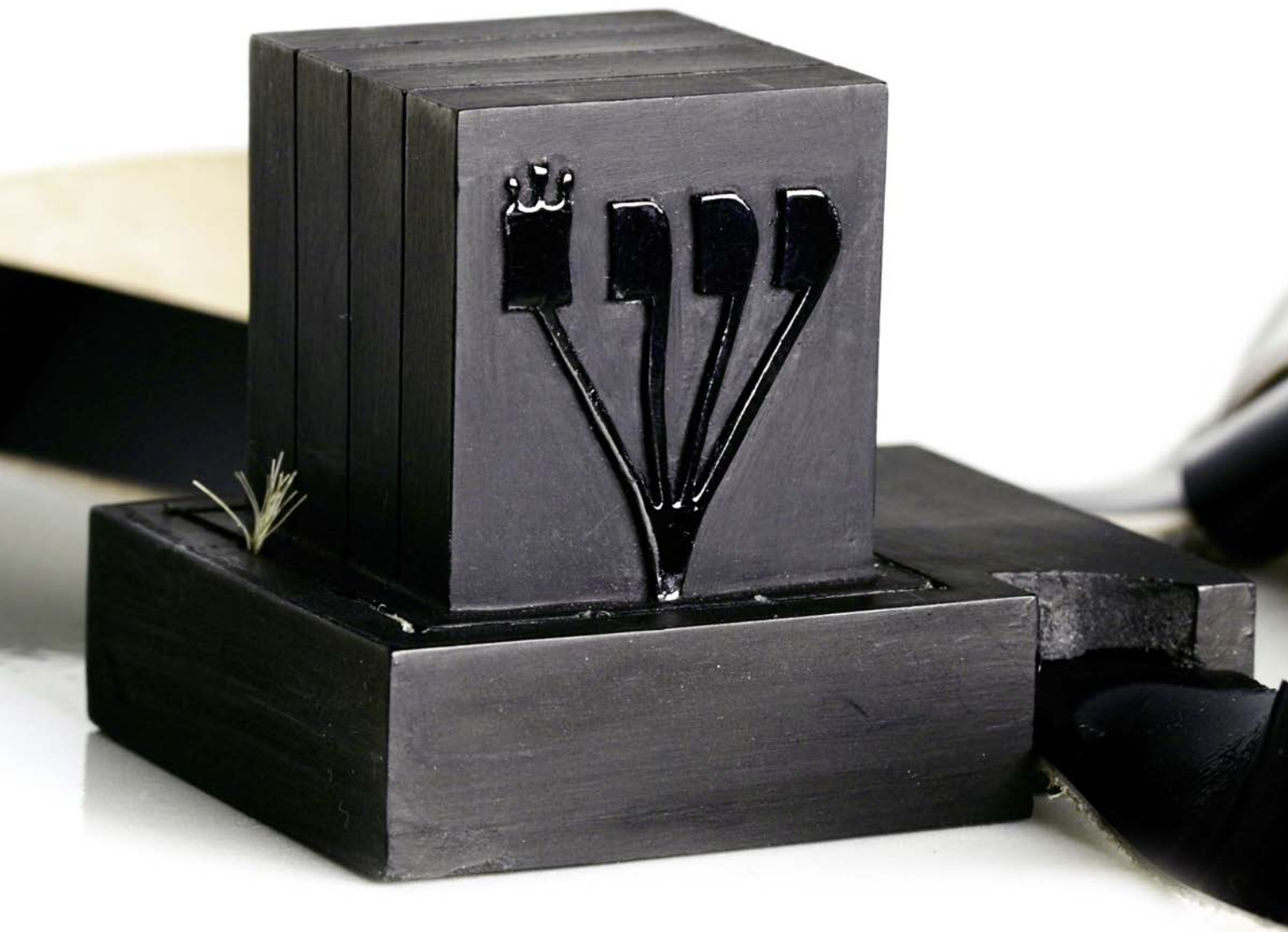


# tefillin

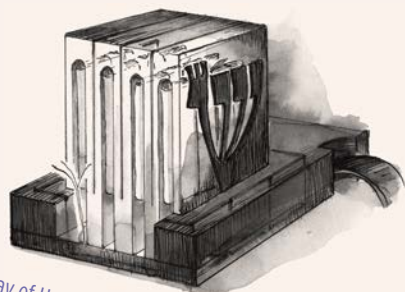
THE HAZAN EDITION



# what are tefillin?

A SYMBOL OF **BEAUTY, STRENGTH AND ROYALTY**

Wearing Tefillin daily is one of the most essential practices in all of Judaism. Tefillin are a set of specially crafted leather boxes containing parchments handwritten with sections from the Torah. The Torah sections in Tefillin speak of remembering God's miracles in freeing us from Egypt, entering the Land of Israel, belief in God, Passover, sanctifying the firstborn and the command to wear Tefillin.



*Cutaway of Head Tefillin showing four chambers each housing a single scroll*



*Cutaway of Hand Tefillin showing a single scroll housed in one chamber*

One box is bound to the arm (with leather straps called *Retzuot* in Hebrew) and one box rests on the head (also held in place with leather straps). While wearing Tefillin we are connecting to God with the fullness of our body, emotions and intellect.

The Hand Tefillin have a single chamber containing a strip of parchment with four Torah portions written on it. The Head Tefillin has four chambers, each containing a strip of parchment with a single Torah portion written on it. The verse below is one of four places\* where the Torah instructs us to wear Tefillin.

וְקִשְׁרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ  
וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטָפֶת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ

And you will bind them for a sign on your arm  
and they will be for a sign ("totafos") between your eyes

*U'Kshartam L'os al yadecha, V'Hayu L'totafos Bein Einecha*

\*The four places are, Deut.6:4-9; Deut. 11:13-21; Exodus 13:1-10; and Exodus 13:11-16

tefillin  
are  
Israel's  
strength

**TEFILLIN ARE FREEDOM:** Tefillin remind us of the abundant love we received during the Exodus when God made the impossible, possible and personally took us out of the bondage of Egypt. We emerged as individuals (and a people) with the ability to manifest all our power and potential. Every day we live with this freedom and possibility. Tefillin remind us of this.

**TEFILLIN ARE TRANSFORMATION:** Our lives are a journey of personal evolution and growth to become more God-like as we elevate and refine the world around us. When we take material items such as leather and parchment and make Tefillin from them, those items become transformed and elevated into something sacred. So too when wearing Tefillin, our physicality is transformed into a vehicle for the Divine and we connect to the source of unlimited blessing.

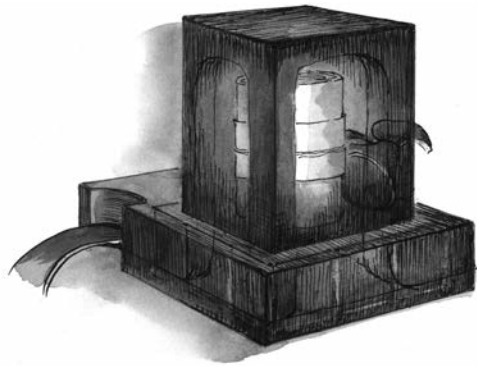
**Tefillin convey the awesomeness of God and His wonders:** The writings of the Master Kabbalist, Rabbi Isaac Luria contain some of the most profound and beautiful teachings concerning how Tefillin connect us to levels of consciousness and wisdom far above our own. Rabbi Luria's words can take many years to understand, but we can get a hint of the mysteries he alludes to through the words of one of the greatest minds of the 20th century...

“The most beautiful and deepest experience a man can have is the sense of the mysterious. It is the underlying principle of religion as well as all serious endeavour in art and science. He who never had this experience seems to me, if not dead, then at least blind. To sense that behind anything that can be experienced **there is a something that our mind cannot grasp** and whose beauty and sublimity reaches us only indirectly... To me it suffices to wonder at these secrets and to attempt humbly to grasp with my mind a mere image of the lofty structure of all that there is.” - *Albert Einstein*.

**“What our mind cannot grasp” we can get a sense of through the Mitzvah of Tefillin...**

# HAND TEFILLIN

וקשרתם לאות על ירך



## תפילין של יד

The Hand Tefillin are placed on the bicep near the heart (and slightly leaning towards the heart). They are worn on the weaker hand (so a righty would place Tefillin on his left arm). Shown at left is the scroll resting in the “house” of the Hand Tefillin.

The Bayis contains one scroll with four Torah **Parhsiyot** or sections written on it

The **Bayis** or “house” of the scrolls must be perfectly square

The wider base of the Head and Hand Tefillin is called the **Titura**

The **Kesher** or knot of the Hand Tefillin is tied in the shape of the Hebrew letter “Yud - י” and should always be touching the Bayis

The straps that affix the Tefillin to the arm or head are known as **Retzuot**



A single scroll is rolled up and inserted in the **Bayis** or housing of the Hand Tefillin. The scroll contains four Torah portions. The scroll can only be written on hide coming from a kosher animal with permanent black ink. The parchments, after being rolled (Hand Tefillin) or folded (Head Tefillin) are tied shut with the hair of a kosher animal.

What we know can't stay in the head. Knowledge must be reflected in action.

As we project our power into the world in pursuit of our heart's desires, the Hand Tefillin that rest near the heart reminds us that our actions should be imbued with awareness of God.

no matter how powerful  
we may be, there is

# strength

beyond our strength

and when we recognize that truth and bend  
our strength and desires before that greater  
power, we grow truly strong

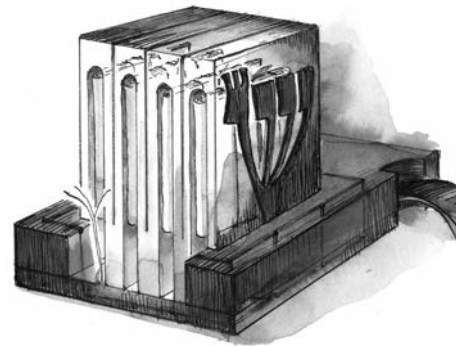
when we put on the hand tefillin  
we put our power and passions  
before God and in his service



# HEAD TEFILLIN

## תפילין של ראש

The Head Tefillin is placed just above the hair-line, centered between the eyes. The housing or "Bayis" of the Hand and Head Tefillin and the straps must be painted all black.



והיו ולטופת בן עיניך

A few threads of calf's hair that are wrapped around the folded scroll of V'haya Im Shamoah must emerge from the housing. There are deep mystical reasons for this

The four chambers of the Head Tefillin are clearly distinct. Each contains one scroll with a section of Torah: Kadesh, V'haya KiYiviacha, Shema, V'haya Im Shamoah

The Hebrew letter "Shin - ש" is upraised on the Bayis. On one side the Shin has 3 heads, on the other it has 4. This is one of the only places in Judaism where there is a Shin - ש" with 4 heads

The knot that will hold the Tefillin on the head is shaped like the Hebrew letter "Dalet - ד"

The extension of the Tefillin where the strap passes through is called the **Ma'abarta** or bridge

The Bayis of both the Head and Hand Tefillin are sewn closed with thread made of sinews from a kosher animal. (The thread is called "**Gid**" in Hebrew)

The Head Tefillin are a Royal Crown. When we wear them while being mindful of God, they become a radiant jewel, shining light and inspiration to the world.

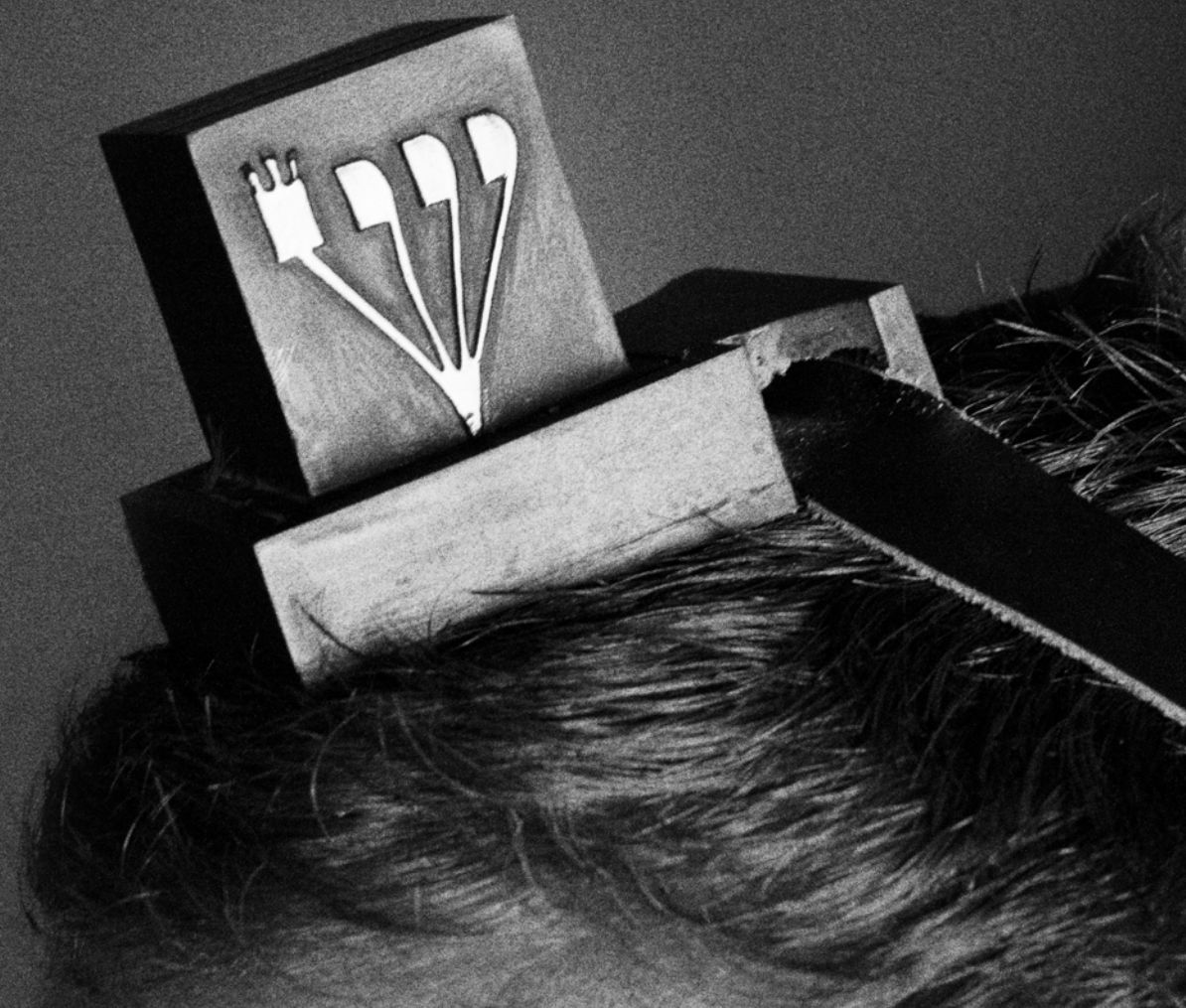
no matter how intelligent  
we may be, there is

# wisdom

beyond our wisdom

and when we bow our heads before  
that wisdom we become truly wise

the head tefillin are a bridge  
connecting us to God while  
transmitting a higher knowledge



# THE LETTERS & THE SCROLLS

## אותיות, קלף והלכות ס"ת

A specially trained scribe (called a Sofer) writes the Torah sections that are placed inside the Tefillin. The writing is in a special Hebrew script called Ktav Ashurit. The script must be written according to a detailed set of laws in order to be valid for use in Torah scrolls, Tefillin and Mezuzot.

The Sages teach that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet are the building blocks of creation. In the writings of Kabbalah we learn that each letter of the Alef-Bet is a channel of Divine energy and reveals a certain aspect of God. Every single detail of how the letters are written is critical. The letters contain the forces of creation and when written correctly on parchment

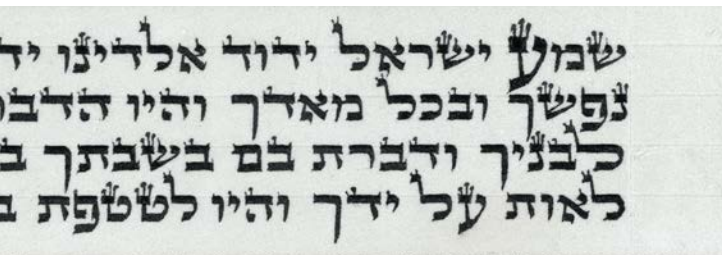
according to the laws of safrut then the parchment scroll is considered "kosher" and acquires holiness.

A kosher scroll is an absolute requirement for Sifrei Torah (Torah scrolls), Tefillin and Mezuzot.

Collectively this group of scrolls is

referred to as STaM (an acronym for Sifrei Torah, Tefillin and Mezuzot). The body of laws governing the writing and production of these scrolls is known as *Hilchos Stam*.

When the scroll is kosher we may make a blessing over it and use it in the performance of the Mitzvah it pertains to. Having a kosher scroll written by a conscientious scribe is critical, for if a person says a blessing to put



Part of the Shema scroll, actual size

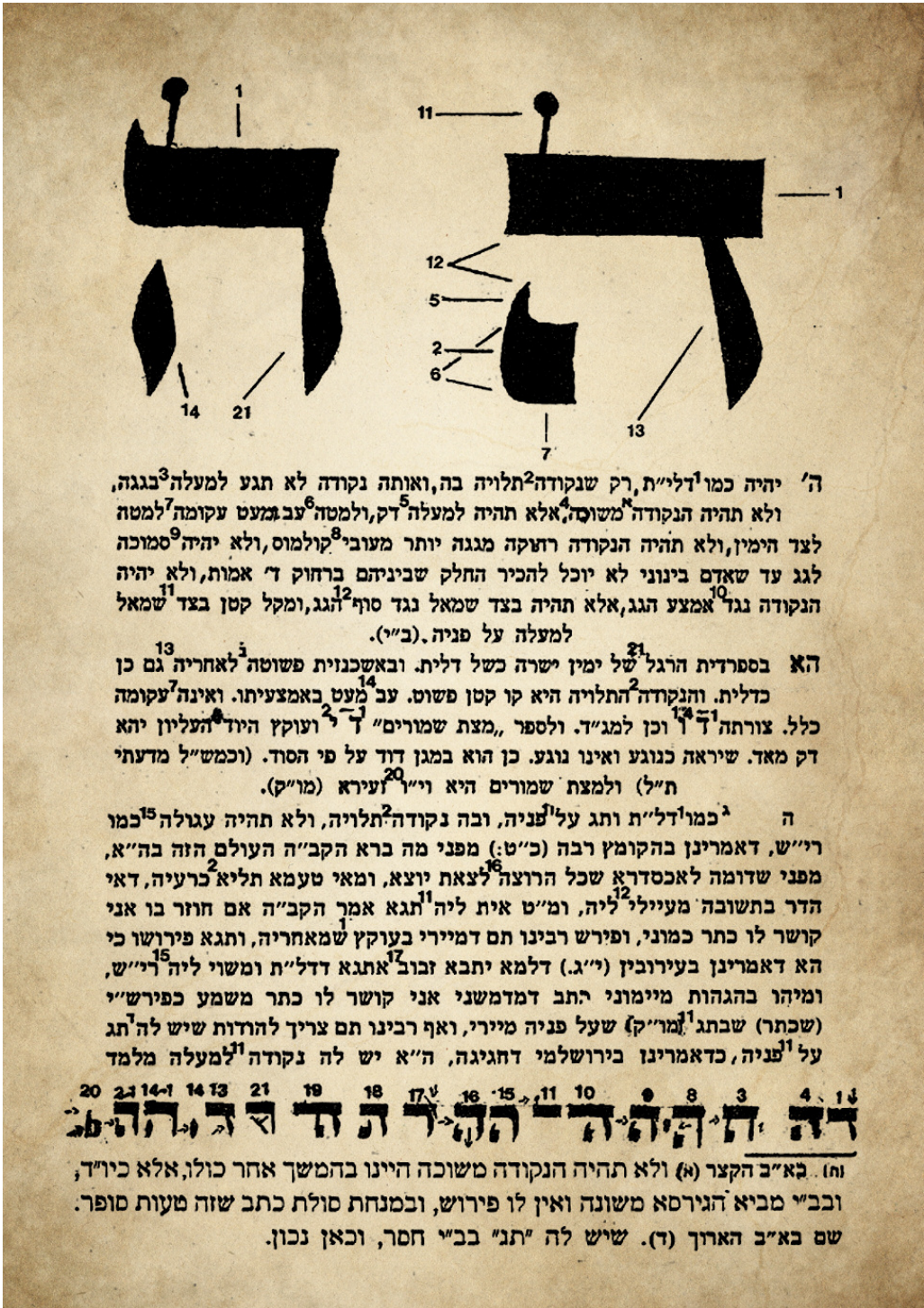
יודע היה בצלאל לצרף אותיות  
שזכראו בהם שמים וארץ

*Babylonian Talmud, Brachos, 55a*

Through his knowledge of the secrets of the Hebrew letters, Bezalel was able to work with the forces of creation



Sofer Michael Khanin writing the Torah section of V'haya Im Shamo'a for the Head Tefillin



. A page from "Likut Sifrei STaM" one of the training manuals for a Jewish scribe. .

This page shows some of the many elements and details that go into the writing of a single letter. A number of these details are so critical that in their absence they can invalidate the letter which in turn, if impossible to fix according to the laws of STaM, invalidates the entire scroll!

on Tefillin or place a Mezuzah upon his or her doorpost or read from a Torah but the scroll is not kosher, then the blessing has been said in vain and the person has not performed the Mitzvah.

There are many issues a scribe must be aware of when writing. Some of the issues concern letters not written correctly (so that a letter appears as another letter), or one letter touching another, or a letter not surrounded by white space (known as *Mukaf G'vil*). All these cases (and many others) make a scroll "passul" or invalid for use.

The idea that our thoughts and intentions matter comes to life in Jewish law. Every element of the production of Tefillin must be done for the sake of Tefillin, this is known as *Lishmah*. If the scroll is written perfectly but was not written for the express purpose of fulfilling the Mitzvah of Tefillin then the scroll is invalid. The Tefillin only take on their sanctity and become usable for the Mitzvah of Tefillin when they are written and constructed for the sake of the Mitzvah.

As the writing of the scroll is such a labor intensive process it is critical that one purchase Tefillin from a scribe or seller of Tefillin that is known to be trustworthy. A finished scroll can appear perfect to the naked eye, but if it was written out of order or without proper intention it is not valid and there is no way of knowing this. This point can not be stressed enough. When purchasing Tefillin or Mezuzot, ask around, and get references about the seller in order to insure that the scrolls and batim one is buying are kosher.

## THE BASICS

# Have you ever truly loved?

Have you ever truly loved?

Have you ever felt so close to another human being that every moment together was precious? Where every moment apart was one of longing? Where every letter and memento from this person was something to be treasured?

What if this person gave you a ring or a pin and asked you to wear it? Every time you looked at it or felt it on your finger, would it not remind you of this great love?

The greatest possible love is the love between God and man.

God told us through His prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 31:3), “I have loved you with an infinite world of love.” To truly believe in God is to share this love.

To the best of our understanding, God’s very act of creation was an act of love. It was a love so immense that the human mind cannot fathom it. The Bible alludes to it, saying (Psalms 136:7), “To Him Who made the great stars, for His love is infinite.”

This bond of love exists always, even when we do not deserve it. God is a Father who loves His children even when they go astray. It is our duty, however to strengthen this bond.

Tefillin are a sign of this bond of love.

Faith and love are very tenuous things. We can speak of them and think about them. But unless we do something about them we tend to forget.

Tefillin serve to help us remember – “and a reminder between your eyes.”

If you would open a pair of Tefillin, you would find that they contain four parchments. One of these parchments consists of the Sh’ma. It contains the

Holding the Shema scroll (Judaism’s most elemental prayer) that will be inserted into the Head Tefillin

When wearing  
Tefillin we bring God  
consciousness to our  
power and remember  
not to be slaves to  
our own limited  
conceptions.

Rather we embody  
the fact that we  
are in the service of  
a higher truth that  
releases us from all  
limitations.



commandment to love God: “And you shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.” This commandment speaks of three types of love. You must love God with your heart, your soul, and your might.

The Tefillin mirror these three aspects of love.

“With all your heart.” The hand Tefillin are worn on the left hand opposite the heart. We thus dedicate our heart, the seat of life, to the love of God.

“With all your soul.” The head Tefillin are worn next to the brain, the seat of man’s soul and intellect. We thus dedicate our mind to the love of God.

“With all your might.” The hand Tefillin are bound to the arm, the symbol of man’s strength. We thus dedicate all our powers to the love of God.

Love is the basis of the entire Torah.

The Bible therefore tells us, “they shall be for a sign... that God’s Torah be on your lips.”

The essence of the Torah is its commandments, Mitzvos in Hebrew. The word Mitzvah comes from a root meaning “to bind.” Every commandment or Mitzvah serves to draw us close to God and strengthen this bond of love.

With every Mitzvah we forge a spiritual bond with God. In the case of Tefillin, this bond is physical as well as spiritual. We literally bind God’s love symbol to our bodies. Thus, our sages teach us that the commandment of Tefillin encompasses all others. Here we can actually see and feel the bond.

Another important theme of the Tefillin is the Exodus from Egypt — “And it shall be a sign... because with a strong hand God brought you out of Egypt.” The Exodus took place over 3,000 years ago. But it still plays a most important role in Judaism.

To understand the reason for this, we must realize how Judaism differs from all other religions.

Other religions begin with a single individual. He claims to have a special message and gradually gathers a following. His followers spread the word and gather converts, and a new religion is born. Virtually every world religion follows this pattern.



The only exception is Judaism.

God gathered an entire people, three million strong, to the foot of Mount Sinai, and proclaimed His message. Every man, woman, and child heard God's voice decreeing the Ten Commandments. Thus was the bond forged between God and Israel.

This took place just seven weeks after the Jews left Egypt. It was the climax of the drama of the Exodus.

This was an event unique in the history of mankind.

It is most important not to forget...

The Torah tells us (Deut. 4:9, 10), "Be very careful and watch yourself, that you not forget the things you saw with your own eyes. Do not let them pass from your minds as long as you live. Teach them to your children, and to your children's children. The day when you stood before God..."

The parchments in the Tefillin speak of the Exodus.

The Tefillin thus serve to bind us to our past, especially to this unique event in our history.

We can understand this on a deeper level. But first we must understand the true significance of the Exodus and Sinai. We must know what it means to say that an entire people heard God's voice.

To hear God's voice is no simple matter. Only prophets hear God's voice. What happened at Sinai was that an entire people, men, women and children, achieved the level of prophecy.

There are many ways to approach God.

You can approach Him on an intellectual level. You can ask questions and seek answers until you achieve some understanding of the Infinite. This is the realm of the philosopher.

You can seek God on a more intimate level, in prayer and in meditation. There may then come a time when your self ceases to exist and all your senses are numbed. Suddenly, a door seems to open, if only by the slightest crack. You catch a glimpse of the Divine, and discover something more wonderful than anything



Scrolls being inserted into an unpainted Shel Rosh.  
The Shel Rosh will be sewn closed and painted black.

Tefillin are a  
reminder of the  
Exodus and bring  
freedom to man.

The essence of  
freedom is when the  
soul is awakened.



on earth. Somehow you feel a unique closeness to God. To describe it would be as impossible as to describe the beauty of a sunset to a blind man. But you know it is there. The door has been opened to you, and you have peered through the crack.

This is the level of the mystic.

But sometimes the door is opened all the way. A man experiences more than merely a glimpse. He hears a clear voice and receives a lucid message. This is the highest possible human bond with God. It is the level of the prophet.

At Sinai, every Jew attained this level.

Tefillin bring us back to this unique moment.

Not many of us can be philosophers. Very few of us can attain the level of the mystic. Prophets no longer walk the earth.

But we can remember...

When we bind the Tefillin to our bodies, we relive the infinite bond of love that was forged at Sinai.

There were Tzadikim – saints – who achieved a mystical experience every time they put on Tefillin. They could feel the words of the parchments literally burning into their heart and soul.

We may never achieve this level.

But we can begin...

God has given us the commandment of Tefillin and clearly spelled out how to do it.

Tefillin may seem like simple boxes and straps. But they are much, much more...

# KABBALAH

## Restoring the Body

God's original intent in creating man was to do absolute good for another. The greatest good is when a person earns his reward. The Zohar refers to *Nahama D'kisufa-the Bread of Shame* which is the shame a person feels when given unearned goodness.

Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden to partner with God. His job in the Garden was to complete the process of creation. One of the divine names associated with Tefillin is *Shadai*, which is an acronym for the words *Sheamar L'olamo Dai - He who said to the world "enough"*. God purposefully stopped the creation process to give a space for Adam and Eve to complete creation and be the masters of the unlimited good that God wished to bestow.

As part of the wholeness he possessed, Adam had the power to see from one end of the universe to the other. Complete knowledge was instantly accessible to him. Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato, a great Kabbalist of the 18th century teaches that while Adam and Eve did have a physical body, their physicality was something far more refined than the physicality of today.

The Sages have an astonishing teaching as well in this regard, that the spirituality of our Forefather Jacob was like Adam's physicality. Adam's

A Jerusalem Kabbalist studies the wittings of Rabbi Isaac Luria on Tefillin



The wells the forefathers dug were for the purpose of revealing the hidden light in material reality. Tefillin are the revelation that even in our physicality is a divine light.

original body was something close to being made of light. What are the implications of Adam's having a body made of light? Whereas today, it can take years or decades of hard work in order to manifest a new talent, skill or physical change, Adam, with just a thought was able to manifest any potential he could conceive of.

Adam was supposed to reveal God. When Adam ate from the Tree of Knowledge, he did the opposite of what his job was. Eating from the tree gave life to the possibility of concealing God. After eating from the tree the Torah says "*God made garments of Ur-עור (leather or skin) for Adam and Eve*". This means that Adam's *Ohr-אור* (light) body had become much grosser, and his physicality had descended to a lower, coarser level, that of flesh-עור. The Alef-א of אור-light was transformed into the similar sounding but much coarser letter Ayin-ע of עור-skin. No longer would it be simple for Adam to manifest his potential and reveal Godliness in the world. Now it would take intense work.

All the observances in the Torah are means of healing the world. The Mitzvah of Tefillin is a powerful healing for the mistake of eating from the Tree of Knowledge and restores the world to its original refined level. When we take the *Ur-עור* (skin) of an animal and create Tefillin from it, we repair what occurred in the Garden of Eden, uplifting fallen physicality and restoring the *Ohr-אור* (light) body we once had.

# HOW TO PUT ON TEFILLIN

Customs may vary, this is the Ashkenaz custom.

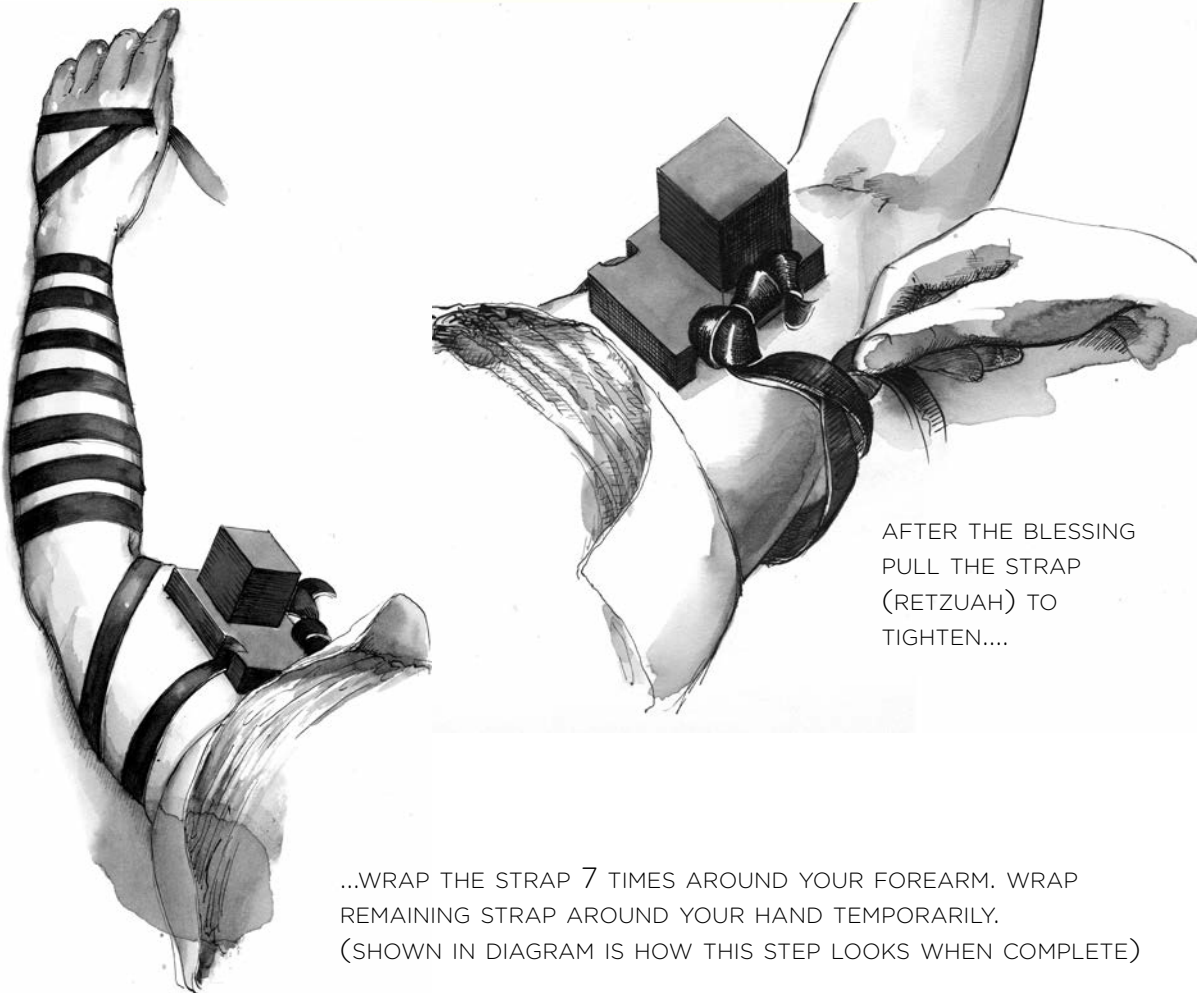
1

PLACE THE **HAND TEFILLIN** ON THE MIDDLE OF THE BICEP LEANING SLIGHTLY TOWARDS THE HEART (THE FRONT END MUST BE AT LEAST 2 FINGERBREADTHS AWAY FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE BICEP (SEE DIAGRAM) MAKE THE FOLLOWING BLESSING (EITHER LANGUAGE)

ברוך אתה ה' אלוקנו' מלך העולם  
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וציונו להניח תפילין

BARUCH ATAH ADO-NAI, ELO-HEINU MELECH HA'OLAM ASHER  
KIDISHANU B'MITZVOTAV, VITZIVANU L'HANIACH TEFILLIN.

BLESSED ARE YOU ADO-NAI, OUR GOD, KING OF THE WORLD  
WHO HAS SANCTIFIED US WITH HIS COMMANDMENTS, AND HAS  
COMMANDED US TO PLACE TEFILLIN.



AFTER THE BLESSING  
PULL THE STRAP  
(RETZUAH) TO  
TIGHTEN....

...WRAP THE STRAP 7 TIMES AROUND YOUR FOREARM. WRAP  
REMAINING STRAP AROUND YOUR HAND TEMPORARILY.  
(SHOWN IN DIAGRAM IS HOW THIS STEP LOOKS WHEN COMPLETE)

2

TAKE THE **HEAD TEFILLIN** AND PLACE THEM ON YOUR HEAD DO NOT YET TIGHTEN AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING BLESSING

ברוך אתה ה' אלוקנו' מלך העולם  
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וציונו על מצות תפילין

BARUCH ATAH ADO-NAI, ELO-HEINU MELECH HA'OLAM ASHER  
KIDISHANU B'MITZVOTAV, VITZIVANU AL MITZVAT TEFILLIN.

BLESSED ARE YOU ADO-NAI, OUR GOD, KING OF THE WORLD  
WHO HAS SANCTIFIED US WITH HIS COMMANDMENTS, AND  
COMMANDED US WITH THE MITZVAH OF TEFILLIN.

TIGHTEN THE HEAD TEFILLIN BY PULLING ON THE SIDE STRAPS AND THE KNOT IN THE BACK. BE VERY CAREFUL THAT THE FRONT EDGE OF THE HEAD TEFILLIN IS **BEHIND THE HAIRLINE** AND CENTERED BETWEEN THE EYES. (THE KNOT IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD RESTS ON THE BONE OR PARTLY BENEATH THE BONE.)

AFTER MAKING THE BLESSING AND TIGHTENING THE HEAD TEFILLIN SAY THE FOLLOWING VERSE

ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד

BARUCH SHEM K'VOD MALCHUTO L'OLAM VA'ED  
BLESSED IS THE NAME OF HIS GLORIOUS KINGDOM FOREVER

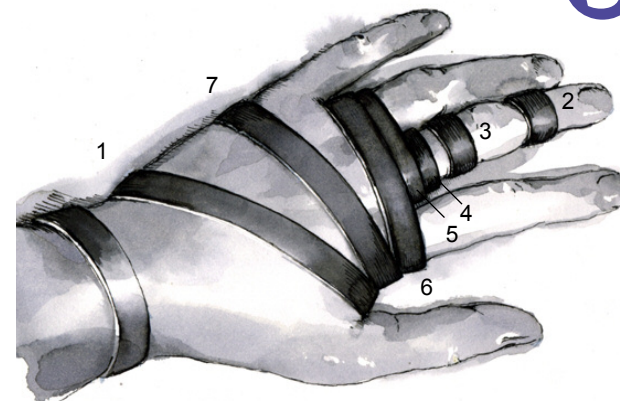
3

RETURN TO THE **HAND TEFILLIN** AND WRAP THE REMAINING STRAP AROUND YOUR FINGERS. (DIAGRAM.) SAY THE FOLLOWING VERSES WHILE WRAPPING.

וארשתיך לי לעולם וארשתיך לי בצדק ובמשפט  
ובחסד וברחמים וארשתיך לי באמונה וידעת את ה'

V'ARASTICH LI L'OLAM, V'ARASTICH LI B'ZEDEK U'VMISHPAT  
U'VCHESD U'VRACHAMIM. V'ARASTICH LI B'EMUNAH V'YADAAT  
ET ADO-NAI.

I WILL WED You TO ME FOREVER. I WILL WED You TO ME  
WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE, WITH LOVE AND MERCY. I  
WILL WED You TO ME WITH FAITH AND YOU WILL KNOW GOD.



The final wrappings on the hand form  
the shapes of the hebrew letters, Shin,  
Dalet and Yud. One of God's names  
associated with protection.

video tutorial: [www.jewishliferies.com/tefillin](http://www.jewishliferies.com/tefillin)

# the tefillin scrolls

Translations of the Torah portions within Tefillin



Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: Sanctify to Me every firstborn that initiates every womb among the children of Israel. Whether man or animal, it is Mine. Moshe said to the people: Remember this day as [the time] you departed Egypt, the house of slaves, when Hashem brought you forth from here with the power of His Arm. [In commemoration of this, i.e., in order to maintain uninterrupted consciousness of the fact that Hashem is the power behind all phenomena] no leaven may be eaten. You are departing on this day in the month of Aviv (Nissan). A time will come when Hashem will bring you to the land of the Canaanite, the Chitite, the Emorite, the Chivite, and the Yevusite, which He swore to your ancestors to give to you. It is a land flowing with milk and honey. There too you shall perform this service in this month, eating unleavened bread for seven days, and making the seventh day a festival to Hashem. Unleavened bread shall be eaten for these seven days. [Even if unleavened bread is not eaten] make sure that no leaven or leavening substance is seen anywhere within your borders. On that day [Passover night], relate [the story of the Exodus] to your children, saying: For the sake of performing this [command], Hashem performed miracles for me when I departed Egypt. [Bind these words] as an insignia on your arm [near your heart], and as a reminder [above your forehead] between your eyes, so that Hashem's Torah be constantly [in your thoughts and] in your mouth. [You will thus remember] that Hashem brought you forth from Egypt with the power of His Arm. You shall observe this law at its designated time, from year to year.

## V'hayah Ki Yiviacha - והיה כי יביאך

A time shall come when Hashem will bring you to the land of the Canaanite as He swore to you and to your ancestors, and He will give you full possession of it. You will then dedicate every firstborn that initiates the womb to Hashem. Of all the firstborn issue of your animals, set the males aside for [the Cohen priests who serve] Hashem. Redeem every firstborn mule with a sheep. If [a mule] is not redeemed, its neck must be severed. As for your children, every firstborn male must be redeemed [with money]. When your son then asks you in the future: What is this [service of severing the mule's neck]? Answer him: With the power of His Arm, Hashem forcefully brought us out of Egypt, the house of slaves. When Pharaoh was stubborn [like a mule] and refused to let us depart, Hashem slew every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of men to the firstborn of animals. This is why I offer to Hashem all firstborn male animals that initiate the womb, and redeem all my firstborn sons. [Bind these words] as an insignia on your arm [near your heart], and tefillin [above your forehead] between your eyes, [in order to remember] how Hashem forcefully brought us forth from Egypt with the power of His Arm.

*(Hashem means "the Name" and is another way of referring to God.)*

TEFILLIN HEAL the consciousness that was damaged in the Garden of Eden, the four Torah sections of Tefillin repair the four components of the mind and refined energy flows into the body

Sefas Emes, Nasso

## Shema - שמע

Hear O Israel, Hashem is our God, Hashem is One. And you will love Hashem your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. Let these words that I command you today be on your heart. Repeat them to your children and speak of them when you are dwelling in your house and when you are traveling on the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. Bind these words as a sign on your arm [near your heart] and as Tefillin [above your forehead] between your eyes. Write them on the doorposts of your house and your gates.

## GOD WEARS TEFILLIN.

Our Tefillin contains praises of God. His Tefillin contain our praises.

*Based on Babylonian Talmud, Brachos 6A*

## V'hayah Im Shamo'a - והיה

And if you carefully obey My commandments, which I am prescribing for you today, to love Hashem your God, and to serve Him with all your hearts and with all your souls, I will provide rain for your land in its season – powerful autumn rains and gentle spring rains. You may then gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil. I will also provide pasturage in your fields for your livestock. You will eat and be satisfied. Beware, however, lest your hearts be misled to turn astray and worship heavenly powers that others serve as gods and bow down to them. [To correct you] God will turn [His mercy into] fierce anger against you. He will close the heavens so there will be no rain, and the land will no longer yield its produce and you will quickly vanish from the good land that God is giving you. You should place these words of Mine on your hearts and on your souls. Bind them as a sign on your arms [near your hearts] and as Tefillin [above your foreheads] between your eyes. You must also teach them to your children to speak of them when you are dwelling in your house and when you traveling on the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. You must also write them on the doorposts of your houses and your gates, so that your days and your children's days will be prolonged on the land that God swore to your ancestors to give them when heavenly days are [again revealed] on the earth.

# sources & personalities

A brief glimpse at some of the sources for this booklet

**MISHNA:** The Mishna is the first written compilation of the Oral Law given to Moses at Sinai and was completed in the third century CE by Rabbi Yehuda the Prince. It consists of highly condensed teachings explaining the laws of the Torah. **BABYLONIAN TALMUD:** The Talmud is an elaboration and explanation of the teachings of the Mishna and was compiled in Babylon about 5th century CE by the sages Ravina and Rav Ashi.

**THE ZOHAR:** One of the most seminal works of Kabbalah based on the teachings of the 1st century Sage, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. The Zohar consists mainly of a mystical commentary on the Torah.

**RABBI ISAAC LURIA (ARIZAL):** Master Kabbalist (1534-1572). Considered the father of contemporary Kabbalah, The *Ari* (as Rabbi Luria is referred to) developed a Kabbalistic system descriptive of all reality. The main work of Rabbi Luria is known as the *Eitz Chaim* or Tree of Life and was recorded from his teachings by his student Rabbi Chaim Vital.

**RABBI MOSHE CHAIM LUZZATO (RAMCHAL):** (1707-1746) Italian Kabbalist born in Padua. By the age of 14 years old Luzzato had mastered the complex Kabbalistic system of Rabbi Isaac Luria. He was praised by Rabbi Elijah of Vilna (The Vilna Gaon) as “having attained the most profound understanding of Judaism a mortal can attain”

**SEFAS EMES:** Rabbi Yehudah Aryeh Leib Alter, (1847-1905). Second Hasidic Rebbe of the Ger Dynasty (the largest Hasidic group in pre-WWII Poland). A prodigy from a young age and outstanding Torah scholar, author of works on the Talmud, Midrash and Zohar.

# tefillin resources

places you can buy Tefillin

## SOURCES FOR ACQUIRING TEFFILIN IN ISRAEL

**Hasofer:** [www.hasofer.com](http://www.hasofer.com) (ships internationally) 10 Straus St, Jerusalem  
Tel: + 972-2-538-3701, Fax: + 972-2-538-8645, [info@hasofer.com](mailto:info@hasofer.com)

**Tefillin Bet-El:** [www.tefillin.co.il](http://www.tefillin.co.il) (ships internationally) [daniel@tefillin.co.il](mailto:daniel@tefillin.co.il)  
Tel: + 972-2-997-4560, +972 50 822 1543 Fax: + 972-2-997-4017

**Tefillin Oter-Israel:** [www.otr-israel.co.il](http://www.otr-israel.co.il) (ships internationally)  
Tel: +972-2-653-5514, Fax: +972-2-653-5725 Kanfey Nesharim 31, Jerusalem

# further reading

a few of the many excellent resources available for further study



**Rav Dov Ber Pinson - Tefillin. A How To Guide - Download the Free PDF**  
[tinyurl.com/dbp-tefillin](http://tinyurl.com/dbp-tefillin)

**Tefillin** by Aryeh Kaplan (Also found in The Aryeh Kaplan Anthology II)

**Tefillin - A Chasidic Discourse by Rabbi Nathan of Breslov** - Avraham Greenbaum

**Tefillin and Mezuzos** by Yerachmiel Askotzky - Targum Press

# feedback + contributions

if you have enjoyed this work we would love to hear your feedback

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# select laws & details

A few important points

**Time for Tefillin.** Tefillin can be put on in the morning as soon as it gets light until sunset. Some opinions state Tefillin can be put on an hour before dawn until sunset. It is best to put on Tefillin when arising in the morning as if one waits till later it is easy to forget. Tefillin are not worn on Shabbat or Torah designated festivals.

**Praying with Tefillin.** The act of putting on Tefillin is a Mitzvah all it’s own, even without praying. The custom though is to at least say the three sections of the Shema prayer with Tefillin on.

**Holiness.** Tefillin are sacred. They should not be brought into the bathroom. One should attend to one’s needs (if necessary) before putting on Tefillin.

**Checking Tefillin.** It is a good practice to have Tefillin inspected every few years by an expert. Problems that require fixing can occur, especially in the straps or housing of the Tefillin. Strictly speaking the scrolls do not have to be checked but it is a good practice to check them as well. Tefillin exposed to extreme temperatures are especially prone to problems and should be checked promptly.

**Types of Tefillin.** There are three types of Tefillin: **Gasos**, from a single piece of the thick skin of an animal such as a cow or ox, **Dakos**, made from a single piece of the thin skin of a goat or sheep and **Peshutos**, made from many pieces of thin leather folded and glued together. According to all opinions the most superior form of Tefillin are Gasos. While Gasos are more expensive, *Tefillin are a lifelong investment and it is strongly recommended that one purchase Gasos type Tefillin.*

Please be aware there are many important laws and details beyond the scope of this introductory work, it is recommended one explore further with one of the books or PDF’s recommended in the resources section or speak with their local Rabbi.



Founder: **Gary Sheva**

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May he continue his good works עֵר מֵאֵה וְעֹשִׂים שָׁנָה.

Dedicated by the **BLUMENFRUCHT FAMILY** in honor of our grandparents Victor Sasson, Jacob Blumenfrucht, and Frieda and Eli Stern

**MICHAEL AND DEBBIE ALPERT** In Memory of their Grandparents

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# TEFILLIN ARE THE LIGHT OF ISRAEL

*-Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*

Tefillin and the Land of Israel are both bridges. They are both places where there is a special connection to God through the physical world. The Tefillin on our Head is like the Temple in Jerusalem.



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