

A Seatbelt Beracha

A suggested new *beracha*/blessing for putting on a seatbelt:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ
עַל שְׂמִירַת הַנַּפְשׁ.

Blessed are you, O Lord, our God, king of the universe, who has made us unique by giving us commandments and has commanded us to guard our lives.

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While there is no ancient *beracha* for using seatbelts or for the act of protecting oneself, there are biblical verses that a Talmudic story sees as urging such behavior:

מַעֲשֵׂה בְּחָסִיד אֶחָד שֶׁהָיָה מְתַפְּלֵל בְּדֶרֶךְ, בָּא הַגִּמּוֹן אֶחָד וְנָתַן  
לוֹ שְׁלוֹם וְלֹא הִחְזִיר לוֹ שְׁלוֹם. הִמְתִּין לוֹ עַד שֶׁסִּיִּים תִּפְּלוּתוֹ.  
לְאַחַר שֶׁסִּיִּים תִּפְּלוּתוֹ אָמַר לוֹ: רִיקָא, וְהֵלֵא כְּתוּב  
בְּתוֹרַתְכֶם: "רַק הַשְׁמֶר לָךְ וּשְׁמֹר נַפְשְׁךָ, " וְכָתִיב:  
"וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם מְאֹד לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם." כְּשֶׁנִּתְּתִי לָךְ שְׁלוֹם לָמָּה לֹא  
הִחְזַרְתָּ לִּי שְׁלוֹם? אִם הָיִיתִי חוֹתֵךְ רֹאשְׁךָ בְּסִיִּי מִי הָיָה  
תוֹבֵעַ אֶת דָּמְךָ מִיָּדַי!?

*A tale of pious person praying along the way: A Roman officer came and greeted him, but he did not respond. The official waited for him to complete his prayer and after he finished, said to him: Fool! Is it not written in your Torah: Watch yourself, guard your life, and, Guard your very lives? When I greeted you, why did you not respond? If I had were to cut off your head with my sword, who would demand justice for you?*

Berachot 32b