

תפילין

# Tefillin

JEWISH WRAP





ידו אכלדני ידור אורד  
בכך ובכל נפעך ובכל מאורד ודני  
אנכי מוצך היום על לבכך ושננתם  
בעינתך בכינתך ובכלכתך בדרך  
זרתם לאות על ידך והיו לטעפך  
זות ביתך ובשעריך

שימעו אל מצותי  
את ידור אל  
ענתני  
שימעו ישראל ידור אלדני ובכל  
ידור אלדני בכך ובכל  
אנכי מוצך היום על לבכך ושננתם  
בעינתך בכינתך ובכלכתך בדרך  
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## Black Leather Boxes

A mystery first spoken under the blazing sun of ancient Egypt was transmitted to earth by a Higher Wisdom at Sinai: Tefillin.

An enigma among human rituals—black leather boxes containing scrolls of sacred parchment. Scrolls inscribed in accordance with the meticulous criteria of an ageless scribal art—never to be read, only to be worn by every male.

No parallel can be found among any other people. No other culture ever undertook to imitate or borrow such an other-worldly rite.

From Sinai to Jerusalem, Auschwitz to Manhattan, through fire, sword, forced labor and affluence—we carried it to this day, guarding the chain of transmission with our very lives.

Yet its mystery remains unraveled. The mystery we call “Tefillin.”



## Hi-tech Connectivity

In the early sixties, when the first mainframe computers were being introduced into business, Professor Abraham Polichenco, a pioneer of computer technology, visited the Lubavitcher Rebbe and posed the following question:

“I know that everything that exists in the world, even something that we discover later in history, has its source somewhere in the Torah. So, where are computers found in the Torah?”

Without hesitation, the Rebbe answered, “Tefillin.” The professor was perplexed.

“What’s new about a computer?” the Rebbe continued.

“You walk into a room and you see many familiar machines: a typewriter, a large tape recorder, a hole puncher, a calculator. What is new?”

“But under the floor, cables connect all these machines so they work as one.”

The professor nodded enthusiastically. He hadn’t realized it before, but yes, this is all that a computer is: A synthesis of media and processing devices.

“Now look at your own self. You have a brain. It is in one world. Your heart is in another. And your hands often end up involved in something



completely foreign to both of them. Three diverse machines.

The Rebbe concluded: “So you put on Tefillin. First thing in the day, you connect your mind, your heart and your hand with these leather cables—all to work as one, and with one intent. And then when you go out to meet the world, all your actions find harmony in a single coordinated purpose.”

## The KABBALA of Tefillin

Kabbala is an esoteric wisdom that reveals the secrets of the cosmos and explains the things Jewish people do. Like Tefillin.

According to Kabbala, the world was projected into being by an infinite light focused through ten harmonious *sefiros*, divine energies. But at the time of creation, only seven of the *sefiros* descended—during the seven days in which our world was created. The first three *sefiros*, those of “Mind,” remained on-high, sort of out of the picture.

That’s why, to this day, people’s bodies are not instinctively in sync with their minds. Neither are their hearts, or their actions. Enter the mitzvah of Tefillin.

Tefillin is all about healing that rift. We do our



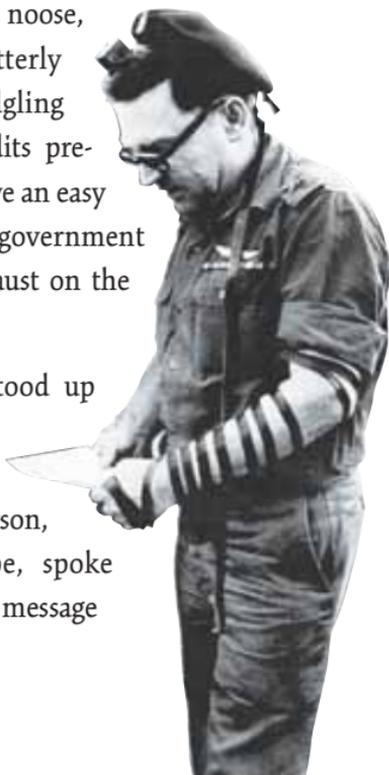
part, connecting mind, heart and action using leather straps and black boxes, containing holy scrolls—and the effect reverberates throughout the cosmos. Heaven connects to earth, spiritual to physical, Creator to creation—united in harmony with its essence and inner purpose.

With gear like this, who needs light sabers?

## Tefillin Reborn

In June of 1967, the Jewish nation was again in dire danger. The neighboring Arab states, led by Egypt and with Soviet support, were tightening the noose, threatening to utterly annihilate the fledgling state of Israel. Pundits predicted they would have an easy victory. The Israeli government feared another holocaust on the horizon.

One Jewish leader stood up with confidence and strength. Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, spoke publicly and ensured his message



would be transmitted to Israel: G-d would perform great miracles for His people and protect them. In the merit of the mitzvah of Tefillin, the enemy would turn and flee in fear.

At the time, Tefillin observance was at an all-time low. Rituals had fallen out of fashion with the climate of conformity that pervaded the Cold War era. But now began an urgent campaign for Jews everywhere to wrap Tefillin. Business men rolled up their sleeves on the street, students on campus, and of course, soldiers in the Israeli army. all joined the worldwide campaign.

The rest is history: The enemy quickly scattered in retreat and surrendered to a ceasefire after only six days of battle. Jewish pride took off like a rocket, and a renaissance of Torah Judaism ensued in Israel, in the West and even in Russia.

Today, Jews of all walks of life can be found wrapping Tefillin every morning—some for an entire hour of prayers, some for only the five minutes it takes to put them on, say the prayer of Shema and take them off again. After all, those few minutes may be just what it takes to make a whole new world.



# Tefillin in Seven

(Easier than you thought, right?)

1. Your bag of Tefillin contains two black leather boxes with straps. One is for the arm, the other for the head. Take out the arm one.



2. Now you're thinking, "I got two arms here. Which one do I put it on?" It goes on the weaker arm; meaning, righties use the left arm, lefties, the right arm. Now roll up your sleeve so that nothing is going to intervene between the leather and your skin. Place the black box on your bicep, right across from your heart, with the strap closest to your shoulder. Hold tight. If anyone asks you what you're doing, tell them it's a Jewish blood pressure test.



3. Say this:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,  
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַנִּיחַ תְּפִלִּין.

*Here's how it sounds:*

Baruch Atah Ado-nai E-loheinu Melech ha'olam, asher kideshanu bemitzvosav, vetzivanu lehaniach Tefillin.

*Here's what it means:*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to put on Tefillin.

4. Focus on what you're doing. You can't talk. You shouldn't even wink. Just tighten the strap around your arm, mindful that the Tefillin knot stays in direct contact with the box. Continue to wrap: two more times over the black box and around your bicep, then seven times around your arm and twice around your palm. Leave the remainder of the strap loose.



5. Next, prepare the head Tefillin—it will go on your head. Actually, just above your forehead. Make sure the leather box is on the right channel—just above the point that's centered between your eyes. Secure it by placing its knot at the bottom of the back of your head.



And be sure the leather straps are not turned inside out! You want a clear signal, right?

*Say this:*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,  
וְצִוָּנוּ עַל מִצְוֹת תְּפִילִין.

*Here's how it sounds:*

Baruch Atah Ado-nai E-loheinu Melech ha'olam, asher kideshanu bemitzvosav, vetzivanu al mitzvas Tefillin.

*Here's what it means:*

Blessed are you, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the mitzvah of Tefillin.

6. Now back to your hand. Wrap the remaining straps three times around your middle finger. Like this: Once around the base, then once just above the first joint, then one more time around the base. You've got some strap left over, so wrap it around your palm and tuck in the tail end.



7. This is where you say the Shema Yisrael meditation, as printed here.

הַרְיֵנִי מִקִּבֵּל עָלַי מִצְוֹת עֵשָׂה שָׁל וְאַהֲבַת לְרַעְדָּה כְּמוֹד:

שִׁמְעֵ יִשְׂרָאֵל, יי אֵל-לֵהִינּוּ, יי | אֶחָד:

כְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלִכּוֹתָו לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

וְאַהֲבַת אֵת יי אֵל-לֵהִיךָ, כָּכֵל-לְבַבְךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשֶׁךָ

וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר

אֲנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם, עַל-לְבַבְךָ: וְשִׁנְנֶתָם לְבִנְיָךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ

בָּם, בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ

וּבְקוּמְךָ: וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יְדֶךָ, וְהָיוּ לְטַמְּפַת בֵּין

עֵינֶיךָ: וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל-מְזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

אֵךְ צְדִיקִים יוֹדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ יִשְׁבוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-פְּנֶיךָ:

*This is what it means (Say this if you don't understand Hebrew):*

I hereby take upon myself to fulfill the mitzvah to “love your fellowman as yourself.”

## **HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD IS OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE.**

*– Blessed be the Name of the Glory of His Kingdom Forever and Ever –*

**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might. And these words which I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them thoroughly to your children, and you shall speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign upon your arm, and they shall be for a reminder between your eyes. And you shall write them upon the gateposts of your house and upon your gates.**

Indeed, the righteous will extol Your Name; the upright will dwell in Your Presence.

*This is how it sounds (Say this if you don't read Hebrew):*

Hareini mekabel alai mitzvas aseï shel “v’ahavta lereï’acha kamocho.”

## **SHEMA YISRAEL ADO-NAI E-LOHEINU ADO-NAI ECHAD.**

*– Baruch Sheim Kevod Malchuso L’olam Va’ed –*

**V’ahavta eis Ado-nai E-lohecha, bechal levavecha, uvechal nafshecha, uvechal me’odecha. Vehayu hadevarim ha’eileh, asher Anochi metzav’cha hayom, al levavecha. Veshinantam levanecha vedibarta bam, beshiv’techa beveisecha uvelech’techa vaderech, uveshach’becha uvekumecha. Ukeshartam le’os al yadecha, vehayu letotafos bein einecha. Uchesavtam al mezuzos beisecha, uvishe’arecha.**

Ach Tzadikim Yodu LiShmecha Yaishvu Yesharim Es Panecha.

Just one Mitzvah can change the whole world

# 10 Mitzvah Campaigns

לעילוי נשמת יהושע אליג בן ר' משה זלמן הכהן ע"ה כמנון

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