

MAKE FRINGES ON THE CORNERS*

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם
וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל־כַּנְּפֵי בְּגָדֵיהֶם
לְדֹרֹתָם. . . .

Speak to the children of Israel,
and say to them
that they shall make fringes on the corners of their garments,
throughout their generations. . . .

Speak to the children of Israel—Help the people to understand the consequences of ignoring the mitzvot, so they will want to take pains to remember them, and so they will recognize the need for practical reminders (S.R. Hirsch). *And say to them that they shall make fringes on the corners of their garments*—One interpretation of why fringes (צִיצִית) are so called is because, as with “looking through [מְצִיץ] the lattice [חַרְבִּים]” (or openings), in the Song of Songs (2:9), the reference is to the verse (Num. 15:40), “that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of Adonai” (Rashi). *Throughout their generations*—The Torah, the plan and pillar of creation, shall sustain and be sustained eternally by those who dedicate themselves to create openings (חַרְבִּים) through which their fellow Jews look to the mitzvot and do them.

* Bamidbar 15:38 (in Shlach)