commandment is fulfilled by reciting the birkat ha-mazon (blessing of the food) after each meal. Reciting birkat ha-mazon is commonly referred to as bentsching, from the Yiddish word meaning "to bless." Although the word "bentsch" can refer to the recitation of any berakhot, it is almost always used to refer to reciting birkat ha-mazon.
- The grace after meals is recited in addition to the various berakhot over food recited before meals.
Birkat Ha-Mazon: Grace After Meals

- Birkat ha-mazon actually consists of four blessings, three of which were composed around the time of Ezra and the Great Assembly and a fourth which was added after the destruction of the Temple. These blessings are:
- Birkat Hazan (the blessing for providing food), which thanks G-d for giving food to the world,
- Birkat Ha-Aretz (the blessing for the land), which thanks G-d for bringing us forth from the land of Egypt, for making His covenant with us, and for giving us the land of Israel as an inheritance,
- Birkat Yerushalayim (the blessing for Jerusalem), which prays for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the coming of the **moshiach**; and
- Birkat Ha-Tov v'Ha-Maytiv (the blessing for being good and doing good), was added after the destruction of the Temple, although it existed before that time. It emphasizes the goodness of G-d's work, that G-d is good and does good.
- In addition to these four blessings, the full birkat ha-mazon incorporates some psalms and additional blessings for various special occasions (holidays, guests, etc.)
Jewish prayer is ordinarily a group activity done with a quorum of 10 people called a minyan. Observant Jews daven (pray) in formal worship services three times a day, every day: at evening (Ma'ariv), in the morning (Shacharit), and in the afternoon (Minchah). Daily prayers are collected in a book called a siddur, which derives from the Hebrew root meaning "order," because the siddur shows the order of prayers. It is the same root as the word seder, which refers to the Passover home service.
Central Prayers

- Undoubtedly the oldest fixed daily prayer in Judaism is the Shema. This consists of Deut. 6:4-9, Deut. 11:13-21, and Num. 15:37-41. Note that the first paragraph commands us to speak of these matters "when you retire and when you arise." From ancient times, this commandment was fulfilled by reciting the Shema twice a day: morning and night.

- The next major development in Jewish prayer occurred during the Babylonian Exile, 6th century B.C.E. People were not able to sacrifice in the Temple at that time, so they used prayer as a substitute for sacrifice. "The offerings of our lips instead of bulls," as Hosea said. People got together to pray three times a day, corresponding to the three daily sacrifices. There was an additional prayer service on Shabbat and certain holidays, to correspond to the additional sacrifices of those days. Some suggest that this may already have been a common practice among the pious before the Exile.
Central Prayers

- After the Exile, these daily prayer services continued. In the 5th century B.C.E., the Men of the Great Assembly composed a basic prayer, covering just about everything you could want to pray about. This is the Shemoneh Esrei, which means "18" and refers to the 18 blessings originally contained within the prayer. It is also referred to as the Amidah (standing, because we stand while we recite it), or Tefilah (prayer, as in The Prayer, because it is the essence of all Jewish prayer). This prayer is the cornerstone of every Jewish service.

- The blessings of the Shemoneh Esrei can be broken down into 3 groups: three blessings praising G-d, thirteen making requests (forgiveness, redemption, health, prosperity, rain in its season, ingathering of exiles, etc.), and three expressing gratitude and taking leave. But wait! That's 19! And didn't I just say that this prayer is called 18?
Central Prayers

One of the thirteen requests (the one against heretics) was added around the 2nd century C.E., in response to the growing threat of heresy (including Christianity, which was a Jewish sect at the time), but at that time, the prayer was already commonly known as the Shemoneh Esrei, and the name stuck, even though there were now 19 blessings. Many non-Jews, upon hearing that there is a blessing like this, assume it is much more offensive than it actually is. Here is what it says:
For slanderers, may there be no hope; and may all wickedness quickly be destroyed, and may all your enemies be cut off swiftly. The intentional [sinners], swiftly may they be uprooted, broken, cast down and subdued, swiftly and in our days. Blessed are you, L-RD, breaker of enemies and subduer of intentional [sinners].
Another important part of certain prayer services is a reading from the Torah and the Prophets.

The Torah has been divided into 54 sections, so that if each of these sections is read and studied for a week, we can cover the entire Torah in a year every year (our leap years are 54 weeks long; regular years are 50 or so, we double up shorter portions on a few weeks in regular years).

At various times in our history, our oppressors did not permit us to have public readings of the Torah, so we read a roughly corresponding section from the Prophets (referred to as a Haftarah). Today, we read both the Torah portion and the Haftarah portion. These are read at morning services on Shabbat and some holidays. In addition, at Monday and Thursday morning services, we read part of the upcoming Shabbat's Torah portion (about 10 to 15 verses; the first aliyyah of the week's portion).
Central Prayers

- The Torah and haftarah readings are performed with great ceremony: the Torah is paraded around the room before it is brought to rest on the bimah (podium). It is considered an honor to have the opportunity to recite a blessing over the reading (this honor is called an aliyah). For more information, see Torah Readings.

- That's the heart of the Jewish prayer service. There are, however, many additional prayers leading up to these things and following these things. There is a long series of morning blessings at the beginning of the morning service. Some people recite these at home. They deal with a lot of concerns with getting up in the morning, and things we are obligated to do daily. There is a section called P'sukei d'Zimra (verses of song), which includes a lot of Psalms and hymns. I like to think of it as a warm-up, getting you in the mood for prayer in the morning. Some people don't show up for services until after that "warm-up."

- There are also a few particularly significant prayers. The most important is the Kaddish, one of the few prayers in Aramaic, which praises G-d. Here's a small piece of it, in English:
Central Prayers

- May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified in the world that He created as He willed. May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and in your days, and in the lifetimes of the entire family of Israel, swiftly and soon. May His great Name be blessed forever and ever. Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, mighty... There are several variations on it for different times in the service. One variation is set aside for mourners to recite, the congregation only providing the required responses. Many people think of the Kaddish as a mourner's prayer, because the oldest son is obligated to recite it for a certain period after a parent's death, but in fact it is much broader than that. Someone once told me it separates each portion of the service, and a quick glance at any siddur (daily prayer book) shows that it is recited between each section, but I don't know if that is its purpose.

- Another important prayer is Aleinu, which is recited at or near the end of every service. It also praises G-d. Here is a little of it in English, to give you an idea:

- It is our duty to praise the Master of all, to ascribe greatness to the Molder of primeval creation... Therefore, we put our hope in you, L-rd our G-d, that we may soon see Your mighty splendor... On that day, the L-rd will be One and His Name will be One. On certain holidays, we also recite Hallel, which consists of Psalms 113-118.
Outline of Services

- There are a few other things, but that's a pretty good idea of what's involved. Here is an outline of the order of the daily services:

- **Evening Service (Ma'ariv)**
  - Shema and its blessings and related passages
  - Shemoneh Esrei
  - Aleinu

- **Morning Service (Shacharit)**
  - Morning Blessings
  - P'sukei d'Zimra
  - Shema and its blessings and related passages
  - Shemoneh Esrei
  - Hallel, if appropriate
  - Torah reading (Mondays, Thursdays, Shabbat and holidays)
  - Aleinu, Ashrei (Psalm 145), and other closing prayers, Psalms and hymns (not on Shabbat and holidays; recited at the end of Musaf instead on those days)

- **Additional Service (Musaf) (Shabbat and holidays only; recited immediately after Shacharit)**
  - Shemoneh Esrei
  - Aleinu and other closing prayers, Psalms and hymns

- **Afternoon Service (Minchah)**
  - Ashrei (Psalm 145)
  - Shemoneh Esrei
  - Aleinu
Rules of Conduct upon Rising in the Morning

1:1 This is a cardinal principle in the Torah and (a fundamental rule) of life among the pious. Because it is not how a person sits, moves and works when he is alone at home but how he sits, moves and works when he is in the presence of a great king. For his conversation is not the same, or his attitude, when he is among his family and friends, compared to when he is in the presence of royalty. For then a man takes special care that his speech and demeanor be refined and correct. How much more should a man pay great attention to his actions, realizing that the Great King, the Holy One, blessed be He, whose glory fills the whole universe, is always standing by him and observing all his doings, as it is said (in the Scriptures): "Can a man hide himself in secret places that I cannot see him?" says the Lord. "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" (Jeremiah 23:24), he will certainly acquire a feeling of reverence and humility from fear of the Blessed Name and he will be ashamed to do anything (wrong).

1:2 Even while still lying in bed; one should be aware before whom he sleeps (G-d), and as soon as he awakes he should acknowledge the loving-kindness of the Lord, which He has done for him, by returning his soul to him, that was committed to G-d faint and weary, and returned renewed and refreshed, thus enabling him to serve Him, Blessed be His name, devotedly, and to serve Him all day. For this is the (goal of) every man; as it is said: "They are new every morning; Thy greatness is Thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:23), which means, every morning man is like a newborn living being; and for this he must thank, with all his heart, G-d, the Blessed, for this. While still in his bed he should say: "I thank Thee, O living and eternal King, Who hast mercifully restored my soul within me; Thy faithfulness is great."

1:3

"Judah, the son of Tema, said: 'Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a deer, and strong as a lion. to do the will of thy Father who is in heaven.' (Avot 5:23). "Bold as a leopard" means that a man should not be ashamed in the presence of (other) people who may laugh at him during his service to G-d, blessed be He. "Light as an eagle," refers to our sense of vision; that is, one should be quick to close one's eyes so as not to look at evil; because (sight) is the initial act of sin. "Swift as a deer," refers to the legs; that one's feet should run to (perform) good deeds. "Strong as a lion" refers to the heart, because the zeal to worship the Creator, blessed be He, is in the heart. and said; that he strengthens his heart in His service and prevails over the Evil Impulse to defeat it, just as a hero makes every effort to prevail over his enemy to defeat him, and throw him on the ground.

1:4

It is therefore every man's duty to make himself strong as a lion. Immediately upon awakening from sleep, and says "I give thanks..." he must rise quickly and be ready to worship our Creator, blessed be He, before the Evil Impulse is given an opportunity to dissuade him from rising with various arguments. (For instance, the Evil Impulse) uses this subtle argument in the winter time he argues: "How can you rise so early in the morning when it is so cold?" In the summer time, he uses this crafty argument: "How can you rise from your bed (now) when you have not yet had enough sleep?" Or, he is using other similar arguments. For, the Evil Impulse knows well the art of ensnaring man in his trap, and dissuading him from rising. Therefore, every man who fears the word of G-d, must overcome the Evil Impulse and disobey him. Even when it is hard for us (to get up early) because of fatigue or because of laziness, we must make it as our aim to fulfill the will of the Supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He. A man should have in mind (the following analogy): If someone, would call him to attend to a profitable business transaction, or to collect a debt, or calls him to save his possessions from being lost for example, - ח"תרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרות והו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תשרותוהו ו"תsher NH yova_n_geo/kizzur/kizzur1.html 04/12/2005 12:40:29 AM
If one is able to wake and get up at midnight and perform the midnight service, there is nothing more meritorious than this; as it is said (Lamentations 2:19): "Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the watches..." just as the Holy One, blessed be He, laments at that moment, as it is written (Jeremiah 25:30): "The Lord will roar from on high, and from His holy habitation utter His voice; He will roar mightily because of His fold." (And our Sages tell us (Berachot 3a) that the Almighty then says: "Woe to My children on account of whose iniquity I destroyed My house, burnt My Temple, and exiled them among the nations." But if one is unable to get up at midnight, let one at least make an effort to rise before dawn; as King David, may he be in peace, said (Psalms 57:9): "I will awake the dawn," (which means), I awake the dawn, but the dawn does not awake me. Even after midnight, one may perform the midnight rite, and then engage in (the study of) the Torah, each one according to one's abilities. The study of the Mishnah is preferable to any other thing, and (by this one will be rewarded (by redemption) (this is derived) by changing the letters (of Mishna) into Neshama (soul)). But if one is not a scholar, one may read the Psalms, Ma'amadot, or some book of ethics. To (study) a little (but) with devotion is better than much (study) without devotion. Rabbi Hyya taught (Tamid 32b): "All who study the Torah at night the Divine Presence is with him"; as it is said (Lamentations 2:19): "Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the watches; pour out thy heart like water before the presence of the Lord;" which signifies; that the Divine Presence is then before you.
Our Rabbis, of blessed memory, said again: "He who engages in the study of the Torah at night, is called 'a servant of the Lord'; as it is said (Psalms 134:1): 'All ye servants of the Lord who stand by night in the house of the Lord.'" When the nights are short and it is impossible to wake so early, he should at least try to get up early enough to have sufficient time to prepare himself to go to the synagogue and pray (together) with the congregation.

1:6 Psalms and other portions of the Torah, Prophets and Hagiographa which ordinarily people do not know by heart, even by one who is well versed in them, should be careful not to recite by heart. A blind man is allowed (to recite any portion of the Torah by heart).

1:7 We must enjoin those who read Ma'amadot, that the concluding benediction; "Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who hearest prayers." should instead be read thus: "Blessed be Thou who hearest prayers." without G-d's name.
Hand Washing in the Morning  Ch. 2:1-9

2:1 Since every man upon rising א is like a newborn creature, ב is insofar as the worship of the Creator, ג Blessed be His name, ד so he needs to sanctify himself ה by washing his hands out of a vessel, ו just as the priests used to wash their hands י daily out of the wash-basin י for performing their service (in the Temple). ה This hand-washing is based on the biblical verse; ב as it says (Psalms 26.6-7): "I wash my hands in innocence א so I compass thy altar, O Lord: ב that I may sound the voice of thanksgiving..." ב There is another reason, ו for this (morning) hand-washing; ה when a man is asleep, ו the holy soul departs from his body, א and an unclean spirit comes into his body. ב When rising from sleep, ה the unclean spirit departs from his entire body, ו except from his fingers, א and does not depart from them א until one spills on them א water three times alternately. ב One is not allowed to walk four cubits (six feet) ה without washing one's hands, ו except in cases of extreme necessity.

* {given by the Kabbalists, Zohar, quoted in Bet Yosef.}

2:2 The first garment which a male must put on, כ is the tallit katan ו for one is not allowed to walk (even as much as) four cubits ה without having a fringed garment on. ו But as his hands are still unwashed, א he may not say the benediction on putting it on.

* {the small four-fringed garment, commonly known as the arba kanfit, four cornered.}

2:3 The ritual hand-washing in the morning כ is performed as follows: כ Take a cup of water with the right hand כ and put it in the left; כ first pour water upon the right hand. י Then take the cup back in the right hand כ and pour water on the left. י This performance is repeated three times. כ It is best to pour the water (over the hands) כ as far as the wrists, י but in case of emergency י it suffices (if the water covers the hands) י up to the joints of the fingers. י One must also wash his face in honor of the Creator, י as it is said (Genesis 9:6):
"For in the image of G-d He hath made the man." Because of what is in the mouth, because we must pronounce the Great Name in purity and cleanliness. Afterwards the hands are dried. Special care must be taken to dry the face thoroughly.

2:4 The hands must be washed into a vessel only. It is forbidden to use for any other purpose, the water from hand washing, because an evil spirit rests on it, * and it must be spilt in a place where people do not walk. * {contaminated, and injurious to health.}

2:5 One should not touch, before the morning hand-washing, neither the mouth, nor the nose, and not the eyes, nor the ears, and not the lower orifice (anus) nor any kind of food, or a place that is bleeding, because the evil spirit that rests upon the hands before washing (them) will cause injury to these things.

2:6 It is best to perform the morning hand washing with water poured from a vessel by human effort, just as it must be done when washing the hands before meals. (See Ch. 40 below). But in case of emergency, and his (hands) are not properly (clean), and one wishes to pray, one may wash his hands in any manner, even when the water is not poured by human effort, and one may pronounce the benediction: "concerning the washing of the hands". If there is a river at hand, one should dip the hand in it three times, or even in snow. If, however, there is no water in any form available, one may wipe one's hands with some material, and say the benediction: "Blessed art ... for cleansing (not washing) the hands." and this is enough for the purposes of prayer. Afterwards, upon finding water and the required vessel, one must wash the hands properly without pronouncing any benediction.

2:7 It is written (Psalms 103:1): "Bless the Lord, 0 my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name." Since it is a man's duty to bless the Holy Name with all that is in him, he is not allowed to say any blessings (to pray) before he has cleaned himself also inside, from excrement and urine. As one gets up in the morning, normally he needs to relieve himself, or at least to urinate, therefore one shall not recite the blessing over washing the hands at the time of washing, until one has eased one's self, then wash the hands again.

and then say the blessing on washing the hands, מִזְבַּח and afterwards "who has formed" חֲנוֹן and the blessing "the giver of the law" מִשְׁמָרָה and the blessing "My G-d, the soul...".

* {according to the order of the morning prayers.}

2:8 If one wakes up and washes his hands, מִזְבַּח while it is still night, מִזְבַּח according to these laws, מִזְבַּח and then stays awake until dawn; מִזְבַּח or if he falls asleep again while it is yet night; מִזְבַּח or if he sleeps sixty breaths in the daytime מִזְבַּח (about one-half hour); מִזְבַּח or if he is awake the whole night מִזְבַּח and did not sleep (even) sixty breaths, מִזְבַּח in all these cases, מִזְבַּח it is doubtful if one needs מִזְבַּח hand-washing or not. מִזְבַּח He shall therefore, wash his hands מִזְבַּח alternately three times מִזְבַּח (as described in paragraph 3), מִזְבַּח but without saying the blessing on them.

2:9 On the following occasions one needs מִזְבַּח to wash one's hands in water. מִזְבַּח On awakening from sleep, מִזְבַּח on leaving the lavatory מִזְבַּח or bath (lit., the bath-house), מִזְבַּח after paring one's nails, מִזְבַּח after having one's hair cut, מִזְבַּח after taking off the shoes (with bare hands), מִזְבַּח after having sexual intercourse, מִזְבַּח after touching an insect (lit., louse) מִזְבַּח or searching the clothes (for lice), מִזְבַּח even if he did not touch the lice, מִזְבַּח after combing one's head, מִזְבַּח after touching his body מִזְבַּח in any places which are (generally) covered, מִזְבַּח after leaving a cemetery, מִזְבַּח after walking in a funeral procession מִזְבַּח or leaving a house where a corpse lay, מִזְבַּח and after blood-letting.
Dressing and Deportment   Ch. 3:1-8

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

3:1 It is written (Micah 6:8): "And to walk humbly with thy G-d." Therefore it is the duty of every man to be modest in all his ways. When putting on or removing his shirt or any other undergarment, he should be careful not to expose his body. He should put it on or remove it while still lying covered in bed. He should never say (to himself): "Lo, I am all alone in my inner chamber and in the dark, who can see me?" For the Holy One, blessed be He, fills the universe with His glory, and darkness is as light before Him, blessed be His name; and modesty and (a sense of) shame bring a person to a state of humility before Him, blessed be His name.

3:2 It is forbidden to follow the customs of the idolaters or to be like them either in the way they dress, cut their hair, or the like; as it is said (Leviticus 20:23): "And ye shall not walk in the customs of the idolaters;" and it is said again (Leviticus 18:3): "Neither shall ye walk in their statutes;" and again (Deuteronomy 12.30): "Take heed to thyself that thou be not ensnared to follow them." We must not wear the kind of garment worn by them for ostentation, and Israelites in another way, or if it is their custom to have red shoe laces and Israelites have black ones (because the color of black is indicative of humility and modesty) an Israelite is not allowed to change (either the knot or the color in order to imitate them). From this Talmudic injunction, every man can learn, depending upon the place and time that garments that are made to reveal pride and immodesty, (the kind worn by the heathens); an Israelite must not do the same. Rather his garments should be made such as to show humility and modesty. It is thus told in the Sifri (Deuteronomy 12:30): "You shall not say: 'Because they walk about (dressed) in a state of humility before Him, blessed be His name; and darkness is as light before Him, blessed be His name; and modesty and (a sense of) shame bring a person to a state of humility before Him, blessed be His name."


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in purple, I, too, will walk about (dressed) in purple; because they walk about helmented, ((carrying) weapons) I, too, will walk about helmented.' For, these are the ways of the proud and the haughty, but not the lot of Jacob (Israel). Their mode of life is to be modest and humble and not to look up to the proud." and also everything that they do, of their customs or laws, even if one suspects that there is even the slightest idolatrous intent, an Israelite should not imitate them. (A Jew) must not cut his hair nor clothes that are too open or dirty, in order that he will not be ridiculed by people; but he should differ from them in dress, manner of speech, and all other deeds, just as he differs from them in knowledge and opinions. And thus does the Scripture say (Leviticus 20:26): "I have set you apart from the peoples."

3:3 One should avoid wearing costly garments, for this leads a person to pride; nor clothes that are too open or dirty, in order that he will not be ridiculed by people; but he should have moderate priced and clean clothes. The Talmudic Sages say (Shabbat 129a): "A man should even sell the beams of his house in order to get shoes for himself."

3:4 We have found that Torah puts (for certain commandments) the right hand first, such as, the sacrifices, and the (thumb of the right) hand and the (great toe of the right) foot (of Aaron and his sons) during the consecration of the Temple (Leviticus 8:23-24), (the blood of the guilt offering) of one who was cleansed from leprosy (Leviticus 14:14), and in the ceremony of halizah (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Yebamot 104a), therefore, when dressing and other actions, we must always give preference to the right (hand or foot) over the left; but when removing shoes and other clothes, one removes that of the left first. (for the honour of the right (side)) With regard to tying (a lace), the left should be given precedence, because the tefillin are fastened on the left hand. Therefore, when one needs to tie (something), one ties that on the left first. For example, shoes with laces, we first put on the right (shoe) without lacing it, then we put on the left and lace it, and afterward we lace the right one. (This method of dressing) also applies to all other clothes. * { When the priest dipped his finger in the blood, and sprinkled it seven times on the altar - Leviticus 4:6; Zebahim 24a-b}
3:6 One (masc.) must not walk (even as little as) four cubits (six feet), or utter a single holy word, while being bareheaded. Young children, too, must be trained to cover their heads, so that they may be imbued with the fear of G-d. As it is related (in the Talmud) of Rab Nahman bar Isaac (Shabbat 156b): 'Cover your head.' The mother of Rab Nahman bar Isaac (Shabbat 156a) "was told by the astrologers: (it's foretold in the stars) 'Your son is (destined to be) a thief.' He would not let (his mother) cover his head. So she said to him: 'Cover your head, so that the fear of G-d may be upon you... '

3:7 It is forbidden to walk haughtily erect, with neck fully outstretched; concerning this, it is said (Isaiah 3:16): "And they (the daughters of Zion) walk with outstretched necks ..." Nevertheless, one should not bow his head too low (when walking), but only a moderate amount, so that he may see approaching people and also to watch his step. From the manner a man walks, we can tell whether he is wise and intelligent, or an idiot and a fool. Thus Solomon said wisely (Ecclesiastes 10:3): "Yea, also when a fool walks by the way, his understanding fails him, and he reveals to everyone that he is a fool." He tells everyone himself (by the way he walks) that he is a fool.

3:8 A man should be careful not to pass between two women, or between two dogs, or between two pigs. Nor should two men permit to pass between them a woman, a dog, or a pig.
A person should accustom himself to ease once in the evening and once in the morning; and this produces alertness and cleanliness. If he is unable to ease himself, he should walk four cubits, then return and try again until he succeeds to ease himself; or he should divert his attention from other (distracting) matters. One who delays easing (himself), transgresses a negative commandment - Lev. 11:43: "You shall not make yourselves abominable" (distracting) matters.

If he eases himself, alertness and cleanliness are produced. However urinating is allowed in any direction as long as his back is facing south, or vice versa, but (to face) east-west is forbidden. If there is a wall, he can ease himself in any direction as long as his back is facing south, or vice versa, it is facing him. If he stops himself, he should turn to the side.

One should not ease himself while standing, nor forcefully strain oneself too much, so as not to rupture the glands of the rectum; nor should one hurry to leave the lavatory before it's certain to him that he is finished.
does not need more (time).  

When one urinates while standing, one should take care not to splash (any urine) on one's shoes or clothes; and one should be extremely careful not to hold with his hand the membrum.

4:4 In the lavatory, it is forbidden to think about Torah; therefore, while he is there, it's best to think on his business and his accounts, so that one may not come to think of Torah or, think of a sinful (forbidden) act, Heaven forbid. On Shabbat, when (he should) not think of his business, he should think of some interesting things that he saw or heard, and such like.

4:5 He should be careful to clean himself thoroughly, for if he has even some feces in the anus, he is forbidden to say anything holy. One should not clean (himself) with the right hand, for with this one puts on the tefillin. A left-handed (person) should clean himself with his "left" which is the right hand of everyone else.

4:6 Every time one evacuates or urinates, even only one drop, he (should) wash one's hands in water and say the blessing "who has formed ...". If he urinated or evacuated and forgot to bless "who has formed ...", and afterwards again urinated or evacuated, and remembered that the first (time) he did not bless, he does not need to bless except the once. One who drinks a laxative medicine and knows that he will need to ease (himself) several times, should not bless until after he has (completely) finished.
Cleanness of Places Used for Holy Purposes

5:1 It's written (Deut. 23:14-15): "You shall cover what comes from you, for the Lord your G-d walks in the midst of your camp... so your camp shall be holy, that He not see in you any unclean thing...", from this learned our Rabbis, may their memory be for a blessing, that in any place that the Lord our G-d walks with us, that is, when we are busy with some holy task, such as the reading of the Shema, prayer, (the study of) the Torah, and the like, it is necessary that the place be holy, and that there will not be any uncovered excrement there, and that there will not be visible any unseemly object, in plain view of one who reads or prays.

5:2 Even to think of some holy matter, in a place (of) excrement or urine, or anything that smells bad, is forbidden, until one covers it, as it is said (Deut. 23:14): "And you shall cover what comes from you." One can pour into urine from one time (of urinating), a revi'it of water. * It doesn't matter that (the urine) was in a container already and the water is put on it, and it doesn't matter that the water was in a container already. If the urine was in a chamberpot which is specifically for this, it doesn't help to (pour) water (into it) (see section 13, below). For urine from two times, one needs two revi'im of water, and so on. Even if (the ground or a garment) absorbed the urine, whilst there is there still some dampness from it, one needs to pour there water.

5:3 If there is excrement on (any part of) one's body, although it is covered with one's garments, one is not allowed any holy matters; as it is said (Psalms 35:10): "All my bones will say, Lord, who is like You..." (which) means that one should be completely clean. Some (authorities) are lenient about this, but it is proper to be strict. If one has even a little excrement in the

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anal orifice, although it is covered, all agree that (the covering) is of no avail, because in its (original) place it (causes) greater contamination.

5:4 One must be careful that in every place where there is a doubt if there is there excrement or urine, we do not say there any holy matters, until we have examined the place. One should not pray in a house if in the attic there is a filthy place. *
* { People used to keep animals or birds in the attic. }

5:5 An infant, who is old enough, (that) he is capable of eating (at least) a k'zayit, * of any breadstuff, even because it was cooked, in the same time that an adult can eat the quantity of a slice; ** One distances (oneself while praying), from (the infant's) excrement and urine. It is better, however, to distance oneself also from the excrement of a baby (who is only) eight days old.
* { The size of an olive, Shiturei Torah - 26 grams, Rav Moshe Feinstein approx. 31 grams, the Chazon Ish approx. 36 grams. }
** { Any type of food of equivalent volume to a slice of bread. }

5:6 Human excrement, even though it does not have a bad smell, and also the excrement of a cat, a marten, * and the excrement of a Idumean cock, (when praying), we distance (ourselves from) them. Other (kinds of) excrement of a wild animal or a bird, we assume that it does not smell bad, (and) we do not need to distance (ourselves) from them. However if it smells bad, and also a carcase that smells bad, and anything (else) that smells bad, due to decay, and a chicken coop, we distance (ourselves from) them, and we also distance (ourselves) from bad-smelling water, or from a steeping pool in which flax is soaked, or hemp, (all of these) usually have a bad smell, and we need to distance ourselves from them just as from excrement.
* { A weasel-like carnivore of the genus Martes, having valuable fur. }

5:7 Excrement that has dried up to the extent that it crumbles when rolled, it is (considered) like earth, provided it no longer has a bad smell. But if frozen due to the cold, since it can return to its former state in warm weather, still is termed excrement. Excrement that is covered by snow, is considered as (being halachically) covered.

5:8 How far must we distance ourself, if the excrement is behind us? * One needs to distance oneself from the

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place where the bad smell stops; (at least) four cubits ** even if one is unable to smell (it), one should distance oneself the same distance as if we could smell it. If the excrement does not have a bad smell, it's enough to distance oneself four cubits from it. If the excrement is in front of one, one must distance oneself until it is out of sight. Even at night, one must distance oneself the same distance that one could have seen it in daytime. If it is to one's side, one should be strict (and act) as if it were in front of one, and one should then turn aside so that it will be behind him.

* { In order to be pray or discuss holy matters. }

** { One cubit is six hand-breadths, that is about 50-60 cm or about 18 inches, so we should move 2m or about 6 feet. }

5:9 A house where a congregation prays, and excrement was found there, even though it was behind the Reader and distant from him more than four cubits from the place where the bad smell stops, in any event, he needs to stop (praying) and wait until it's taken away or covered, because it is impossible that there will not be one of the congregation within four cubits from the place where the smell stops, and it is forbidden for him to listen and to pay attention to what the Reader is saying.

5:10 One who prayed and found afterwards that there was excrement there, if the place was such to be suspicious of it, that it may have excrement, yet he sinned and did not check, because the Shemoneh Esreh prayer is in place of a sacrifice, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination," * and he must repeat the Shemoneh Esreh. Also (in the case of) reading the Shema which is from the Torah, and there is no problem of an unnecessary blessing, he repeats the reading (of the Shema), however, without the (preceding and following) blessings; (neither must he repeat) the other blessings which are said there. Even Grace after meals, one does not go back and bless (again). If, however, if the place was not such to suspect of having excrement, then he has not sinned (by not checking). even for the Shemoneh Esreh his duty is discharged after the fact. If urine is found, even in a place where it should have been suspected, his duty is discharged after the fact even for the Shemoneh Esreh.

* { From Proverbs 21:27 and taken as applying to his prayer. }
5:11 If one had let wind, he is forbidden any holy matter until the bad smell has stopped; and if it was from his neighbor, he also needs to wait. Only if one is busy studying Torah, does one not need to wait on account of a (bad) smell that came from his neighbor.

5:12 A lavatory even though it has walls and does not have excrement, one needs to distance oneself from it (when praying), also a bench made with a hole in it, under which a pot is put for one to relieve oneself, even if the pot has been removed and the hole has been covered with a board in any event, this bench is considered as a lavatory. One needs to remove it from the house or to completely cover it. However, if this was a chair for sitting, and is covered with a cushion to sit upon, and only when needed the cushion is removed and one eases oneself, after which the cushion is put back on it, concerning such (a chair) one can be lenient.

5:13 A night-pot for excrement or a chamber-pot for urine, if made of clay or wood, are regarded as a lavatory. Even though they are clean and have no bad smell, and even if water was poured into such (containers) or they are inverted; it does not help; and even if put underneath a bed, it does not help; (because our beds are not considered as covering), rather one needs to take them out of the house or completely cover them. If they are of metal or glass, and have been washed well, and do not have a bad smell, one does not need to distance oneself from them. The snout of a pig, because it usually roots in excrement is considered like a night-pot and even if it is coming up from the river the washing does not help.

5:14 In the bath-house it is also forbidden to speak or to think of any holy matter. It is forbidden to mention any name which refers to the Holy One, blessed be He, even in a secular tongue, (like Gott in German or Boga in Polish and Russian) in a bath-house or in a filthy alley. It is also forbidden to say Shalom (peace) to a friend (in a bath-house), for Shalom is the name of the Holy One, blessed be He; as it is said (Judges 6:24): "And he called him, Lord-Shalom..." * Some (authorities) forbid calling one in these places by his name (if it is Shalom), others permit it, because one does not intend (by this) anything to do with peace, rather to use the name of the same man. The custom is to be lenient, but a G-d-fearing (person) should be strict.
5:15 It is forbidden to discuss Torah matters or (other) holy matters, even in view of a genital organ, whether his own or anyone else's, even that of a male child or a female child. (Only for the act of Brit Milah. It is allowed to bless in the presence of the genital organ of the baby.) Even if one closes his eyes, so as not to look at the genital organ this is not enough, since it is in front of him; rather he should turn away his face and his body from it.

5:16 (Concerning) the body of a woman, every part that is her practice to cover; if one handbreadth is uncovered, and also the hair of a married woman which is her practice to cover, if there becomes uncovered part from these this is considered like a genital organ for a man; There is no difference between if it is one's wife or another woman. However, regarding (being seen by another) woman, this is not regarded as nakedness. The sound of a song from a woman is also considered like nakedness ** In any case, in an emergency, (for example) when he hears women singing, and he is unable to stop it, he must not give up, because of that, from reading the Shema, and prayer *** and (the study of) Torah, rather he should exert himself and concentrate all his attention upon the holy matters with which he is occupied and pay no heed to her (singing).

* { A hand-breadth is about 3 inches (8 cm), or 9.6 cm according to the Hazon Ish. }

** { Concerning holy matters such as reading the Shema, etc. }

*** { Such as one's silent Shemoneh Esreh (Amidah). }

5:17 If his heart could view his genital organ even though his nakedness is covered for example, he is wearing a robe, also in this case he is not allowed to say any holy matters. Rather he needs to be dressed in trousers which are tight on his body, or put on a belt, or place his arm on the robe in order to make a separation between his heart and his organ. A woman does not need (to do) this.

* { That is, if no garment or girdle separates the upper part of the body from the lower. }

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Laws of Blessings  Ch. 6:1-11

6:1 Before one blesses any blessing, he needs to know which blessing it is that he needs to bless, so that at the time he mentions the (G-d's) name, blessed be He, which is the main part of the blessing, one knows what will be the end (of the blessing). It is forbidden to do anything (else) at the time one blesses; and one must not bless hurriedly; but pay attention to the meaning of the words. And this is (what is) said in the "Book of the Pious": "When one washes ones hands, or blesses over the fruit, or over everyday commandments which are familiar to everybody, one must pay attention to bless by the name of his Creator, who was wonderfully kind to him and gave him the fruit or the bread, to get enjoyment from them, and commanded him about this commandment. One should not do it like a person who does something out of (sheer) habit, bringing (the) words out of his mouth without rational (intention) in his heart. On account of this, the anger of G-d was aroused, and He sent (us a message) by (His Prophet) Isaiah, and said (Isaiah 29:13): 'Since this people draw near, and with their mouths and with their lips do honor Me, but their hearts they have distanced from Me, and their fear of Me is as a commandment learned (by rote).' The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Isaiah: 'Look at the deeds of My children, which are only for appearance, just as a man holds to and practices one knows what is the main part of the blessing, who brings forth ..'; they drink and bless as if this is usual to them; but at the moment they bless they do not intend to bless Me.' Therefore, His anger was aroused, and He swore by His great name to destroy the wisdom of their wise men, who know Him and bless Him because of (routine) custom, but not with (true) intention; as it is written (cf. 14): 'Therefore, behold, I will do yet farther ...
Therefore the Sages warned, concerning this matter, and said (Nedarim 62a): 'Do things for themselves,' etc.

It is proper for a man that he should accustom himself to say the blessings out aloud, because (hearing one's) voice awakens the concentration.

6:2 When one blesses, one's mouth should be free of saliva, nor should anything else be in one's mouth; as it is said (Psalms 71:8): "Let my mouth be filled with Your praise."

6:3 It is forbidden to say G-d's name (lit. "the Heavenly Name") in vain, and everyone who says G-d's name in vain transgresses a positive commandment, as it is written (Deut. 6:13): "The Lord your G-d you shall fear;" and it is written (again) (Deut. 28:58): "If you will not observe ... to fear the glorious and awesome Name." This (we learn) from the concept of fear, that one should not mention His great Name except by way of praise or blessing whenever required, or when learning (the Torah). One should be fearful and one's entire body tremble when mentioning the name, blessed be His name, but one should not say it G-d forbid, in vain. (This applies) not only to the special Name but to all the names specially referring to Him, may He be blessed. It is not just in the Holy Tongue (Hebrew), that it is forbidden (to mention the Name), but even in any language it is forbidden. He who curses his neighbor or himself by (using) His name, may He be blessed, or one of His attributes (an "attribute" is (a word or phrase) by which we praise Him - the Holy One, may He be blessed - such as, "the Great", "the Mighty", "the Revered", "the Faithful", "the Glorious," "the Strong," and the "the Steadfast," "the Omnipotent," "the Gracious," "the Merciful... the Zealous... the Long-suffering," "the Abundant in mercy," etc) in any language, is liable to (the penalty of) lashes. Due to our many sins, most people are not careful and say in the vernacular, "G-d shall punish him," or the like, and so by this transgresses a negative (commandment) of the Torah. If one curses without (mentioning) the Name, or one of (His) attributes, or if the curse can be inferred from the contents of the words, for example when one says: "May that man not be blessed by G-d," and the like, even though one is not liable to lashes, nevertheless, it is a forbidden act. It is likewise forbidden to write, in a letter, His name, may He be blessed, in any language. Many people make a mistake with His name...
and write, ע"מ "may He be blessed", ע in the vernacular, ע or they write the word ע"ד "Adieu", ע which is in the French language ע and means ע""ד "with G-d;" ע this is definitely forbidden, ע after some time, ע this letter will arrive to the garbage (dump). ע and this matter causes poverty in Israel. ע If His name is (frequently) mentioned, ע and especially in disrespect, G-d forbid, ע then one requires wisdom and effort ע to abolish this (practice). ע When saliva collects in one's mouth, ע one should spit (it out) first ע and then say His name, ע and not to say the name ע and then spit. ע Likewise, when one kisses the Scroll of the law, ע one should first spit (out his saliva) ע and not after (kissing the Scroll). ע When one wants to mention ע His name (in ordinary conversation), ע one says the word "HaShem" (the Name), ע and not as many mistakenly say: ע"ד "Adoshem", ע for this is undignified when referring to Heaven.

* { The Tetragrammaton - the four letters, Yud, He, Vav, He - also called HaSHEM - "The Name". }

** { Literally, in the "Ashkenaz Tongue", which normally means in Yiddish. }

*** { The word "polen" means "so and so" and is commonly used in Halachic literature when we want to say that someone is being mentioned by name - but we don't want to use an actual name. The other method is to use "Reuven" and "Shimon", for example, "if Reuven sold to Shimon a goat...". }

6:4 ע One should take care not to bless ע G-d forbid, a blessing in vain; ע or to cause oneself ע to bless a blessing that is not needed. ע If one fails ע and does bless a blessing in vain, ע and also if during another matter one fails ע and says G-d's name in vain, ע one can say after this ע "blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom ע for ever and ever". ע If immediately after ע saying the name of G-d (in a blessing), ע we remember that we do not need to bless, ע one concludes (it with Psalm 119:12): ע"ד "Teach me Your statutes." ע For this is a complete verse (in itself), ע it is as learning (the Psalms), ע and (the Name) was not mentioned in vain. ע If we have also begun the word "our G-d", ע but after saying "Elohe" (the G-d of), ע and not finished (by) saying ע"ד "our", ע one finishes and says (I. Chronicles 29:10): ע"ד "Israel our Father, for ever and ever." ע (which is also a verse ע from Chronicles I 29:10) ע At any rate, we should also say with this ע "Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom ע for ever and ever."

6:5 ע One who blessed over water ע and then heard that someone in the neighborhood had died, ע (then) the custom is to spill out the water ע (stored) in (the houses of) the...
neighborhood of the dead (one), because of the danger (of drinking the water), nevertheless because he has blessed he should drink a little, so that his blessing shall not be in vain. He need not be concerned about the danger, * "Who keeps a commandment shall not know any evil." After drinking a little, he should spill out the rest.

* {Following is a quote from Ecclesiastes 8:5 }

6:6 (With) all the blessings, except Grace after meals; If one is in doubt about them whether one said them or did not say them, one does not repeat the blessing.

6:7 A man must bless on every day at least one hundred blessings. King David established this (law). A hint to this matter (is found in II Samuel 23:1): "The saying of the man who was raised on high," (the word) "al" (high), has the numerical value one hundred (lamed=30, ayin=70).

This is supported from the Torah (Deut. 10:12): "Now, O Israel, what (Hebrew, mah) does the Lord your G-d require of you? But to fear the Lord," etc. Do not read "mah" (what), but "meah" (one hundred), these are the one hundred blessings, which (by saying them) will (lead one) to fear the Lord, and to loving Him and to always remember Him, because of the blessings that one blesses. The curses contained in Deuteronomy (28:15-61) are (total) ninety-eight, and it's also written (verse 63): "Every sickness" and "every plague," which (adds on and comes to) one hundred. Now, the one hundred blessings which we bless every day, are a shield to us and save us from these (one hundred curses). On Shabbat, and festivals and also fast days, which have less than the hundred blessings, we make up by paying attention to the blessings of the ha'zan, when he repeats the Shemoneh Esre, and by the blessings over the reading of the Torah and the Prophets, after which we respond Amen. Also (make up the 100) the blessings over snacks.

6:8 Every blessing one hears from another, when one hears him say "Blessed are You, O Lord", one says (after the Name): "Blessed be He and blessed be His name" and when he finishes the blessing, one should say "Amen". The meaning of "Amen" is "it is true". One should concentrate in his heart that the blessing is true, which the one blessing, blessed, and that we believe in it (explicitly). (With) blessings which include also a prayer, for instance, the blessings in the Shemoneh Esre from "You favor with knowledge" until "He who restores His divine presence to Zion", and the blessing "bestow peace", we have in mind on saying "Amen"
these two things:  that the blessing is true,  and that it may be the will (of G-d)  that these words (of prayer) will be accepted soon.  (In responding Amen) to the kaddish,  which is only a prayer for the future,  we only have in mind to request  that these words (of prayer) will be accepted soon.

6:9  If one who hears (another)  is at that part (of prayer),  which he is not allowed to interrupt,  he should not say  "Blessed be He and blessed be His name".  Similarly, when he hears a blessing  that he also needs  to fulfill his obligation on this blessing (by saying "Amen"),  so it will be considered for him  as if he said it himself,  as for instance,  the blessing said before (blowing) the Shofar,  or the blessing before (reading) the Megillah (Scroll of Esther),  he should not say  "Blessed be He and blessed be His name",  because this is considered a break  in the middle of the blessings.  (Regarding responding "Amen",  when he is at a part (of the prayers),  where he is not allowed to break,  will be discussed,  G-d willing,  later on (in  and Ch. 16)

6:10  One should be very careful  that one says the word "Amen" correctly,  and not say too quickly  the "aleph"  or swallow  the "nun".  Also one should be very careful  not to respond "Amen"  before the one blessing finishes the whole blessing.  This is called a "snatched" Amen.  and also not to be slow to respond Amen,  for this is an "orphaned" Amen.  But rather immediately after the finish,  (by) the one who is blessing, of the blessing,  he will respond "Amen".  He should not raise his voice louder than the one who is blessing,  as it says (Psalms 34:4):  "O magnify the Lord with me,  and let us exalt His name together."

6:11  One does not say Amen on one's own blessing,  (except in the Grace after meals  after "And build Jerusalem").  Even if one finished a blessing at the same time as the Reader,  one does not respond (Amen to the Reader).  However, if one blesses one blessing  and the Reader (says) a different blessing,  and they finish together,  he can say Amen on the Reader's blessing.  If he finishes the blessing  "Praised be your name"  or the blessing  "He watches over His people Israel for ever"  or the blessing  "May He be praised"  which is after the Hallel,  together with the Reader  he can also respond Amen.  (because many authorities hold  that even after himself  he can say for these (blessings) Amen).
The Morning benediction

7:1 After (the blessing)
"To engage in the study of the Torah"
the authorities disagree
whether or not the listener should respond Amen.
Some authorities hold
that the blessing does not end there,
but that
"and make pleasant"
is a continuation of it,
and it is all one benediction;
therefore no Amen should be responded to it.
Others hold
that the blessing does end here,
(and) "and make pleasant"
is a separate benediction,
and therefore Amen must be said.
One should, therefore, pronounce
that blessing quietly,
so that no one shall hear it,
thus avoiding the doubtful (situation).

7:2 The blessing
"He that gives the cock understanding..."
should not be said
before daybreak.

7:3 The blessing
"Who opens the eyes of the blind"
may be said even by a blind person,
for he, too, gains benefit, in that others (who can see)
can show him the way.
If one said first the blessing
"Who raises the bowed down"

זוקף כפופים
before he blessed
"Who sets the captives free" (this means loosens the
joints of one's body to give one free movement and
coordination of muscles),
one need not repeat the (latter) blessing,
"Who sets the captives free",
because this is already covered
by "Who raises the bowed down"
because the act of straightening up
includes loosening the limbs.

7:4 After (the blessing)
"He who removes sleep from my eyes...",
one does not respond Amen
because this is not the end of the blessing.
Rather
"May it be Thy will..."
is also part of this blessing,
and the end of the blessing is
"He who bestows kindly favors
upon His people Israel".

7:5 One who was awake all night
must say all the morning blessings,
apart from the blessing
"concerning the washing of the hands"
which is not said.
The blessings
"my G-D, the soul, etc.",
and "He who takes sleep away"
and the blessings over the law,
there is a doubt whether to say or not.
It is, therefore, a good practice to hear these
from others
and respond Amen (to them).

7:6 All the morning (dawn) blessings,
If one has not said them
before praying
he can say them after the (other) prayers,
except the blessing on washing the hands
(for some authorities hold
that the washing of the hands in the morning
was ordained because of the prayers,
and so after he has (already) prayed,
there is no longer any need for this blessing).
Neither should he say
"My G-D, the soul, etc."
(for this has already been covered in the blessing,
"Who quickenest the dead" ).

7:7 (In the case of) the blessings over the Torah,
if he did not say them before praying,
the authorities disagree
as to whether one need say them
after the prayer or not.

Some hold that he should not say them,
because he had already done it (by reading the prayer)
"With abounding love",
(or "everlasting love"
for this blessing,
is also similar to
the blessings over the Torah (for it reads):
"And put it into our hearts to understand
and to discern, to hearken,
learn and teach," etc.

There are others who hold that the prayer
"With abounding love" (does not)
 exempt him from the blessings over the Torah,
unless he studies (the Torah)
immediately after his prayers
without a break.
We must, therefore, be careful
to recite the blessings of the Torah before praying,
but post facto,
if we forget to recite them before the prayers,
we should study something (of the Torah)
immediately after praying.
If we forget to do this, too,
then due to the divergence of opinions,
we also need to say again
the blessings over the Torah.
7:8 If, one is called to go up to the Torah, before saying the morning benedictions, if he can first say the morning benedictions of the Torah, and read at least one (Torah) verse, like, for instance, "May He bless thee", etc., he should do so, and then go up to the reading of the Torah and bless. But if it's impossible for him to do so, he should go straightway to the Torah. And, since he has already recited the blessing "Who has chosen us", etc., one need not repeat it again (privately), but read: "Who has sanctified us", "And make pleasant...", up to "to His people Israel", and then say "The L-RD bless thee", etc.
What May Not Be Done From Dawn Until Praying Time

Ch. 8:1-6

8:1 As soon as the day dawns, that is, the first light of the sun in the East - since this is the time when prayers may begin (if one had (by chance) prayed then (at that early hour), one had complied with his duty) we are not permitted to begin any kind of work, or transact business, or start a journey until one had prayed, as it is said (Psalms 85:14): "Righteousness shall go before him; and he shall make its footsteps a way to walk in." " Righteousness " means prayer, wherein we declare the righteousness of our Creator, and only afterward are we to direct our footsteps on the road of our material desires.

8:2 One is not allowed to eat or drink (before praying), as it is said (Leviticus 19: 26): "Ye shall not eat with the blood," which means, that you shall not eat before you pray for your lives. To one who first eats and drinks and then prays, the following Scriptural text applies (I Kings 14:9): "And hast cast Me behind thy back." Do not read "thy back" rather "thy pride";

the Holy One, blessed be He, said:
"After this man had catered to his pride, he then vouchsafed to accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven."
And even to drink coffee or tea with sugar and milk is forbidden (before praying). But if one is old or feeble and cannot wait for his food until the time when the congregation leaves from the synagogue, especially on Sabbaths and festivals, when (the services) are prolonged, it is better to allow him to pray the morning prayers (Shaharit) at home at his ease, then recite the kiddush, and eat something. Then he should go to the synagogue, listen attentively to the congregation while they pray the Shaharit, and afterwards pray with them the additional prayers (Musaph); but one should not drink coffee with sugar, or the like, without accepting the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven first. However, if one is ill, one is allowed to eat and drink before the prayers, this is not an act of pampering one's ego. If one does not have the ability to concentrate upon the prayers without (first) eating and drinking, if one wants he may eat and drink before praying.

8:3 There are some authorities who hold that even if a man awakes at midnight, he is not allowed to taste (any food) before praying; and it is proper to follow this stricter opinion.
But if he has a weak heart,
he may eat
and drink something
to fortify himself for the Divine Commands.

8:4 Water, and also tea,
or coffee without sugar or milk
may be taken before praying,
even after dawn,
because there is no trace of egotistic indulgence in this.
This may be done even on the Sabbath and festivals
when the kiddush must be recited (before meals),
it is allowed to drink
one of these before praying
and kiddush does not prevent him
because the prayers
the time for kiddush has not yet come,
as kiddush is only (said) before a meal,
that is, just before eating,
because it is not permissible eat
before saying the morning prayers.

8:5 We are not allowed (before praying in the morning), to first
go to a neighbor's house,
to meet him
and give him a greeting
or even to say:
"Good morning" (in Aramit)
(or in Ivrit) "good morning"
as it is said (Isaiah 2:22):
"Withdraw yourselves from man,
whose breath is still in his nostrils;
because for what is he to be esteemed?"
This means,
what is his importance,
that you have honored him
before you have honored Me?
But if we meet a neighbor casually,
from the halacha,
we are allowed to greet him.
It is proper, however, to alter
his usual expression (of greeting),
so that we remember
that we must not engage
in other matters before praying.

8:6 Even the study of the Torah
is forbidden him to begin
after dawn.
But if one is accustomed
to go (regularly) to the synagogue
and there is no fear that he will overlook the time,
he is allowed (to study after dawn).
Also one who studies (the Torah)
together with others (before praying),
and if they do not study now,
they will lose their study (time),
he is allowed to study with them
because the collective merit of a group is very great.
They must take care, however,
not to go past the time set for praying.
The Tzitzit (Fringes) Ch. 9:1-21

9:1 The precept to wear the tzitzit (a fringed garment) is of great importance; for of the Scriptures, all the commandments, as it is said (Numbers 15:39):
"That ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the L-RD."
The numerical value of (the letters of the word) tzitzit is six hundred (tsade=90, yud=10, tuv=400), (and taken together with) the eight threads and the five knots (which make up the tzitzit), we get six hundred and thirteen (the number of the Divine Commandments contained in the Torah).
Therefore, every Jew must take care that he has a tallit katan (a small fringed garment) that he wears all day.
This must be made of white lamb's wool, measuring about three-fourths of a cubit in length (13 1/2 inches) and half a cubit in width (9 inches); other authorities hold (that the size is) one cubit square (18 by 18 inches).
Those who make the tallit katan by sewing together from the sides, should take care that there is from each side, the greater part open, of the visible part, and even by means of hooks one should not join (the open parts).
Every man must also take care that he has a large fringed tallit, with which to enfold himself while praying, and he should take care that the tallit be fine looking. For every religious deed must be performed as scrupulously as possible, as it is written (Exodus 15:2): "This is my G-D, and I will glorify Him," and it is explained to mean: Show yourself glorious before Him when performing His Commandments.

One must also be careful to buy the fringes from a trustworthy person, so as to be certain that they were spun and twined with the purpose of being used for the precept, and that they are of the prescribed length.

9:2 One who can not (afford) only a linen tallit, which can not have woollen fringes (attached) because of the ban on shatnez (mixture of wool and linen), then according to one authority, one should make the corners (of the tallit) out of leather and attach woollen fringes to them; but other authorities disagree with this opinion. and do not allow this.

9:3 The hole into which the fringes are inserted should not be away from the edge of the cloth, both in the length and the breadth, more than three thumb-breadths, (Some authorities maintain that this thumb-breadth is measured from the short joint of the thumb, which is at its top, and it is proper to follow this stricter opinion, see further in the Sha-arey Tshuva, because above three thumb-breadths (from the edge) is not called the corner of the garment proper
but it is the garment proper.)
If one has made the hole
more than three thumb-breaths (removed),
even though, when tying on the fringes,
he pulls the knot (tightly)
so that the tallit is contracted
and the hole comes down (nearer to the edge),
it is still invalid.
If after one inserted the fringes in the hole,
which was further than allowed (from the edge),
one cut the hole (larger) to make the fringes hang
within the three (thumb-breaths), it is invalid;
for, it reads (Deuteronomy 22:12):
"Thou shalt make the fringes,"
and not be made (by a subsequent act) (which means,
they must be valid while putting them in).
The hole must not be
closer to the edges of the cloth,
whether in the length or the breadth,
than the size
of the first joint of the thumb,
upto the nail,
because if it is less than that
it can no longer be called the corner,
but below the corner.
If the hole was the correct distance (from the edge),
but by pulling the knot (of the fringe),
the edge has become drawn in,
and there is less than the correct distance (between the
hole and the edge),
it is nevertheless valid.
The threads which are at the edge of a tallit,
and are unwoven,
there is a question whether they are included
in the this measurement (mentioned before) or not;
they must therefore be cut off from there
before the fringes are tied on.
In the small tallit
some people are accustomed to make
two holes,
next to each other like (the Hebrew vowel) tzere (.),
and in these two they insert the fringes,
suspending them on the outside of the tallit.

9:4 If, when the fringes are tied on,
the hole was at the correct distance (from the edge),
but in time the hole was torn a little
or the edges of the tallit (are frayed)
to the extent that the fringes are
closer than the correct distance from the edge,
they are still valid,
because the Torah does not insist
that the fringes should not be below the corner,
except when they are made (tied on),
as it is said (Numbers 15:38):
"And they shall make for themselves fringes
at the corner of their garments."
Nevertheless, from the start,
it is best to make a seam around the hole
and on the edge of the tallit,
so as not to have a reduction (after some time)
in the required thumb-breath's size.

9:5 It is the general custom to make in the fringes
five double knots,
between which there are four spaces.
It is done by putting
the four threads through the hole
and tie with two knots;
and coil the longest thread,
that is called the shamesh (servant),
(around the other threads) seven times,
and again tie two knots;
we coil it around again eight times,
and tie two knots;
then we coil it around again eleven times,
and tie two knots;
and (finally) we coil it around thirteen times,
and tie two knots.
Since the beauty of the fringes lies
in that all the spaces be of equal size,
and so in the first space
where the (number of) coils is the smallest
we make (the threads) far apart;
in the second,
we make them somewhat closer,
and in the third and in the fourth (still closer).
The prescribed length of the fringe,
that is, beginning with the first knot
to the ends of the thread,
must be no less than
twelve thumb-breadths.
For the same reason of symmetry,
it is proper that all the spaces
together be one-third (of the prescribed length),
and the hanging (loose) threads two-thirds;
we should, therefore, take care
that every space shall be
of the size of a thumb-breadth;
then all the spaces (taken together)
(will equal) four thumb-breadths,
and the loose threads
(will equal) eight thumb-breadths (in length).
If they (the threads) are longer
we should make the spaces also
a little larger.
It is advisable to make all the knots
by (tying together) the four threads on the one side
with the four threads on the other side,
so that each of the (four inserted) threads is divided,
half on one side and half on the other side.

If one does not take four separate threads,
but takes one very long thread,
folds it into four,
puts it through the hole,
makes a knot, and afterwards
cuts (apart the threads), it is invalid,
because it is written (Deuteronomy 22:12):
"Thou shalt make thyself fringes,"
which was explained
"to make and not to have made"
which means, concerning the fringes
as they are made on the garment,
it is according to the law
and not put them in first unlawfully
and afterwards legalize them by some act,
so that they are made properly.
But this is forbidden.
Likewise, if the fringes were
made in the manner prescribed by law
on one garment,
and the garment becomes torn,
and one wants to put the fringes
as they are, on a different garment,
or even in the same garment,
as for instance, if the tallit becomes torn
from the hole to the edge
and the fringe fell off,
and one wants to return them to their place
and we sew up (the rent) in the tallit up to the hole
this is also invalid,
because the Divine Command is: "Thou shalt make,"
and not use what has already been made.
Likewise, if one puts in the fringes
into a tallit which is at this moment
legally unfit to put fringes in it,
as for instance,
when most of it is sewed (up),
and after that one opens up the sewing
until it is mostly open, and valid for tzitzit,
if the tzitzit are kept as they were
it is also invalid, (for the reason stated before),
that (the tzitzit) must be made,
and not (use what has) already been made.
one must first untie the tzitzit,
and put them on again as prescribed by law.
And so in all similar instances to them.

9:7 Before wrapping oneself with the tallit
one must examine the tzitzit,
to see if they are in order,
and also check the threads
that are in the holes
and the coils,
and separate the threads from one another,
so that they are not tangled together.
However, if one comes late to the synagogue,
and while separating the threads
and examining them,
one will lose the opportunity
to pray together with the congregation,
one does not need to examine them
or separate them.

9:8 With any precept, one says the (appropriate) blessing
for doing them
meaning, before the actual performance
and immediately afterward the blessing
the precept must be performed
without pausing.
Therefore, we must take the tallit
with both hands,
and bear in mind that we are commanded by
the Holy One, blessed be He,
to wrap ourselves with the tzitzit
in order that we may remember
to perform all His commandments,
as it is said (Numbers 15:39):
"That ye may look upon it
and remember all the commandments of the L-RD."
Then while still standing, we say the blessing:
"to wrap ourselves with the tzitzit",
(the letter bet has the vowel patach _)
and immediately cover our heads
all the way down to our mouth.
After that we raise the corners (of the tallit,
and wrap them) around the neck,
after the fashion of the Arabs,
and remain standing like this
as long as it takes one to walk four cubits (six feet),
while reciting the verses:
"how precious", etc.
After this we may remove it from our head.
It is proper to take care
not to let the tzitzit drag on the floor,
as it constitutes contempt of the precept;
we must, therefore, raise them
and we can insert them under the belt.

9:9 One does not bless over the tzitzit
except during the day
and not during the night.
Care should be taken
not to bless over them
until it (the light) is sufficient to
distinguish between blue and white.
If one puts on the small tallit
while it is still night,
and did not bless over it,
or put it on
while one's hands are still unwashed,
and so did not bless over it,
then when one blesses on the large tallit,
one should have in mind to include in this blessing
the small tallit as well.
If one has no large tallit,
then upon putting on the small tallit
in the daytime, with hands already washed,
one should say over it the blessing,
"concerning the commandment of the tzitzit".
(the letter vov has the vowel patach _ )
If one put on (the small tallit)
while he was unable to bless over it,
then later on when it is daytime
and one's hands are washed
one should take the fringes in one's hands
and say the blessing,
"concerning the commandment of the tzitzit".
If one slept with the small tallit on,
one should not bless over it at all,
but upon saying the blessing over the large tallit,
one should have in mind to include the small one as well.

9:10 If one takes off the tallit,
intending to put it on again soon,
even if one went to the lavatory,
upon putting it on again,
one need not bless over it
because according to the halacha
it is allowed to go to the lavatory with it on,
and so this is not considered as an interruption.
But if one does not intend
to put it on again soon,
but then one changes one's mind and puts it on again,
one must bless over it.
If the tallit slips off his back,
accidently,
but a part of it still remains on the body,
even though most of it fell off,
since there remains on him part of the precept,
there is no need to return
and bless (again) upon adjusting it,
but if no part of it was left on his body,
even though one is holding it with his hands,
because there is no longer any part
of the precept on his body,
for, the (intent of the) precept is not
to hold the tallit in one's hands,
but to enfold one's body with it.
According one needs to bless
when one puts it on again;
If it (the tallit falling off) happened to him
during his prayers,
at a part which may not be interrupted,
one should not bless then (upon adjusting it),
but wait until (after finishing the prayer)
and he is able to bless,
one takes the tzitzit in the hands
and says the blessing.
9:11 It is permissible to borrow the tallit belonging to someone else, occasionally, even without his knowledge, to pray in it and bless over it, because it is presumed that a person is glad if a precept is performed with his property when no monetary loss is involved. But not to take it (the tallit) out from the place where it was, because the owner might object to that. If the tallit was folded, (the borrower) must return it folded. On the Sabbath, one does not fold it; and because, there is no folding this being one of the Sabbath prohibitions, the owner will forgive him. If he borrows somebody's tallit just to go up to (the reading of) the Torah, it is doubtful whether one should bless over it. (The borrower) should, therefore, have it in mind that he does not want (even temporary) possession (of the tallit), and in such event all authorities agree that no blessing need be said. But for a communal tallit, even if one just took it only to go up to (the reading of) the Torah, one must bless over it, because it is considered like his own (property).

9:12 The word "wool" without qualification, mentioned in the Torah or by the legal authorities means either lamb's or ram's wool. A tallit where the warp (the lengthwise threads in a woven cloth) is of wool and the woof (also weft - the breadthwise threads in a woven cloth) is of cotton
or silk or something else similar;
or vice versa,
that the woof is of wool
and the warp is of another kind,
a G-D-fearing (man) should not bless
over such a tallit.
Some authorities hold
that also tzitzit of wool
do not release one (from the obligation to bless),
only a tallit which is of this type (of mixture).
If the tallit is of silk
and the fringes of wool,
one does not bless over it,
but first bless
over a woolen tallit and put this on,
and then remove it
and put on the other (silk one).
However, if also the tzitzit are of silk,
one may bless over it
(but it is not customary in our countries
to have silk tzitzit,
that is tzitzit made for the precept).
If some of the tzitzit are of silk
and some of wool,
it is still worse;
(no tzitzit) should ever be made in this manner.

9:13 A tzitz (single fringe) where there is torn
from it one thread
of the four threads
(which are folded to form eight fringes),
and there is enough left of it to make a loop,
that is, (the size of) four thumb-breathths,
or even if parts of two threads have been torn off
and four thumb-breathths are left of each,
but the other two threads
are the full size,
(such tzitzit) are still valid.
But if three threads have been damaged,
even though there is left of each
four thumb-breadths
and the fourth thread is perfect;
or if only one thread has been damaged
so that less than a thumb-breadth is left of it,
even though
the remaining three threads are perfect,
in any event, (the tzitzit) are unfit.
(except in an emergency).
It follows that if one thread is torn
out of the eight fringes
even if it is completely missing,
the tzitzit are valid beyond any doubt,
since in reality, this is only one-half of the thread,
and of the other half there is still enough
left to make a loop with it, and more.
If two of the fringes have been torn off
and does not remain from them
four thumb-breadths of each,
if it is probable
that these two (torn) fringes
belong to one thread,
the tzitzit are rendered unfit.
However, if one is certain
that they belong to two (different) threads,
as for instance when tying them (the tzitzit),
one has always been careful to tie
four ends of one side
and four ends of the other side (never mixing them up),
and now the two fringes that have been torn off
are both on one side of the knot,
then these (two torn fringes)
surely belong to the other group of four;
and since there is still left of each thread
no less than the length of four thumb-breadths
on the other side of the knot,
and the (remaining) two threads are perfect,
the tzitzit are considered valid.
If one of the threads is torn
where it is inserted in the hole,
(the tzitzit) are rendered unfit. The law that stated that if one thread is torn off and there is enough left of it with which to make a loop, the tzitzit are still valid, is true only if, when originally put in, all the threads were of the prescribed length and afterwards became torn, but if at the time of putting in the tzitzit, there was even one shorter thread, no matter to what extent from the prescribed length, (the tzitzit) are unfit for the purpose.

9:14 The threads of the tzitzit must be twisted, and if any thread has become untwisted, the untwisted part is considered as entirely cut off and non-existent.

9:15 A tallit which has fringes and consists of two parts, as is the case with many of our talliyot (fringed garments), which are made of two pieces joined together. Occasionally (such a tallit) is taken apart for washing or for mending it, and after that it is again joined by means of a seam. Because we rely that each part is large enough to wrap oneself with it, then it suffices to remove two tzitzit from either of the parts, and after joining (back) the tallit (the tzitzit) may be put in again and tied. But if each part is not by itself large enough to wrap oneself with it,
then all the tzitzit (from both parts) must be removed.
(because the parts were separated,
each part lost (the precept) of fringes,
and after they are joined together again,
they require fringes,
and if we left on the original (fringes)
they are invalid because of
"Thou shalt make,"
and not use what has already been made.
as explained above in Law 6.)
If one part
is large enough to wrap in
and the other part does not have
(enough) to wrap in,
then the tzitzit should be removed from this part
which did not have enough to wrap in.

9:16 If a corner was severed or torn
and completely separated from the tallit
and (the severed piece) does not (measure)
three thumb-breadths square,
(them) some authorities are of the opinion
that this piece
even after
it is properly sewed on to the tallit,
is unfit to put the tzitzit in it,
because (of the detached piece),
measuring less than three thumb breadths (square),
cannot legally be called a "garment,"
and even when attached to the tallit
it is still considered (in the eyes of the law) as severed.
And it is proper to follow this opinion.
But if it (the piece) is not entirely severed
from the tallit,
because it is still a little connected
then the sewing is effective
to make it considered as part of the tallit itself,
and the tzitzit put in
after the sewing are valid.
It is customary to sew on a piece of extra cloth
at the corners of the tallit,
because there are many garments,
even new ones,
that have pieces joined together,
measuring less than three (thumb-breadths) square;
in the place where the tzitzit are put in
therefore, we put on a piece of cloth measuring three
thumb-breadths square.

9:17 Some authorities are of the opinion
that in the entire area of the corner
where the tzitzit may be inserted,
that is, from the width of the first joint of the thumb,
from the edge of the tallit
up to three thumb-breadths,
there should not be there any seam,
even a thread,
that should be suitable to make
of thread which is for the tzitzit
of this particular tallit.
For instance, if the tallit is of flax,
we must not make a seam with flax threads,
only with silk threads or similar,
or if the tallit is of silk,
we do not sew with silk threads;
and if the tallit is of wool,
we do not sew with woollen threads,
only silk threads, or the like.
It is proper to observe this (rule of law)
also as regards
(the seam) made round the hole to strengthen it.
All these (laws) are only (for the case)
where white thread (is being used),
but if colored thread (is used),
it does not matter.

9:18 If one wants to remove the tzitzit from the tallit
in order to put there
other tzitzit which are better,
or if one of the threads has been torn off
and one desires to put in perfect ones,
although the first ones are still fit.
In any event, this is permissible
because one does not intend to free
the tallit from the requirement of tzitzit;
on the contrary,
one intends to put in better tzitzit.
But one must take care not to throw out
the original (tzitzit) into an unseemly place.

9:19 Even tzitzit that fall off
and are removed from the tallit
must not be thrown into the rubbish,
because we slight thereby a precept.
Some people are strict (about discarded tzitzit)
and place them in a book
to serve as a bookmark,
because, since they have once been used
for the performance of a precept,
let another precept be performed with them.
Similarly, a tallit which has become old,
and is no longer put on for the precept,
one should not make of it
any unworthy use.

9:20 If one came on the Sabbath to the synagogue
and found
that one of the tzitzit in the tallit has become unfit,
and he is unable to borrow another tallit,
and he is embarrassed
to (remain) sitting without a tallit,
since it is impossible for him on this day
to replace it by another tzitzit,
and so, as a matter of decorum,
one may put on the tallit as it is,
and not bless over it.
What cases are we talking about,
when it was not known to him,
before the Sabbath,
that it had become unfit,
but if one has been aware
before the Sabbath that it had become unfit,
one is not allowed to put it on (now)
because he should have already repaired it yesterday.

9:21 One who puts on a garment
that requires tzitzit,
but has no tzitzit,
then this is omission of a positive commandment.
One needs to watch out for those garments
which are made having four square corners;
one of these corners must be cut off
and made round (in order not to require tzitzit);
but if one folded up one of the corners
and sewed it up so that it looks round,
this is of no avail,
for as long as it has not been cut off,
it is still considered a part of the garment.
Severe is the punishment
of the one who neglects the precept of tzitzit.
He who is scrupulous in the precept of tzitzit,
will be worthy of beholding the Divine Presence.
The commandment of tefillin is also a very precious precept, because the whole Torah is compared to the tefillin, as it is written (Exodus 13:9):

"In order that there will be the law of the Lord in your mouth."

One who does not to put on tefillin is considered as one of the transgressors in Israel who sin with their bodies, (because they refuse to subjugate their bodies to the worship of the Almighty).

One who puts on defective tefillin not only fails to observe the precept, but also utters many blessings in vain, which constitutes a grave crime.

Therefore, one must take care to buy tefillin from a scribe (who is) competent and God-fearing.

Also the straps (for the tefillin) should be bought from a trustworthy person, to be sure that they were prepared for this particular purpose from the skin of a clean (animal).

But due to our many sins, this gross mistake is on the increase, in that (people) buy their tefillin and the straps from anyone who sells them cheaply, (although) they are unfit.

Every God-fearing person should consider this: if for his clothes and utensils, he is spending money liberally

10:1 The commandment of tefillin

הלכות תפילין

מצות תפילין

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שלל התורה והשות התחול

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so that they be of the right kind,
how much more, then,
(should he do so) with the objects required by the Almighty,
blessed be His name.
He should not economize
and worry about spending the money,
but be scrupulous to buy those (holy objects)
only when certain that they are fit for the purpose,
although the price may be high.
He should always take care of them (the tefillin)
that they be in proper condition,
and that the cases and the straps be black.
It is proper to smear
the straps with a little oil,
so that they are (always) black.
(But not smear them with fish oil
which is called "fishtran"
because this is from a nonkosher fish.)
If the tefillin become defective,
even in the slightest degree,
or if the stitches become loose,
we should immediately consult a competent scholar
(to ascertain) whether they are (still) fit.
We must particularly be careful
regarding the edges of the cases,
and especially so (with the edges of) the one for the head,
because this is very common
that they become frayed
and holes are made there,
which makes them unfit.
Very frequently,
when the tefillin become old,
some part of the upper skin becomes separated,
of the head,
which makes them unfit.
We need to take great care about all these.
All who are careful about the precept of the tefillin
and treat them with respect,
and not engage in idle talk about them
or everyday matters,
his days will be prolonged,
and he is assured of being in the world to come,
as it is written (Isaiah 38:16):
"0 Lord, by these things,
(that they wear on them G-D’s name in the tefillin)
men will live,
and in all these things is the life of my spirit;
so wilt Thou give me health and cause me to live."
The word "tefillin" connotes judgment and admonition,
(and therefore the lamed has the dagesh - stress -
to take the place of the missing second (lamed) )
because the tefillin serve as evidence
and convincing proof
that the Divine Presence rests on us,
as it is written (Deuteronomy 28:10):
"And all the nations of the earth shall see
that Thou art called by the name of the Lord;"
and explained our Rabbis, of blessed memory,
that (the reference) is the tefillah of the head
upon which is (embossed the letter) shin,
(the first letter) of the word Shaddai (Almighty).
Therefore, it is forbidden to cover
the tefillah of the head
entirely with the tallit.

10:2 The time for putting them on (the tefillin)
(begins from that hour) of morning
when one sees his neighbor,
with whom he is slightly acquainted,
at a distance of four cubits,
and recognizes him.
After putting on the tallit
one puts on the tefillin.
The reason we put first
the tzitzit over the tefillin
is that the precept of the tzitzit
is performed more often,
both on week days
and on Sabbaths and festivals,

while the precept of the tefillin

is only performed on weekdays.

And this rule is well established (that when we have two precepts);

one which is observed regularly

and one which is not observed regularly,

that which is observed regularly takes precedence.

However, if one happens to take hold of the tefillin first,
even if they are still in their bag,
one must put them on first

and then enfold oneself with the tallit,
because a mitzvah must not be passed by,
as it is written (Exodus 12:17):
"And ye shall observe the matzot," read instead mitzvot (commandments):
that is, if a precept presents itself,
do not allow it to sour (by delaying its performance).

10:3 It is written (Exodus 13:16):
"And it shall be as a sign upon thy hand" (Hebrew, yadhah),
in the section (that starts from verse 5): "And it shall be ..."
(the word) "thry hand" is written
with the (superfluous) letter "he" (at its end).
The interpretation of our Rabbis, of blessed memory,
is that this is the "faint" hand,
that is the left hand,
which is weaker and feeble.
One puts on (the tefillah) there,
on the place where the muscle stands up (the biceps),
as it is written (Deuteronomy 11:18):
"Therefore, shall ye lay up these My words in your heart,"
(meaning) that it's put physically opposite the heart.
Therefore, one puts it (the tefillah) there,
and inclines it slightly
to the side of the body,
so that when one lets the arm down,
it (the tefillah) will be opposite the heart.
It is written
about the head tefillah (Deuteronomy 7:8):
"Between your eyes,"
by tradition,
our Rabbis, of blessed memory, (received),
that it does not mean literally between the eyes,
but (on the head) midway between the eyes.
And the place is
from where the hair begins to grow,
and continues upwards
up to the spot where
the child's skull is soft;
which means that the lower edge of the tefillah
should not be lower
than the place where the hair begins to grow,
and the upper edge
not higher than the place
where a child's skull is soft.
Great care should be taken
that it (the head tefillah) should always lie
in its proper place.
If there lies even a small part of it,
on the forehead where no hair grows,
or one puts all of it
at the place of the hair
but it is to one side
and it is not exactly midway between the eyes,
the precept is not fulfilled,
and the blessing was in vain.
The knot (in the strap) must be placed opposite this,
on the back of the head,
above the nape of the neck,
at the base of the skull,
where there is hair,
which is opposite his face
and must not incline to one side or another.
It should be tightened onto the head;
but when the case and the base are wide,
it is difficult
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that it will be tightened properly.
One needs to be very careful with this matter.

10:4 The tefillin must be put on while standing.
One must not shake the tefillin
out of the bag,
because it is an act of contempt toward a mitzvah;
rather take them out with one's hand.
One first puts on the hand (tefillah),
and before tightening the knot
one says the blessing:
"to put on the tefillin".
(the letter he has the vowel kametz,
and the lamed of "tefillin" has the stress).
One then tightens the knot
and makes seven coils on his forearm.
Afterwards, one puts on the head (tefillah),
and before one tightens it on his head
one says the blessing:
"Concerning the commandment of the tefillin".
(the letter vav has the vowel patach)
and tightens (the strap) on his head
and says:
"Blessed be His glorious kingdom
forever and ever".
The reason for saying this last verse
"Blessed be His glorious ...and ever"
is because there is some doubt (whether)
this blessing (should be said).
Because there is doubt about this blessing,
it is also doubtful
whether or not a listener has to respond Amen to it.
It seems to me, therefore,
that this blessing should be said quietly.

10:5 If one happens
to take from the bag
the head (tefillah) first,
one must pass over the precept,
hold it in his hand,
and cover it up with something,
and put on the hand (tefillah) first.
Since the precedence of the hand (tefillah),
over the one of the head,
is ordained in the Torah,
as it is written (Deuteronomy 6:8):
"And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand,
and they shall be frontlets between thy eyes."
Hence, one can disregard,
the apparent neglect of a precept, in this case.

10:6 Nothing must intervene
between the tefillin and his flesh,
and it makes no difference whether it is the one of the hand
or of the head.
Short hair
is not considered an intervention
since it is customary (to wear the hair) like that.
But those who grow a thick tuft of hair,
not only is this brazenness and vanity,
and so is forbidden,
there is also a prohibition
because of putting on tefillin
since this growth (of thick hair)
is an intervention (between the head and the tefillah).

10:7 Care should be taken of the tefillah of the hand
that the knot should not be shifted from the case
(even when they are in their bag
one needs to be careful about this),
and the yod of the knot
must always be facing the heart.
The base
in which the strap is inserted
should be upward
and the case downward.
In an emergency,  
for instance, a left-handed person,  
who puts on (the tefillah on) the right hand,  
and now has no tefillin (of his own)  
only borrowed (ones)  
from a person who puts it on his left,  
(and also the opposite case)  
and he can not change the knot;  
if this is the situation,  
if he puts them on as they are  
with the base upward  
and the case downward,  
then the yod and the knot will be facing outward.  
In such a case,  
he may invert (the tefillah), and put it on  
with the base being downward  
and the case upward,  
so that the yod and the knot may be  
 facing the heart.  

10:8 It is forbidden to interrupt, by conversation,  
between (the putting on) of the hand (tefillah)  
and that of the head.  
Even to wink the eyes  
or motion with the hands is forbidden.  
For it is written (Exodus 13:9):  
"And it shall be unto thee for a sign upon thy hand  
and for a memorial between thy eyes,"  
it is necessary that the memorial  
must be immediate  
(between) the hand tefillah and that of the head,  
so that both of them may constitute one unit.  
Even if one hears the kaddish  
or the kedushah,  
one must not interrupt (to respond with the congregation),  
but one must keep silent  
and listen to what the worshippers say.  
If, however, one hears  
someone say the blessing,  
"to put on the tefillin",  
...
one can respond Amen (to it),
because this Amen is a corroboration
that he believes in the precept of the tefillin;
and is therefore, like one event (and not an interruption).
(When putting on) the tefillin,
(arranged according to the view) of Rabbenu Tam,
it is likewise forbidden to interrupt
between (putting on) the hand (tefillah)
and that of the head;
but (to respond) to the kaddish and the kedushah
one may pause.

10:9 If one errs and pauses,
he must touch the hand (tefillah),
repeat the blessing,
"to put on the tefillin",
tighten the knot
and thereafter put on the head (tefillah)
and bless over them.
If, however, the interruption has been
for the need of the tefillin,
one needs not repeat the blessing
over the hand (tefillah).

10:10 One must reflect
on putting on the tefillin,
that we are commanded by the Holy One, blessed be He,
to put on tefillin
which contain four sections of the Torah
which have written on them
the unity (of G-d), blessed be His name,
and of the exodus (of the Israelites from the land) of Egypt.
(The tefillin) are on the arm nearest the heart
and on the head near the brain,
in order that we should always remember
the miracles and wonders that He has wrought for us,
which signify His Unity
and His might and dominion
over those who are above and below,
who can do with them as He pleases;
also, that we should submit to Him the soul which (resides) in the brain, and also the heart, which is the seat of our desires and passions. In so doing, one remembers the Creator, and restrain one's pleasures, and also fulfill (that which is written in Numbers 15:39): "And that ye seek not after the inclination of your heart and the delight of your own soul." This is the reason why, concerning the tefillin, it is written, "Between thy eyes."

10:11 The tefillin of the hand and of the head are two separate (and distinct) precepts, and non-observance of one does not effect the other. Therefore, if one has only one tefillah (available), or if by reason of some accident one is able to put on only one, one puts that one on. If one puts on the one for the hand, one says (the blessing): "to put on the tefillin" only; but if one puts on the one for the head, one says on it (both blessings): "to put on the tefillin" and also "Concerning the commandment of the tefillin"; and say also "Blessed be the name ... and ever".

10:12 A fully left-handed man, even if he has become left-handed by becoming accustomed to this, must put (the tefillah) on the right hand for everyone which is his "left". If he does all work with his right hand but he writes with his left, or vice versa, then the hand with which he writes is considered the "right" one,
and the tefillah is placed on the other.

An ambidextrous person
puts the tefillah on the left hand (for every one).

A man not born left-handed,
who has accustomed himself
to write with the left
but does all his other work with the right hand,
must put (the tefillah) on the left hand (for every one).

10:13 The prescribed width of the straps,
whether of the head (tefillah) or of the hand,
is no less than the length of a barley.
The prescribed length
for the head (tefillah),
of both the right and left (straps)
is to reach down to a man's navel,
or a trifle above that.

There is an opinion that holds
that (the strap on) the right hand side
should reach down to below a man's abdomen.
(that is most used)
And it is proper to follow this stricter view
in the first instance.
The (strap of) the hand (tefillah)
(should be long enough), with enough left to tighten it,
to make seven coils around the arm,
and three windings around the middle finger,
and then hold it (by winding around the hand).
If (one) strap becomes torn,
whether of the head or of the hand,
an authority should be consulted.

10:14 Care should be taken that the straps be always
with their black side out.
If it happens
that the strap around his head becomes inverted
or around his arm
so that the white side is outwards,
he must either fast or redeem himself by giving charity.
Similarly, if the tefillin fell to the ground,
when not in the bag,
he must likewise fast.
But if they fall down while in their bag,
he need not fast,
but he must give something to charity.

10:15 If one has removed the tefillin
in order to go to the lavatory,
upon putting them on again.
one must repeat the blessing
But if one was in the middle of the blessings
belonging to the shema,
that is, from the blessing
"who forms the light" and onward,
one must not interrupt by saying the blessings
over the tefillin;
but put them on without the blessings,
and after the reading of the Shemoneh Esre (silent prayer),
one touches them (the tefillin)
and blesses over them.

10:16 As long as one has the tefillin on,
his attention must not be diverted from them at all,
except during the Shemoneh Esre prayer
and while studying the Torah.
We are forbidden to eat a regular meal with them on,
but a snack
may be eaten with them on.
Sleep, even a nap,
is prohibited with them on.

10:17 We must touch the tefillin
whenever we think of them,
because by so doing,
our minds will not be diverted from them.
One should first touch the hand (tefillah)
and then the one of the head.
It is a beautiful custom to touch them
when mentioning the precept concerning them
in the reading of the Shema.
When saying (Deuteronomy 6:8):
"And thou shalt bind them as a sign upon thy hand,"
we touch the hand (tefillah)
and kiss (that object with which we have touched it),
and when saying:
"And they shall be as frontlets between thy eyes,"
we touch the head (tefillah)
and kiss (that object with which we have touched it).

10:18 One may elevate (a holy thing to a higher grade of) sanctity
but not degrade it.
Since the tefillah of the head
is more sacred than the one of the hand,
for it has
four compartments and the letter shin;
therefore, the strap that was once used for the head
may not be used for the hand,
but the strap that was used for the hand
may be used for the head.
If the strap of the hand (tefillah)
breaks above the knot,
and one wants to reverse it
so that now the knot will be
at the lower end (of the strap),
it is forbidden,
rather the knot must be made
at the place it has been broken off.
The same applies to the strap of the head (tefillah).
it is forbidden to change (the part of the strap)
that was making up the knot
so that it is outside the knot.
A bag made for the purpose of keeping the tefillin,
and had been used to hold them,
afterwards no use may be made
of this bag, for any secular purpose.

10:19 The tefillin should not be taken off
until after the kedusha in (the prayer)
"and a redeemer shall come to Zion".
when we recite
"may it be Thy will, 0 Lord, that we keep Thy statutes".
But in communities where it is customary,
that on the day the Torah is read,  
the holy scroll is not replaced (in the ark)  
until after completing the prayer  
"and a redeemer shall come to Zion",  
the tefillin should not be taken off  
until after the scroll is returned to the ark.  
A Biblical hint to this rule is found (Micah 2:13):  
"And their king passeth on before them,  
and the Lord at their head."  
If there is a circumcision that day (in the synagogue),  
(tefillin) should not be removed until after the  
circumcision.  
On Rosh Hodesh (the New Moon), (tefillin) are  
removed  
before the Musaph (additional) service;  
on Hol Hammoed Sukkot (the Intermediate Days of  
Tabernacles),  
every one takes them off before Hallel;  
but on Hol Hammoed Pesach (Intermediate Days of  
Passover),  
the congregation removes them before Hallel  
and the hazan (Reader) after Hallel.  

10:20 One removes them while standing.  
One unwinds the coils around the (middle) finger  
and two or three coils from around the arm,  
than first removes the head (tefillah),  
and after that removes the hand (tefillah),  
because it is written (Deuteronomy 6:8):  
"And they shall be for frontlets between thy eyes,"  
since it is written in the plural, "And they shall be,"  
our Rabbis, of blessed memory, explained that  
(it signifies) as long as the tefillah is midway between the  
eyes  
the two (tefillin) must be on.  
Therefore, one first puts on the hand (tefillah)  
and removes the head (tefillah) first,  
so that whenever the head (tefillah) is on him  
the one of the hand should also be on.  
It is proper to remove the head (tefillah)  
with the left hand,
which is the weaker one, in order to indicate that we are reluctant to remove it; for the precept is actually that one should wear the tefillin the whole day, but because our bodies are not always clean we take them off immediately after the prayers.

One must not remove the tefillin in the presence of a sefer torah (Holy Scroll), nor in the presence of his teacher; rather turn oneself to the side (and remove them).

It is the custom of sages to kiss the tefillin when putting them on and when taking them off. The tallit is not taken off until after the tefillin are removed.

10:21 The tefillin must be placed in their bag in a way that one may be certain the following day of taking out the hand (tefillah) first. It is not permissible to place the hand (tefillah) on top of one of the head, since the sanctity of the one of the head is greater than that of the hand, rather they must be placed side by side.

The bag containing the tefillin should be placed in the bottom of the tallit bag, with the tallit above them, so that the tallit is first at hand.

10:22 If a man (arrives at the synagogue) with no tefillin of his own when the congregation is already praying, he should wait till the end of the service and then borrow tefillin from someone, so that he can read the Shema, and the Shemoneh Esreh wearing tefillin, rather than pray together with the congregation.
without tefillin.
If he is afraid
that he will go past
the time (limit) set for the praying of the Shema,
while waiting for the tefillin
he should read the Shema without tefillin.
If he is afraid
that he will also go past
the time (limit) set for praying,
he should also pray (without tefillin).
But upon obtaining tefillin later,
he shall put them on,
with the (necessary) blessings,
then say, while wearing them, some Psalms,
or put them on at the Minhah (afternoon) service.
The night is not the time for tefillin,
and it is forbidden to put them on in the nighttime.
It is permissible to take someone else's tefillin,
even without his knowledge,
and put them on, and say the blessings over them.
(As is described
in the previous chapter
Law 11, relating to the laws of the tallit.)

10:23 Tefillin require a clean body;
therefore one should be careful
not release gas with them on.
A person suffering with diarrhea,
although he has no actual pain,
is exempt from (putting on) the tefillin,
since he is unable
to keep himself
properly clean.
However, if he is under the impression
that he will be able to keep his body clean
when reading the Shema
and the Shemoneh Esreh,
he may then put them on.
As regards any other ill person,
if he suffers pain

and he cannot concentrate,
because of his pain,
he is exempt (from putting them on),
because it is forbidden
to divert his attention from them;
if this is not the case,
he is bound to put them on.

10:24 (In the case of) a minor (below the age of thirteen) who knows
to take care of tefillin,
not to pass wind with them on,
and not to sleep while having them on,
then his father must buy him tefillin
so that he can put them on.
It is now the prevailing custom
that a minor begins putting on tefillin
two or three months
before he becomes thirteen years old.

10:25 As regards to wearing the tefillin
on Hol Hammoed (Intermediate Days of festivals),
there is disagreement among the authorities
and divergent customs.
In some communities, they go by the opinion
that one does not put on tefillin (on Hol Hamoed),
while in other communities,
they go by the opinion that they do put them on,
but do not say the blessings over them
out aloud at the synagogue
as it is done on weekdays.
(In still other communities), they have made it a custom
to put them on without the blessings
(then one must have in mind,
that if Hol Hammoed
is not the (appropriate) time for tefillin,
they should be considered merely as ordinary straps).
And although no blessing is said over them,
in any event,
one is not allowed to interrupt (by talking or otherwise)
between (putting on) the hand (tefillah)
and that of the head,
but one may interrupt for kaddish and kedushah.
Care must be taken
that among those who worship in one synagogue
there should not be some who put on (the tefillin)
and some others who do not put them on.
(it can be seen
that this is not allowed
because of "you should not cut yourself" away from others.)

10:26 Tefillin are presumed to be ritually fit
by the law,
all the time the case is in perfect condition,
also the written parchments are presumed to be valid.
They need not be examined (to ascertain their validity).
Nevertheless,
it is proper to examine them (occasionally),
because at times
they become spoiled through perspiration.
If the tefillin are not put on
except occasionally,
they should be examined twice
in every seven years,
because there is a possibility
that they have become moldy.
If the cases are torn,
the parchments must also be examined.
(An examination) is also called for
if they fell into water.
However, if he does not have
a competent person to examine them
and sew them up again,
one should put them on without having them examined,
so as not to miss the precept of tefillin
but not bless over them.

לשל ראש
אר טלקוריין ללקיהו איסקר
אברכים ליהוה
ש럼ולמלוא בבלט כנסת אוח
לא יימי קצב מיתין
רכות ערכיין מכירין
כף נרצה
דבורה דוא יאכין
משוע לא תנגדר

10:26 תפילין השוחוקים כשרים
מן היה
כל זוג שבעת שמל
המפרשיםDDR Honorן רב מתוקות
اصر ערכיין בדיקת
רמול מקומ
נגיך לבודק
מטבר🍎 מחמיר
אום אצרי מניה אוחין
אל לחרוק
עריכין בדיקה מпустו
זכלה שבעת שInputGroup
כפי יי לוחש
שמח תנשמו
וכבר לא תקריט הניבת
עריכין גmiscר הפורשתי בדיקה
וכבר
אם נשאר בטמה
רמול מקומ אם כאר ול
פי תרושית לплодקים
ולחנו לחרוק
ניגך כבל כדייה
שלום עבאת ממחין 텐יפילין
אבל לא יברך עליה.
The Mitzvah of Mezuzah

11:1 It is a positive commandment to affix a mezuzah to every doorway (in one's home)

Even if one's home contains several rooms,
and each room contains several doors made for entrance and exit,

This applies even when one ordinarily uses only one of them;

a mezuzah is required for each of them.

Furthermore,
even if the (number of) people living in the home decreases

and now there is a need for only one entrance,
it is necessary (to affix mezuzos) on all of them.

However, if one doorway is used only to bring in packages (from time to time),
and another doorway is used for coming in and going out,
concerning the doorway used only to bring in packages, there is no obligation (to affix a mezuzoh).

11:2 Gates to courtyards,

alleyways,
cities,
and countries require mezuzos,
as [Deuteronomy 6:9 and 11:20] states:
"and on your gates."

11:3 (The mezuzoh) must be affixed (on the doorpost) at a person's right side as he enters.
If it is affixed on the left, it is unacceptable and must be removed and affixed on the right side. The blessing must be recited (when correcting this error). In this regard, there is no difference whether one is left-handed or not.

11:4 When there are two houses (also rooms), each of which possesses a doorway to a thoroughfare or to a courtyard and there is a partition between them which also has a doorway there is a question about this doorway, as to which side the mezuzoh should be placed. The determining factor in this regard is (termed) "know by the hinge" i.e. (it is dependent) on which side are placed the hinges of the door, since the door will open in that direction, [the direction to which the door opens] is considered as defining the house (or room) and the mezuzoh is placed on the right side as a person would enter into it.*

* {When a door opens up to the public thoroughfare, the way it opens is not significant and the mezuzoh is always placed on the right side as one enters the house. However, if there is a courtyard behind a house and the only way of entering it is from a door in the house, that courtyard is considered just like any of the rooms of the house, and the mezuzoh is placed on the right side as one goes out to it (Misgeres Hashulchon 2).}
even if the door opens
into the other room.*

* {Different rules apply regarding the placement of a mezuzoh at the entrance to the rooms of a house when it has only one entrance to the public thoroughfare. (The fact that it has a back or side door which opens up to an enclosed yard is not significant.) The Misgeres Hashulchon(3) explains that in this instance, the determinant factor is the manner in which one enters the room as one proceeds from the entrance to the house. Nevertheless, other authorities consider hekeir tzir on the importance of the room's function as the determinant factor.}

11:5 The place (to which the mezuzoh is affixed) is the beginning of the top third of the height of the entrance.*

If it is placed higher than that, it is still acceptable, as long as it is away from the lintel more than a hand-breadth.

If one affixed it below the top third, one must remove it and affix it properly (at the right height).

A blessing must be recited.

* {If the doorway is very high, one should place the mezuzoh at the height of one's shoulders, even though this is below the top third of the doorway (Misgeres Hashulchon 4).}

Should one have affixed (the mezuzoh) within a hand-breadth on the lintel it must also be removed and affixed at the proper (height).

However, another blessing is not recited.

[If the entrance way is wide], one should place (the mezuzoh) within a hand-breadth of the outside end (However), if one did not follow this (practice), (the mezuzoh) need not be moved.

11:6 How must one affix it?

One should roll it from the end to the beginning i.e. from (the word) "one" to (the word) "Hear" place it in a tube or other container and affix it with nails
to the doorpost.
It should be placed at an angle
with its head
- i.e. the (word) "Hear"
pointed towards the house
and the final line
pointed toward the outside.
Should the doorpost
be narrow
it (the mezuzoh) may be affixed upright.
This is preferable
to affixing it behind the doorpost.
If it was not affixed in a permanent manner
but merely hung up,
this is not acceptable.
Therefore, one should take care
to nail it at the top
and also the bottom
so that it will not be (considered as) hanging.

11:7 Before affixing it,
one recites the blessing
"who has sanctified us with His commandments
and commanded us
to affix a mezuzoh".
When one affixes a number of mezuzos
one blessing is sufficient for all of them.
If a mezuzoh falls
by itself (i.e. without any external influence)
when one affixes it again
a blessing should be recited.
However,
when it (the mezuzoh) is removed
in order to be checked
there is a question
whether another blessing is recited. *

* {The common practice is not to recite a blessing if the mezuzoh is put back the same day. However, if the mezuzoh is not put back up until the following day, or if the mezuzoh was determined as no longer acceptable and had to be replaced with another one, a blessing is recited.}

11:8 Some gateways
are (built) with a small doorway
next to the large gate
and through this small doorway
(and people ordinarily) go in and out
and the large gate is opened
only occasionally.
Since there are two separate entrances
and they are separated by a pillar
at least a hand-breadth in width
two mezuzos are required.*

* {The same principles apply to any entrance which is serviced by two doors, e.g. an entrance to a large storefront. As long as both doors are used and they are separated by a pillar a hand-breadth or more wide, a mezuzoh is required for each.}

11:9 In a place where one fears
that it (the mezuzoh) may be stolen
if it is possible
one should embed it
within the doorpost to the house
and place it there.
However, not (to embed it) too deeply,
one (should not) embed it more than a hand-breadth
for there (at that depth), it is no longer considered
"on the doorposts of your house" (Deuteronomy 6:9)
but, rather, within the doorpost
and is thus unacceptable.
Also, one should make sure
that in any case,
the place of the mezuzoh is recognizable.
If it is impossible to embed it
within the doorpost
one can rely (on the opinions),
under such difficult circumstances,
(which allow one) to affix it inside,
behind the door.*
(This leniency applies) only when one affixes it on the
doorpost itself
and not on the wall.
Also, one should not (place it) away
from the entrance way
more than a hand-breadth
for that would be unacceptable.

* {Similar rules apply if for other reasons it is impossible to affix the mezuzoh on the doorpost.}

11:10 A house only requires a mezuzoh

if it is

two cubits by two cubits.

If it is not two cubits by two cubits,
even though it is

more in area

than two by two (four square) cubits
i.e., its shape is rectangular

or circular,
some (authorities) require (a mezuzoh)

and others do not require. *

* {The Misgeres Hashulchon (6) explains that rooms within a house require a mezuzoh even though they are smaller than this size, if they serve a specific purpose - e.g. storage - or they lead to larger rooms.}

11:11 An entrance does not require a mezuzoh

unless it has

two doorposts,

their height at least

ten hand-breadths,

and a lintel over them.

Even if the doorposts are not made of wood

or other (separate) stones,

but the walls of the house themselves

are the doorposts

with the ceiling over them,

still a mezuzoh is required.

[The following rules apply when] there is to a room

only one doorpost

for example, if from one side

the wall (of the room) continues beyond (the doorway on the other side)

like this: □

If it (the doorpost) is on the left side,
(a mezuzoh) is not required;
if it is on the right side,
there is a question

whether (a mezuzoh) is required or not.

Therefore one should be affixed
without a blessing. Alternatively, one may affix it, after affixing a mezuzoh on a doorway that does require (it), and cover this (the first) as well. And in all cases where a question exists (regarding whether a mezuzoh is required or not) this practice should be followed.

11:12 (An entrance) which has two doorposts and it does not have a lintel, but has on them an arch - like a rainbow (curving over); or alternatively, it also lacks doorposts, but the arch curves up from the ground: if it's height is at least ten hand-breadths* and four hand-breadths wide, it requires a mezuzoh.

* {According to the Rambam's opinion, a mezuzoh is not required unless the entrance extends directly upward for at least ten hand-breadths. Therefore, if the entire entrance way is arched, the mezuzoh should be affixed without reciting a blessing. (Misgeres Hashulchon 9).}

Regarding those stores which have one doorpost extending from the ground until the lintel and one which does not reach the lintel, but rather, one removes a space of a cubit or more from the wall, like this:

If the doorpost which is high enough to reach the lintel, is on the right side as a person enters, the mezuzoh is affixed to that doorpost. If the short doorpost, is on the right as one enters, if it is at least ten hand-breadths long one should affix the mezuzoh to it. If it is not ten hand-breadths long, (the mezuzoh) is affixed to the wide portion.
11:13 Some authorities say
that even an entrance way which lacks a door
requires a mezuzoh.
Others say
that with regard to this case, it's actually (when there is) a
door.
Therefore,
one should not affix the mezuzoh
until one first puts the door up.
One should not first affix (the mezuzoh),
and then put up the door,
because of the principle
"to do and not have it already done" (i.e. it is required to
"affix" a mezuzoh and not to use one that is already
affixed - see Ch. 9:6.)

11:14 A house which is not constructed
as a permanent dwelling
does not require (a mezuzoh).
Therefore, a festival sukkoh
on that holiday does not require (a mezuzoh).
Similarly, those stores
that are put up on market days
for the duration of a business fair
and then are either taken down
or left
unused (vacant)
do not require (a mezuzoh).
However, stores which are permanently
(filled) with merchandise
require a mezuzoh.*

* {Some opinions do not require that mezuzos be affixed on stores. Hence, they should be affixed without
a blessing (Misgeres Hashulchon 11).}

11:15 A porch,
which has three walls
and a ceiling over them,
with the fourth side open,
even if it has
two pillars (there)
which resemble a doorway,
does not require a mezuzoh;
since these pillars
were not placed there as doorposts,
but rather as supports for the roof.
If it has a wall
on the fourth side,
even if that wall is low
and does not reach the ceiling
or even if they are made with windows,
the windows require (a mezuzoh).

11:16  A gatehouse
(i.e., a small house
by the gate to a courtyard
where a guard waits),
a balcony used
to go up to a higher (storey),
a garden,
and a pen (enclosure for animals)
do not require a mezuzoh,
because they are not made
for living (dwelling) in.
However, if a house,
which requires a mezuzoh,
opens up to one of these
or to a porch,
a (mezuzoh) is required
even for the entrance to these
from the public thoroughfare.
Accordingly,
the gates to courtyards,
alleyways,
countries,
and cities,
all require mezuzos,
because houses that require mezuzos
open up to them.
Furthermore, ten houses (or rooms),
which lead one to another,
(This applies even if the nine outer ones
are constructed such that they do not require a mezuzoh.)
if the innermost one requires a mezuzoh, all require mezuzos. Therefore, the gateway leading from a garden to a courtyard requires a mezuzoh. Some (authorities) say that gatehouses and balconies require (a mezuzoh) even if the house does not open up to them. Therefore, a mezuzoh should be affixed without a blessing.

11:17 A bathhouse, tannery, and mikveh do not require (a mezuzoh), because they are not intended (to be used) as a proper (respectful) dwelling. However, a cattle barn or chicken coop,* a storage room for hay or for wood, a wine cellar, or place where other beverages are stored if it is of the minimum size of a house requires (a mezuzoh). Nevertheless, some opinions do not require (a mezuzoh in these instances). **

** {The Misgeres Hashulchon (13) rules in favor if the opinion which requires a mezuzoh and states that the matter is so clear that a blessing may be recited when the mezuzoh is affixed.}

* {At present, many do not affix mezuzos to chicken coops and barns because of the waste found there. Each situation should be considered individually (Misgeres Hashulchon 12).}
11:19 A room
or courtyard
[shared by a Jew and] a gentile
does not require (a mezuzoh).*

11:20 A cellar whose doorposts
and the entrance
lie on the ground
does not require (a mezuzoh).
A doorpost is considered as such
only when it stands upright.

11:21 A person who rents a house
outside Israel (in the Diaspora)
is not required to affix (a mezuzoh)
(during the first) thirty days (he lives in it).
This is not considered a permanent dwelling.

11:22 (When a Jew) leaves a dwelling
and another Jew
will come to live there (in his place),
the former should not take
the mezuzos.
Rather, he should leave them there
and the second (Jew) should pay
him for them.

11:23 A person is obligated
to be extremely careful
(regarding) the mitzvoh of mezuzoh,
since it is
a constant obligation for everyone.
Thus, whenever he enters
or leaves (his home),
he will be confronted with G-d's Unity
the name of the Holy One, blessed be He,
and remember His love.
This will rouse him from his sleep
and his errors
in the vanities of the time
and he will realize that nothing lasts
for eternity
except the knowledge of the
"Eternal Rock."
Thus, he will immediately return
to his senses
and follow righteous paths.

[Menochos 43b] states:
"Whoever wears tefillin
on his head and arm,
tzitzis on his clothes,
and has a mezuzoh on his door
can be assured
he will not sin,
since he has
many reminders.
They are the angels
who rescue him
from sinning,
as [Psalms 34:8] declares:
'The angel of G-d camps around
those who fear Him and rescues them.' 

Furthermore, [Shabbos 32b] relates
that the sin [of negating the mitzvoh of] mezuzoh (has
serious implications),
(causing) one's sons and daughters
to die young.
(In contrast), any one who carefully observes (the
mitzvoh of) mezuzoh
will have his days prolonged,
as [Deuteronomy 11:21] states:
"so that you will prolong your days
and the days of your children..."

11:24 Since the mezuzoh is intended
to recall the unity of His name,
blessed be He,
as one leaves from the entrance of one's house
and one enters
one should kiss it (the mezuzoh).
However, a person should not place his hand
on (the parchment of) the mezuzoh itself.
Rather, one should take care that there is
a glass (covering) over G-d's name.
When one leaves his house
and places his hand on the mezuzoh,
he should say:
"G-d is my Guardian.
G-d is my shadow on my right hand.
May G-d protect my going out and returning
now, and forever."

11:25  A mezuzoh (belonging to a private) individual
should be checked twice
in seven years*. Those (belonging to the) public
(so it will not be a burden to them)
should be checked twice
in a Jubilee period (fifty years).

* {At present, improperly written mezuzos are quite common. Hence, before affixing a mezuzoh, one
should have it checked by a competent Rabbinic authority. Also, some mezuzos are written on coated
parchment. This causes the letters to crack and fade more quickly than otherwise. Hence, more frequent
checking is required.}

12:1 [Amos 4:12] states:

"Prepare to meet your G-d, O Israel"

i.e., a person should prepare himself to stand in the presence of G-d, blessed be He.

He should wear becoming clothes when he goes to pray, as if he were presenting himself before an honorable official.*

Even if one prays alone in his house, he should dress himself in the proper manner.

In places where it is customary to wear a belt, it is forbidden to pray until one puts on a belt.

12:2 It is desirable to give charity before prayer, as [Psalms 17:15] states:

"I will see your face with righteousness."

Also, one should resolve to fulfill, before each prayer service, the mitzvoh to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18), having the intention to love every single Jew as oneself.

If, heaven forbid,
there is a division of hearts
among Jews on the physical plane,
then also in the spiritual realms
there is no unity.
This (the unity on this physical plane) causes
also their prayers to be unified (in the spiritual realms).
So these prayers become
more communal (in quality which)
makes them (more) desirable
before G-d, blessed be His name.

12:3 [Ecclesiastes 4:17] states:
"Guard your feet when you walk
to the house of G-d."
[Brochos 23a] explains
that the term "your feet" [is a euphemism] for one's excretory organs,
which are located near the feet (legs).
Therefore, a person should check himself before prayer
to see whether he must urinate or defecate (lit. to carry out his needs).
If he feels even a slight need
to relieve himself,
he is forbidden to pray.
And even (to recite) words of Torah is forbidden
as long as his body is detestable,
until he cleans his system.*

* {There is no opinion which prevents a person who feels a need to relieve himself, but can contain himself for an hour and twelve minutes, from studying Torah. Some opinions are lenient and also allow such a person to recite the Shema and other portions of the prayer service (Mishnoh Beuroh 92:7)}

Should he have prayed despite the fact that he felt a need,
provided he feels that he would have able to contain himself for the time it takes to walk a parsoh (one hour and twelve minutes)
his prayer is acceptable after the fact.
If not, despite the fact that he has already prayed, his prayer is considered an abomination and he must pray again.*

* {Most authorities (Mogen Avrohom, Shulchon Oruch HoRav, Chayei Odom) maintain that this applies only if one feels he must defecate. If he needs only to urinate, he is not required to pray again. However, other opinions are most stringent.}

Others maintain that a person who can contain himself for the time it takes to walk a parshah from the beginning is permitted to pray. One may rely on this opinion if waiting to relieve oneself will cause one to miss the time for the morning prayers. (See also Ch. 18:16.)

12:4 A person who is sure that he cannot contain himself from releasing gas until after he concludes the Shema and the Shemoneh Esreh [should refrain from reciting these prayers].*

It is preferable that he delay until after the times for the Shema and the Shemoneh Esreh than to pray without a clean body.

Should the time for prayer pass, [it is not his fault]. He is prevented by factors beyond his control (and may compensate, as will be explained in Ch. 21).

* {The Shulchon Oruch HoRav 80:3 and the Mishnah Beruroh 80:3 require that one recite the Shema and its blessings at the proper time. However, one should refrain from wearing tefillin. It must be emphasized that this applies only to someone who is sure that he will not be able to hold himself back from releasing gas. However, if a person merely suspects that he might do so, he should pray.}
and the Shema, recite the blessing upon them, (and recite the Shema).

12:5 A person must wash his hands to the wrists before prayer.
Therefore, even though he washed his hands in the morning, if afterwards his hands touched a place of filth i.e., a part of the body which is usually covered and is sweaty: or he scratched his head, or he did not wash them in the morning up to the wrist he must wash them again before prayer.
If there is no water available, he must go back and search for it, (even if) he needs to walk on four milin* or one mil back.
However, should he fear that in doing so the time for Shemoneh Esreh will pass (without his praying), he should clean his hands with a shard, or with dust, or any other material, and pray.

* {The above applies when a person is on a journey. If one does not intend to travel, there is no difference between in front of him or behind him. There is no need to search further than a mil. A mil is approximately a kilometer in contemporary terms.}

[This may be derived from Psalms 26:6]:
"I will wash my hands in cleanliness and encircle Your altar."
If possible, I will wash my hands with water,
If not,
I will achieve "cleanliness" through other means.

12:6 Even though he washed his hands in the morning properly,
and he does not know
that his hands have become dirty,
because he diverted
his attention meanwhile [from his hands]
(This applies) even though he [only] studied in the interim
again he diverted his attention [from his hands]
it is still necessary for him to wash them
with water before prayer.
However, in this instance, there is no need
to search for water.
If he does not have
water available,
and searching for it
will prevent him from praying with a minyan,
he need not search for it.*
Rather, he should clean his hands
with other materials
and pray with the minyan.

* {The Shulchon Oruch, Orach Chayim 92:5 states that in such an instance, one need not search for water, and does not make the leniency dependent on the concept of communal prayer.}

12:7  A person should try and exert himself
to pray together with a minyan,
as [Psalms 69:14] states:
"May my prayer to You, G-d, be at a propitious time".
When is "a propitious time"?
When the community prays.
Similarly, [Isaiah 49:8] announces:
Thus declares G-d:
'I will answer you at a propitious time.' "
G-d will not reject
the prayers of the many,
even if there are sinners among them,
as [Job 36:5] can be interpreted:
"Behold, G-d,
the many,
He will not despise them."
Similarly, [Psalms 55:19] relates:
He redeemed my soul in peace
from the battle that was against me,
because of the many who were with me" (Berochos 8a).

12:8 [The following rules apply to] a person who is travelling and reaches a place where he would like to spend the night:

If there is a place further on his way, within four milim, where communal prayers are recited,

This applies provided that he can arrive there before nightfall,

so that he will not have to travel alone at night,

he must travel those four milim in order to pray with a minyan.

Similarly, he must turn back one mil in order to pray with a minyan.*

Surely, one should not leave a place where prayer is recited communally if it's possible for him to reach his destination while it is still day.

* { Similarly, a person living within a mil of a minyan is required to attend communal services every day (Shulchon Oruch HoRav 90:17, Mishnoh Beruroh 90:52).}

12:9 It is a great mitzvoh to pray in a synagogue or in a house of study, for these are holy places.

This applies even when, on occasion, there is no minyan there;

nevertheless, it is preferable to pray there alone, because of its holiness.

A person who customarily studies (Torah) in a house of study should pray there together with a minyan, even if there is a synagogue in his city.

However, someone who does not frequently study (Torah) in a house of study should pray in the synagogue, for there more people are present,
two synagogues,
he should go to the further one,
so that he will earn reward for his steps.
Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi declared:
A person should always rise early
to attend the synagogue,
so that he will be counted among
the first ten who arrive,
Even if a hundred people come after him,
he receives a reward equal to all of them (Berochos 47b).
Also, [Berochos8a] teaches:
Whoever attends in the morning
and the evening, a synagogue
or a house of study
at the appropriate time,
spends an appropriate amount of time there,
and behaves in a holy manner as is befitting the place,
merits long life,
as [Proverbs 8:34] states:
"Happy is the man who hearkens to me,
faithfully coming to My gates day after day,
waiting at the doorposts of My entrances."
Afterwards, the verse continues:
Whoever finds Me, finds life."

12:10
A person should designate
one synagogue or house of study
where he will pray regularly.
Similarly, he should designate there
a fixed place to pray.
Within four cubits of a place
is still considered as the same place.
It is preferable if he can find a fixed
place near a wall,
as we find in the case of Hezekiah.
[Isaiah 38:2 relates that when he decided to pray to G-d]:
"Hezekiah turned his face to the wall."
One should not stand or sit
next to a wicked person during prayer.
When a person prays at home,
he should also establish a fixed place,
so that the members of his household will not disturb
him.

12:11 It is a mitzvoh to run
when going to the synagogue,
to the house of study,
or to fulfill other mitzvos,
as [Hoshea 6:3] states:
"Let us run to know G-d," and [Psalms 119:32] states:
"I will run [on] the path of Your mitzvos."
Accordingly even on the Sabbath
it is permitted to run for the sake of a mitzvoh.
However, within a synagogue
or a house of study,
it is forbidden to run.
When a person approaches the entrance [to the
synagogue],
he should hesitate momentarily
so that he does not enter
suddenly.
He should tremble
and fear
from the splendor of His glory,
blessed be His name.
He should recite the verse (Psalms 5:8)
"And, I, through Your great kindness, {enter Your
house...,"
which is comparable to receiving permission.
Afterwards, he should enter
and proceed with awe and fear,
as if he is walking in the presence of a king.
In communities where Jews have
streets of their own,
it is a mitzvoh to wrap oneself in the tallis
and put on tefillin at home,
and walk to the synagogue wearing them.
In those places where (the Jews) live
among the gentiles,
or one would have to pass
alleyways that are filled with filth,
one should wrap oneself, in the tallis
and put on tefillin in the anteroom
before the synagogue itself,
for it is a great matter,
entering the synagogue
wearing a tallis
and crowned with tefillin.

12:12 If, because of factors beyond his control,
he is not able to go
to a synagogue
or a house of study
or attending any other fixed minyan,
there is some reason one cannot go,
one should try to assemble,
ten people
in order at least to pray
(together) with a minyan at his home.
If that is impossible for him,
one should at least pray
at the time the minyan prays,
for this is
"a propitious time."
Similarly, a person who lives
in a place where there is no minyan
should pray at the time
the people of the nearest city pray (communally).
Nevertheless, a person who must study (Torah)
or begin work
which is very pressing
as explained in Ch. 8 (text has "5" which seems to be a mistake),
since, a person may not start (these activities)
before prayer,
may begin early
and pray [even if there is no minyan], as soon
as the sun rises.

12:13 Similarly, a person
who feels weak
and has difficulty
waiting to eat
until after the minyan completes its prayers
is permitted
to pray earlier at home,
in order to eat immediately (as stated in Ch. 8:2).
A person is only permitted, when (he remains) at home
to pray earlier because of this reason (to eat).
However, if he comes to a synagogue
where a minyan (prays communally),
he may not pray before
the prayers of the minyan.
and even if he wants
to go outside the synagogue
in order to pray before the minyan,
this is also forbidden.*

* {The Mishnah Berurah 90:34,35 mentions leniencies should one need to leave the synagogue.}

Nevertheless, should he see
that the minyan is delaying its prayers,
he may pray alone
in order that the time (for Shemoneh Esreh) not pass
(before he prays).
Similarly, if he is sick
or there are other factors beyond his control,
it is permissible to pray earlier [than the minyan].
(This applies] even in the synagogue.
However, it is preferable
for him to go home to pray.

There are opinions which maintain
that if one minyan has already prayed
in the synagogue
and a second minyan also came
to pray there,
it is forbidden for the chazon
(from) the second (minyan) to stand
in the same place as (the chazon from) the first (minyan),
for this is disrespectful to the first [minyan].
(This applies only] if the (members of the) first (minyan)
have not already left

12:14

the synagogue.
Similarly, if the first (minyan) took out a Torah scroll
to read from,
the later (minyan) should not take out again
a Torah scroll
to read in the same synagogue.
Nevertheless, in many communities,
no attention is paid to these matters.
(In practice,) everything follows the custom of the
community.

12:15 The inhabitants of a city may enforce [rules intended to
motivate] one another
to build a synagogue
or a house of study
and to purchase (sacred) texts to study.
Similarly, in a place where there is no regular minyan,
(the community members) may employ fines to compel
one another
to attend the minyan regularly,
so that the daily service will not be nullified.
Even if the scholars
because of this [attendance at this minyan]
may have to cancel their study,
they should be compelled to attend the minyan.
The time designated for Torah is one matter,
and the time for prayer, another.
13:1 The sanctity of a synagogue
or a house of study is very great.
We are warned to be in awe
of the One who rests within them,
(G-d), blessed be His name,
as [Leviticus 19:30] states:
"Fear My sanctuaries."
(This applies) to a synagogue and a house of study,
for they are also called sanctuaries,
as [Ezekiel 11:16] states:
"I will be a small sanctuary for them"
and [Megillah 29a] interprets:
"These are the synagogues and houses of study."
Accordingly, it is forbidden to discuss in them
things of no consequence (idle talk)
or to reckon accounts inside them.
excepting (accounts associated with) a mitzvoh
e.g., that of the charitable fund and the like.
These buildings should be treated with respect,
and swept
and mopped.
Candles are lit in them to show them honor.
One should not kiss one's small children (inside these
buildings).
In these places, it is not fitting to show
other love
except the love of G-d, blessed be His name.

13:2 Before one enters them,
one should clean the mud off one's feet
and check that there is not on one's person
or on one's clothes
any dirt.

שומ לכלוך
It is permitted to spit inside.

However, one should immediately rub out (the spittle) with one's foot. *

* {On the Sabbath, it is forbidden to rub out the spittle. However, one should pass one's foot over it (Mishnah Berurah 151:25).}

13:3 One should not enter them in the heat
[only to seek refuge] from the heat, or in the rain
[only to seek refuge] from the rain.
If one has to enter to call a colleague, one should enter and recite there a verse, (a mishnah)
or say a prayer, or listen to others on some (topic being) studied
- at the very least, he should sit for a while, for also sitting in these (buildings) is a mitzvoh
- and then call his colleague.

13:4 It is forbidden to eat, or drink, or sleep inside these (buildings), even a short nap.
For the sake of a mitzvoh - for example, on Yom Kippur night - one may sleep (in them).
However, one should move away from the holy ark.
Similarly, to eat there, for the sake of a mitzvoh, a meal, as long as no drunkenness or light-headedness (is involved), is permitted.
Also those people who study there regularly, may eat and sleep there, even for extended periods,
so that they will not neglect their studies.

13:5 When constructing a synagogue, it is necessary to consult a Torah Sage, who will give directions how it should be built.
P'sukei D'zimroh (the "verses of praise")

14:1 [The portion of the prayer service extending] from Hodu to the conclusion of the song [sang at the Red Sea].

is termed the "verses of praise".

and "Blessed (be He) who said ..."

is the blessing recited beforehand, and "Praised be Thy name ..."

is the blessing recited afterwards.

A person, from the time he begins "Blessed (be He) who said ..."

until the end of his prayers,

is forbidden to interrupt his prayers by speaking.

This applies even if he speaks in Hebrew.

(Whenever it is forbidden to make an interruption, this prohibition applies even to speaking in Hebrew.)

Regarding an interruption for the sake of a mitzvoh, different laws apply,

depending on (whether one is in the midst of) the "verses of praise" and its blessings or the Shema and its blessings.

In the "verses of praise", even in the midst of "Blessed (be He) who said ..." to "Praised be Thy name ...",

if one heard (someone else concluding) a blessing it is permitted to answer "Amen."

Similarly, if one hears the congregation reciting the Shema, one may recite with them the verse "Hear, O Israel ...".

Surely, (to respond) to Kaddish, Kedushah, and Borchu one is permitted to interrupt (one's prayers)
and to respond (Amen) with the congregation.*

Nevertheless, if possible,

one should plan to make the interruption for these

in a place where it is natural to stop,

between one psalm and another,

or at least

do it between one verse and another.


* { One may interrupt the "verses of praise" to recite the prayer Modim, recited by the congregation in response to the chazon (Shulchon Oruch Horav 66:5).}

and "Blessed be He and blessed be His name"

should not be recited within the "verses of praise",

even at a place where it is natural to stop.

(because it is not mentioned in the Talmud)

Similarly, the prayer

"Let be blessed, and praised ...",

which is recited while the chazon chants Borchu,

should not be recited (at this stage of prayer),

since it is only a custom.

Also, if a person relieved himself

and washed his hands,

it appears to me

that he should not recite the blessing

"Who has made",

since he can recite it afterwards. (See also Law 8. The laws governing interruptions in the midst of Shema and its blessings will be explained in Ch. 16.)

14:2 (A person) should hold the two tzitzis that are in the front (of the tallis)

and recite "Blessed (be He) who said ...

while standing.

When he concludes reciting

"who is praised with (praise) songs",

he should kiss them and release them.

He should recite the entire "verses of praise"

patiently and pleasantly,

without hurrying.

He should be careful with each of the words,

as if he were counting money,

and should concentrate on the meaning of the words.

In particular, the verse

"You open Your hand ..."
should be recited with great concentration, (focusing on
the meaning of the words)
and, in one's thought,
praying for one's own sustenance
and the sustenance of the entire Jewish people.
If one had no awareness whatsoever (when reciting that
verse),
even after one has concluded,
one must go back
to recite it (again) with the proper attention.
[In the prayer Hodu,] between the word, "falsehood"
(elilim)
and the phrase "G-d made the heavens",
one should pause slightly
so that it does not seem
that (the 2nd phrase is connected) back to the 1st one.

14:3 A person should take care not to touch,
during the "verses of praise",
and even more so
after this and up to the end of the prayer,
any covered parts of his body
or the covered part of his head.
Similarly, the waste produced by the nose (mucus)
or the waste produced by the ears (wax),
it is forbidden to touch
unless one uses a handkerchief.
If he touches (any of the above) with his hands
he must wash his hands with water.
If he is in the midst of the Shemoneh Esreh
and it is impossible for him to move
and search for water,
it is sufficient for him to clean [his hands by wiping them
on] a shard
or rubbing them on the wall or the like.

14:4 "A Psalm of thanksgiving" [Psalm 100)
is recited while standing.
It should be recited with happiness,
for it was (instituted) in place of a thanksgiving offering.
Similarly, (the verses) from "And David blessed"
until "Thou art the Lord, the G-d", should be said while standing. Also, the song [sung at the Red Sea] should be recited while standing, with concentration and with happiness. Similarly, the blessing "Praised be thy name ..." (should be recited) while standing.

14:5 On Sabbaths and festivals, "A Psalm of thanksgiving" [Psalm 100] is not recited, because the thanksgiving offering was brought as a "voluntary offering," and we do not bring "oath offerings" (Nedarim) and "voluntary offerings" (Nedavos) on Sabbaths and festivals. Similarly, it is not recited on the Chol Hamo'ed days of Pesach, since a thanksgiving offering was not sacrificed then, because, together with the offering, one was required to bring ten loaves, which were "bread" (chometz). This psalm is also not recited on Pesach eve, [for such sacrifices were not offered then] out of fear that [the breads which were chometz] would not be eaten until the time that chometz became forbidden, and it would be necessary to burn them. Similarly, it is omitted on Yom Kippur eve. [These sacrifices were also not offered then,] for doing so minimizes the time in which they (the sacrifices) could be eaten and thus causes sacred meat to be disqualified (for consumption).

14:6 (The following rules apply to) a person who delayed coming to the synagogue until after the minyan had begun to pray, (to the extent that) were he to follow the regular order of prayers, he would not be able to recite the Shemoneh Esreh with them (the minyan). Since what is most essential is that he recite the Shemoneh Esreh with a minyan,
he is allowed to skip certain prayers, as will be explained:
The blessing "on the washing of the hands", the blessing for Torah study, and "the G-d of my soul" must always be recited before prayer (as explained in Ch. 7).

Therefore, if a person did not recite them at home, he must recite them in the synagogue, even though by doing so he will be too late to recite (the Shemoneh Esreh) with the minyan.

Similarly, the Shema and its blessings, in the morning service, must be recited before the Shemoneh Esreh; i.e. one must begin (to recite the prayers in order), (beginning from) the blessing "who formed light" and pray in order until after the Shemoneh Esreh without any interruption (in order to link together redemption to prayer, i.e. "who redeemed Israel", (directly before) the Shemoneh Esreh).

However, the other blessings and the entire order of the "verses of praise" (except for the blessings "Blessed (be He) who said ..." and "Praised be Thy name ...") can also be recited after the Shemonah Esreh.*

Therefore, if after reciting the three blessings mentioned above and putting on the tallis and tefillin, a person sees he does not have enough time left to be able to recite the Shemoneh Esreh with the minyan.

* { The Mishnoh Beruroh 52:5,6 states that it is preferable to pray without a minyan than to skip "Blessed (be He) who said ...", "Happy are they", and "Praised be Thy name ...". On Shabbos, the additional prayers beginning "The breath of every living thing" (Nishmas) should also be recited.}
unless he skips
and begins with the blessing "who formed light",
he should begin there.
If he has time to recite
both "Blessed (be He) who said ...",
and "A Psalm of David" until its conclusion
i.e "His holy name for ever and ever" [i.e. Ashrei],
and "Praised be Thy name ...", he should recite them.
Should he have further time,
he should also recite
(Psalm 150) "Praise ye the Lord, Praise ye G-d in his
sanctuary"
until "All that breathes shall praise the Lord. Praise ye the
Lord!".
If he has further time,
he should recite
(Psalm 148) "Praise ye the Lord! Praise ye the Lord from
the heavens ..."
Should he have still more time,
he should also recite the other Psalms that begin "Praise
ye the Lord."
If he has additional time,
he should also recite from
"And David blessed"
until "to thy glorious name".
If he has still additional time,
he should begin reciting "Give thanks"
and continue until "And he, being merciful",
and then skip from there until
the repetition of the latter verses before "Happy are they"
and start from there.
(Should a similar situation occur) with the extra psalms
(and verses) that are added,
on Sabbaths and festivals,
and a person lacks the time to recite them,
then those psalms and verses
which are recited every day,
should be given priority.
If there is additional time,
one should also recite
some of those (psalms) that are added.

It appears to me

that on the Sabbath and on Yom Kippur,

"A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath Day"

and the great Hallel

(i.e. "O give thanks to the Lord ..." [Psalm 136]).

to them precedence should be given.

On other festivals,

precedence should be given to the great Hallel alone.

Afterwards, (precedence should be given) to the psalm

"For the Chief Musician",

and "(A Psalm) of David, when he changed"

and "A prayer of Moses".

All these verses and Psalms

should be said before "Praised be thy name".

At the end of the service,

one should complete everything that he skipped.

However, "Blessed (be He) who said ..." and "Praised be Thy name ..."

should not be recited after the service.

If a person sees

that even if he begins

at the blessing "who formed light",

he will not be able to recite

the Shemoneh Esreh

together with the minyan

unless he rushes (his prayers),

it is preferable for him,

to pray by himself,

(reciting the entire service) in order and slowly,

and with proper concentration. (See Ch. 20:11, 20:12.)

14:8 A person who comes to the synagogue

after the congregation has already begun

to recite the "verses of praise"

and is lacking a tallis and tefillin,

but expects that they will be brought to him shortly,

may also recite

"verses of praise".

When they bring him,
a tallis and tefillin,
he should put them on after "Praised be Thy name ..."
and before the blessing "who formed light",
and recite the blessings for them.
If he fears
that while he (is busy) putting them on
he will miss out from reciting
the Shemoneh Esreh with the minyan,
he should skip from
the "And He being merciful" in "Give thanks to the Lord"
until the "And He being merciful" before "Happy are they";
alternatively, skip from "Thus the Lord saved.." [before the song of the Red Sea]
until "Praised be Thy name ...
and recite only the essential psalms,
as explained above,
so that will have the opportunity to put them on
after he says "Praised be Thy name ...
before the chazon recited Kaddish.
Laws Pertaining to Kaddish

15:1 After (the blessing) "Praised be Thy name...", the chazon should recite the half-Kaddish.

We may not recite Kaddish, "Bless ye the Lord", and Kedushoh, nor may we read the Torah unless ten adult males* are present.

If ten men are not present when (the congregation) recites "Praised be Thy name...", but rather (the quorum) is completed afterwards, the chazon should not recite Kaddish, because Kaddish is recited only after something (prayers) that were recited with ten (men).

* {The Shulchon Oruch (Orach Chayim 55:4) mentions the custom of counting a child as the tenth. The Ramah notes that some authorities allow a child to be counted only if he hold a Chumash in his hands. However, many of the later authorities rule against counting a child at all.}

Therefore, they (the congregation*) should wait before reciting "Praised be Thy name..." until ten come.

They can wait up to about half an hour, but they should not wait any longer.

Rather, they should recite "Praised be Thy name...", and then wait.

When the ten come (together), they should first recite some verses (from Psalms).

After they (have done this) the chazon recites the half-Kaddish.

* {The Mishnoh B'rurah 53:9 advises the congregation to recite "Praised be Thy name..." and the chazon alone to wait until the minyan arrives before continuing his prayers.}

15:2 (The term) "adult"
(refers to a child) who has gone through thirteen years (of life) and begun the fourteenth.

(We rely on the assumption that he has already "two hairs" (the halachic definition of physical maturity).)

For example, one who was born on Rosh Chodesh Nisan is not considered an adult until Rosh Chodesh Nisan - i.e., on the beginning of the night of Rosh Chodesh Nisan after thirteen years (of life) he becomes an adult.

One who was born in the month of Adar in a normal year, and when he becomes adult (on his thirteenth year) the year is a leap year, does not became an "adult" until (his birthday) in the second Adar.

In contrast, a person who was born in a leap year in the first month of Adar becomes an adult also in the first month of Adar (should he complete the thirteenth year of his life in a leap year).

However, if when he was born the year was a leap year and (the thirteenth year) when he became adult is a normal year, regardless of whether he was born in the first Adar or was born in the second Adar, he becomes adult on that day (his birthday) in the current month of Adar.

Thus, it may sometimes occur that a youth who was born before his friend may be later to becoming an adult than his friend who was born after him.

For example, (two babies) were born in a leap year: one on the twentieth of the first Adar,
the other on the tenth of the second Adar.
if the year of their Bar Mitzvoh
is a normal year, [the latter becomes an adult before the
former].

15:3 Care must be taken
not to take a head count of people
to see if there is a minyan.
It is forbidden to take a head count of Jews
even for the sake of a mitzvoh, [as implied by I Samuel
15:4]:
"and Saul gathered the people together and counted them
using goats."
It is customary to count them using the verse [Psalms
28:9]:
"Save Thy people...",
since it contains ten words.

15:4 All ten people must be
in the same place.
(among them the chazon)
However, if some are in one room
and others in a second room,*
they may not be counted together
even though
there is an open entrance between them.
Even if the majority (of the minyan)
are in the synagogue
and the minority are in the courtyard
before the synagogue,
they are not included together with the majority
to be counted with them.

* {However, if one room is divided with a curtain, the people standing on either side may be counted as
part of the minyan. Similarly, leniency can be observed to include people in two separate rooms if they
can see each other (Mishnoh Beruroh 55:48,49,57, Shulchon Oruch HoRav 55:16).}

Even those standing at the entrance
- i.e. within the doorway, but outside (the door)
in a place where if the door were closed,
they would be outside -
even though, at the moment, the door is open,
are, nevertheless, considered as being outside.
The above applies with regard to including them as part of the ten (required for a minyan).

However, if there were ten (within the synagogue) and they are reciting Kaddish, "Bless ye the Lord", or Kedushoh, anyone who hears their voices can respond (Amen) with them, even if they are separated by several houses, for even a barrier of iron cannot separate between Israel and their Father in heaven. (The above applies) provided that there is neither feces nor an idol (where one is standing).

15:5 One should take great care to hear kaddish and reply to it with proper concentration. This surely applies to Amen; "Let His great name..", where proper concentration is required. Whenever someone answers Amen; "Let His great name..", with all of his strength and concentration, seventy years' worth of severe heavenly decrees are nullified.

The above response should be recited in a loud voice, for this voice will break down all accusing forces and negate all harsh decrees. Nevertheless, it should not be given in a very loud voice, lest it cause other people to laugh and thus cause them to sin.

one should say Amen; "Let His great name..", together with the word, "Let be blessed". Afterwards, one hears the chazon (repeat this), and (it is customary to) answer "Amen."*

* {The Ramoh (Orach Chayim 56:2) states that it is customary not to recite "Amen" in this instance.}

15:6 Certain opinions maintain

that it is not necessary to stand while Kaddish (is being recited).

However, during every Kaddish which [follows a prayer that is recited while] standing - e.g., the Kaddish after Hallel - one should remain standing until after Amen; "Let His great name."

Other opinions maintain that it is always necessary to stand for Kaddish and all other holy matters. It is possible to support (the latter opinion) by comparison to Eglon, King of Moab. [Judges 3:20] relates how "Ehud came to him... and Ehud told him... I have a word of G-d for you, and [Eglon] arose from his throne."

If Eglon, the King of Moab, who was an idolater, rose for the word of G-d, surely, we, His people, (should do the same).

Therefore, it is proper to follow the more stringent view.*

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 56:8 relates that the Ari zal would stand for all the Kaddishim.}

15:7 If there are not nine (people) to respond to the chazon, he should not recite Kaddish at all, for all holy matters, should not be recited unless ten (people are present) - i.e., one (person) reciting and nine responding. Nevertheless, if one of the ten is reciting the Shemoneh Esreh, even though he cannot respond ("Amen") with the others, he may be included. The above also applies if two, three, or four [of the ten are reciting the Shemoneh Esreh].

As long as the majority of the minyan can answer, the minority's inability to respond "Amen" is not a disqualifying factor. (See also Ch. 20:2.*)

* {There it states that more severe laws apply to the recitation of the Shemoneh Esreh.}

If one of the ten is sleeping,

It is necessary to wake him,
for a sleeping person cannot be counted as one of ten. *

* {The Shulchon Oruch HoRav 55:8 also quotes this decision. However, the Mishnoh Beruroh 55:32 allows leniency in a difficult situation. }

**15:8** After the chazon concludes the half-Kaddish, he should recite in a loud voice "Bless ye the Lord who is ever blessed".
The congregation responds "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever".
The chazon then returns and also says (the same) "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever", and thus does not exclude himself from the others.

[It would be improper] for him to call them to bless G-d without reciting such a blessing himself.

Some follow the custom of responding "Amen" after the chazon.

However, the chazon should not respond (Amen) to the congregation.

If the chazon prolongs (his recitation of) "Bless ye the Lord" with melodies, the congregation recites (the additional prayer) Yisborach.

However, this prayer should be recited only while he is singing.

In contrast, while he is reciting the words, the congregation should not say anything, but rather should listen to what he is saying.

Even a person who did not hear the chazon recite "Bless ye the Lord", but did hear the congregation respond "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed...", may respond together with them.

**15:9** (Concerning) The Kedushoh in the blessing "who formed light", one should attempt to recite together with a minyan.

If that is impossible, it may be recited alone.*
If there are present in a synagogue, only the exact (number of people) for a minyan, it is forbidden for even one of them to leave. We apply to anyone who leaves the verse [Isaiah 1:28]: "Those who leave G-d may they be destroyed". However, if ten people will remain, the others may leave if they have already heard "Bless ye the Lord", Kedushoh, and the Kaddishim, including the Kaddish after Oleinu [in a previous minyan]. Even though [some of the people included in the quorum departed], so that ten (people) do not remain, it is still possible to complete without ten (as long as at least six remain) any stage of prayer begun with ten (people). For example, if the chazon has begun the repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh, [and some of the minyan leave,] he may conclude the entire Shemoneh Esreh, recite Kedushoh, and also recite "Our G-d and G-d of our fathers", "Bless us with the three-fold blessing" [which is in place of the blessing from the Cohenim]. However, the Cohenim themselves should not "spread their hands" (i.e. bless the congregation), and one does not recite the Kaddish after the Shemoneh Esreh, for these are considered as other matters.*

* {The Shulchon Oruch HoRav 55:4 and the Mishnoh Beruroh 55:18,19 allow the recitation of the full Kaddish. The fact that this Kaddish includes the request "Accept the prayers" demonstrates its connection to the Shemoneh Esreh.}

Similarly, if (a congregation) began reading the Torah with ten people and some left,
they may complete the (Torah) reading.

However, they should not add (to the number of aliys),

nor should they call someone as maftir,

Rather, the person who received the last alyah

should recite the haftorah without its blessings.

15:11 The chazon should be suited [for this responsibility],
as [Jeremiah 12:8] proclaims:
"It calls with its voice towards Me; therefore, I hated it,"

[Ta'anis 16b] states:
"this refers to a chazon who is not suitable and yet prays
before the ark."

What makes a (chazon) suitable ?

A person:

who is devoid of sin;

who has a pleasant reputation
- i.e.,

there were never attributed to him
defamatory traits even in his youth;

who is humble;

who is acceptable to the community,

so that they will agree to his praying on their behalf;

who has a pleasant and sweet voice
that arouse emotion;

and one who frequently studies the Torah,

prophets, and sacred writings,

so that the verses mentioned in the prayers

will be familiar to his lips.

If there cannot be found,
a person with all these qualities,

(the congregation) should choose the best person among

them

in (the areas) of wisdom and good deeds.

15:12 A person should not pray before the ark (i.e. act as the chazan)

if he is not acceptable to the congregation

and if he did pray without permission

causes arguments

and is haughty

and (the congregation) does not answer Amen after his blessings
as it says (Psalms 10:3):
"And the greedy wretch curses and renounces the Lord."

15:13 One should only appoint as a (permanent) hazon
one who has grown a beard
but on a temporary basis,
any one who is at least 13 years and one day old,
can lead the prayers (lit. go down before the ark).
16:1 (Concerning) the recitation of the Shema and the three blessings associated with it - i.e.,
"creator of light"
"with great love"
"true and firm"
(and also the evening service recitation of Shema and its blessings.)
(The laws pertaining to interruptions during these) are more stringent
than those concerning the "verses of praise".
This (block of prayers) is separated in sections;
the breaks between the sections are:
- between (the concluding blessing) "creator of the lights",
and (the start of the next blessing) "With great love";*
- between (the concluding blessing) "who chooses his people Israel in love",
and "Hear, O Israel";
- between "and on your gates"
and "And it shall come to pass, if you shall listen":
- between "above the earth"
and "And (the Lord) said".**

* {Since "creator of light" and "with great love" are described as the blessings of the Shema, some authorities forbid making an interruption between the conclusion of those blessings, "who chooses his people Israel in love", and "Hear, O Israel"; just as one is forbidden to make an interruption between the blessing for other mitzvos and fulfillment of the mitzvah.}

** {An interruption cannot be made between the conclusion of the paragraph of "And (the Lord) said" and the beginning of the following blessing "True and firm.", in order that we read the phrase, "G-d, Your Lord, is true," without a break, as explained in Law 5.}

16:2 At these dividing points,
it is permitted to respond "Amen"
to any blessing one hears.*
Surely,
one may respond to Kedushoh,
Kaddish, and "Bless ye the Lord".
However, "blessed be He and blessed be His name",
should not be said.

* {The Chayei Odom and the Shulchon Oruch HoRav 66:5 forbid reciting "Amen" to any blessing with
the exception of "the holy G-d", "who hearkens to prayer", the blessings recited when called to the Torah,
and the blessing which one has just recited - e.g., a person who concludes "creator of the lights" may
answer "Amen" if he hears a colleague conclude the same blessing.}

Similarly, if one hears
the congregation reciting the Shema,
one should not recite together with them.
the verse "Hear, O Israel".
Rather, one should say
one's own prayers
in a louder voice,
in the way that the congregation says (out aloud)
"Hear, O Israel"
to appear as if
one is reciting with them.

16:3 In the middle of these sections,
one should not respond "Amen"
except to the blessing "the holy G-d"
and to the blessing "who hearkens to prayer".
(In response) to Kaddish, one should say
Amen;
"Let His great name be blessed for ever and in all
eternity".*

When the chazon recites:
"which are said in the world, and say ye, Amen",
he should also respond "Amen."
However, "Amen" in other places,
he should not respond,
for these (responses) are not fundamental elements of the
Kaddish.

* {The Mogen Avrohom 66:6 and the Shulchon Oruch Horav ibid. advise adding the word "Let be
blessed".}

with regard to Kedushoh:
(for the introductory section), a person should remain
silent and listen
to the chazon,
and then respond with the congregation
"Holy, Holy, Holy"
"is the G-d of Hosts. The entire earth is filled with His glory."
Afterwards, he should remain silent (without reciting the passage recited by the chazon) and then respond together with the congregation,
"Blessed be the glory of G-d from His place."
He should not recite anything else, (for the other responses including "The Lord shall reign...")* are not essential elements of the Kedushoh.

* {In the pesokim which accompany his Siddur, Rav Shneur Zalman of Liadi also allows "The Lord shall reign..." to be recited.}

If one hears "Bless ye..."
either from the chazon or from one who was called to the Torah, one may respond "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever."
Similarly, one may respond "Amen" to the blessings (recited) by the one called to the Torah.
(if he hears) the congregation answer "We give thanks..."
he should also bow and recite "We give thanks to you",
but no more.
If he hears thunder, some authorities allow him to stop and recite the blessing ("Whose strength and power fill the world"), but others forbid it. *

* {The Shulchon Oruch HoRav 66:4 allows one to recite the blessing even in the midst of the sections. However, the Mishnoh Beruroh 66:19 also mentions a more stringent opinion which allows its recitation only between the various sections, but not in the midst of a section.

16:4 Regarding the interruptions which are allowed while in the midst of these sections: if one is reciting the blessings, one should try to plan the interruption to be made at a point which is the conclusion of a concept.
If one is in the midst of the Shema,
one should try to plan that the interruption
be made between verses.
If this is impossible,
one may make these interruptions
even in the middle of a verse.
(In such an instance), one begins again from the
beginning of the verse.

16:5 What we said
about being allowed to make an interruption in the
middle of a section
(only applies) to the specific things we mentioned
and does not apply to the verses "Hear O Israel!"
and "Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for
ever and ever".
In these (verses),
it is forbidden to make any interruption whatsoever,
Even when greeted by a king,
one should not interrupt to reply to him.*

* {For by reciting these verses, one accepts "the yoke of G-d's kingdom." The Shulchon Oruch 66:2 and
the later authorities allow a person to interrupt the recitation of these verses only if he feels that his life is
in danger.}

Between the (concluding verse), "I am the Lord your G-
d" and (the following blessing), "True", "and firm"
similarly, an interruption should never be made,
because this is a verse from the Bible (Jeremiah 10:10): "G-d, Your Lord, is true".
One does not stop between "your G-d"
and "True"
and one should be careful not to break
until one recites the word "firm".
(For "firm" also implies acceptance of the truth of the
matter.)
and after this he can break
as in other places in the middle of a verse
[ (In Talmudic times), it was allowed (to break) to greet
someone
and to respond to another's greeting.]
However, at present, [failure to respond to such a
greeting] is not serious.
So one should not make a break for this (to greet someone or to respond) even between the sections.

ואין להפסיק בו
אפילו בין הפרקים
Recitation of the Shema

17:1  

[The Torah requires that the Shema be recited within a specific time each day.] The beginning of the time to recite the Shema in the morning is the same as (the earliest) time (one may put on) tefillin ([when it is sufficiently light to enable one to recognize a colleague at a short distance as explained] above Ch. 10:2).

The time (for its recitation) extends until (the passage of) one fourth of the day.

whether the days are long (in summer) or short (as in winter).

(In this context), a day is considered as (lasting) from dawn until the appearance of the stars (at night).*

* {The Vilna Gaon and the Shulchon Oruch HoRav 443:4 subscribe to a more lenient opinion, which considers the day as the time between the appearance of the sun and sunset. According to this view, the latest time of the recitation of the Shema in the morning is approximately an hour after that prescribed by the opinion quoted by the Kitzer Shulchon Oruch.}

The most preferable way (to fulfilling) this mitzvoh is to recite it when the pious would (i.e., those who hold the mitzvos dear).

They would prepare to recite it (the Shema) shortly before the appearance of the sun, so that they could complete the recitation of the Shema and its blessings together with the appearance of the sun, and immediately proceed to recite the Shemoneh Esreh.

Whoever is able to pay attention and do so, will receive great reward.

However, at the very least, one should take care not to recite it after one fourth of the day has passed.
In particular, in the summer days,
when the day is very long.
In this country, at times, the latest time (for the recitation
of the Shema)
is as early as 7:00 a.m.*

* {A person who is unable to recite the entire prayer service in time to recite the Shema at the prescribed
time should recite the Shema before beginning his prayers. When he prays afterwards, he may,
nevertheless, recite the blessings for the Shema and the Shema within the prayer service. (See Ramoh,
Shulchon Oruch, Orach Chayim 58:4).}

Nevertheless,
if the above mentioned time passed (without one's
reciting the Shema),
it is permissible to recite the Shema
and its blessing
until one third of the day passes.
However, after the third of the day (has passed),
it is forbidden to recite the blessings (beyond this time)
rather, one should recite the Shema alone, [without the
blessings].
(The Shema itself) though, may be recited the entire day.
(Other authorities allow
that also the blessings
can be recited throughout the day.)

* { The Chasam Sofer and others allow one to recite the blessings until noon. The Mishnoh Beruroh (58;
Biur Halochoh) explains that if one was prevented from reciting the Shema on time by factors beyond
one's control, one may recite the blessings until noon.}

17:2  The Shema may be recited
whether sitting or standing.
If one was sitting,
it is forbidden to be strict
and rise (so as to say the Shema while standing).
It is forbidden to recite (the Shema)
while lying down.
A person who is already lying down
should turn himself to be on his side
and recite (the Shema).
If he is slightly sick
and it is difficult for him actually to lie on his side,
he is nevertheless obligated
to lean slightly to his side.
Before beginning (to recite the Shema),

one should have the intention of fulfilling the mitzvah

of reciting the Shema,

which we were commanded

by the Holy One, blessed be He.

When one recites Shema Yisroel,

one should concentrate on its meaning:

"Hear [i.e., comprehend] Israel,

that G-d is our Lord

and He is the One G-d,

single and unified in the heavens and the earth."

A person should prolong his pronunciation of the chet of

Echod

in order to pronounce G-d as king

in the heavens and the earth.*

One should also prolong the pronunciation of the dalet

slightly

the same amount

in order to allow one to meditate on how G-d

is One in His world

and the ruler within all four directions of the world.**

* {Since the chet, numerically equivalent to eight, is an allusion to the seven heavens and our physical earth.}

** {The dalet is numerically equal to four.}

However, one should not prolong the word any longer

than that.

Also, one should take care, one does not mispronounce

the word "One" (Echod),

due to that prolonging of the pronunciation.

Indeed, we find many of the common people

mispronouncing the term.

Some say

"eche'od"

and others

"edhoddeh".

It would be preferable for them not to prolong (their

pronunciation of the term)

rather than to prolong and mispronounce it as they do.

It is customary to recite

(the verse) "Hear, O Israel"
in a loud voice,
to arouse one's concentration.
A person should cover his eyes with his right hand [when reciting the verses "Hear, O Israel" and "Blessed be the name"].
After saying (the word) "One"
one should pause momentarily and recite
"Blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom for ever and ever"
(this verse is recited) silently
(Except on Yom Kippur).
In this (verse) as well, one should concentrate
on the meanings of the words.

17:4 One should pause slightly
and then, recite the passage "And you shall love..."
Between this passage
and the (following) passage,
"And it will come to pass if you heed...",
one should also pause.
Similarly, before beginning (the passage)
"And (G-d) spoke...",
one should pause.
When reciting that passage, one should have the intention
to fulfill the positive commandment
to remember the exodus from Egypt.

17:5 One must recite the Shema,
with great care about the exactness of one's pronunciation
using a Siddur which has been carefully checked.
One should listen (carefully)
to what one says aloud.
Care should be taken not to add
the dot (dagesh) in a letter unnecessarily,
nor to drop one (thus mispronouncing a word).
One should pause whenever
there is a line like this "|" marked (in the Siddur).
The above also applies in the Verses of Praise.
One should be careful about the accurate (pronunciation)
of these
and say clearly the ayin
in the word "swore" (nishba')
so that it should not sound like
he said "captured" (nishboh),
with a hey (being substituted for the ayin).
Similarly, with the zayin of "you may remember" (tzchury)
and of "and remember" (uz'chartem)
- and be very accurate (with the pronunciation)
so that it should not sound like
he said it as a sin.

17:6 One who is reciting the Shema [should not try to communicate without speaking]
- i.e., he should not wink with his eyes,
move his lips,
or gesture with his fingers.
However, for the sake of a mitzvah,
he may make gestures
from the second passage onwards.

17:7 Before reciting the Shema,
[in the blessing "With great love"] when saying
"and bring us [from the four corners of the world) ",
a person should take his tzitzis in his hand.
he should hold them, while reading Shema,
in his left hand,
between his forefinger and middle finger,
opposite his heart.
When he reaches the passage "And (G-d) spoke...",
the passage concerning tzitzis,
he should hold them in his right hand.
When he recites the verse "that you may look upon it",
he should place them on his eyes,
look at them and kiss them.
It is customary, every time one recites the word "tzitzis.",
to kiss them.
One should hold them until the phrase "and desirable for ever" in the blessing "True and firm",
when one should kiss them and release them.

17:8 When one concludes the Shema with the phrase "I am the Lord your G-d",
one should recite the word "True" immediately,
so that no interruption is made between them.
The chazon should do the same when he recites the Shema by himself and then, he should pronounce out loud - "The Lord your G-d is True".

All (the congregants) should concentrate on hearing these three words from the chazon, for these three words bring the total of the words in the Shema to 248, corresponding to the 248 limbs in the human (body).

Afterwards, one starts (the following blessing), "and firm",

but it is forbidden for them to recite "True" a second time.

A person who is praying alone should recite, before reciting the Shema, (the phrase) "G-d, faithful King", to complete, with these three words, the number of 248 words.

17:9 When a person makes an interruption in the midst of the recitation of the Shema (i.e., in the portions from Shema Yisroel until "off the land"*) due to circumstances that forced him to stop, for example, he had to go out to relieve himself or feces were found in the place (where he was praying) if he was forced to wait for the amount of time (long enough) so that he could have recited all the Shema he must return to the beginning of the Shema.

* {Other halachic authorities do not exclude the passage "And (G-d) spoke...".}

17:10 A person who already recited the Shema and enters a synagogue where he finds the congregation reciting the Shema, should recite together with them the entire Shema*, so that it does not appear that he does not desire to accept the yoke of heaven together with his colleagues.

He receives a reward as one who reads from the Torah.
* {Though it is preferable to recite the entire Shema, the Ramoh (Shulchon Oruch, Oruch Chayim 65:3) requires recitation of only the initial verse.}

The same applies to a person in the synagogue who is reciting prayers of supplication or other verses in a place where it is permitted to make an interruption. (If he is at a point (of the service) where he cannot make (an interruption) (then the laws about this) are explained above [Ch. 14:1; Ch. 16:2].)

If one has not yet recited the Shema, he should recite it with the congregation.

However, he should have the intention not to fulfill his obligation to recite the Shema, so that he may recite it later, together with its blessings.

(These principles apply) regarding all other prayers recited by the congregation - e.g., "A Psalm of David. Happy are they.." (Ashrei), and "Upon us", and the like.

Even liturgical chants should be recited with them, so that one does not separate oneself from the congregation.
18:1 The time in which we are commanded to recite the Shemoneh Esreh begins at the appearance of the sun, as [Psalms 72:5] states: "May they see You with the sun." Nevertheless, a person who recited (the Shemoneh Esreh) after dawn (and before the appearance of the sun) has fulfilled his obligation.

* {The Hebrew word "tefilloh" is generally translated as prayer. However, in halachic terminology, it specifically refers to the Shemoneh Esreh prayers. Accordingly, in this chapter (and throughout the text), when the meaning of the word is confined to that specific application, we have translated the term as "Shemoneh Esreh." When the concepts apply in particular to the Shemoneh Esreh, but can in a more total sense, be applied to the entire prayer service, we have translated the term as "prayer."}

The time (for its recitation) continues up to a third of the day.

It is forbidden to delay (one's prayers) any longer.

However, after the fact, if one transgressed and delayed one's prayers, even intentionally, one may recite the Shemoneh Esreh until noon.*

Though he does not receive the reward of one who prays the Shemoneh Esreh at the required time, he still receives reward for prayer.

* {According to the halachah noon is not necessarily exactly 12:00 AM. Rather it is the midpoint between sunrise and sunset. Thus, in daylight saving time, on the average, noon is 1:00 PM and not 12:00. Furthermore, depending on the time of year and latitude and longitude of a city, there may be certain other fluctuations of the exact hour of noon. For example, if the sun rises at 5:45 AM and sets at 5:45 PM, noon is 11:45 AM.}

If one intentionally transgressed and went past noon, and still did not pray, there is no way he can compensate for this act.
[Ecclesiastes 1:15] refers to such a deed as:
"the crookedness that cannot be made straight."
If he (did not recite the Shemoneh Esreh) by accident
or was prevented
(the laws) are explained in Ch. 21.

18:2 When a person reaches the words
"Praises to the most high G-d" [in the blessing "who
redeemed Israel"],
he should rise and prepare himself
for the Shemoneh Esreh prayers.
He should remove all spittle
and mucus (from his mouth),
and turn his attention from any matter that will disturb
his thoughts.
He should take three steps backwards
and recite from "Praises to the most high G-d"
it until "who redeemed Israel",
and then take three steps forward,
as one who approaches and comes close to the king.
He should not break between "who redeemed Israel"
and the Shemoneh Esreh,
even for Kaddish,
Kedushoh, and Borchu,
so that [the blessing for our] redemption is followed
directly
by the Shemoneh Esreh prayers.
One should plan to conclude
the blessing "who redeemed Israel"
together with the chazon.
Were a person to finish first,
before the chazon,
there would be a question whether he should respond
"Amen"
to the chazon's blessing or not.*
However, when he also (at the same time as the chazon)
finishes the blessing,
he surely need not recite "Amen"
for one does not recite "Amen"
after one's own blessings. (See Ch. 6:11.)
* {A person who completes his prayers before the chazon may respond "Amen" when he hears the conclusion of the blessing (Ramoh, Shulchon Oruch, Orach Chayim 66:7).}

In the evening service,
since the blessing before the Shemoneh Esreih does not conclude with "who redeemed Israel",
one is permitted to make all the interruptions allowed "between the sections" (see Ch. 16) at this time.
Before the Shemoneh Esreih,
one should recite the verse,
"G-d, open my lips..." (Psalms 51:17).
This (verse) is not considered an interruption since it is relevant to the prayers.
However, the verse (Deuteronomy 32:3)
"I will call forth the name of G-d..."
is not said (it is considered an interruption).
Hence, with (the Shemoneh Esreih) of musaf and minchah,
it should be recited before
"G-d, open my lips..."

18:3 A person who prays needs to be aware that the Divine Presence is before him, as [Eichah 2:19] states:
"Pour out your heart like water in the presence of G-d."
He should arouse his concentration and remove any thoughts that bother him, until his thoughts and his concentration are purified for prayer.
He should meditate on how, were he to be speaking before a human monarch, he would surely order his statements and concentrate upon them so as not to err.
Surely, this applies when standing before the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.
In His presence, one must concentrate his thoughts, for before G-d, blessed be He, thought is the same as speech and He probes all our thoughts.
Before prayer,
one should meditate on the exaltedness of G-d,
blessed be His name,
and the insignificance of man,
and remove (the desire for) all human pleasures from
one's heart.

18:4 A person who prays should concentrate in his heart
on the meaning of the words he recites,
as [Psalms 10:17] states:
"Direct their hearts,
Your ear shall hear."
Many siddurim have already been printed,
with translations of the prayers in Yiddish [the vernacular]
and thus, any person can learn
and understand what he is praying.
A person who cannot concentrate
on the meaning of the words (of prayer)
At the very least,
should think,
during prayer,
about matters that humble the heart
and direct his heart
to his Father in heaven,
and if an extraneous thought comes
during his prayers,
he should remain silent and wait
until the thought ceases.

18:5 He should position his feet one next to the other,
as if they are only one,
in order to resemble the angels
[concerning whom Ezekiel 1:7] states:
"And their feet were like a straight foot."
their feet appear to be as one foot)
He should bend his head slightly downward
and close his eyes,
so as not to look at any other matters.
If he prays from a siddur,
he should not remove his eyes from the siddur.
He should place his hands on his heart,  
and pray wholeheartedly, with awe, fear, and humility,  
like a poor man standing at the doorway (requesting charity).  
He should pronounce the words with care and concentration.  
Each person should pray according to his nusach,  
whether Ashkenaz, Sephard, or other,  
because the foundation of them all is in the peaks of holiness.  
However, he should not mix words (of prayers) from one nusach with those of another,  
because the words of each nusach are carefully counted in accordance with the mystical secrets [of the Kabbalah].  
One should not add to them or subtract (from them).

18:6 One should take care to pray in a hushed tone, so that only he can hear what he is saying, and a colleague standing near him should not hear, as [I Samuel 1:13] states in regard to Chana: "Only her lips were moving; however, her voice could not be heard."

18:7 A person should not support himself, even to a slight degree, (on any objects during the Shemoneh Esreh). If he is slightly ill, [leniency may be observed.] and he may pray while sitting or lying down, provided he can concentrate his attention.  
A person who is unable to recite his prayers verbally should at least think about them within his heart.

18:8 A person should hold nothing in his hands,
during the Shemoneh Esreh prayers, with the exception of a siddur or Machzor. He should first mark off the places which he needs to pray in the Siddur or Machzor, so that he will not have to search (for them) in the midst of his prayers. There should not be anything between himself and the wall, as [Isaiah 38:2] relates: "Hezekiah turned his face to the wall." Nevertheless, an object is not regarded as a separation unless it is at least ten handbreadths high and four handbreadths wide. A small object is not considered as a separation. Even a large object, if it is permanently fixed (in one place) - for example, a closet or cabinet - is not considered a separation. Another person (is also not considered) as a separation. If there is no easy alternative, one need not be strict with these matters, as long as one closes one's eyes or prays from a siddur, so that one's concentration will not be disturbed. One should not pray facing a picture. A person who happens to pray facing clothes or a tapestry should close his eyes. It is forbidden to pray facing a mirror, even when one's eyes are closed. A person should not pray in an open place, like a field. When he is in a private place, the awe of the King falls upon him. His heart is broken and he becomes humble. Nevertheless, while on a journey, it is permissible to pray in a field. However, if possible,
one should pray among the trees.

18:9 A person should not burp
or yawn (in the midst of the Shemoneh Esreh).
A burp is what sometimes
a person produces from inside the body out through his mouth
and expands because he is full
like the smell of food he has eaten
and some say that
his body and neck extend
because it is difficult (for him to stop it)
and a yawn is what opens his mouth
like one who wants to sleep
or is waking up from sleep.
If a person feels that it is necessary to do so,
against his will,
he should cover his mouth with his hands
so that its opening will not be seen.
Similarly, it is forbidden to spit.
If spittle comes to a person's mouth
and it upsets him to the extent
that his concentration on his prayers is disturbed,
he may release it into a handkerchief or a garment.
If that disgusts him,
he should lean to his left and spit behind himself.
If he cannot spit behind himself,
he should spit towards his left side.
If it is not possible to his left,
he should spit towards his right.
If a louse bites him,
he should cover (his hands) by his clothes,
in order to remove it
so that his attention will not be disturbed.
However, he should not remove it with his hands [and so need to wash them].
Should a person's tallis slip off him,
he may adjust it
even though the majority of the tallis has fallen.
However, if it has fallen off entirely,
it is forbidden to wrap oneself in it again, since that is considered as an interruption. If a holy text fell to the ground before him and this disturbs his concentration, he may pick it up between one blessing and another. All the acts forbidden during the Shemoneh Esreh remain forbidden until one takes (three) steps (backwards after the Shemoneh Esreh). (However, regarding making an interruption [to respond to other prayers], there are differing (opinions) as explained in Laws 14 [and15]).

18:10 A person must stand facing the direction of Eretz Yisroel, as [I King 8:48] states: "They will pray to You in the direction of their land." He should have the intention of facing Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Holy of Holies. Therefore, in our countries (i.e. Europe), which are to the west of Eretz Yisroel, we should stand facing east (not exactly to the east, rather to the southeast direction). Those who live to the north of Eretz Yisroel should face south; those to the east, west; and those to the south, north. Thus, all Jews direct their prayers to one place that is, to Jerusalem and the Holy of Holies, because this is the "gateway to heaven," since all prayers rise up in this direction. Therefore, the Temple is called "Talpios" as [Song of Songs 4:4] states: "Your neck is like the Tower of David, built as turrets (Talpios)."
A tower that all turn towards.

A person who prays in a place
where he cannot face
Eretz Yisroel
should direct his heart to his Father in Heaven,
as [I Kings 8:44] states:
"Pray to G-d."

A person who stood facing the north or south
and realized in the midst of the Shemoneh Esreh
that he is not standing properly
should not move his feet.
Rather, he should turn his face to the east.
And if this is impossible,
or if he is facing west (and so cannot face to the east),
he should conclude his prayers like this,
and direct his heart towards the Holy of Holies,
without moving his feet.

Similarly, if a person is praying in a place
where there are images (of false gods) to the east,
he should face another direction,
even if this is not to the east.

18:11 One must bend (the knee)
and bow
four times in the Shemoneh Esreh:
at the beginning and end of the first blessing,
in the blessing "We give thanks" at the beginning and end.

When a person recites "Blessed",
he should bend his knees,
and when he says "are you",
he should bow to the extent
that the vertebrae
of the spine protrude.
He should also bend his head.
Before he recites G-d's name,
he should return to an erect position slowly.
(This is alluded to by [Psalms 146:8]:
"G-d lifts up the bowed.")

Similarly, in "We give thanks",
one should bend (the knee), and bow,
and rise before reciting G-d's name.

A person should not bow too low
- i.e., he should not bow to the extent that his mouth
is opposite his belt
- because this is considered as proud behavior.

A sick or elderly person who suffers,
when bowing, pain
(bowing) his head is enough.

It is forbidden to add extra bows
in the other blessings,
neither at their beginning nor their conclusion.

18:12 After completing the Shemoneh Esreh,
one should recite
"O my G-d, guard my tongue..."

Before reciting the verse
"He who makes peace",
one bows and steps backwards three steps,
like a servant who departs from his master.
These steps should be medium-sized:
at least large enough
for the toe to be placed at the heel,
but neither should they be large steps.
One should not take more than three steps,
and should begin first with left foot,
then the right,
and then the left again.

While he is still bowing,
he should turn his face to the left,
which is to the right of G-d's Presence
(which is before him while he prays
and as he departs from prayer).

Then, he recites
"He who makes peace in his High heavens",
turns his face to the right
(the left of the Divine Presence)
and recites
"May He make peace for us".
He then bows directly in front of him
and recites
"and for all Israel, and say you, Amen".

Afterwards, he rises

and states:

"May it be Your will...that the Temple be rebuilt...",

because prayer was

(instituted) in place of the Temple services.

Therefore, we pray

that the Temple will be built,

so that we will be able to carry out the actual service

speedily, in our days.

The reason we step (backward)

with the left foot first

is that normally, when a person walks,

he lifts the right foot first.

Therefore, in this instance, we lift our left foot first,

to demonstrate that it is difficult for us

to depart from G-d, blessed be He.

Therefore, a left-handed (lit. footed) person

lifts up (what for him is) his left foot

which is actually the right foot.

18:13 At the place where he concludes his prayers,

a person should stand with his feet together

as in the Shemoneh Esreh.

He should not turn his face to the west

nor should he return to his place

until the chazon reaches Kedushoh.

A person praying alone

should also wait an equivalent amount of time.

If the place where one prays is crowded,

or the chazon recites hymns [before Kedushoh],

one may return (to one's place)

when the chazon begins his prayers.*

* {At the least, one must wait the amount of time acquired to walk four cubits (Shulchon Oruch HoRav 123:3, Mishnoh Beruroh 123:11).}

18:14 One who is reciting the Shemoneh Esreh [should not try

to communicate without speaking]

- i.e., he should not wink his eyes,

move his lips,

or gesture with his fingers
- nor may he make an interruption
  even to respond to Kaddish,
  Kedushoh, and Borchu.
  Rather, he should remain silent
  and concentrate his attention on what
  the chazon and the congregation are saying.
  This is considered as answering
  with regard to the fulfillment of his obligation [to respond],
  and yet it is not considered an interruption [to the Shemoneh Esreh].

18:15 However, the prayer "O my G-d, guard my tongue..." it is permitted to interrupt
  (to respond to) certain (prayers).
  (The same rules apply) as to interruptions "between the sections"
  in the blessings associated with the Shema
  and the reading of the Shema (itself) (as explained above, Ch. 16).

Nevertheless, if possible,
  one should first recite [the verse, Psalms 19:15,]
  "May it (the words of my mouth) be acceptable..."
  - and, if possible, step also three steps (back).
  Some follow the custom of reciting,
  directly after concluding (the blessing)
  "who blesses His people Israel with peace",
  the verse
  "May it (the words of my mouth) be acceptable..."
  Then, they recite
  "O my G-d, guard my tongue..."
  and then they recite a second time.
  "May it (the words of my mouth) be acceptable...".
  This custom is proper to follow.
  It appears to me that if this (practice is followed),
  one is permitted to stop in the midst of the prayer
  "O my G-d, guard my tongue..."
  to respond "Amen" at all times.
  Certain opinions suggest that before reciting
the verse "May it (the words of my mouth) be acceptable...",
it is desirable to recite a verse from the Bible or from the Prophets or the Writings that begins with the letter with which one's name begins and ends with the letter with which one's name ends.

It appears to me that those who recite "May it (the words of my mouth) be acceptable..." twice should say this verse only before the second "May it (the words of my mouth) be acceptable...".

18:16 As explained in Ch. 12:3,
a person who feels even the slightest need to use the toilet may not pray until he relieves himself.

In particular, this applies to the Shemoneh Esreh. A person may not stand in preparation for the Shemoneh Esreh if he feels any need, until he relieves himself. However, if at the outset he felt no need, and then, in the midst of the Shemoneh Esreh, felt the need to defecate, or urinate, he should try to contain himself until he completes the Shemoneh Esreh and not interrupt (the Shemoneh Esreh prayers), even if the need is great.

Rather, he should hold himself back as long as he can, and not stop to leave (to relieve himself) in the midst of his prayers until he completes (the blessing) "who blesses His people Israel with peace".

18:17 [The following rules apply when] a person feels that he is about to release gas and is unable to contain himself:

If he is praying at home,
he should step back four cubits or step to the side, release the gas, wait until the odor ceases, return to his place, and say the following prayer: "Master of the world, You have created us with numerous orifices and cavities. It is revealed and known before You our shame and embarrassment; shame and embarrassment during our lives, worms and maggots in our deaths". He should then complete his prayers. If he released gas against his will while standing in his place, or if he was praying (together) with the congregation and it would be embarrassing for him to move back, he does not have to leave his place. Similarly, he should not say (the prayer) "Master of the world..." Rather, he should wait until the odor ceases and then complete his prayers. If the person sitting is also involved in matters relevant to prayer, he may remain sitting. Other opinions show even greater leniency even if he is not involved in prayer, as long as he is studying Torah out loud, a person is not required to move away. A person who fears the word of G-d should not sit in front of a person reciting the Shemoneh Esreh, if the latter can see him.
This applies even if one is reciting the Shema. Nevertheless, if one sits to the back or side (of the person praying), there is no objection. One may stand near him in any direction, even in front of him.

18:19 If a person who remains sitting (near someone reciting the Shemoneh Esreh), is weak one should not rebuke him.

18:20 If the person sitting had been sitting previously, and then another came and rose to recite the Shemoneh Esreh at his side or in front of him, so that the seated person now finds himself behind him, he is not required to get up, since the second (person) has entered "his domain." However, if the person praying stood up to recite the Shemoneh Esreh behind him, causing the seated person to be sitting in front of him, he should be careful and rise. The above applies only when one is praying at home. However, if one is praying in a place set aside for communal prayer - how much more so in a synagogue which is set aside for anyone to pray - even if one had been sitting previously [and another began the Shemoneh Esreh], one must rise before him, since this place is designated for prayer.*

* {The Mishnah Beruroh 102:13 allows a person studying Torah to remain seated even under those circumstances.}

18:21 It is forbidden to pass within four cubits of a person reciting the Shemoneh Esreh. Therefore, when one has already completed the Shemoneh Esreh, and there is another colleague reciting the Shemoneh Esreh behind him...
who has not yet completed his prayers,
the former should not step backward three steps until the
latter completes his prayers.
Otherwise, he will be considered as one who passes in
front of someone praying.
To pass by his side,
and certainly behind, is permitted.

18:22 A drunk who (is so intoxicated) that he would not be able
to speak
before a great and important person
is forbidden to pray.
If he transgressed and did pray,
his prayer is considered an abomination,
and he must come back and pray again
after he becomes sober.
If the time for the Shemoneh Esreh passes,
he may compensate in the following prayer service,
As in the laws of one who inadvertently,
or because of forces beyond his control, (did not pray).
See further in Ch. 21.
Ch. 19:1 In the winter, (in the second blessing of the Shemoneh Esreh), we recite [praising G-d, who]
"causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall".
We begin (making this addition) during the musaf service of Shemini Atzeres. The sexton (Shamash) announces first (before the congregation starts the Shemoneh Esreh):
"causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall".
If he does not make this announcement, (the congregation) does not say this (phrase) during the (individual) quiet musaf prayers. A sick person who prays alone at home, and similarly, those who live in villages where there is no minyan, should wait to recite musaf until the time that musaf has definitely been recited in the cities. Then they should recite musaf, and say this (phrase).
This is recited until musaf of the first day of Pesach; i.e., the congregation and the chazon recite it still in the (individual) quiet Shemoneh Esreh. (When) the chazon repeats the Shemoneh Esreh (aloud), he does not recite it. The congregation also does not say it during the afternoon prayers, because they already know from the chazon that it is no longer said. Accordingly, someone who prays alone...
should pray early,
so that (his) musaf prayer (finishes) before the chazon has yet concluded reciting it ("causes the wind to blow...") in the cities, because someone who recites (musaf) after the chazon has already stopped saying it in musaf, should not say it ("causes the wind to blow...") any more. There are places where, in the summer, [instead of "causes the wind to blow..."] they recite "causes the wind to blow and the dew to fall" [praising G-d for granting us dew]. (In these places), the sexton announces this on the first day of Pesach. Then (the congregation) starts to say this also in the quiet (individual) musaf and stops saying "and the rain to fall".

19:2 [The following rules apply] should one err and omit "causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall": If he remembers before he says the (second Shemoneh Esreh) blessing "...revives the dead", he should recite it at the place where he remembered. However, he should take care not to interrupt a concept; for example, were he to remember after he recited "He fulfills His trust", he should continue and say "to those who sleep in the dust". Then he should say "causes the wind to blow..." and then continue the blessing "Who is like you...".*

* {If one remembers the omission of "causes the wind to blow..." after reciting the phrase "And you are faithful to revive the dead", he should recite "causes the wind to blow...", and then repeat the latter phrase (Mishnah Beruroh 114:29).}

(Alternatively), should he desire, he can say all of it, (both) "causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall", (and) "He sustains the living...". Should he fail to remember
until after he concluded  
the blessing "revives the dead",  
he needs to return  
to the beginning of the Shemoneh Esreh.*

(It is not sufficient to begin from (the second blessing)  
"You are mighty",  
since the first three blessings,  
are considered as one, in this regard,  
so if a person concluded a blessing improperly  
it is necessary to return to the start of the Shemoneh Esreh.)*

* {The Shulchon Oruch, Orach Chayim 114:6 states that even if a person has already concluded the blessing "revives the dead", as long as he has not begun the following blessing, "You are holy", he may recite "causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall". This prevents him from being forced to begin his prayers again. The Shulchon Oruch HoRav and Mishnoh Beruroh accept this decision.}

If one erred during the (first day) Pesach evening service,  
or the morning, or musaf services,  
and omitted this (phrase),  
he need not repeat (his prayers).

19:3 [The following rules apply] in the places  
where they say in the summer  
"causes the wind to blow and the dew to fall",  
if he erred and said (that phrase)  
in the winter as well [instead of "...and the rain to fall" as required]:

If he did not remember  
until after he had said (the concluding blessing)  
"Blessed are you, O Lord",  
he should continue "revives the dead".

He need not start again  
because he omitted the mention of rain,  
since he did mention dew.  
However, if he does remember  
before he mentions G-d's name,  
he should recite, at the conclusion of a concept,  
"the rain to fall".

19:4 [The following rules apply] should a person err, in the summer,  
and recite "causes the wind to blow..." :  
If he remembered before

concluding the blessing "revives the dead",
he should begin again "You are mighty...".
(This is not from the laws of repetition
rather that the blessing will be distinguished
as one in which is not recited
"causes the wind to blow...".)
However, if he remembered only
after he concluded (the blessing)
"revives the dead",
he must return to the beginning of Shemoneh Esreh.
If he recited only "wind to blow"
without concluding "and the rain to fall",
there is no difficulty,
and he may continue "sustains the living..."
If one erred in the evening or morning service
of Shemini Atzeres itself
and recited ["causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall"],
there is no need to start again.

19:5 We begin requesting
"dew and rain", [adding it to "Bless for us",]
from the evening service of the sixtieth day
after the fall equinox.*
This always falls on the fourth or
the fifth of December. **
We continue (making this addition) until Pesach.

* {The above applies only in the diaspora. In Eretz Yisroel, the request for rain is added from the seventh of Marcheshvan. A question exists regarding when those living in the southern hemisphere should request rain.}

** {From the year 1900 (until the year 2100), this day will fall on the fifth of December, except when the coming secular year will be a leap year. In that instance, it will fall on the sixth of December.}

19:6 [The following rules apply] should a person err
and fail to recite "and give dew and rain":
If he remembers before
he completes the blessing "blesses the years",
he should recite
"and give dew and rain for a blessing on the face of the earth"
(and continue) "and satisfy us..."
and conclude the blessing as usual.
If he remembers
after he concludes that blessing,*
he should continue praying
and in the blessing "Hear our voice",
after (reciting) "empty, do not send us away",
he should recite "and give dew and rain for a blessing"
(and then continue) "For You hearken to the prayer..." **

* {If one has not begun the blessing "Sound the great trumpet", one may still recite "and give dew and rain" and fulfill one's obligation.}

** {If one has not begun the blessing "Be pleased", one may still recite "and give dew and rain" and fulfill one's obligation (Shulchon Oruch, Orach Chayim 117:5).}

However, if one did not recall
until one finished
the blessing "who hearkens to prayer",
one must return and begin again
(from the blessing) "Bless for us...".

If one did not remember
until after reciting
the verse
"Let be acceptable..." [at the conclusion of the Shemoneh Esreh],
one must start the Shemoneh Esreh again.

19:7 If one erred in the summer
and recited "and give dew and rain",
he should begin again from "Bless for us".
A person who did not remember
until after reciting [at the end of the Shemoneh Esreh]
the verse "Let be acceptable"
must recite the entire Shemoneh Esreh again.

19:8 [The following rules apply] if one is not sure
whether he said "causes the wind to blow..." or not:
If this occurs after more than thirty days
and thus he has already recited (the prayer) 90 times,
properly
we can assume that also, now,
he recited it properly as he was accustomed.
However, within the (first) 30 days, he must pray again.
Similarly, in regard to "and give dew and rain",
if the doubt arose after one had already recited 90 prayers properly,
we can rely on the assumption that also now the person prayed correctly.
However, before (the establishment) of this (pattern) he is required to repeat the Shemoneh Esreh.*

* {According to the Mishnah Berurah (114:37), everything depends on the number of days and not the number of prayers. Therefore, though in 30 days one will have recited "causes the wind to blow" more than 90 times (because of the musaf prayers of the Sabbath), the number of days is not reduced. Conversely, though in 30 days one will recite "and give dew and rain" fewer than 90 times (since that prayer is omitted on the Sabbath, 30 days are sufficient.)

19:9 A person erred in the evening service of the first night of Pesach, and began reciting a weekday Shemoneh Esreh, and remembered after starting (the blessing) "Bless for us".
The law is that he must conclude that same blessing (as explained in Ch. 76).
(In this event), he should not recite "and give rain and dew",
because also the congregation does not recite it (on that day).
If the question arises (on the day one starts requesting (dew) "and give rain and dew") on the Sabbath, and a person erred and recited the weekday Shemoneh Esreh and also began (the blessing) "Bless for us", he should not recite "and give rain and dew".
(This decision was reached) because the congregation had not as yet started (that prayer), and an individual follows always after the congregation.
19:10 {On Rosh Chodesh and Chol Hamo'ed, the prayer "Let ascend and come..." is added in the blessing "Be pleased".}

Should a person forget (the prayer) "Let ascend and come"
in the Rosh Chodesh morning or afternoon service
or in the Chol Hamo'ed morning service
or in the afternoon, or evening services:
If he remembered before reciting
"Let be acceptable" [at the end of the Shemoneh Esreh],
he must begin (his prayers) again from "Be pleased".
This applies even if the remembered,
before he began "(We) give thanks".
Since he concluded the blessing,
"who restores His divine presence to Zion",
he must return to "Be pleased"
(as mentioned before regarding "the wind to blow"). *

* {As long as one has not begun "(We) give thanks", one may recite "Let ascend and come" even though one has concluded the previous blessing.}

If he remembered before reciting the blessing
"who restores his divine presence to Zion",
he may recite it at that point,
and then conclude
"And let our eyes behold..."
If he did not remember
until after reciting
"Let be acceptable" [at the end of the Shemoneh Esreh],
he returns to the beginning of the Shemoneh Esreh.

On Rosh Chodesh if he forgets
"Let ascend and come" in the evening service,
whether this occurs on a two day New Moon
or a one day only,
because he recites
"Blessed are You, O G-d..."
and so recites G-d's name,
he need not return [to this addition];
rather, he concludes (this blessing)
"who restores His divine presence to Zion"
and finishes his prayers.
The reason for this is...
because they did not declare the new month at night.

19:11 A person who forgot, at Rosh Chodesh or Chol Hamo'ed "Let ascend and come" in the morning service, even if he does not remember until after he recited the musaf service (in which he mentioned Rosh Chodesh or Chol Hamo'ed) in any case, he must go back and (again) recite the morning service. If the time (for the morning service) has passed, he must compensate for it in the afternoon service (as explained in Ch. 21:4. See also Ch. 20:10).

19:12 Whenever, a person needs to return (and repeat) the Shemoneh Esreh, he must wait (the time it takes) to walk four cubits (before he begins again).

19:13 A chazon who erred in the quiet (individual) Shemoneh Esreh need not recite this prayer a second time, because of "troubling the congregation" (causing them to wait unnecessarily).

Rather, he may rely that he will pray correctly during his recitation (of the Shemoneh Esreh) out loud. (Therefore, after the repetition he recites the passage "O my G-d, guard..." and take three steps back.) However, if he made a mistake in the first three blessings and remembered before he completed his prayers, at a point where if he returned it would not be "troubling the congregation", he should repeat his prayers.*

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 126:17 brings a more lenient opinion, which does not require the chazon to repeat his prayers at all.}
19:14 On a fast day, whether it is a public fast or an individual (private) fast, One adds in the afternoon service in the blessing "Hear our voice" (the prayer) "Answer us".
When one gets to (the phrase) "in all times of trouble and distress", one concludes (in the regular text) "For You hearken...".
A person who forgot to recite "Answer us" and did not recall until after he recited G-d's name in the blessing "who hearkens to prayer" should not recite it until he concludes the entire Shemoneh Esreh.
Then, after (he recites the prayer) "O my G-d, guard...", and before he moves his feet (to leave his place of prayer), he should recite (the "Answer us..." prayer) until (the phrase) "in all times of trouble and distress". Then he recites the verse "Let be acceptable...".
If he did not remember until after he leaves his place of prayer, he should not recite it all all.
The Chazon's Repetition

20:1 When the chazon steps back
after completing his quiet (individual) prayers,
he should stand still
for the amount of time (it takes a person) to walk four
cubits.
Then he returns to his place,
recites quietly
"G-d, open my lips..."
and starts (reciting) aloud
"Blessed are you..."
At this time, everyone should remain quiet
and listen carefully,
concentrating on what he is saying.
They should respond
"Blessed is He and blessed is His name"
and "Amen" to each blessing,
as it is fitting.
It is even forbidden to study
during the chazon's repetition of the Shemoneh Esreha.
Needless to say,
one must be careful not to indulge in idle talk.
If it is easy for him to do so, [during the chazon's
repetition of the Shemoneh Esreha],
a person should stand
as if he himself is reciting
the Shemoneh Esreha.
He should keep his eyes closed
or follow in the Siddur,
to what the chazon is saying.
There are some who, after Kedusho,
remove the tefillin of Rashi (the normal ones we use),
and returns to his place,
at this time, everyone should remain quiet
and listen carefully,
concentrating on what he is saying.
They should respond
"Blessed is He and blessed is His name"
and "Amen" to each blessing,
as it is fitting.
It is even forbidden to study
during the chazon's repetition of the Shemoneh Esreha.
Needless to say,
one must be careful not to indulge in idle talk.
If it is easy for him to do so, [during the chazon's
repetition of the Shemoneh Esreha],
a person should stand
as if he himself is reciting
the Shemoneh Esreha.
He should keep his eyes closed
or follow in the Siddur,
to what the chazon is saying.
There are some who, after Kedusho,
remove the tefillin of Rashi (the normal ones we use),
in order to put on those of Rabben Tam (the grandson of Rashi, who proscribed a different arrangement of the parchments).

This practice is not in accordance with the law.

20:2 In the chazon's repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh, since the chazon has already recited (the Shemoneh Esreh) by himself quietly, and does not repeat those prayers (for his own benefit) only for the benefit of those listening. Accordingly, there must be at least nine people listening (to his blessings) and responding (Amen to them). Otherwise, his blessings are considered as "an empty blessing" (having no purpose). (Thus, this law does not resemble Ch. 15:7.)

Therefore, if there are only ten people in the minyan, one must be careful to see that the chazon does not begin the repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh until everyone has concluded their prayers, so they can all respond to him.*

* {If there is a question whether all nine can answer or not, it is customary for the chazon to repeat the Shemoneh Esreh on the condition that, were there to be fewer people answering than required, his prayer is to be considered tefillas n’dovoh, a prayer offered as a N’davoh - gift. (See Mishnoh Beruroh 124:19.)}

20:3 The chazon should take care, after completing one blessing, not to begin the next blessing until after the majority of the congregation have recited "Amen".

If he began the next blessing immediately afterwards - e.g., he completed "the shield of Abraham" and started immediately "You are mighty" - since if he begins to say "You are mighty", (the congregation) can no longer recite "Amen". And the punishment for the cancellation of "Amen" will be on him.
20:4 During (the recitation of) Kedushoh, everyone should take care to position his feet so that both are together so they appear as one foot (as it is written: "After their feet were like a straight foot." [See Ch. 18:5.])

When reciting the verse "Holy, holy, holy" and also "Blessed is the glory...", and "(The Lord) shall reign...", one should lift up (on the toes) one's body and heels. It is customary to raise one's eyes upward. It is desirable that they (one's eyes) be shut.

20:5 When the chazon reaches (the blessing) "(We) give thanks", the entire congregation bows and recites the "(We) give thanks" prayer instituted by the Rabbis. (It is customary to recite this prayer) entirely while bowed.*

* {There are other customs which require one to rise after reciting G-d's name. (See Shulchon Oruch HoRav 127:1, Mishnoh Beruroh 127:5.)}

[When] a person is reciting quietly the Shemoneh Esreh and hears the chazon recite "(We) give thanks". If he is in the midst of a blessing, he should also bow. If, however, he is at the beginning of a blessing, or the end of a blessing, he should not bow, because it is forbidden to add bows at the beginning of a blessing or the end of a blessing (except) in those places (where bowing was) ordained by our Sages, "of blessed memory".

20:6 Before reciting (the blessing) "Bestow peace", (the chazon) says (the additional prayer) "Our G-d and G-d of our fathers" [which has the priestly blessings]. When he recites [at the end of the 1st blessing] "and keep you", ...
the congregation should respond
"So may it be willed",
and not 'Amen.'
Also when saying [at the end of the 2nd and 3rd blessings]
"and be gracious unto you"
and "peace".*

* {In Eretz Yisroel, it is customary for the Kohen to recite the priestly blessings each day, as will be explained in Ch. 100.}

This (prayer) is not said
except in the morning and musaf services,
but not in the afternoon service.
Nevertheless, on a public fast day,
when we also say, during the afternoon service,
(the blessing) "Bestow peace",
the chazon also recites
"Our G-d and G-d of our fathers".
This (prayer) is not recited
in the house of a mourner
or in the morning service on Tisha B'av (because all are like mourners).

20:7 After the chazon completes (the repetition of) the Shemoneh Esreh,
he should quietly recite (the verse)
"Let be acceptable..."
However, he need not take three steps backward
for he may rely on the three steps
he takes at the end of the complete Kaddish.

20:8 During a public (communal) fast,
when there are ten* (people) in the synagogue who are fasting
- and intend to complete their fast
- the chazon recites
in the morning and afternoon services (the blessing)
"Answer us"
before [the blessing] "Heal us".

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 566:14 allows "Answer us" to be recited if there are only seven people fasting, provided there are three others who are prevented from fasting due to sickness.}

[The following rules apply] should he err
and omit (this blessing):
If he remembers before mentioning G-d's name in the blessing "who heals the sick...", he should return and recite both "Answer us" and "Heal us". However, if he does not remember until after mentioning G-d's name, he should complete the blessing "who heals the sick of his people Israel" and recite "Answer us" in the blessing "who hearkens unto prayer". and conclude "who hearkens unto prayer" like an individual does [when reciting "Answer us"].

If he forgot (and did not recite it) there also, he should recite it after the conclusion of the Shemoneh Esreh, without concluding (with a blessing).

The Shemoneh Esreh should not be repeated out loud unless there are at least six men, the majority of a minyan, who have just completed their prayers. but if there are not six men, who have just completed their prayers, one does not repeat the whole of the Shemoneh Esreh out loud rather (everyone should pray as individuals with this difference);

One person [who has not yet recited Shemoneh Esreh], should recite until (the blessing) "the holy G-d" out loud (instead of quietly), and Kedushoh should be recited, then he should conclude his prayers quietly.

Wherever an individual must repeat his prayers because of an error, The same rules apply to a chazon, in the repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh, if he makes an error. he must also repeat his prayers. The only exception is in the morning service.
of Rosh Chodesh
or Chol Hamo'ed,
where, if he (the chazon) forgot
and omitted "Let ascend and come"
and did not remember
until he completed his prayers,
he is not required to repeat (the Shemoneh Esreh)
because of "troubling the congregation".
Rather, we rely on his mention [of these special days)
in the musaf prayers.
However, if he remembers
before he completes his prayers,
he returns to "Be pleased",
and this is not considered as "troubling the congregation".

20:11 A person is obligated
to recite Kedushah together with the congregation.
Similarly, (he is obligated to recite) "Amen"
after (the blessing) "the holy G-d"
and after "who hearkens unto prayer",
he is also obligated (in other places)
such as the Kedusha,
and also the Kaddishim
recited by the chazon
he is obligated to respond to them.
Similarly, at "(We) give thanks",
one is obligated to bow
together with the congregation.*

* {Similarly, one is obligated to respond to Borchu.}
Accordingly, if he was late,
in coming to the synagogue
too late to be able to
pray together with the congregation,
and he is forced to pray alone.
provided the hour is not late,*
he should take care
not to recite the Shemoneh Esreh
at a time when he will be prevented
from responding to the above.
Rather, he should wait,
until he responds (to these prayers),
and then recite the Shemoneh Esreh.

* {Regarding Kedushoh, the Misgeres Hashulchon also mentions the alternative of reciting the Shemoneh Esreh at the same time as the chazon, and then reciting Kedushoh together with him and the congregation.}

Nevertheless, he should not wait
between (the blessing) "the redeemer of Israel"
and the beginning of the Shemoneh Esreh,
because the two must be recited linked
without an interruption between them.
Therefore, he should pause
before (the phrase) "a new song". (See also Ch. 69:7.)

20:12 Should a person reciting the Shemoneh Esreh alone
conclude (the blessing) "who revives the dead"
when the congregation recites
the Kedushoh in (the prayer) "And there shall come to Zion",
or the Kedushoh in "who formed light",
he should not recite
Kedushoh together with them,
for these Kedushos are not on the same level (as those of
the Shemoneh Esreh).
However, if the congregation is reciting
the Kedushoh of the musaf prayers,
even though he
is reciting the Shemoneh Esreh of the morning service,
he may answer together with them
"Holy, ...".
The converse also applies,
since the Kedushoh of the morning service
and that of the musaf service
are on the same level.
As already explained (in Ch. 18),

(1) (one who delayed) until the time for prayer has passed

purposely

can never compensate (for this).

However, if it happened because he forgot,

or by forces beyond his control,

was prevented from praying,

or made an error in his prayers,

which requires him to repeat

the Shemoneh Esreh [but it's too late],

he may compensate [with a second Shemoneh Esreh],

after completing the Shemoneh Esreh

of the following service.

He should first recite

the prayer appropriate for the time he is praying,

and then

the prayer for which he is compensating.

For example,

a person who did not recite the morning service

when the time for the afternoon service arrives,

should first pray,

Shemoneh Esreh of the afternoon service

and then recite Tachanun.

Immediately, afterwards,

he should recite "Happy (are they)"

and then recite the Shemoneh Esreh again,

to compensate for the morning service.

If a person did not recite the afternoon service,

he should recite the evening service,
wait only the amount of time it takes to walk four cubits,
and not recite "Happy (are they)",
but, immediately recite
another Shemoneh Esreh
to compensate for the afternoon service.
If a person did not recite the evening service,
then, after the Shemoneh Esreh of the morning service,
he should recite Tachanun,
then "Happy (are they)",
and then recite the Shemoneh Esreh a second time,
to compensate for the evening service.
Afterwards, he should recite
(Psalms 49) "For the Chief Musician"
and (then) "And there shall come to Zion..."
it is forbidden to eat [like before the morning service]
until after reciting also this Shemoneh Esreh,
which compensates for the evening service.

21:2
If the Shemoneh Esreh was not said (in time),
even though he had the opportunity to pray,
because he thought
that he would still have time to do so
after he completed the activity
with which he was involved.
In the meantime,
the time (for prayer) passed.
Similarly,
a person who was preoccupied
with financial dealings
so that he would not suffer a loss,
and for this reason
did not pray during proper time.
Even though it is forbidden
to overlook the time for prayer
because of financial loss (or other mundane matters),
in any event (for cases)
of forces beyond his control,
he may compensate (for prayers he failed to recite).
Similarly,
a person who was so intoxicated
that he was not in a fit state to pray.
is also considered
as one prevented by forces beyond his control.
This applies even though
he began to drink when it was forbidden to do so,
after the time for prayer had already arrived.

21:3
There is no compensation
for a prayer [that was not recited in its proper time]
except in the service that follows.
However,
if one delays any longer,
it is impossible to compensate.
For example,
a person who failed to recite both the morning
and afternoon services,
he can compensate for the afternoon service
in the evening service which follows.
However,
he can no longer compensate for the morning service,
since two prayer times passed,
(during which) he did not pray
at the correct time,
and neither (after) the afternoon prayer time.*

* {The Shulchon Oruch HoRav 108:9 and the Mishnoh Beruroh 108,19 explain that except on Sabbath
and festivals, it is proper to recite an additional Shemoneh Esreh as compensation. However, one should
add a new request, in addition to the normal text of the Shemoneh Esreh in that prayer. One should make
the following stipulation: If it is possible to compensate for a missed prayer after one service has passed,
this Shemoneh Esreh should be considered as intended for that purpose. If that is not possible, this
Shemoneh Esreh should be considered as a prayer offered as a gift.}

21:4
Even on a day with musaf service,
if one failed to recite the morning service,
one may compensate for it after the afternoon service.
(Since the time for the musaf service
extends until night, if necessary,
like the afternoon service
so it is not regarded as though there has passed
the time for two services.)
However, after the musaf service,
he is not able to compensate for
the morning service [by reciting the musaf again].
(Since it mentions
the sacrifices [offered after the daily morning service],
of musaf,
it is not an appropriate
substitute for the morning service.)

Nevertheless,
if the time for the morning service has not passed,
he may recite the morning service,
even though one has recited the musaf service.

21:5 There is no compensation for a Shemoneh Esreh which
was not recited
except during the time of the following prayer service,
but not during a time which is not a time of prayer.
For example,
a person who waited a long time
after reciting the service
which he was obligated at that time,
can not add another prayer,
to compensate for that he omitted.*

*{For example, a person failed to recite the morning service, and later recited the afternoon service in its
proper time. After he waited an hour, he desired to compensate for the morning service which he omitted.
This is not allowed even though the sun has not set and, thus the time for the afternoon service has not
passed.}

Because [the Sages] did not decree
compensation for a prayer one omitted
except at the time
of a currently obligatory prayer service.
While one is involved in prayer,
one may also compensate
for what he missed out.*

* {The Mishnok Beruroh 108:15 allows one to compensate for the omitted prayer in such circumstances.}

21:6 The compensating Shemoneh Esreh
which a person recites,
must be recited
like the one he would have then said,
as he was obliged to recite.
For example,
a person who did not recite the afternoon service
before Shabbos (Friday afternoon)
should recite two evening Shemoneh Esreh
for the Sabbath.
Even though the second one is to compensate for a weekly service, however, because it is already the Sabbath, he recites the Sabbath prayers. If he recited the weekday Shemoneh Esreh, he must pray again. *

* {This decision follows the Shulchon Oruch HoRav 108:14. However, the Mishnoh Beruroh 108:25 considers one free from any further obligations.}

Similarly, on the day before Rosh Chodesh, if he omitted the afternoon service, he says two evening Shemoneh Esreh, reciting the prayer "Let ascend and come" both times. Similarly, if he omitted the evening service on Rosh Chodesh he says two Shemoneh Esreh in the morning service. Should he forget "Let ascend and come" even in the second (of those prayers), he must repeat the Shemoneh Esreh again.

(Even though this is compensation for the evening, and (this omission) would not require one to repeat, in any case, at present it is day (and one must repeat).)*

* {In this instance, as well, the Mishnoh Beruroh allows for leniency and does not require the repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh.}

If a person omitted the afternoon prayers on the Sabbath, he should recite during the evening service, two weekday (Shemoneh Esreh). Nevertheless, there is a difference with "You have favoured us" [which takes out Sabbath]. In the first (Shemoneh Esreh), one recites "You have favoured us", but in the second it is not said. The reason for this (difference) is that "You have favoured us" is considered like the Havdoloh (prayer), and one should not make Havdoloh twice in one's prayer's.
The converse is also true.

If one forgot the Saturday night evening service
(on Sunday) two morning services are said.
one says in the Shemoneh Esreh
that compensates (for the evening),
"You have favoured us"
the principle of these laws,
he needs to make Havdalah in this prayer.*

* {In contrast to the Shulchan Oruch HoRav 294:2, the Mishnoh Beruroh 108:33 does not require one to mention "You have favoured us" in one's prayers if one has already recited Havdalah. Rav Chaim Soloveitchik explains that even though the second prayer is compensation for the evening service, one should say "You have favoured us" in the first Shemoneh Esreh, since the obligation is to recite this prayer in the first Shemoneh Esreh one prays after the passage of the Sabbath.}

21:7 One erred in the Rosh Chodesh afternoon service
and failed to recite "Let ascend and come",
when the following day is not Rosh Chodesh,
and then even if
he recites two evening Shemoneh Esrehs,
he will gain nothing (by this recitation).
Since (in this service) he can no longer recite
"Let ascend and come",
and without "Let ascend and come",
he has already recited (the Shemoneh Esreh)
and so he should not recite
the (second) compensatory (prayer) at all.*

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh (108:18) suggests reciting a second Shemoneh Esreh as described before)

21:8 (The time for) the musaf service
is the entire day (until evening).
Accordingly,
the evening service
follows it [for compensation for musaf if omitted].
Nevertheless,
the law is that) there is no compensation
at night (for the musaf service).
As the musaf offerings
were instituted (instead of the musaf offerings),
[Hos. 14:3:] "[prayer of] our lips take the place of bulls."
Hence, if its time has passed,
its sacrifice (in the temple) was no longer acceptable (and so the same applies to the musaf prayers which replaced the actual sacrifices of temple times).

21:9 A person who was required to recite two morning Shemoneh Esreh or two afternoon services, [as compensation,]
if he is also the chazon, he fulfills his obligation when he repeats the Shemoneh Esreh out loud.

21:10 (In the case of) a person who is unsure whether or not he recited the Shemoneh Esreh, in our times, (as additional] prayers are not recited as "gifts") (the rule is) he does not repeat his prayers.*

* {The Shulchon Oruch HoRav 107:1 and the Mishnoh Beruroh 107:2 do not accept this decision.}
Ch. 22 Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Linear Translation by Yona Newman© 1999-2001

Laws Pertaining to Tachanun

1. After the Shemoneh Esreh, one says (prayers of supplication) "Tachanun" while "falling [i.e., leaning downward] on one's face;" [i.e., covering one's face with one's arm]. It is improper to talk about mundane matters between the Shemoneh Esreh and Tachanun.

2. In the morning service, as there are tefillin on his left (arm), one leans to the right out of respect for the tefillin. In the afternoon service, one leans to one's left.

3. One should lean and cover one's face while seated. However, under difficult circumstances, one may do so while standing. After Tachanun, we say "And we do not know". We should (start) saying this while seated, and then we should stand, and say "what to do,...".

4. One does not "fall on one's face;" except in a place where there is a Torah scroll. In a place where there is no Torah scroll, even though there are other sacred texts, one need not "fall on one's face." * Rather, one says the psalm without "falling on one's face."

* Rather, one says the psalm without "falling on one's face.

Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Linear Translation by Yona Newman© 1999-2001 Hebrew/English Main Text Hebrew Main Text English Main Text Previous Next Help Index Home
(Nevertheless), when one prays
in the courtyard of the synagogue
and the entrance to the synagogue is open,
it is considered as if
a Torah scroll was there.

* {The Mishneth Berurah 131:11 mentions opinions which require "falling on one's face" in the presence of sacred texts even though a Torah scroll is not present}

22:5 When praying in the house of a mourner,
or in the home of the deceased,
even when no mourner is present,
Tachanun is not said
(throughout the entire) seven days of mourning.
This applies even during the afternoon service
of the seventh day.
It is customary that also
when they return to their homes [after services there],
they do not say it (Tachanun).
If a mourner is in the synagogue,
the congregation does not follow him;
and they do say Tachanun.
Nevertheless, the mourner
does not say (Tachanun).

22:6 Tachanun is not said in a synagogue
where a bris will be.
Or, if the father (of the child),
or the sandek,
or the mohel
are praying there,
(Tachanun is omitted) even if the bris
will be in another place.
If the afternoon service is recited,
in the house of the child (to be circumcised),
either before the meal
or during the meal,
one does not say (Tachanun).
However, if those prayers are recited
following the grace after meals,
(Tachanun) should be said.
Nevertheless, the child's father,
the sandek,
and the mohel
should not say (Tachanun)
even after the grace after meals,
for the day is like a festival for them.

22:7 Also (Tachanun) is not said
if a groom is in the synagogue
on any of the seven days after the wedding,
if the groom was a bachelor
or the bride was a virgin (i.e. not married before).
However, if a widower marries a widow,
he has only three days
and after that one says (Tachanun).
(If the groom is in the synagogue) on the day
of the wedding,
one says (Tachanun) in the morning service,*
but on the afternoon service before the wedding
it is not said.

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 131:21 mentions opinions which state that Tachanun should be omitted in the
morning service as well.}

22:8 One does not say Tachanun
neither on Rosh Chodesh,
nor on the 15th of Av,
nor on the 15th of Shevat,
nor during Chanukah,
nor on both days of Purim [i.e., incl. Shushan Purim],
nor on both days of Purim Katan,
nor on Lag B'Omer,
nor during the entire month of Nisan,
nor on Tisha B'Av,
nor on the days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos,
nor from Rosh Chodesh Sivan
until after the day following Shavuos,*
and not on the day following Sukkos.**
On all these (days Tachanun) is not said
also in the Mincha service which precedes them.

* {In many communities, Tachanun is not recited until the thirteenth of Sivan.}
** {In many communities, after Yom Kippur, Tachanun is not recited during all the remaining days of the
month of Tishrei.}

However, on the day before Rosh Hashanah
and the day before Yom Kippur,
(it) is said in the afternoon service before them.
On the day before Rosh Hashanah,
Selichos are also said (before the morning service)
However, afterwards, (Tachanun) is not said.

22:9  Mondays and Thursdays
are "days of favor,"
for during the forty days
associated with receiving the second tablets,
Moses ascended [Mt. Sinai] on a Thursday
and descended on a Monday.
Therefore, we increase on these (days),
the prayers of supplication,
saying before Tachanun
(the prayers beginning) "And He, being merciful".
These are said standing.
They should be said with concentration
and deliberately,
in a manner of supplication.
On the days when Tachanun is not said,
these (prayers) are not said.

22:10  After Tachanun,
one says the half-Kaddish.
On Mondays and Thursdays,
one also says
"O G-d, slow of anger"
while standing. (see Ch. 25:2 for when this is omitted).

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Reading the Torah

23:1 When the Torah scroll is removed from the ark and carried to the platform on which it is read, it should be carried on the northern side (of the synagogue) - i.e., to the right side of the person carrying it. When it is returned to the ark, it should be carried on the south side (of the synagogue). The Torah scroll should be carried in one's right hand. It is a mitzvah for all those whom the Torah scroll passes to accompany it to the platform (on which it is read).

23:2 A person called to receive an aliyah, should wrap himself in a tallis with fringes. (See Ch. 9:11.) He should go up (to the reading platform) by the shortest path (possible), and return (to his place) via the longer way. If both ways are the same distance, he should go up (to the platform) on his right, and to his left when descending. Customarily, he waits (next to the platform on which the Torah is read) until the person receiving the following aliyah completes the final blessing (after reading). Then he descends.
between the two men (the last and the next aliya).
[Before saying the blessing] he opens the Torah scroll, and sees from which place will be the reading, holds the scroll open* with both hands (see the following law), closes his eyes, and says "Bless ye the Lord, who is ever blessed". He should say (it) out loud so that all the congregation will hear and respond "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever".

* {In some communities, it is customary to recite this blessing while the Torah scroll is closed.}

If the congregation did not hear the person making the blessing, even if they heard the reader answer, they should not respond together with him. Rather, after the reader completes (this response), they should answer "Amen." *

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 57:1 writes that this is a very common mistake. Thus, those who recite "Bless you" in a low tone are responsible for causing the public to err. However, if "Bless you" is recited loud enough for ten people to hear, the entire congregation may respond: "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever" even though they did not hear "Bless you" themselves (Biur Halachah).}

After the congregation responds "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever", the person receiving the aliyah should repeat the same (response) (See Ch. 15:10)

"Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever", and say the blessing "who has chosen us ..."
The congregation responds "Amen."

He removes his left hand and holds the Torah scroll during the reading with his right hand alone. As the reader reads the passage (out loud), he should read together with him quietly. The reader should not begin to read until after the "Amen"
by the congregation.
The entire congregation should concentrate and listen attentively to the Torah reading.
When the reading is completed, again the person receiving the aliyah takes (the Torah scroll) with his left hand as well, rolls it (closed), and says the final blessing.

23:4 One may not hold the Torah scroll itself with bare (hands).
Rather, one should hold it with (one's hands wrapped in) the tallis or by its handles.
Others follow the stringency that also its handles they do not hold with bare (hands) rather, with the tallis (wrapped around their hands).

23:5 The one who goes up (to the Torah) and the reader must stand (while the Torah is being read).
Even to lean against a support is forbidden.
Because, they must stand in awe.
Just as the Torah was given in (an atmosphere of) awe, so, too, we must treat it with reverence.
Nevertheless, a weak person may lean slightly on a support.

23:6 While the person receiving the aliyah says "Bless ye ..." and the congregation responds "Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever", 
the entire congregation should stand.

However, while he says the blessing "who has chosen us ...", and also during the reading, and during the final blessing, the congregation is not required to stand. Those who observe the mitzvos precisely are stringent on themselves and stand.

It is proper (to follow this practice). However, between one aliyah and the next, there is no need to be stringent (by standing).

23:7 If the reader himself receives an aliyah, another person should stand next to him.

Just as the Torah was given using an intermediary (Moses, our teacher, may he be in peace), so we should relate to it with an intermediary.*

* {Generally, it is customary for a person to stand at either side of the Torah platform. Thus, there are at least three people on the platform: the reader, one person to his right, and one to his left (Mishnoh Beruroh 141:16).}

23:8 Once the reader begins to read (the Torah), the congregation is forbidden to talk, even concerning Torah subjects. This applies even between one aliyah and another. (Similarly,) it is forbidden to leave the synagogue, while the Torah is being read.*

Nevertheless, between one aliyah and the next, while the Torah is rolled (closed), a person may leave for a matter of great necessity.

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 146:1 writes that this applies even though one has already heard the Torah reading and a quorum is present to hear the Torah reading at present.}
23:9 If a kohen is present in the synagogue, he must be called first. This applies even if he is an unlearned person. As long as he is a proper person, he is given precedence even over a Torah Sage. and even if the kohen desires to forego (this honor) he is not allowed to. After the Kohen, a Levi is called. If a Levi is not present, the same Kohen is called (to the Torah) (again) in his place, (the gabbai) announcing, "in place of a Levi". If there is no Kohen (present) in the synagogue, they call in his place either a Levi or a Yisroel. They should call the Torah scholar of the greatest stature who is present there. (The gabbai) declares: "If no kohen is present" "let-----, the levi, take the place of the Kohen" or "let-----, the Yisroel, take the place of the cohen". If a Yisroel was called in the place of the Kohen, a Levi may not be called after him. A community made up entirely of Kohanim or Levi'im should consult a Rabbinic Sage regarding how they should behave.

23:10 If a kohen is in the middle of reading the Shema, or the blessings associated with that prayer, and how much more so if he is in the midst of the Shomeleh Esreh,
even if there is no other kohen,
he should not be called (to the Torah),
nor should the congregation wait for him,
because of the inconvenience it will cause.
Rather, they call instead,
a Levi or Yisroel.
(Under such circumstances, the gabbai) should not say:
"If no Kohen is present".
Rather, he should merely declare:
"Let----, the Levi", or "----, the Yisroel"
"take the place of the Kohen".
If, by mistake,
(the Kohen) was called (at such a stage of prayer, then:)
If he is in the midst of reciting the Shema
or its blessings,
he may accept the aliyah and recite the blessings.
However, he should not read together with the reader,
but merely listen.
In any event, if it is possible,
he should complete the part
which he is in the middle of,
and thus pause between one topic and the next,
before he goes up.
If he is in the midst of the Shemoneh Esreh,
even if he is called,
he should not accept the aliyah.
The same (law) applies between "who redeemed ..."
and the Shemoneh Esreh,
he should not accept the aliyah.
But in the prayer, (at the end of the Shemoneh Esreh),
"O my G-d, guard ..."
he may accept the aliyah.
If he is in the midst of "(the) Verses of Praise",
and there is no Kohen other than him,
Even for the first (aliyah),
he should be called (to the Torah).
However, he should not read
together with the reader.
If there is another (Kohen),
...
he should not be called
first.
The same principles apply to a Levi.*

* {The same principles also apply with regard to a Yisroel (Mishnoh Beruroh 66:26).

23:11 If a kohen was called (to the Torah),
or Levi
and he is not present (in the synagogue),
another person should not be called
by name (to replace him),
lest they say
about the first that he was unfit (to go up).
Rather, simply ask the other person
to accept the aliyah
and he goes up [without having his name announced].
Nevertheless, the son of the person (originally called)
may be called to the Torah by name.
Since this does not (cause anyone to think)
the father is unfit,
for if the father was unfit,
the son would also be unfit.
Similarly, if (the reason) the Kohen
or the Levi
can not accept the aliyah,
because they were in the midst of the Shemoneh Esreh,
another person may be called to the Torah by name,
because everyone can see
that he did not accept the aliyah
because he was unable to do so.
If a Yisroel was called to the Torah,
and was not present,
another person may be called (in his place) by name,
for with regard to a Yisroel,
there is no concept of unfit (to go up).
Similarly, if they called up a Kohen
or Levi as acharon
or maftir
on a Sabbath, or festival,
and he was not present,
another person may be called in his place by name.
23:12 If no Kohen was present in the synagogue; or (a Kohen) was present, but they did not know of him, and a Yisroel was called in his place, and went up. Even if (the Yisroel) has said "Bless ye the Lord, who is ever blessed", but he has not yet begun the blessing "who has chosen us ...", and the Kohen arrived or others became aware of his presence, the Kohen is called and goes up. and he also recites "Bless ye...". The Yisroel, so that he will not be embarrassed, remains standing there (next to the Torah platform) until the aliyot of the Kohen and the Levi are completed, and then he is called to the Torah. Nevertheless, if the Yisroel has already said G-d's name in the blessing (before the Torah) - i.e., he had already recited "Blessed art Thou, O Lord", the aliyah is not given to the Kohen. The same principles apply if a Levi was called (to the Torah) instead of a Kohen and the Kohen arrived before the Levi recited "Blessed art Thou, O Lord": the Kohen is given the aliyah and the Levi waits and is called after him. Similar principles apply if a Levi was not present or others were unaware of his presence and the Kohen was called.
in the place of the Levi.
If then the Levi arrived
before the Kohen recited
"Blessed art Thou, O Lord",
the Levi is called (to the aliya)
and goes up.

23:13 We do not call (to the Torah)
two brothers,
in succession,
whether paternal brothers
or maternal brothers,
Similarly, a father and son
or grandson
should not be called (to the Torah) one after the other.
because of "the evil eye."
(They apply) even if they (these individuals) say
that they do not care;
and even when one is called as the acharon
and one as the maftir.
The latter point applies only on a Sabbath,
when a second Torah scroll is not taken out
for maftir.
However, when a second Torah scroll is taken out
for maftir (on festivals or on special Sabbaths),
it is permitted (to call them in succession).
Similarly, if the maftir
is not yet bar-mitzvah,
it is permissible.
In all the above cases,
if one was called (to the Torah)
and already went up,
he should not descend.
Two brothers,
that are only maternal
and (similarly) a grandfather and his grandson,
if called (in succession),
even if they have not already gone up,
can accept it.
If circumstances require,
permission may be granted (to call such individuals) 
even at first, 
to be called (to the Torah) one after another.

23:14 A person who received an aliyah 
in one synagogue, 
and afterwards happened to be 
in a second synagogue 
and was called (to the Torah) again, 
even (if he was called) to the (same) portion 
to which he was called previously 
may go up this second time 
and recite the blessings.

23:15 On a public fast day, 
when we read [Ex. 32:11-14; 34:-10]: "And (Moses) besought..." 
We only call to the Torah 
those who are fasting. 
If there is no other Kohen 
except one who is not fasting 
or who does not intend to complete (the fast), 
then we call a Yisroel 
or a Levi in his place. 
However, it is preferable that then the Kohen leave 
the synagogue. 
If another Kohen (who is fasting) is present, 
he (the first Kohen) need not leave, 
but he should inform them 
not to call him. 
Even if they call him, 
he should not accept the aliyah. 
If it (the fast) is on a Monday or Thursday, 
even though 
one reads "And (Moses) besought...", 
in any event, because 
this is a day 
on which the Torah is (normally) read, 
accordingly, after the event, 
if he did not leave 
the synagogue.
and was called (to the Torah),
he may accept the aliyah.

23:16 Similarly,
a person who lives in Eretz Yisroel,
where the festivals are (celebrated)
for only one day
with the exception of Rosh Hashana,
and visits the Diaspora,
if he attends the synagogue
on the second day of a festival,
he should not be called
to the Torah.
The law (is),
as given,
in the preceding law.

23:17 It is customary to give blind people aliyas.
Even though
verses of scripture
may not be recited by heart,
in any event, at present,
since the reader reads in place of him (the one called up)
it is permitted (for the blind person to receive an aliyah).
(Furthermore), it is customary
not to check
whether he is learned
or an unlearned person.
Rather, we assume
that he can follow
the reader.

23:18 If the person called to the Torah was shown
the (wrong) passage
and then said the blessing
and afterwards (the reader) realised
that this was not the (right) place,
but from another place
they should be reading.
Whether he already began to read
or still had not started.
If the place where the reading should be,
is open before him (the person who received the aliya)
even if it (the correct passage)
is in a different column (from that he was shown).
and was further on than the place shown to him,
he does not have to say a second blessing.
We may presume that he was mindful
of the place where he blessed
and everything else onwards from where he was shown.
If the proper place was not open before him
rather it was necessary to roll
the Torah scroll (further to reach that point;*)
or even if the proper place was open before him,
but it was located before
the place which he was shown,**
he must say again the blessing,
"who has chosen us ...".
Nevertheless, "Bless ye..." is not repeated.

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 140:9 mentions other opinions which maintain that even if it is necessary to roll
the Torah scroll to reach the proper place, as long as it is in the same portion, another blessing need not be
recited. The Mishnoh Beruroh does not subscribe to that opinion.}

** {As long as the proper place is open before the person reciting the blessing, whether before or after the
place he was shown, a second blessing is not required (Mishnoh Beruroh ibid.).}

He should first say
"Blessed be the Lord who is blessed for ever and ever",
on the first blessing
that he recited in vain.
(If the error was discovered) after he had only said
just "Blessed art Thou, O Lord",
he should end [then look at the proper place and bless]:
"who taught us your laws".
If the place where he should read
is before the place he was shown,
but close to it
such that (the reader) can read to him
- also three verses
from the place where he blessed and beyond -
provided that all (he reads)
are in the same weekly passage,
he should do so,
and should not say a second blessing.
23:19 Each person called (to the Torah) needs to read at least three verses.

On Mondays, Thursdays, and during the afternoon service on Shabbos, we need to read for everyone (the three people called up) at least ten verses.

One reads for the third (aliyah) four verses.

After the fact, if we only read for all of them just nine verses, three for each one, the obligation is fulfilled.

On Purim, we only read for all of them just nine verses, that's sufficient, for this (represents) the conclusion of the subject.

23:20 The reader of the Torah should not conclude at a place where there does not remain from there up to the (next) portion (section) that is either open (marked in our Chumashim with a peh) or closed (marked in our Chumashim with a samech) at least three verses.

if (the person who received the aliyah) had already recited the (final) blessing, after he concluded with less than three verses to (the beginning) of the passage for the next aliyah (the reader) need not start from the previous verse (to make three verses], but just begin from the place where the first one concluded, and read with him three more verses in the following section.

If a section has in it
only two verses,
one may stop in between them.
If a section is divided
in the midst of a verse,
as is found in the beginning of "Pinchas",
one may stop
even at the previous verse.

23:21 Similarly,
(the reader) should not start (a new aliyah) within less
than three verses
after the beginning of a section.
Therefore, (the reading for) the previous (aliyah),
should not be concluded within less than three verses
after the start of (a new) section.

23:22 (The reader) should always try to begin
with a subject of positive (impact) on the Jews,
and end
with a subject of positive (impact) on the Jews.
Similarly, he should not conclude (an aliyah)
with (the narrative) of one who did an evil deed.

23:23 If one read for someone
only two verses,
and he said the final blessing
the reading must be repeated
and he must say both the blessings before
and after (the Torah reading).
Also, since after the final blessing (the first time),
he surely was distracted,
and so he must start also with "Bless ye".
(The reader) reads (again) the two verses
that he read previously
and at least one more verse.
If this occurred
for (the person given) the third (aliyah),
(and the previous two
were read only three verses each)
one needs to read two additional verses,
so that all together are
four verses (each).
Should this happen with a Kohen
- i.e. that only two verses were read
and the Levi was already called
- and they realized [the error] only afterwards,
the following laws apply:
If the Levi has not yet said
the first blessing
- even if he had already said "Bless ye...",
for that is not considered the beginning of a blessing
- the Kohen should return,
and three verses are read with the blessings,
as explained.
The Levi should wait
and be given the following aliyah.
However, if the Levi has already said the blessing,
the reading is done for the Levi,
from the place where the Kohen stopped.
(For if they read for the Levi,
what was already read for the Kohen,
it would appear as an affront to the kohanim
that are present,
since it would be said
that first a Levi
was called to the Torah.)
After the Levi's aliyah,
two Yisr'elim should be called,
so that there will be three people called (to the Torah),
since the Kohen is not counted
(because only two verses were read for him).
If the above situation occurred regarding a Levi
- i.e. only two verses were read for him
and the Yisroel (after him) had already said the blessing
- they read for the Yisroel
the two verses already read for the Levi
and one additional verse.
Afterwards, another Yisroel should be called,
in order to complete the (required number of) three aliyaot.
If a Kohen was not present
in the synagogue,
and a Yisroel was called in his place,
and it happened that
ythey only read for him
two verses,
and it was not noted
until after
they called the second Yisroel
and he said the blessing [on the Torah].
The (reader) should begin for the second Yisroel
from the start of the Torah portion.
(Afterwards), the first Yisroel
should wait
and read after him,
and, following him,
another, Yisroel should be called (to the Torah).

23:24 A minor should not be the reader (of the Torah),
nor should he be given an aliyah. (See Ch. 79:9).

23:25 After the Torah reading is completed,
half-Kaddish is said,
and then the Torah is lifted up.
The person lifting up should open the Torah
so that three columns
of script can be seen.
He should show it to (the people on) his right,
his left,
in front of him,
and behind him,
for it is a Mitzvah for everyone
to see the actual writing.
They say
"This is the Torah...".
(Afterwards) the Torah is rolled (closed).
We are commanded to roll it
so that the seam
is between the two rolls.
It should be rolled
so that the closest seam
is in the middle.
If the seam before (the passage recited)
is closest, it should be rolled to that point.

If the seam following (the passage read) is closest, it should be rolled toward there, for it is preferable to minimize the rolling, in deference to the Torah.

23:26 Whenever the Torah is read, the half-Kaddish is said afterwards, except for (the reading) of Shabbos afternoon or for a fast day afternoon service.

Then we rely on the Kaddish said before the Torah is rolled to that point.

23:27 On Mondays and Thursdays, the chazon says, after the Torah is lifted up, (the prayer) "May it be Your will...". The congregation should listen and say "Amen."

(On the days) when Tachanun is omitted "May it be Your will..." is not recited.

23:28 Afterwards, the Torah scroll is returned to the ark. It is a mitzvah for anyone whom the Torah is carried past, and also for the person who lifted up (the Torah), and the one who rolled it, to accompany it to before the ark.

23:29 In a place where there is no Torah scroll, one person should read (the portion), from a chumash, out loud.* The congregation should listen, so that they will not forget the practice of reading the Torah.

* The practice of reading the Torah out loud is optional. It is preferred to read it out loud, but it is not necessary.
* {No blessing is recited (Mishnoh Beruroh 143:9).}

23:30 If ten people who are praying without a scroll to read from, one should not bring for them a Torah scroll for the sake of reading from it. This applies even if they are confined in a prison.*

or even on (holidays, such as) Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. However, if one prepares one or two days in advance, an ark or closet as a fixed place for the Torah scroll, this is permitted.

* {The Mishnoh Beruroh 145:47 allows a Torah scroll to be brought to ten people who are imprisoned, or ten sick people confined to the same place.}

For an important person who is sick, one may bring (a Torah scroll) even if this is only in order to be read. Some opinions say that (bringing a Torah scroll) for an important person even if he is not sick, or for a sick person even if he is not an important person, is permitted.

One should be lenient (and allow the scroll to be brought) on the Sabbath [with the mitzvah to destroy Amalek] of the portion "Zachor" and "Parah" [purification with the ashes of a red cow], because, according to many opinions, they are mitzvahs from the Torah.