

ברכת הבנים Blessing One's Children

It is customary for parents to place their hands on their childrens' heads and recite the following:

לבנות: For daughters:

יְשִׁמְךָ אֱ-לֹהִים כְּסָרָה רִבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה. Y'simeikh Elohim k'Sarah, Rivkah, Rahel, v'Leah.

לבנים: For sons:

יְשִׁמְךָ אֱ-לֹהִים כְּאֶפְרַיִם וְכִמְנַשֶּׁה. Y'simkhah Elohim k'Efrayim v'khiMenasheh.

לכולם: For all:

יְבָרְכֶךָ יי וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ. Y'varekh'khah Adonai V'yishm'rekha.

יָאֵר יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיַחַנְךָ. Ya'eir Adonai panav eilekha vihuneka.

יִשָּׂא יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשֵּׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם. Yisa Adonai panav eilekha v'yaseim l'kha shalom.

For daughters: May God bless you as God blessed Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

For sons: May God bless you as God blessed Efrayim and Menasheh.

For all: May God bless you and keep you. May God cause God's spirit to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May God turn God's spirit unto you and grant you peace.

Meditations on Blessing One's Children

These meditations may be recited along with the traditional text:

For daughters: May God bless you with the strength and vision of Sarah, with the wisdom and foresight of Rebecca, with the courage and compassion of Rachel, with the gentleness and graciousness of Leah – and their faith in the promise of our people's heritage.

For sons: May you be blessed by God as were Efrayim and Menasheh, who understood that wherever they lived their Jewishness was the essence of their lives; who loved and honored their elders and teachers, and who cherished one another without pettiness or envy, accepting in humility the blessings that were theirs.