

Halakha 5

Mezuzah

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 is a Mezuzah?

lit. doorpost

Parchment (*klaf*) containing Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Deuteronomy 11:13-21 on One side and שַׁדַּי *Shadai* on the other side

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.

(Kabalah) shadai is remnant of "SHomer D'latot Yisrael" (Keeper of the Doors of Yisrael)

Placed in a case or hollow in doorpost

Case can be made of any durable material

The word *Shadai* or the letter *shin* on outside

Rabbinic Mezuzah

One must be placed at each doorway that has two posts and a lintel, including Interior rooms. (except bathrooms, toilets...)

Courtyards, fences and gates require mezuzot "upon your gates," city gates or courtyard gates.

May be applied by anyone of age to understand the mitzvah

Must be applied immediately to owned home, within 30 days if rented

Should be removed when moving out if next resident does not understand mezuzah is a sacred object

Not to be worn as jewelry, amulet or "lucky charm," or keychain.

Mark of Jewish home, reminder of commandments, God's divine presence

A synagogue does not need a mezuzah as it is not a residence, but is often applied as meals are taken therein

The scroll must be examined twice every seven years to be sure the writing is still legible.

Every time you pass through a door with a mezuzah on it, you touch the mezuzah and then kiss the fingers that touched it, expressing love and respect for God and his mitzvot and reminding yourself of the mitzvot contained within them.

How to apply a Mezuzah (Khanukat ha-Bayit)

Blessing recited:

*Baruch ata Adonai Elohenu Melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu
b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu likboa mezuzah.*

Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to affix mezuzah.

Mezuzah, in its case, is nailed, screwed or glued to right side of doorpost as one enters the house or room
Placed about 1/3 from top of doorpost, no more than 3 3/4" from outside, slanted with top toward inside of house or room. Why? A compromise between horizontal and vertical.

Messianic applications

No record in Brit haChadeshah

Good mitzvah to follow, but there may be other ways to literally observe the commandment.

ישמעאל ישראל יהוה אלדיו יהוה אחיו ואהבת את
יהוה אלדיו בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך והיו
הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוה היום על לבבך וישגתם
לבבך ודברתם בם בשבתך בביתך ובכלכתך בדרך
ובשכבך ובקומך וקשרתם לאות על ירך והיו לטופת
בין עיניך וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך
והיה אם ישמעל תשמעו את מצותי אשר אנכי
מצוה אתכם היום לאהבה את יהוה אלדיום ולעבדו
בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם וציתתי מטל ארצכם בעתו
יורה ובמקושי ואספת דגלך ודירשך ויצהרך וציתתי
עשב בשדך לבדמתך ואכלת וישבעת השמרו לכם
פן יפתה לבבכם וסרתם ועבדתם אלהים אחרים
והשתחויתם להם וזרדה אף יהוה בכם ועצר את
השמים וכא יהיה מטל והארמה לא תתן את יבולה
ואבדתם מהרה מעל הארץ הטבה אשר יהוה צתן לכם
ושמתם את דברי אלה על לבבכם ועל נפשכם וקשרתם
אתם לאות על ידכם והיו לטופת בין עיניכם ולמדתם
אתם את בציכם כדבר בם בשבתך בביתך ובכלכתך
בדרך ובשכבך ובקומך וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך
ובשעריך למען ירבו ימיכם וימי בציכם על האדמה
אשר צעבת יהוה לאבותיכם לתת להם כימי השמים
על הארץ