



RECITING TEHILLIM

The Value of Tehillim

Once, in the time of the holy Baal Shem Tov, it was decreed in Heaven that a certain Jewish settlement should be destroyed, R"l. The Baal Shem Tov called upon his friends, the hidden *tzaddikim*, Reb Mordechai and Reb Kehos, to join him to form a *beis din* and find a way to nullify the decree.

The *beis din* convened, and the *neshama* of the Baal Shem Tov ascended to the heavenly worlds. There he saw that the decree had already been sealed and could not be annulled. However, as he passed through the heavenly spheres while descending back to the physical world, he saw a magnificent light created by the words of *Tehillim* that were being recited by a simple villager. This Yid would complete the entire *Sefer Tehillim* five times every day, but since he was quite ignorant, he sometimes said *Tehillim* in unclean places. Nevertheless, *HaShem* valued his *Tehillim* so much, that a privileged share in *Olam HaBa* awaited him.

The Baal Shem Tov immediately traveled to see this man and asked him, "Would you be willing to sacrifice your share in *Olam HaBa* in order to save an entire Jewish community?"

The simple Yid responded, "If I have a share in *Olam HaBa*, I am ready to forfeit it for such a cause."

And the decree was annulled.

(שמח"ת תרצ"ז - קובץ מכתבים ע' 201)

On the *pasuk* "Yiheyu leratzon imrei fi" (may the words of my mouth find favor before you), the *Medrash* teaches that Dovid HaMelech requested that his words of praise be written and engraved for all future generations. Furthermore, he asked *HaShem* that the recitation of *Tehillim* be considered just as worthy as the study of the most complex *halachos* of the Torah.

(מדרש תהלים א,ח.)

The Frierdiker Rebbe related: "When I was little boy I once wondered whether *malochim* are able to calculate numbers. When I asked my father, he replied, 'That's a good question! But I am certain that Malach Michael counts all the *Tehillim* that one says, and with it he creates a chandelier that lights up, Above and below, for that person and for his children.'

"Following this, my father would often ask me, 'How is your chandelier doing?'"

(סה"ש תש"ט ע' 336)

The Rebbe explains that even when *Tehillim* is said without particular *kavonos* and at a quick pace, as many do on *Shabbos Mevarchim*, this nevertheless has a tremendous effect. In fact, in the *Yehi Ratzon*, we ask that our reading be considered as if it came from the mouth of Dovid HaMelech himself.

The Frierdiker Rebbe emphasized that the *kedusha* of the words, even when they are not understood, is as precious in the eyes of *HaShem* as a *korbon*. One should learn the translation of the words, but not recite that instead of the original.

(התועודיות תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 814, אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ד ע' תנט)

Great Powers

About 650 years ago, in a village in Germany, there lived a simple pious Yid who was able to study Torah only at its simplest level. Every day, year after year, he would recite the entire *Sefer Tehillim*.

Less than thirty days after he passed away, he appeared in a dream to a *chochom* from the nearby city of Worms. In the dream he stood holding a little *Tehillim*, and he cautioned the *chochom*, "Warn the people in my village to escape immediately to the surrounding towns. During my life I protected them with my recitation of *Tehillim*, but now they are in grave danger."

Early the next morning, the *chochom* sent a messenger with an urgent letter telling the villagers of the looming danger. The people heeded his words, and they were saved.

(מנהגי וורמייזא סדר תהלים)

The Baal Shem Tov would say that reciting the entire *Sefer Tehillim* is a *segula* for crushing any verdict on a person.

The *Tzemach Tzedek* once told his chassidim, "If only you knew the power of *pesukim* of *Tehillim* and their effect in Heaven, you would recite them at all times. The *kapitlach* of *Tehillim* break through all barriers as they soar aloft, higher and higher, uninterrupted. They prostrate themselves before the Master of the Universe,

bringing results with kindness and mercy."

(הוספות לכש"ט ס"ז, היום יום כ"ד שבט)

The Frierdiker Rebbe related how in all generations, whenever a decree was issued against Yidden, they would run to *shul* to recite *Tehillim*. The *melamdin* would recite *Tehillim* with their young *talmidim*, for "their breath is sinless." The Frierdiker Rebbe added that the numerous Hamans in every generation are eliminated by the heartfelt *Tehillim* of a simple Yid – "not by sword or spear, but only by a heartfelt *kapitel* of *Tehillim*."

In the year תר"ג (1843), the interior minister of Russia summoned the *Tzemach Tzedek*, along with three other leaders representing the Yidden of Russia, in order to pass new decrees upon the Yidden. When they arrived in Petersburg and heard of the *gezeira*, they immediately ordered three *kapitlach* of *Tehillim* to be recited in all *shuls* and *chadorim* (כ, כב, טט). This required *mesirus nefesh*, for the czar was likely to punish them for supposedly assuming control over Russian citizens. Shortly after, that evil minister fell ill and died, and was replaced by a neutral minister who canceled the decrees.

In the year תרמ"ב (1882), which became known as "a year of bloody pogroms," the Yiddische leaders led by the Rebbe Maharash revealed a secret plot against the Yidden. They likewise called upon the Yidden to recite the above-mentioned *kapitlach*, and within one month the evil plan fell through.

In the year תרס"ו (1906), pogroms began to erupt throughout Russia. The Yiddische leaders, lead by the Rebbe Rashab and Reb Chaim of Brisk, gathered in Petersburg, where they heard of the czarist government's secret plan to instigate pogroms in 116 Yiddische communities. At that time, too, they requested that the three *kapitlach* be recited by Yidden everywhere, and shortly afterwards the plan failed.

(אג"ק הרי"צ ח"ב ע' קלא, סה"ש תש"ט ע' 308)

CONSIDER THIS!

■ What about *Tehillim* is so effective: the *kavonos* that one has or the intrinsic *kedusha* of the words?

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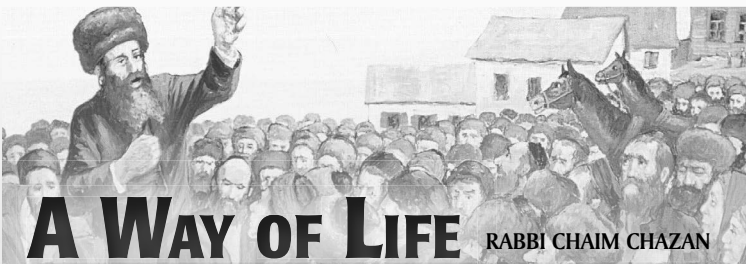
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A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

Hasagas Gevul

May one pick up someone who is waiting at a bus stop for a Jewish owned bus and give him a ride, thereby causing the company to lose the income of that customer?

- If the person offering the ride would charge for the ride this would be a case of encroaching on someone else's livelihood, which would be prohibited in this case where the profit definitely would have gone to the bus company. The issue of competition among businesses in halacha is particularly complex as it depends on both many unresolved halachic disputes and the particular business conditions¹.
- As a rule of thumb, a distinction² is made in halacha between opening a competing business that will eliminate the possibility of the first establishment to make a living (*posekchayuso*), such as a neighborhood that cannot sustain two stores selling the same product, which is prohibited, and a case where both could do business but opening a second store would cause the first to lose customers and thereby lose income, regarding which a *shaila* must be asked.
- Even when the letter of the law permits one to enter into the field of expertise or commerce of one's fellow, the *Alter Rebbe* writes in his *Shulchan Aruch*³ that it is *amidaschassidus* – an act of piety not to do so.
- When one party invests in an attempt to make a profit, it is prohibited for another party to step in and reap the rewards of the first party's efforts. (This is included in the halachic principle known as *anihamehapechbecharara*). In the case of picking up someone from a bus stop and charging for the ride, the bus company invested in advertising its service and that people should gather at this bus stop, therefore a taxi picking up someone waiting is considered reaping the rewards of the efforts of another.
- However, in our case where the person giving the ride merely desires to do a favor and does not intend to charge the person waiting for the bus, it would be permitted. *Chazal* only prohibited **taking** the profit that another person worked to attain, but our case is analogous to a person giving his friend a gift to save him from needing to buy the item. Although the store owner lost the profit he would have received had the friend not given the present, the giver of the present has not **taken anything** that the store owner would have profited, and hence there is no prohibition⁴.

1. ראה בכ"ז בשו"ע ר חו"מ דיני הפקר והשגת גבול סי"ג, ובאמרי יעקב שם, פתחי חושן גניבה ואנאה פ"ט, אנציקלופדיה תלמודית ערך יורד לאומנות חבירו והדברים ארוכים.
2. עי' המצויין במקורות שבהע' 1 בפרט
3. בשו"ת הת"ס חו"מ סי' קיה, משאת בנימין סי' כז הובא בפ"ת חו"מ קנו, ג, צ"צ חו"מ סי' כג.
4. שו"ת משיב בהלכה חו"מ סי' ריב.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

ליכות

התמים מנחם מענדל קארף ושטערנא שרה גליק שיחיו לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשעטמוצ'א

OUR HEROES

כ"א אלול

Reb Yonasan Eibshits

Reb Yonasan Eibshits was born in Cracow around the year ה'ת"נ (1690). When he was still very young, he was noted for his genius and sharp mind, as well as oratory skills. He was also learned in secular studies which he used to help defend the Yidden. He eventually became the Rav in the famous *kehilos* of AH"U (Altoona, Hamburg, and Vadsbek). He wrote many very well-known *seforim*, such as "*Kreisi Upleisi*", "*Urim Vetumim*" and "*Yaaros Devash*". He passed away on the 21st of Elul תקכ"ד (1764), in Altoona.



When he was still a young man, Reb Yonasan was elected as the Rav of the great city Prague. Seeing that some of the leaders in the community were disturbed by his young age, the young Rav sent them a letter to calm their reservations, "Do not worry. Although my young age may be a blemish (*mum*), it will wane over time (*'mum oiver'*)..."



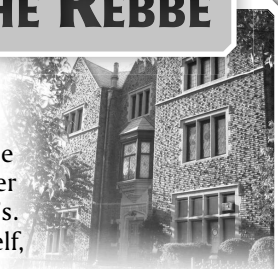
A wealthy man in Reb Yonasan's community once bought the honor of *Chassan Torah* for a large sum of money. This particular gentleman was quite short of being a Torah scholar, but considered himself to be very learned. Upon hearing who had bought the honor, Reb Yonasan commented, "Indeed we have here a pious *chassan*; he has not even looked at his *kallah* for an entire year..."

ליכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

The Baal Shem Tov's Work

Reb Dovberish Shapiro, the son of the Rebbe of Norol, served as the principal of the Belzer *Cheder* of Williamsburg during the 5710's. Many of the students, as well as he himself, resided in Crown Heights.



Usually, the students would travel with the school bus to Williamsburg, but on this day, the bus broke down. Seeing no other way, Reb Dovberish was compelled to collect all the children, in order to take them with public transport. And so it was, a procession of little *yiddische* children paraded through the streets of Crown Heights, with Reb Dovberish in the lead.

Suddenly, they saw the Rebbe walking on the sidewalk, in their direction. The Rebbe stopped, smiled a broad smile of satisfaction, and said to Reb Dovberish: "*Ir tut dem Baal Shem Tov's arbet!*" (You are doing the *Baal Shem Tov's* work!).

The day changed for Reb Dovberish. What had begun as a miserable failure of a morning, turned out to be a memory he will cherish forever.



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