



HEARTFELT PLEADING (2)

Simple Tehillim

The Friediker Rebbe related: Reb Ber, the father of Reb Mendel the *meshares*, was a simple Yid who constantly recited *Tehillim* while delivering milk. At his *bar-mitzva* he had been by the *Tzemach Tzedek*, who instructed him to say the entire *Tehillim* daily, as well as while he traveled. Years later, before his *chassuna*, the Rebbe reminded him, "Remember to say *Tehillim* at all times."

He once told the *Tzemach Tzedek*: "I wake up every day at a quarter to 12 a.m. and read *Tikkun Chatzos*, *Tehillim* and *Zohar*. I don't understand what I'm reading, but saying it all gives me such pleasure! I'm a wagon-driver, so I know that a man can travel only when the horses are harnessed..."

When I related the above to my father, he remarked: "The world stands on the *Tehillim* of these simple Yidden. The pleasure it brings *HaShem* is beyond description."

(סה"ש תש"ז ע' 241, סה"ש תש"א ע' 86)

A number of simple, unlearned businessmen and farmers once arrived to spend *Shabbos* in *Mezhibuzh*. On Friday night they joined the *seuda* of the Baal Shem Tov, who showered them with attention. To one of them, the *tzaddik* gave the wine remaining in his *becher*, another was given slices of *challa*, and some had the *zechus* of receiving fish and meat from his plate. Watching this conduct of the Baal Shem Tov and seeing the attention he was giving to these simple folk, his *talmidim* were perplexed.

On *Shabbos*, as usual, the Baal Shem Tov had the *seuda* alone with his *talmidim*. The unlettered guests had their own hurried *seuda* and returned to *shul* to read *Tehillim*, while at the *seuda* the Baal Shem Tov delivered a *maamar*. Inspired by the profound teachings of their Rebbe, the *talmidim* sang a meditative *niggun*. Feeling so greatly uplifted, some of them were relieved that this time they did not have to share their *seuda* with ignorant people. They still wondered about the affection shown to them by the Baal Shem Tov.

Hardly had the thought crossed their minds when the *tzaddik* became deeply serious, and began to describe the unique quality of the *avoda* of a simple, sincere Yid. The *talmidim* resumed the *niggun* while the Baal Shem Tov sat deep in thought. Suddenly he opened his eyes, and told his *talmidim* that each of them should place his right hand on his neighbor's shoulder. He then told them to close their eyes, and he closed the

circle by placing his holy hands on the shoulders of those near him. The *talmidim* suddenly felt themselves transported to the highest worlds by sweet music. This was the music of familiar *pesukim* of *Tehillim*, interspersed with requests in informal Yiddish that sprang spontaneously from warm and humble hearts. The *talmidim*, overcome by the devout sincerity of these *tefilos*, sat entranced and trembling, their eyes closed, tears coursing down their faces. They wished that they too could attain such heights.

When the Baal Shem Tov removed his hands, breaking the circle, the music was no longer to be heard. The *talmidim* were instructed to open their eyes and continue singing. Soon after, the *tzaddik* explained that the spiritual bliss that they had experienced had been aroused by the *Tehillim* being recited in the next room by the simple Yidden. Their words, springing from the deep faith that is their very essence, were bringing *HaShem* indescribable pleasure.

(קובץ מכתבים אודות אמירת תהלים ע' 194)

The Friediker Rebbe described how in the past, even ordinary Chabad *chassidim* had a *pnimiyus* to them. Even those who did not understand the meaning of the words said *Tehillim* with an inner sincerity that was superior even to the *Tehillim* with tears that is said today.

(סה"ש קיץ ת"ש ע' 101)

Reading with Emotion

The reading of *Tehillim* has tremendous power, repelling evil decrees from a person, his family and even his entire generation, and generously drawing down *beracha* and *hatzlacha*. There is a tradition that a person in need of a *yeshua* should recite the entire *Tehillim* every day, humbly and without interruption, and he will be saved. Also, nothing protects a person from evil more than the *Kaddish* recited after the *tzibbur* says *Tehillim*.

However, these qualities apply to those who read *Tehillim* as it ought to be read, word by word, with a *niggun* of gratitude and of request to *HaShem*. We should put our heart into understanding those *tefilos*, even though we are unable to perceive their true depth, for they were revealed to Dovid HaMelech by *Ruach HaKodesh* to ward off trouble. Nevertheless, a person who does not understand them can also merit their positive effect, provided that they are recited slowly and carefully.

(פלא יועץ ערך תהלים)

The Friediker Rebbe writes: Whoever says *Tehillim* every day, pleasantly and deliberately, grants the public protection and salvation. His words are precious in the eyes of *HaShem*. The *malochim* embrace and kiss the letters of his words and carry them before His throne with joy and awe, where they intercede on his behalf, on behalf of his family, and on behalf of his entire community.

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ה ע' רמב)

In the days of czarist Russia, Yiddish children were often snatched and taken off to be trained in the militia. Many such six- and seven-year-olds from various cities were once conscripted as a group, and their parents, wailing fathers and mothers, followed them until the officers drove them away.

At some point during their lengthy trek, the children were temporarily confined in a fortified house. They began to talk about their unfortunate circumstances, how they were being forcibly taken with the intention of eventual conversion, with no opportunity for escape. They knew that if they were to fake illness, they would be abandoned or poisoned. The tearful parting of their parents pained them as well. Then they reminded each other: "At home, whenever there was a *tzara*, people always said *Tehillim*. There's no greater calamity than what is happening to us, so let us *daven*."

However, they had no *seforim* and didn't know any *kapitlach* of *Tehillim* by heart – but from their days in *cheder* they remembered the tune to which they used to sing their way through the *pesukim* of *Tehillim*. Their cries pierced the heavens, and through a quick turn of salvation, they were all returned to their homes.

(שער יששכר תקע בשופר אות טו)

CONSIDER THIS!

- What does it mean to say *Tehillim* with "inner sincerity"? How is that different than *kavana*?
- What new understanding did the *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov learn about the simple Yidden? Had they never before heard them recite *Tehillim*?

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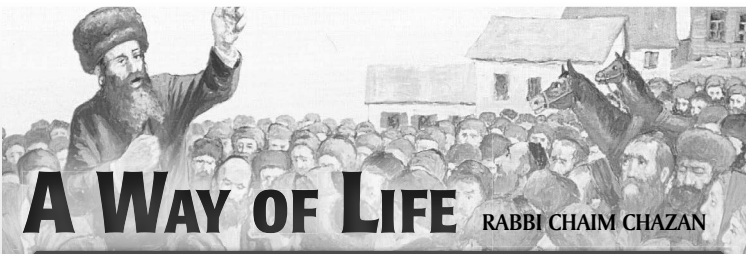
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A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

Drunkenness and Halacha

May one who is intoxicated *daven*, *bentch* or say *brachos* on food?

- Halacha differentiates between various alcohol induced states of mind: (a) One who is mildly intoxicated - *shosuy*. (b) One who is 'drunk' - *shikur*. (c) One who is completely unaware of his actions - *shikruso shel lot*.
- One who drank a *revi'is* (3 fl oz, 86 ml) of wine should not *daven* until the effects of the wine have worn off (unless it was not immediately prior to, or during a meal). However, the Alter Rebbe writes¹: Since wines are not as strong as they used to be, accepted practice is to *daven* after drinking even more than a *revi'is*, as long as one doesn't feel the effects of the wine on his clarity of mind. Once one has drunk an amount that that affects his clarity of mind, he may not *daven*. If by waiting until the wine wears off he will miss the time frame for *davening* he should *daven* as a *shasuy*².
- One who is in a state of drunkenness that renders him unable to talk to a king - a *shikur*, may not *daven* even if he will miss the time frame for *davening*. He must make up the missed *davening* by saying two *shmonei esreis* by the next *tefila*. If he went ahead and *davened* in such a state, his *davening* is an abomination comparable to *avodah zara* and therefore must obviously be made up for during the next *tefila*³.
- *Bentching* is more lenient and a *shasuy* may *bentch*, since the Torah requires one to *bentch* after one is satiated which understandably includes times when he will be slightly intoxicated.
- The *rishonim* debate whether a *shikur* (one who is in a state of intoxication that renders him unable to talk to a king) may *bentch*. The Alter Rebbe *paskens*⁴ that *lechatchila* one should *bentch* before reaching such a state. However, if one did not, one should still *bentch*⁵, since the obligation to *bentch* is *min hatorah* where we are stringent when in doubt.
- Other⁶ *brachos* may be made even by a *shikur*. The reason for the distinction: One who is drunk is not considered mentally impaired and is held responsible for damages to other people's property, and he is therefore deemed fit to have sufficient mental capacity to make a *bracha*. However *davening* requires superior *kavana* for which one who is drunk is incapable of.
- One who has reached a state where he is completely unaware of his actions *shikruso shel lot*⁷ is prohibited from making any *bracha*⁸.

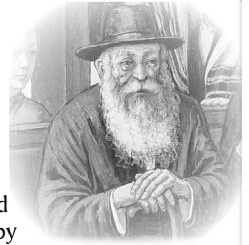
1. שוע"ר או"ח סי' צט סעי' ד.
2. אף שבתחילת הסעיף מסתפק לה"א ששיכור אסור לברך ברהמ"ז אם עבר ובירך אם צריך לחזור ולברך כשיפוג יינו בעוד שלא נתעכל המזון שבמעיו, הרי שיש כזה היכא תמצא, לכאן' כוונתו שם אם אירע כן בתור יוצא מן הכלל, אבל ע"פ רוב נדרש יותר זמן ולכן בסוף הסעיף לא כתב להמתין, וילע"ע.
3. שם.
4. רמב"ם הל' מכירה פכ"ט ה"י ח.
5. משנ"ב סי' צט ס"ק יא בשם הפמ"ג ופר"ח. וראה שוע"ר סי' קכח סעי' נא.
6. מן הסתם הטעם שלא כתב אדה"ז שימתין עד שיפוג יינו הוא, כי חיישינו שמא ישכח מלברך, ואף בכל אדם כתב בקיצור ש"ע ב"י שנכון שלא יהיה הרבה לפני ברכת המזון, ואולי יש להוסיף שבדרך כלל בשיכור שאינו יכול לדבר לפני המלך כלל - נדרש יותר זמן מכדי שיתעכל המזון בכדי שיפוג יינו.

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

OUR HEROES

Reb Groinem

Reb Shmuel Groinem Estherman was the first and foremost *mashpia* in Tomchei Temimim and set hundreds of *talmidim* in the ways of Chasidus. He was educated by the *chosid* Reb Avraham of Zhembin (Avremkeh Zhebiner). Hundreds of stories and anecdotes were heard from him and written down by his students. He passed away in תרפ"א.



After his *chassuna*, he lived in poverty, earning little money by guarding a mill or garden. He had no funds for light at night and he would learn chasidus by the light of the moon. From this, his eyesight was damaged and he had to spend weeks by a specialist to be healed.



Reb Groinem, the revered *mashpia* in Lubavitch, would invest time and effort to hear what *eltere chassidim* had to say, and would go to wherever he could hear a *gut vort*, an insightful teaching. Whenever an *elterer chossid* visited Lubavitch, Reb Groinem would visit him and listen to what he had to say.



Reb Yehuda Chitrik remembers: "Reb Groinem could not tolerate *yeshus*. Once, on Shabbos Parshas Kedoshim, he was talking about the specialness of learning *sefer kodshim*, as is explained in the *maamar* 'Vehadarta penei zakein.' He asked the group of *bochurim*, 'Who had taken upon themselves the learning of *masechta Zevachim* for *chalukas hashas* of Yud Tes Kislev?' One of the younger *bochurim* announced with pride that he had gotten that *masechta*. Reb Groinem turned away his face in distaste, for hearing this said with such smugness was utterly despicable to him.

(רשימו"ד חדש ע' 264)

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

"When I Ask for Something ..."

The Rebbetzin a"h related:

The Rebbe once came home from Seven Seventy, with a distraught expression on his face. To the Rebbetzin's inquires, the Rebbe responded, "A number of days ago, I requested at a *farbrengen* that the Chassidim report to me how much *nigleh* and *chassidus* they have each learned in the past few months.

"As I passed Brooklyn Avenue, I was expecting to see a line of people waiting to give in their notes, but no one was there. I approached Eastern Parkway, and again, there was no one. Then I came into Seven Seventy, and I received this much..."

The Rebbe paused and demonstrated with his fingers, showing a small pile. The Rebbe continued in a strained voice, "When I give out *lekach* or *kos shel brachah*, the queues are teeming with people! To take - everyone comes. But when I ask for something, which in truth is for their own good, very few participate..."

(As heard from Rabbi Leibel Groner)



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