

Judaism 101: AFFIXING A MEZUZAH

This ancient tradition is from the Torah: "Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deuteronomy 6:9). The sages say that this refers to the words of the *Shema* and the *Ve'ahavta*, which command us to believe in one God and to love God with all our heart, mind and soul.

You will need to purchase two items: A parchment with the Hebrew passages, called the *Klaf* and a case to hold the parchment. Mezuzah cases come in a wide variety of styles and sizes, but all serve to protect the parchment. These items are available from the Beth Tikvah Sisterhood Gift Shop.

Interesting fact: the back of the parchment always has the Hebrew expression: *kuzo bemuchsaz kuzo*, which is a coded expression for *Adonai Eloheyenu Adonai*, "The Lord is our God". In addition, there is the word *Shaddai*, meaning "Almighty God" and is an acronym for "Guardian of Doors of Israel"

Simply roll the parchment tightly from the end to the beginning so that the word *Shema* is on top and insert it into the case. The Mezuzah, its top inclining inward, is affixed to the upper part of the doorpost on the right, as one enters the house.

The Mezuzah is raised and one says: This ancient symbol speaks to us of our need to love God and to live by the words of the Torah. We affix the Mezuzah to the doorposts of this house with the hope that it will always remind us of our duties to God and to one another. May the divine spirit of love and kindness always fill this home.

Affix the Mezuzah with two nails into the doorpost and say the following two blessings:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוֵּנוּ
לְקַבֹּעַ מְזוּזָה:

Baruch atah Adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu likboah mezuzah.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has made us holy with mitzvot and instructed us to affix the *mezuzah*.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהִחַיֵּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ
לְזֶמַּן הַזֶּה:

Baruch atah Adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam she-hecheyanu vekimanu vehigiyanu lazman hazeh.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and helped us to reach this moment.

