

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה' מאיר שלמה שיחל' ניו
שיגדל להיות חי"ל לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י
משפחתו שיחיו

A painting of a bearded man with a long, flowing beard, wearing a red robe, playing a large harp. The background is a vibrant, abstract mix of yellow, orange, and red. The man's face is expressive, with his eyes closed in a state of devotion or ecstasy. The harp is dark wood with many strings. The overall style is expressive and emotional.

EXPRESSIONS OF THE HEART TEHILLIM

There is hardly another book in all of Jewish history replete with so much meaning, embedded in the heart of the Jewish people like Dovid Hamelech's Sefer Tehillim. While the Chumash might be more fundamental, it could likely be said that there were far more Jews who occupied their time with the recital of Tehillim than those who studied Chumash.

In times of distress, it is Tehillim more than anything else that soothes the souls of the Jewish people, reinforcing our *bitachon* in Hashem's ever present hand in our lives. And likewise in times of joy, it is Tehillim that we recite to express our gratitude for His constant guidance, blessings, and salvation.

The *Hallel* that Chazal instituted to be recited on the joyous milestones throughout our history is taken entirely from Tehillim. So is the chapter of Ashrei ("*Tehilla L'Dovid*"), the recital of which Chazal promised can bring anyone into *olam haba*. The famous "*Mizmor L'Dovid*" that soothes our souls with *bitachon* comes from Tehillim (23), as does "*Lamnatzeiach Yaancha*," which we recite in times of distress. Chapters of Tehillim are woven through every part of davening, from *Pessukei D'Zimra*, to *Tikkun Chatzos*, to *Kabbalas Shabbos*.

With the revelation of Chassidus, a major theme that the Baal Shem Tov taught was the potency of the davening and mitzvos of the simple Yidden, done with wholehearted sincerity and love of Hashem. Once during a Shabbos meal with his closest disciples, the members of the "*chevraya kadisha*," the Baal Shem Tov had them close their eyes and suddenly they heard the most beautiful sublime recitation of Tehillim, said with heartrending emotion. The members of the group were moved to immediate tears.

"Hearing those words of Tehillim," the Maggid later related to the Alter



DOVID HAMELECH'S KEVER IN YERUSHALAYIM

Rebbe, "my heart was filled with such intense longing and love for Hashem, such that I had never experienced before. My shoes were soaking with a mixture of sweat and tears, emerging from the deepest *teshuvah* from the core of my soul..."

After the *talmidim* opened their eyes, the Baal Shem Tov revealed to them that those words of Tehillim were coming from the simple Yidden, who recited Tehillim with utmost sincerity from the bottom of their hearts, with genuine *emunah*.

The Maggid later related that he spent years after that trying to gain a *tikkun* for having previously dismissed the simple Yidden as being less worthy.¹

The Tzemach Tzedek summed up the power of reciting Tehillim in these famous words, cited by the Rebbe in Hayom Yom:

"If you only knew the power of *pesukim* of Tehillim and their effect in the highest Heavens, you would recite them constantly. Know that the chapters of Tehillim shatter all barriers, they ascend higher and still higher with no interference; they prostrate themselves in supplication

before the Master of all worlds, and they effect and accomplish with kindness and compassion..."²

In recent generations, the Rabbeim placed even more emphasis on the importance of constant Tehillim recital, including a daily section of Tehillim after davening, and the entire Sefer Tehillim every month on Shabbos Mevarchim.

The Rebbe often told people to recite extra *kapitelach* of Tehillim as a *segulah* in many instances, including: Help with making the proper decision,³ finding a *shidduch*,⁴ having a healthy pregnancy,⁵ having a successful surgery,⁶ being healed from various ailments,⁷ being saved from troubles and distress.⁸

The Rebbe once wrote to an individual who was undergoing surgery: "It would be a good thing if you could keep with you in the hospital a kosher mezuzah, and take upon yourself that as soon as you leave the hospital, you will give something to tzedakah in the name of Rabbi Meir Baal Haness, and to recite every day a chapter of Tehillim in *Lashon Hakodesh* or, if this is too difficult for you, in English..."⁹



LETTERS FROM THE REBBE REGARDING THE “CHEVRAS TEHILLIM”.

To individuals who wrote to the Rebbe that they had a longstanding custom of reciting the entire Tehillim every day, but they wished to discontinue this practice because it takes away from their learning, the Rebbe told them unequivocally that they should keep at it.

“Even though it seems to you that the reason why you took on this practice no longer applies,” the Rebbe writes to one individual, “you must still continue anyways. Who knows what is more precious to Hashem [your Tehillim or learning deeper subjects in Torah like Gemara]...”¹⁰

Oftentimes, the Rebbe advised people to keep *sefarim* in their cars as a means of protection, usually specifying a *siddur*, Tanya, and Tehillim.

The Rebbe also encouraged children to have their own *sefarim* in their rooms, including a personal Sefer Tehillim belonging to the child.¹¹

During the trying times of World War II and the ravaging Holocaust, the Frierdiker Rebbe founded an international “Chevras Tehillim”—a fellowship of people who would recite Tehillim. The flagship group was based

in Yerushalayim, and they would recite the entire Tehillim every day at the site of Dovid Hamelech’s burial.

The Frierdiker Rebbe entrusted the newly founded Machne Yisroel organization, headed by the Rebbe, to lead this initiative. In many of the Rebbe’s letters from that period, he encourages individuals and community leaders to join this program.¹²

When the Rebbe was invited to address the conference of Agudas Harabbonim, he asked the rabbonim to encourage their communities to join the program and he also gave a scholarly explanation as to the importance of everyone reciting Tehillim.¹³

DAILY TEHILLIM

The author of the *Tzeida LaDerech*, Reb Menachem ben Zerach of Spain, divided the Tehillim for recital on two tracks: one with seven parts, to be recited daily over a week, and one with thirty parts, to be recited daily over a month.

The Rabbeim generally followed the thirty-day track, thus completing the entire Tehillim every month. In times of distress, they recited an extra *shiur* of Tehillim adding the one for the day of the week. Most famously, the Alter Rebbe added this *shiur* during his time in prison, which is why he was reciting the *possuk* of “*Pada B’shalom*” on Yud-Tes Kislev, which that year occurred on a Tuesday.¹⁴

This method of saying Tehillim daily was not so widespread until the year 5687*, when the Frierdiker Rebbe declared that this practice should be adopted by everyone. Later in the year, the Frierdiker Rebbe was arrested, imprisoned, and then sent to exile in Kostroma.

While in Kostroma, the Frierdiker Rebbe had a discussion with two Chassidim, Reb Elya Chaim Althaus and Reb Michael Dvorkin. Reb Elya Chaim later recorded in his diary:

“The Rebbe told us as follows, verbatim:

“Before the year 5687*, I was frightened. I wasn’t thinking about myself, I was worried about the Chassidim. Before I gave the instruction about reciting Tehillim, things were very difficult for me...”

“I asked [the Rebbe], ‘When was the instruction about Tehillim given?’ He answered, ‘On Simchas Torah.’

“Then I recalled: On the day of Simchas Torah, the Rebbe kept asking all of *anash* to accept upon themselves to recite the daily section of Tehillim after davening...

“I have no doubt that the note we found in the Rebbe’s room on the day of his arrest about reciting Tehillim was also written in Elul 5686* or Tishrei 5687*.

“This is what was written in the note found on the Rebbe’s holy table after his arrest on 15 Sivan 5687* in Leningrad:

“Attention Chassidim and all Jews who are waiting for Moshiach. Please

convey in my name to all Chassidim across the world—in all *Chassidishe* shuls they should recite the daily section of Tehillim as divided for the days of the month, both on Shabbos and every day... To Chassidim you should say that I command it, to other Jews you should say that out of *ahavas Yisroel* and seeking the best for all Jews, I request of them that they should fulfill this...”

One year later, on 15 Sivan 5688*, the Frierdiker Rebbe had already left Russia and was living in Riga, Latvia, and he penned a letter asking that this request be instituted from then on. “This is appropriate for every shul,” he writes. “It is not specifically for the Chassidic community...”¹⁵

Although this *takanah* to recite Tehillim would later be incorporated in the famous daily *shiurim* of Chitas, the Rebbe mentioned specifically the *takanah* of Tehillim more than any of the other *shiurim*. In countless letters to individuals who turned to the Rebbe for *brachos*, the Rebbe instructs that they should diligently recite the daily portion of Tehillim as a channel for all good things.

The daily *shiur* Tehillim has since become almost a part of davening. Interestingly, when the Frierdiker Rebbe instituted reciting Tehillim in shul, he emphasized that it should not be done by the *chazzan* standing in front of the shul, so as not to look like we are adding something new to the long-established *sefer hatefillah*. Instead, the Tehillim recital should be led by someone standing at the *bima* in the middle of the shul.

The Rebbe once explained that with time, this point had been forgotten, since the *chazzan* is already in front of the shul and having him move to the middle would be *tircha d'tzibura*, inconveniencing the crowd and making everyone wait. Instead, the Rebbe said that we should be careful to recite *Al Tira* and *Ach Tzaddikim*

before beginning with the daily *shiur* Tehillim, demonstrating that the official davening is over.¹⁶

When the Rebbe davened at the *amud* when in *aveilus* and on *yahrtzeits*, he always concluded with the daily *shiur* Tehillim, reciting the last *possuk* of each *kapitel* out loud for all to hear.

In addition to the daily *shiur* Tehillim, the Frierdiker Rebbe revealed that the Baal Shem Tov instituted another cycle of reciting the entire Tehillim, during the months of Elul and Tishrei. The Rebbe writes in Hayom Yom:

“When the Tzemach Tzedek was nine years old, the Alter Rebbe said to him: I received from my Rebbe (the Maggid) who received from his Rebbe (the Baal Shem Tov) in the name of his well-known Rebbe [Achiya Hashiloni], that from the second day of Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur we are to say three chapters of Tehillim every day. Then, on Yom Kippur, thirty-six (chapters): Nine before Kol Nidrei, nine before going to sleep, nine after Musaf, and nine after Neilah...”¹⁷

PERSONAL KAPITEL

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes that the Alter Rebbe heard from the Maggid, who heard from the Baal Shem Tov, that before reciting the daily *shiur* in Tehillim, a person should recite the *kapitel* that corresponds with his age.¹⁸ The Rebbe once pointed out that in one of the Alter Rebbe's *maamarim*, the words “*haka-pitel shelo*” appear, describing the personal individual *kapitel* of each person corresponding to their age.¹⁹

Bochurim who would come into *yechidus* with the Rebbe in honor of their birthdays were often told by the Rebbe to study their new *kapitel* with the Tzemach Tzedek's explanations in *Yahel Ohr*. Also, when speaking



REB CHAIM DOVID LAINE, THE CHOSSID FROM NEVEL WHOM THE FRIERDIKER REBBE MENTIONS AS HAVING FIRST SUGGESTED THE IDEA OF RECITING THE ENTIRE TEHILLIM ON SHABBOS.

in *yechidus klolis* to those celebrating their bar and bas mitzvahs, the Rebbe would often specifically mention the importance of learning their new *kapitel* on the day of their bar or bas mitzvah.

The Frierdiker Rebbe also mentions that some people recite the *kapitelach* of their children too, as a *segulah* for them to remain true to the Torah way.²⁰

Before the Rebbetzin's passing in 5748*, the Rebbe generally did not daven Shacharis with the *minyan* every day and he would join the yeshiva's *minyan* for *krias haTorah* on Mondays and Thursdays. After *kriah* was over, the Rebbe was usually seen reciting his own and the Rebbetzin's *kapitelach*, and—until her passing in 5725*—also his mother's.

SHABBOS MEVARCHIM

As the day that blesses the forthcoming month, the Frierdiker Rebbe taught that Shabbos Mevarchim is a day of utmost importance and



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AMONG THE PRECIOUS BELONGINGS REBBETZIN CHANA BROUGHT TO HER HUSBAND WHEN SHE JOINED HIM IN HIS GALUS IN KAZAKHSTAN, WAS A TEHILLIM FROM WHICH HE WOULD DAVEN FOR HOURS. REBBETZIN CHANA WROTE A MEMORANDUM IN THE COVER OF THE TEHILLIM, HOW THE TEHILLIM WAS SOAKED THROUGH WITH THE COPIOUS TEARS HARAV LEVI YITZCHAK SHED WHEN RECITING TEHILLIM DURING HIS HARSH YEARS IN GALUS.

should therefore be utilized in an appropriate manner.

After one of the Chassidim wrote to the Frierdiker Rebbe about his idea that all the Chassidim in Nevel should recite the entire Tehillim every Shabbos, the Frierdiker Rebbe instead instructed that this should be done on Shabbos Mevarchim, together with a *Chassidishe* farbrengen in each community.

In an undated letter written in the summer of 5695*, the Frierdiker Rebbe says: "I was very pleased that

you recite Tehillim as a community every Shabbos Mevarchim, just as my dear friend the Chossid Reb Chaim Dovid [Laine] suggested, and that you farbreng together with true brotherly love..."²¹

About a month later, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote an open letter to all *anash* and *Temimim*, asking them to adopt this *seder* for every Shabbos Mevarchim in their communities.

"On Shabbos Mevarchim, Chassidim are to assemble in shul early in the morning to say the entire

Tehillim. Afterwards, for about an hour, study a *maamar* Chassidus that everyone can understand, and then daven. The time to farbreng is to be determined according to the circumstances in the place they live (for material and spiritual success)..."²²

From then on, this *seder* was established in all Chabad communities the world over.

The Rebbe was exceptionally scrupulous about keeping the *takanos* of Shabbos Mevarchim. Throughout all the years without fail, the Rebbe joined the *minyán* every single Shabbos Mevarchim to recite the entire Tehillim before Shacharis. Additionally, the Rebbe farbrenged every single Shabbos Mevarchim throughout all the years of the *nesius*, without ever missing even one.

Once, when the Rebbe bemoaned the fact that Chassidim are not paying attention and appreciating all the hours of Torah discussed at the farbrengens, he remarked that this coming Shabbos Mevarchim, he will nevertheless have to farbreng again because "we have no choice, it's a *takanah* of the Frierdiker Rebbe..."

Just how important the reciting of Tehillim on Shabbos Mevarchim is, is underscored by the Rebbe's famous statement in Hayom Yom:

"Studying a *parshah* of Chumash with Rashi every day (Sunday until *sheini*, Monday until *shlishi*, etc.), saying Tehillim every day and the entire Tehillim on Shabbos Mevarchim—be diligent about all of these. It is crucial for you, for your children and your children's children..."²³

TEHILLIM ON ROSH HASHANAH

Since the *avodah* of Rosh Hashanah is mainly about *kabbalas ol*, crowning Hashem as our king, our Rabbeim instructed that the time should be

used for saying Tehillim, the simple recital of which represents our *kabbalas ol*.

The Tzemach Tzedek's sons once came into his room on Rosh Hashanah while the crowd outside was reciting Tehillim and asked that he say Chassidus. The Tzemach Tzedek replied: "They are all saying Tehillim and you want Chassidus? Tehillim is better!"

With the onset of Rosh Hashanah in 770 each year, the Rebbe joined the crowd for Tehillim reciting for a while before Maariv.²⁴

On the night of Yom Kippur, the Rebbe instituted that the entire Tehillim should be recited after Maariv. In 5711*, the first year of the Rebbe's *nesius*, the Rebbe himself stood at the *amud* and led the recital of the entire Tehillim. The same thing happened one year later in 5712*.

THE REBBE'S KAPITEL

On a number of occasions, the Rebbe spoke about the importance for Chassidim to recite the Rebbe's *kapitel* every day, as a means of connecting with him and a channel to receive his *brachos*.

"It would be appropriate to say the Rebbe's *kapitel* everyday," the Rebbe writes to an individual, "which right now is *kapitel* 71, and a few times a week you should learn words of Chassidus from him. Do this at least until the upcoming Yud Shevat. This will serve as a broad channel to bring the Rebbe's blessings into this physical world..."²⁵

At a *farbrengen* during the first year after the Frierdiker Rebbe's *histalkus*, the Rebbe explained:

"In a *sicha* on Yud-Beis Tammuz last year, the [Frierdiker] Rebbe said: 'Every day, every Chossid should recite a chapter of Tehillim with the specific intent that the *zechus* of the Rabbeim

should be drawn unto himself and that the revelation of light should be absorbed and integrated within him in a *pnimius*.'

"...We can assume that the intention here was that every Chossid should continue to recite the Rebbe's *kapitel* of Tehillim, in accordance with the number of his years.

"Some Chassidim were accustomed to reciting the Rebbe's *kapitel*, but after Yud Shvat doubts arose as to whether or not they should continue. And now that Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Rebbe's birthday, has passed, they are unsure as to whether they should continue with *kapitel* 70, or begin *kapitel* 71; in other words, whether or not the addition of years is still relevant after *histalkus*.

"The [Frierdiker] Rebbe clarified this question by saying on the last Yud-Gimmel Tammuz of his life in this world, that every day, every Chossid should recite a *kapitel* of Tehillim—the Rebbe's *kapitel*, so that his merit will thereby be elicited, and the revelation of his light will be integrated within each individual in a *pnimius*..."²⁶

To a group of *bochurim* leaving for Merkos Shlichus, the Rebbe said that by reciting the Rebbe's *kapitel*, we are able to internalize what the Rebbe wants from us as Chassidim.²⁷

TORAH AND TEFILLAH

The Rebbe explained on a number of occasions that Tehillim, while being a part of the Torah (one of the 24 *Kisvei Kodesh*), also consists of *tefillos*, hence it is considered, the *tefillah sheb'Torah*. The most important aspect of Torah study is comprehension—using your intellect. However when it comes to Tehillim, the most important thing is the heart and feeling that goes along with the words.

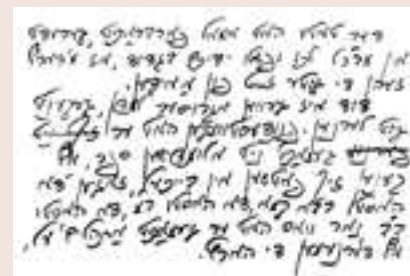
The Midrash says that when Dovid Hamelech said, "יהיו לרצון אמרי פי"—May the words of my mouth be willfully accepted," he was asking Hashem that when a Yid says Tehillim, it should be considered as if he is studying the subjects of *Negaim* and *Ahalos*, some of the deepest and most complex *halachos* of Torah.²⁸

Indeed, the Rebbe writes in Hayom Yom that when Moshiach comes, we will finally see the full depth of accomplishments by the words of Tehillim said with heartfelt sincerity of the simple Yidden.²⁹

WHAT DID DOVID MAKE?

In a rare moment in *yechidus* with the Rebbe, the Frierdiker Rebbe revealed an extraordinary thing about Dovid Hamelech's Sefer Tehillim.

Upon returning to his room downstairs at 770, the Rebbe recorded the words he heard in his holy handwriting, and he subsequently gave the note to Reb Sholom Chaskind as a gift:



דער טאטע האט אמאל פארבראכט, גערעדט אין מרדכי לכו ופשטו ידיכם בגדוד, אז מ'דארף זעהן די גוטע זייט פון א אידען. דוד איז געווען אגרויסער למדן, געקענט גוט לערנען. פונדעסטוועגען האט ער געמאכט ניט אלומדישען ספר, אף קענען זיך פאטשען אין בייכעל, זאגען דא האסטו בבא קמא דא האסטו ב"ב, נאר וואס האט ער געמאכט א תהילים'על, אף דערנעמען די הארץ.

My father [the Rebbe Rashab] once *farbrenged*, speaking about the words of Chazal [that Dovid Hamelech said]: "Go stretch forth your hands with the army," explaining that we must always



THE REBBE RECITES TEHILLIM FOLLOWING KRIAS HATORAH, 27 ELUL 5743*

JEM 194550

see the good side of a fellow Jew. [See Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayyatz vol. 3, p. 136 for a full explanation.]

Dovid was a great *lamdan*, he knew how to learn very well. Nevertheless, he did not make a scholarly *sefer*, to allow himself to pat his stomach and say, “Here is Bava Kama, here is Bava Metzia, here is Bava Basra.” Rather, what did he make? A small Tehillim, to inspire the heart.

(Yemei Melech vol. 3, p. 1052)

NO KUNTZEN!

“When Moshiach comes,” the Rebbe once proclaimed at a farbrengen, “he will not hear of any *kuntzen*. He will demand of you to offer an exact account, like the *possuk* says, אלה פקודי המשכן: Write down

for me on a piece of paper how many Chassidim you made! How many Yidden did you influence to become Chassidim of the Rebbe? How many Yidden did you influence to come and recite the entire Tehillim on Shabbos Mevarchim?!”³⁰ ①

1. Kovetz Michtavim.
2. Hayom Yom 24 Shevat.
3. Igros Kodesh vol. 9 p. 71.
4. Ibid. vol. 6, p. 264.
5. Ibid. vol. 5 p. 105.
6. Ibid. vol. 5 p. 180.
7. Ibid. vol. 5 p. 208.
8. Ibid. vol. 18 p. 58.
9. Ibid. vol. 5 p. 175.
10. Ibid. vol. 5 p. 315.
11. Hisvaaduyos 5747 vol. 2 p. 648.
12. See Igros Kodesh vol. 1, p. 55, et. al. Yemei Melech vol. 2, p. 668.

13. Reshimos *choveres* 52.
14. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayyatz vol. 3 p. 473.
15. Kovetz Michtavim, Tehillim.
16. Sichos Kodesh 5730, vol. 1 p. 42.
17. Hayom Yom 1 Elul.
18. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayyatz vol. 10 p. 53.
19. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 3 p. 57.
20. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayyatz vol. 1 p. 31.
21. Igros Kodesh Admur HaRayyatz vol. 3 p. 411.
22. Ibid. p. 422. Hayom Yom 26 Kislev.
23. Hayom Yom 25 Shevat.
24. See Otzar Minhagei Chabad Tishrei p. 48.
25. Igros Kodesh vol. 3 p. 350.
26. Toras Menachem vol. 1 p. 149.
27. 12 Menachem-Av 5710.
28. Shavuot 5737.
29. Hayom Yom 24 Iyar.
30. Shabbos Parshas Pekudei 5727.