

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MITZVAH OF TEFILLIN

Tefillin are Israel's strength. It is written (Deut. 28:10), "And the peoples of the earth shall see that G-d's Name is called upon you, and they shall be awed by you." This refers to the Tefillin

(Talmud Berachot 6a)

ALL THAT FOLLOWS ABOUT THE GREAT MITZVAH OF TEFILLIN APPLIES ONLY IF WE WEAR KOSHER TEFILLIN. IF WE ARE LAX ABOUT THIS, AND WE USE NON KOSHER TEFILLIN, THEN WE ARE NOT ONLY NOT ACCOMPLISHING A GREAT MITZVAH BUT WE ARE ALSO TRANSGRESSING BY SAYING BLESSINGS IN VAIN. SO PLEASE BE CAREFUL AND DILIGENT IN PROCURING FOR YOURSELF KOSHER TEFILLIN

THE TEFILLIN OF ALL THE JEWISH PEOPLE

1) Rabbi Nachman of Breslov once heard that the saintly Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berdichov was forced to wander about. He called his scribe and asked him to examine his Tefillin. He explained that a Tzadik like Rabbi Levi Yitzchok is the glory of his generation, and as such, is the Tefillin of the entire Jewish people. If a defect in our people's Tefillin forces him to so wander, all Tefillin must be examined for a blemish. Yemey Moharnat 28b

2) G-d desires that we wear Tefillin. Therefore, when we wear them, we are enveloped by His desire. This is true of all other Mitzvot as well. Lekutey Moharan 34:4

3) Tefillin can help a man master the perfection of speech. Ibid. 38:1

4) Tefillin can bring a person to Truth. Ibid. 47

5) The light of Tefillin illuminates the holiness of the Land of Israel. Ibid.

TEFILLIN HELP US RECOGNIZE THE TRUTH

- 6) Every day, G-d grants us signs, showing us the way of truth. Through Tefillin you can attain the wisdom to recognize these signs. Ibid. 54:3
- 7) When you overcome evil desires, you break the seat of the Evil One. You are then worthy of the holy seal of Tefillin and the deep insight they provide. Lekutey Moharan Tanina 5:7
- 8) G-d's providence is revealed through Tefillin. Ibid. 40

WISDOM AND THE FEAR OF G-D

- 9) The boxes of Tefillin represent wisdom, and the straps, the fear of G-d. You can only bind yourself to wisdom through the fear of G-d. Ibid. 77
- 10) A man who washes his hands, puts on Tefillin, says the Sh'ma and prays is considered to have built an altar and offered sacrifice. He is also said to have truly accepted upon himself the yoke of heaven. (Berachot 14b, 15a)
- 11) Rabbi Jeremiah saw that Rabbi Zera was very jubilant. He asked, "is it not written (Prov. 14:23), 'in seriousness there is profit?'" Rabbi Zera answered, "I rejoice for I have worn Tefillin today." (Berachos 30b)
- 12) It is told that the saintly Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berdichov once saw a simple Jew drop his Tefillin. The man gently lifted them up and lovingly kissed them. The Rabbi then raised his hands and said, "Lord of the universe: The Jewish people are Your Tefillin. You have dropped them and let them lie on the ground for more than two thousand years, trampled by their enemies. Why do You not pick them up? Why do You not do as much as the most simple Jew? Why?"
- 13) It is told in the name of the blessed Baal Shem Tov that the Mitzvah of Tefillin is so holy it can bring man to a yearning that will make him depart this world. He must therefore bind them with straps, holding body and soul together. Sefer Baal Shem Tov, VeEsChanan 83

HAPPY IS THE MAN WHO WEARS TEFILLIN

- 14) Happy is the man who wears Tefillin and fathoms their mystery. Zohar 1:129a
- 15) When a man wears Tefillin and Tzitzit, he enters a realm where the Holy One Himself surrounds him with the mystery of the Highest Faith. Ibid. 1: 140b

16) When a man places Tefillin on his arm, he should stretch out his hand as if to draw in the Community of Israel and embrace it with his right arm. Thus, it is written (Cant. 2:6), "Let His left hand be under my head, and His right arm embrace me." Ibid. 3:55a

17) The man who wears Tefillin is crowned as on high. He enters the perfection of Unity, and so resembles his Creator. Ibid. 3:81a

HE WHO WEARS TEFILLIN IS CONSIDERED A KING

18) He who wears Tefillin is called a king on earth, even as G-d is called a King in heaven. Ibid. 3:169b

19) Every single Jew is surrounded by seven Mitzvot. He has Tefillin on his arm and head, a Mezuzah on his door, and four Tzitzit on his garment. Thus, King David said (Psalm 119:164), "I will praise You each day with seven." Tosefta, Berachos 6:31

20) A man must constantly touch his Tefillin and not take his mind from them. Shabbat 12a

21) One should be as dedicated in wearing Tefillin as Elisha, the Master of Wings. Once the government issued a decree that anyone wearing Tefillin should be put to death. Elisha defied the decree and publicly wore Tefillin. He was caught by one of the king's agents and captured. They asked him, "What is in your hand." Concealing his Tefillin, he replied, "A dove's wing." When they forced open his hand, they indeed found the wing of a dove in place of his Tefillin. From then on, he was called Elisha, the Master of Wings. Ibid. 49a

MANY JEWS RISKED THEIR LIVES ONLY TO WEAR TEFILLIN

22) Many Jews risked their lives in order to wear Tefillin. Ibid. 130a

23) It is written (Eccl. 9:8), "Let your garments always be white, and let your head never lack oil." This speaks of the Tzitzis and Tefillin. Ibid. 153a

24) Man always needs a sign of his bond with G-d. The Shabbat itself is such a sign, but on weekdays, this sign is Tefillin. Eruvin 96a

THE ONE WHO DOESN'T WEAR TEFILLIN IS BANNED BY G-D

25) One who does not wear Tefillin is counted among those banned by G-d. Pesachim 113b

26) Who is a sinner with his body? One who never wears Tefillin. (Rosh HaShanah) 17a

27) The students asked Rabbi Ada ben Ahavah, "Why were you worthy of such long life?" He replied, "One reason is because I always wore Tefillin." (Taanit 20b)

28) Abraham told the King of Sodom (Gen. 14:23), "I will not even take a thread or a shoe strap." Because of this, G-d gave Abraham's children the threads of Tzitzit and the straps of Tefillin. Sotah 44b

THE MITZVAH OF TEFILLIN INCLUDE ALL OTHER MITZVOT

29) The Mitzvah of Tefillin encompasses all others. Kidushin 35a

30) A man wearing Tefillin on his arm and head, Tzitzit on his garment, and a Mezuzah on his doorpost, is certain not to sin. Ibid.

31) One who does not wear Tefillin violates eight commandments. Ibid 44a

32) He who wears Tefillin is worthy of long life. Ibid

33) It is written (Cant. 2:6), "Let His left hand be under my head, and His right hand embrace me." G-d thus embraces man who wears Tefillin. Shir HaShirim Rabbah 2:1 7

34) It is written (Ibid. 4:1), "Behold you are beautiful My love." The beauty of Israel before G-d is Tefillin. Ibid. 4:1

35) It is written (Ibid. 8:6), "Set Me for a seal on your heart, as a seal on your arm." The Tefillin are this seal of G-d. Ibid. 8:4

36) It is written (Ex. 14:29), "And the waters were a wall to their right and to their left." The Mezuzah forms a wall to Israel's right, and the Tefillin to their left. Mechilta

37) Wearing Tefillin is like reading the Torah. Pesikta Zutrasa, Shmos 13

WEARING TEFILLIN IS CONSIDERED AS STUDYING THE TORAH ALL DAY

38) The Jewish people said to G-d, "We would like to immerse ourselves in the Torah day and night, but do not have the time." G-d replied, "Keep the Mitzvah of Tefillin, and I will count it as if you spent all your time with My Torah." (Midrash Tehillim 1)

39) The wicked say (Psalms 2:3), "Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their thongs." They "break their bands asunder" and abandon the Tefillin on their arms, and "cast away their thongs," the Tefillin on their heads. Ibid. 2

40) The Mashiach will come to give the world Mitzvot such as Tefillin. Ibid. 21

41) Man is bound to the Mother of Israel with two signs, the Tefillin and the Covenant of Abraham. Tikuney Zohar 7a

42) When a man wears Tefillin, a voice proclaims to all the angels of the Chariot who watch over prayer, "Give honor to the image of the King, the man who wears Tefillin." Ibid. 55 (124a)

43) A man wearing Tefillin is enveloped by the supernal Mind, and the Divine Presence does not depart from him. Ibid. 69 (159a)

44) When a man wakes up in the morning and binds himself with the holy mark of Tefillin, four angels greet him as he leaves his door. Zohar Chadash, Terumah 4 lb

TEFILLIN ARE LIKE CHAINS BINDING THE EVIL INCLINATION

45) The Tefillin straps are like chains binding the Evil One. Tikuney Zohar Chadash 101 b

46) There was a pious man who was very careful about always wearing Tefillin. When he died, the angels on high eulogized him with the verse (Deut. 33:21), "He kept G-d's righteousness"

47) G-d so loved Israel that He surrounded them with Mitzvot: Tefillin on the arm and head, Tzitzit on their garment, and a Mezuzah on their door. Menachot 43b