

halakha 4

Tefillin

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. **And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.** And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. (Also Exodus 13:9,16 and Deuteronomy 11:18)

What are Tefillin?

From תפלה *tefilah* to pray, a prayer
also known as phylacteries

Two small black boxes (*bayit*, house) of leather from a kosher animal shaped in a perfect square containing parchment written by a scribe.

Shel Yad, for the hand, has one compartment.

Shel Rosh, for the head, has four. In each *bayit*:

Exodus 13:1-10;

¹ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and beast; it is Mine."

³ And Moses said to the people: "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this *place*. No leavened bread shall be eaten. ⁴ On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. ⁵ And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. ⁶ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *there shall be* a feast to the LORD. ⁷ Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. ⁸ And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, '*This is done* because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.' ⁹ It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. ¹⁰ You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.

Exodus 13:11-16;

¹¹ "And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, ¹² that you shall set apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males *shall be* the LORD's. ¹³ But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. ¹⁴ So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What *is* this?' that you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand the LORD

brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ¹⁵ And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.' ¹⁶ It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (above);

Deuteronomy 11:13-21

¹³ 'And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴ then I will give *you* the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. ¹⁵ And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, that you may eat and be filled.' ¹⁶ Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, ¹⁷ lest the LORD's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

¹⁸ "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹ You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ²⁰ And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹ that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.

Shel Rosh has a **U** *shin* on two sides, one has four prongs

3 Patriarchs, 4 Matriarchs

Shin carries the numerical equivalent of 300.

300 out of 354 days *tefillin* are worn.

Four pronged shin so it can be read from both sides

Leather straps (*retzuot*) from a kosher animal

Rabbinic Use of Tefillin

Limited to specific times

Daytime (*Shachrit*) and only on weekdays. Not on *Shabat* or Feast days.

Women are not to wear *Tefillin*

Not worn by males under 13 years old.

Placed directly on skin and hair

If one is missing or cannot be used, the other must still be worn

Reckoned as two separate *mitzvot*.

If one does not have *Tefillin* at synagogue prayer, one should wait and borrow them to do the Shema and Amidah rather than do them without *Tefillin*.

Not putting on *Tefillin* violates 8 affirmative commandments, while regular use brings long life (Isaiah 38:16, 'these things' = Torah)

¹⁶ O Lord, by these *things* *men* live;

And in all these *things* *is* the life of my spirit;

So You will restore me and make me live.

How to Wear Tefillin

Put on *Tefillin* after *Talit*

Stand while putting on or taking off

Do not distract from task; conversation, prayer

Put on the *Shel Yad* first.

Left arm if you are right-handed, right arm if you are left handed

"bind them on your hands" Deut 6:8

Set on Bicep "close to the heart" Deut 6:6; 11:18

Lip or Ledge to the top

Knot next to box, closest to heart

Tied to symbolize "Yud" part of the Divine name *Shadai*

Recite first blessing:

**Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, Asher kidshanu
b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hanyakh t'filiyn.**

Blessed art Thou, L-rd our G-d, Ruler of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to put on tefillin.

Tighten, wrap 7 times below elbow, put on the *Shel Rosh* but do not tighten, and recite:

**Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, Asher kidshanu
b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al mitzvat t'filiyn.**

Blessed art Thou, L-rd our G-d, Ruler of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us regarding the commandment of tefillin.

Tighten the *Shel Rosh*. Fix firmly on head, above hair line (or approximate), on line between eyes (Deut 6:8), knot centered behind head at base of skull, and recite:

Baruch Shem k'vod Malchuto l'olam va'ed.

Blessed is the Name of His glorious Kingdom for all eternity.

Straps of the *Shel Rosh* brought forward and rest on chest, black side forward

The remaining strap of the *Shel Yad* is wrapped around fingers and hand: wind 3 times around middle finger, once in middle, twice close to hand, go around ring finger and finish remainder of strap around palm, while reciting:

**V'eris'tikh li l'olam, v'eris'tikh li b'tzedek uv'mishpat uv'khesed
uv'rakhamim. V'eris'tikh li b'emunah, v'yada'at et ha-Shem.**

I will betroth you to Me forever, and I will betroth you to Me with righteousness, justice, kindness and mercy. I will betroth you to Me with fidelity, and you shall know the L-rd. (Hoshea 2:21-22)

Removal is in reverse order.

Matityahu (Matthew) 23:5: Yeshua decries the misuse of t'filin but never says to NOT do it.

5 But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.

