Topics in Folklore and Minhagim

I. Prayer
   a. Preparation and Conduct
   b. Tzitzis
   c. Tefillin
   d. Reading the Shema
   e. Shacharis
   f. Birkat Kohanim
   g. Tchanun
   h. Minchah and ma’ariv

II. Divine Dwellings
   a. Mezuzah
   b. The shul
   c. Kriat Torah
   d. Haftarah
   e. Torah study

III. Blessings
   a. Birkas ha-Mazon
   b. Sefiras ha-Omer
   c. Birkas ha-Gomel
   d. Birchos ha-Nehenin

IV. Shabbos
   a.Preparing for Shabbos
   b. Shabbos Evening prayer
   c. Schaharit
d. Minchah

e. Shelosh Seudoth

f. Motza’ei shabbos

g. Shabbos ha-Gadol

h. Special Sabbaths

V. Hagim


VI. Yamim Noraim

a. Eluls and yemai ha-teshvah

b. Rosh Hashanah

c. Yom Kippur

d. Between YK and Sukkot

VII. Fasts and Days of Mourning

a. Before Tishah b’av

b. Tishah b’Av

c. Public fast days

d. Other fasts

VIII. Time to Rejoice

a. Bris Milah

b. Naming a child

c. Pidyon ha-Ben

d. Bar Mitzvah

e. Chasan and Kallah

IX. Time to Mourn

a. Burial
b. Shivah

c. Sheloshim

d. Year (11 months) of mourning

e. Yahrtzeit

X. Miscellany: Aphorisms and Addenda and Minhagim

Chill’s abridged anthology on the Minhagim is organized with the following scope

I. Synagogue

a. Mishkan

b. Beth HaMikdash

c. Great Synagogue

d. Mishmarot and Ma’amadot

e. Bet Knesset, Shule, Bet ha-Midrash

II. Tallit and Tzitzit

a. Tallit gado and tallit katan

b. Attaching the tzitzit to the talit

c. Which garment needs tzizit

d. Borrowed Tallit

e. Threading tzitzit into tallit

f. Tzizit as remembrance via knots of TARYAG ha-mitzvot

g. Blue threat

h. The attarah

i. How to wear Tallit

j. Wearing tallit after getting married according to Ashkenaz

III. Tefillin
a. Tefillah shel Yad
b. Tefillah shel Rosh
c. Making tefillin
d. Two types of Shins amongst Ashkenaz vs. Sephardim, LiShekar ayn raglayim!
e. Parchment in the bayit
f. Retzuot
g. Rabbeinu Tam tefillin
h. Which is more important: tefillin, tallit, mezuzah
i. Blessing over tefillin
j. Winding strap 7 times around arm, 3 times around middle finger
k. Removing tefillin
l. Correct time to wear tefillin and times not to be worn

IV. Keriat Shema
a. Why cover eyes when recite shema
b. Why does shema contain 248 words
c. Reciting shema in tongues other than Hebrew
d. Why benediction is not recited before reading of shema

V. Shemoneh Esreh
a. Ramban vs. Ramban controversy
b. Prohibition of eating and drinking before morning prayer
c. Why composed
d. Standing upright facing Jerusalem
e. The sequence
f. Why recited silently
g. Bending of knees
Taking 3 steps backward in presence of royalty

3 daily prayers corresponding to 3 daily Korbanot and 3 patriarchs

Eloki Netzor

VI. Birkhat Kohanim

a. Why remove shoes before ascend dukhan
b. Disfigured kohanim disqualified
c. Birkat Kohanim daily in Israel
d. Raising of hands
e. Dictating words of the Kohanim, what if reader is a kohen?
f. What if congregation of all kohanim
g. Prohibition to look at kohanim giving blessing
h. Thanking the kohanim

VII. Tahanun

a. Prostrate position (nefilat appayim)
b. Head resting on arm: right or left/
c. Not recited in Maarive
d. Occasions when not recited

VIII. Kriat Torah

a. Ezra ordinances
b. Number of men called up
c. Torah reading on Shabbos minchah
d. Haftorah reading
e. Armaic translation by miturkiman
f. Rules concerning sefer torah, washing hands
g. Order of being called up to torah, what if no kohen or levi present
h. Relatives not be called up in succession
i. 3 men at bima next to torah during keriat ha-torah
j. Holding stave of torah scroll
k. Blessing before and after each aliyah
l. Hagbahah and Gelihah, differences between Ashkenazie and Sephardic

IX. Ein K-Elohenu
a. Concluding morning service, why with reciting pittum ha-ketoret preceeded by Ein K-Elohem, reason; why in Ashkenazi synagogues Ein K-Elohenu and Pittum ha-ketoret said only on Shabatot and Hagim

X. Meals
a. Netilat Yadayim
b. Ha-motzi
c. Salt, bimalakh timalekh
d. Mayim aharonim
e. Birkhat ha-Mazon, why tap table for instance?
f. Kos
g. Zimmer
h. Removing knives from the table
i. Reason leave bread or crumbs on table
j. Women and Birkat Ha-mazon

XI. Mezuzah
a. Production
b. Kabbalistic inscriptions on outside
c. Procedure of affixing
d. Ten conditions making its affixing obligatory
e. Examination of the mezuzah
XII. Shabbat
   a. Forbidden categories of work
   b. Sabbath siren
   c. Hadlikat ha-nerot
   d. Blessing children
   e. Shir Hashirim
   f. Kabbalat Shabbat
   g. Lekhah dodi
   h. Maariv, amidah of 7 benedictions instead of 19
   i. Kiddush, minhag to hold cup in palm or stemmed cos?
   j. Kiddush in synagogue
   k. Shalom Alekhem
   l. Lehem mishneh (2 loaves)
   m. Why Shabbat loaf called hallah
   n. Hallot between 2 clothes
   o. 12 loaves of the Kabbalists
   p. Eating fish, dag biyom dag
   q. Shalosh Seudot
   r. Havadalah, flame of a torch, besamim, departing of the neshamah eterah, mystical aspects
   s. Glancing at fingernails by light of havadalah torch
   t. Songs honoring eliyahu ha-navi
   u. Malaveh malkah- King david's meal

XIII. Rosh Hodesh
   a. Lunar calendar
   b. New moon testimony
c. Fixing the calendar

d. Announcing new moon

e. Erev Rosh Hodesh as YK katan

f. Rosh hodesh as womens’ holiday

g. Half hallah

h. Extra month in leap year

i. Reappearance of moon as sign of attonement

j. Kiddush levanah symbolism

XIV. Pesah

a. Shemurah matzot vs. matzah Ashirah

b. Nissan as chief of months

c. Shabbat ha-Gadol

d. Bedikat hametz

e. 10 pieces of bread around house, candle-feather-wooden spoon

f. Burn hametz

g. Sell hametz

h. Mitzvah to eat matzah

i. Fast of first born

j. Siyum bekhorim

k. Seder, role of children

l. 4 cups

m. Reclining

n. 3 matzot

o. Wearing kittel

p. Seder plate symbolism
q. Why al ha-nissim not recited
r. Why Hasidim recite hallel in shul
s. Hag ha-matzot vs. hag ha-peasah
t. Kiddush karpas Yahatz
u. Stealing afikoman
v. Maggid lift matzah
w. 4 questions
x. Spilling drops of wine when mention 10 plagues
y. Eating maror dipped n haroset
z. Korekh- Hillel sandwich f matzah and maror
aa. Eat eggs dipped in salt water
bb. Eating of afikoman
cc. Opening of the door, cos eliyahu
dd. Completing Hallel
e. Had gadya and other songs

XV. Shavuot
a. Anniversary of matan torah
b. Hag ha-Katzir vs. Hag ha-shavu’ot vs. hag ha-Bikkurim and Atzeret
c. Days of Sephira as period of mourning
d. Lag ba-Omer
e. Sifrat ha-omer
f. No sheheyanu is recited at commencement of sifrat ha-omer
g. Decorating homes and synagogues with foliage
h. Tikkun lelayil shevuot
i. Akdamut
j. Megilat Ruth
k. Dairy foods
l. Throwing apples

XVI. Tisha’ be’ av
a. Four fast days
b. Ben ha-metzarim
c. Shabbat Hazon
d. Abstension from eating meat
e. Eat meat after siyum
f. Seudah ha-mafseket
g. Eikah
h. Kinot
i. Shacharit without tallit and tefillin
j. Nefilat Appayim omitted
k. Visiting the cemetery

XVII. Rosh Ha-Shanah
a. Shofar blasts
b. Selihot
c. Tishri
d. Why 2 days
e. Problem of sheheyanu
f. Special synagogue melodies
g. Hallot in form of ladder or bird
h. Honey, apple, and good food omens
i. Why hallel not recited
j. Why shofar made of ram’s horn
k. Thirty plus seventy blasts
l. 10 reasons of Saadya Gaon
m. Circumcision before RH before blow shofar
n. Why shofar not blown on Shabbat, afraid someone care it
o. Shofar as symbol of akedah
p. Blowing before and after amidah
q. Why teki’at shofar is delayed till Musaf
r. Malkhuyot, Zikhronot, Shoferot
s. Custom not to sleep on day of RH
t. Taslikh

XVIII. Yom Kippur

a. Ten daysof penitence
b. Shabbat shuvah
c. Kapparot
d. Vidduy at minha
e. Netirat nedarim
f. Seudah ham-Mafseket
g. Wing shaped bread
h. Holiday candles vs. memorial candles
i. Why white garments
j. 5 deprivations in mishnah yoma
k. Kol Nidre
l. Remove sifrei torah from aron hakodesh
m. Why “Blessed be the name of His Glorious majesty” recited
n. Schaharit
o. Why torah reading recounts death of nadav and avihu
p. Haftorah
q. Yizkor
r. Musaf
s. Prostrating 3x
t. Hay on synagogue floor
u. Torah reading of sex laws
v. Maftir yonah
w. Ne’ilah
x. Symbolism of gates
y. Ten confessions/3 verses of Epilogue
z. Ending YK with shofar blasts

XIX. Sukkot
a. Feast of tabernacles vs. feast of Ingathering of the fruits
b. Booths and heavenly clouds
c. Material of sukkah construction
d. Ushpizin
e. 4 species
f. Etrog, why not tied
g. Why benediction refer to lulav only
h. Simhat bet ha-sha’evah and nisukh ha-mayim
i. Hosha’na rabbah
j. Circling the bimah 7x
k. Flail the aravot
l. Shemin Atzeret
m. Simchat Torah
n. Hakafot
o. Aliyah for every man
p. Kol ha-ne’arim
q. Circling with last pesukim of devarim and 1st pesukim of bereishit
r. Hatan Torah and Hatan Bereshit
XX. Hanukkah
   a. Cruse of oil miracle
   b. 8 days
   c. Dreidel and hanukkah gelt
   d. Pirsumei missa
   e. Why the shammash
   f. Procedure, time, and place of lighting menorah
   g. Dispute of Hillel and Shamai of order of lighting candles
   h. Candles or olive oil
   i. Wine for Kiddush
   j. Sabbath candles vs. havdalah candles
   k. Full Hallel recited all 8 days
   l. Custom of eating dairy and fried foods
XXI. Tu bi-shevat
   a. 4 Rosh Hashanahs in mishnah RH
   b. Year of trees
   c. Significance in laws of tithing
   d. Eat fruits grow in land of Israel
e. Kabbalistic significance
f. Planting trees in Israel

XXII. Purim
a. Ta’anis Esther
b. Megillah reading evening and morning
c. Pruim, Shushan Pruim, Purim in leap year, Megillah, Sefer, Igeret
d. Gragers
e. 3 benedictions before read megilah
f. Why hallel not recited
g. Megilah and tefillin
h. Mishloach manot
i. Mahatzit ha-shekel
j. Why Purim celebrated in days of messiah and megillah will outlast all the prophets

XXIII. Marriage
a. Piru ve-revu
b. Erusin and kiddushin and Nissuin and huppah and yihud
c. Adam and Havah
d. Aufruf
e. Showering with nuts, almonds, raisons
f. Why fast on wedding day
g. Veiling the bride, bedekin
h. Why a minyan required at wedding
i. Why minyan required at wedding
j. Escorted to huppah with candles
k. Why groom enters huppah first
l. Why bride circles the groom
m. The tenaim
n. Birkhat Erusin
o. Act of betrothal harei at mikideshet li
p. Witnesses
q. Betrothal by a ring
r. Reading the ketubah
s. 7 benedictions of marriage- Birkat Nissuin
t. Break glass
u. Wear kittel under chupah
v. Henna for yeminite brides
w. Sheva berakhot
x. Bride presents groom with talit
y. Why benediction not recited over consummating marriage

XXIV. Birth
a. Berit milah and berito shel Avraham Avinu
b. Hatafat dam berit
c. Child born at twilight and counting 8 days
d. When circumcision endangers life
e. In Kabbalah
f. Shalom Zachar
g. Leaving scalpel under baby’s pillow
h. Wachnacht
i. Why minyan at berit milah
j. Kvater why say Barukh ah-ba
k. Why father wears tallit and tefillin at berit milah
l. Why mohel’s scapel double edged
m. Sandek
n. Chair of Elijah
o. Periah, metzitzah
p. Sheheheyanu
q. Just as he entered the covenant of Abraham
r. Why removed foreskin placed in earth
s. Mohel’s prayer
t. In thy blood shall you live
u. Why mohel wets baby’s lips with wine
v. Baby receives name after the berit milah
w. Birth of a daughter, naming
x. Pidyon ha-ben, 4 key elements, which bekhorim are exempt from being redeemed, redeeming orphan bekhor, father-kohen dialogue, birkat kohanim, 2 answers to 1 question, adorning child with precious objects

XXV. Bar Mitzvah
a. Barukh she petarani
b. Receiving tefillin

XXVI. Death and mourning
a. Why no cremation or burial in vault
b. Lo’eg larash, sanctity of soul
c. Wash hands when leave cemetery
d. Closing the eyes
e. Candles lit besides body
f. Pur out water in front of house of deceased
g. Hevrah Kadisha
h. White linen shrouds and pine box
i. Wrap body in tallit
j. Ritual of keriah
k. Speedy burial
l. No jewelry
m. Stop 7 times when carrying the body to grave
n. Head towards west and feet toward east
o. Hands on casket
p. Shurah
q. Tearing up grass and throwing it over shoulder when leave cemetery
r. Why don’t dry hands when wash them
s. What happens when parent of bridegroom dies the day of the wedding
t. Seudat Havra’ah
u. Eggs symbol of mourning
v. Aninut, shiv’ah, sheloshim, 12 months
w. Cover mirrors
x. Kaddish for 11 months only
y. Why kaddish in Aramaic
z. Erecting a monument
aa. Yahrzeit in kabbalah
bb. Hillula Yizkor
cc. resurrection

A more recent book on Sabbath minhagim of Kabbalistic origin: Their history and practice (Academic Studies Press, 2013) is by Morris M. Faierstein. Faierstein’s table of contents reveal a subset of mystical
interest in specific religious categories as sighted above in the previous two older books on religious
minhagim around the context of the synagogue and the life of the Jew in it. Faierstein’s table of conents
lists specific terms that are surrounded by many kabbalistic beliefs and significance:

I.  Talit and Tefillin

Zizit and Talit

Tying the Zizit

The Talit

The Talit and tefilin

Kabbalistic innovation

Customs related to donning the tefillin and tallit

II.  Prayers and Blessings

a.  Berikh Shemie: A Tehinnah Recited when Taking out the Torah

b.  Birkhat ha-mazon

c.  Birkhat Kohanim

d.  Le-Shem Yihud

e.  Modeh Ani

f.  Psalms during the Yamim Noraim

g.  Reading the chapter of Nesi’im during the first 12 days of Nisan

III.  Sabbath customs

a.  Eve of the Sabbath

i.  Preparations for the Sabbath

ii.  Additional prayers on the eve of the Sabbath

iii.  Hadlikat neirot

iv.  Kabbalat Shabbat

v.  Meal preparations

vi.  Kiddush
vii. Friday night meal
viii. End of the meal

IV. Sabbath day
   a. Morning light
   b. Minchah
   c. Seudah Shlishit
   d. Havdalah

V. Sukkot
   a. Lulav and etrog
   b. Ushpizin
   c. Hoshana Rabbah
   d. Hakafot on Simhat torah mimicking 7 plants orbits

VI. Minor Observances
   a. Tu B’shevat
   b. Sifrat Ha-Omer
   c. Lag ba-Omer

VII. Tikkunim
   a. Tikkun Leyl Shavuot
   b. Tikkun Hazot
   c. Tikkun for the night of the 7th day of Pesah
   d. Tikkun for Erev Rosh Hodesh
   e. Tikkun Leyl Hoshanah Rabbah