

# HEARTFELT PLEADING

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שני בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

## TEHILLIM FROM THE HEART

In the year תרמ"ח the Rebbe Rashab was appointed as gabbai of the local Chevra Kadisha. As the minhag was, they led the Rebbe under a chupah, and then he delivered a maimar. The Rebbe spoke of the advantage of simple folk that follow directives more so than the learned, just as the foot can be more easily entered in hot water, than the head. When he finished, a group of simpletons approached the Rebbe and exclaimed: "Gabbai! If you will command so, we will even go into fire!" "Yes," the Rebbe replied, "One must go into fire! One must recite Tehillim with a 'fire' ("brenn")."

(סה"ש תרצ"ו ע' 165)

The Alter Rebbe writes in Shulchan Aruch that one should prefer to say fewer kapitlach Tehillim with more kavana rather than say many more without kavana.

(שו"ע אדה"ז מהדו"ב סי' א ס"ב)

The reading of Tehillim has tremendous power, repelling evil decrees from a person, his family and even his entire generation, and draws down much bracha and hatzlacha. There is a tradition, that one in need of a yeshuah, should recite each day the entire Tehillim uninterrupted with humility, and he will be saved. Also, nothing protects from evil more than the kaddish recited after saying Tehillim.

However, these advantages are for those who read the Tehillim properly, word by word with a niggun of thanks and beseeching to Hashem. One must put his heart to understand the words of Tehillim, though we are unable to perceive their true depth; for these tefilois were revealed to Dovid Hamelech in Ruach Hakodesh to ward off any trouble from every person. One who cannot understand them can also merit their effect, on condition that they recite them slowly and carefully.

(פלא יועץ ערך תהלים)

It is said in seforim that saying Tehillim without a 'hefsek' is a segulah for all good. The tzaddik Reb Moshe of Savran would interpret this to mean, that one should say the Tehillim with feeling and there be no separation between his mouth and heart. This is indeed the best segulah.

(תהלה לדוד ע' לג)

The chossid Reb Avrohom Chaim Rozenboim related what he witnessed as a young man of twenty years old:

One morning, while in the Rebbe's chotzer in Lubavitch, I noticed a ladder leaning against the outside of the Rebbe's house, for the purpose of cleaning the chimney. I realized that by climbing the ladder I would

be able to peer into the Rebbe's room and watch him daven.

It was after Shachris. The Rebbe sat in his talis and tefillin and read Tehillim with sweetness. Reading kapitel לט, he sang the possuk "Hoidi'eini Hashem" in an especially sweet tune, repeating it several times (the tune is existent today). I was taking delight in my ploy, considering my fortune to see the Rebbe like this, when I suddenly heard a voice. The Rebbetzin noticed me and was shouting, "No embarrassment?! You climb up on the roof to watch a Yid daven?!" Terrified, I escaped immediately, but that niggun I will never forget.

(תולדות אברהם חיים ע' ט)

The Tzemach Tzedek would often recite Tehillim early in the morning to join the simple Yidden in their service of Hashem. Once, Reb Chaim Ber the meshares invited one of the chassidim to listen in. The chossid approached the Rebbe's room, and he heard the Rebbe reciting Tehillim with much dveikus and outpouring of his neshama, bringing the chossid to tears.

Reb Pesach, the melamed of the Rebbe Maharash, slept for a period of time in a nearby room. One morning, around three a.m., he heard the Tzemach Tzedek reciting Tehillim (kapitel פד) and then exclaim: "Even the smallest bird which You created has a place, yet You, the greatest of all great, has no place..." The Rebbe sang the niggun Daled Bavos of the Alter Rebbe, and then sat down to learn gemara Baba Kama for two hours.

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ח ע' תצב)

Rebbetzin Chana related how every shabbos afternoon the Rebbe would pace back and forth in their home, saying kapitlach Tehillim. "Tehillim with such sweetness that I had never heard."

(ימי מלך ח"ג ע' 988)

The Baal Shem Tov said: The way to recognize the lessons in avoda from life occurrences, are through saying a kapitel Tehillim with a fiery heart, personally doing a Yid a favor, and having Ahavas Yisroel with Mesiras Nefesh. These are the keys that open the locks to the chambers of mercy, health, yeshuah and parnassa.

(סה"ש קיץ ת"ש ע' 73)

The Frierdiker Rebbe described how in the past, even the simple Chabad chassidim had a pnimiyus to them. Even those who did not understand the meaning of the words, said Tehillim with an inner sincerity which are superior even to the Tehillim with tears said today.

(סה"ש קיץ ת"ש ע' 101)

### Lma'an Yishme'u

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The Rebbe explains that even when the Tehillim is said without special kavonos and at a quick pace, as most do on Shabbos Mevarchim, it nevertheless has a tremendous effect. As we say in the Yehi Ratzon afterwards, that it be considered as if Dovid Hamelech himself had said them.

The Frierdiker Rebbe emphasized that the kedusha of the words even when not understood are precious before Hashem like a korban. One should learn the translation of the words, but not recite that instead of the original.

(התוועדויות תשמ"ז ח"ג ע' 418, אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ד ע' תנמ)

## READING WITH EMOTION

The Frierdiker Rebbe related: Reb Ber, the father of Reb Mendel the meshares, was a simple Yid and would constantly recite Tehillim while delivering milk. When he became Bar Mitzvah he traveled to the Tzemach Tzedek who instructed him to say the entire Tehillim daily, as well as while he traveled. Years later, before his chassunah, the Rebbe reminded him, "Remember to say Tehillim at all times."

He once told the Tzemach Tzedek: "I wake up each day at a quarter to 12 a.m. and I say tikkun chatzos, Tehillim and Zohar. I don't understand what I am reading, but I say them all with much pleasure. I am a wagon driver, and I know that when the horses are harnessed, one is able to travel..."

When I related the above to my father, he remarked: "The world stands on the Tehillim of these simple Yidden. This causes Hashem tremendous pleasure."

(סה"ש תש"ז ע' 142, סה"ש תש"א ע' 86)

One week, many simple, unlearned businessman and farmers arrived to spend Shabbos in Mezibush. Friday night, they joined the seuda of the Baal Shem Tov, where they were showered with attention. To one, the tzaddik gave the wine remaining in his becher, another was given slices of challa, and some had the zchus of receiving fish and meat from his plate. Watching the behavior of the Baal Shem Tov and seeing the attention he was giving to the simpletons, his talmidim found themselves greatly perplexed.

Shabbos day, as was the usual arrangement, the Baal Shem Tov had the seudah alone with his talmidim. The simple guests had their own hurried seudah and then returned to shul to recite Tehillim. At the seuda, the Baal Shem Tov delivered a maamer, after which the talmidim sang a niggun, inspired by the deep teachings of their Rebbe. Feeling greatly uplifted, some talmidim were relieved that they did not have to share their seudah with ignorant people, and once again 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 explaining the intrinsic quality of the avoda of a simple, sincere Yid. When he finished, the talmidim resumed the niggun, while the Baal Shem Tov sat in deep thought. Suddenly, the Baal Shem Tov opened his eyes, and commanded his talmidim to place their right hand on his neighbor's shoulder. The Baal Shem Tov told them to close their eyes and he placed his hands on the shoulders of those near him, and suddenly the talmidim felt themselves lifted to the highest worlds, as sweet, emotionally charged words of Tehillim soared above.

Completely overcome by the sincere devotional tefillos, the talmidim sat entranced, eyes closed and tears coursing down their faces, wishing they could attain such greatness. When the Baal Shem Tov removed his hands, breaking the circle, the sound stopped, and the talmidim

were then instructed to open their eyes and continue singing. Soon after, the tzaddik explained that this spiritual bliss had been brought about by the Tehillim being recited in the next room, by the simple Yidden. These words being drawn from the simple Yidden's essence, were causing the greatest pleasure to Hashem.

(קובץ מכתבים אודות אמירת תהלים ע' 194)

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes: One who says Tehillim each day in a sweet voice and a slow pace, benefits the public with protection and salvation. His words are precious before Hashem, and the malochim above hug and kiss the letters and carry them before Hashem's throne with joy and awe. They speak good before Hashem on his behalf, his family and his entire community.

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ה ע' רמב)

## TEARFUL TEHILLIM

When the Tzemach Tzedek was in Petersburg, he received a request from the many Yiddishe soldiers stationed in Kronshtat. The soldiers wished to meet the Rebbe, so the Tzemach Tzedek travelled to the nearby city.

To express their honor for the Tzemach Tzedek, the soldiers made a parade. Upon the Rebbe's arrival, they told him, "We put in lots of effort to shine our uniform buttons to prepare for your visit. Now, you work for us, and polish our neshamos which have become so soiled..." The soldiers broke off crying.

Many of these soldiers knew some words of tehillim by heart and would recite them while polishing their buttons. The Tzemach Tzedek said a maamor for them in Yiddish, beginning with the words, "Machisi k'av p'shaecha." Afterwards, he told them, "In order to polish buttons, one needs to use soil and water. Soil is likened to the letters of tehillim, and water is compared to the tears which cleanse."

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 3)

The Tzemach Tzedek told Reb Hendel in yechidus, 'Zohar lifts up the nefesh, Midrash arouses the heart, and tehillim recited with tears washes out the keli.

(היום יום ט"ז טבת)

In her diary, Rebbetzin Chana writes about the time she spent in Kazakhstan with her husband Reb Levik. She describes a time when she was very ill with an unknown illness, and Reb Levik sat at a small table saying tehillim, with tears pouring from his eyes. She would lie in bed and watch him saying tehillim with a broken heart, in a tune that could melt a stone. However one night Reb Levik said Tehillim again, but the sadness was missing, instead he poured out his neshama with belief and trust in Hashem. After this, she fully recovered. She concludes in her diary, "I believed then, and still believe today, that this is what helped me recover from that terrible situation."

(צדיק למלך ח"ד ע' 261)

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