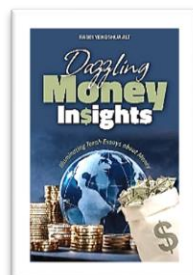
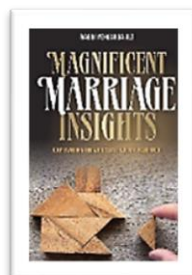
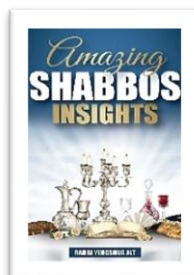
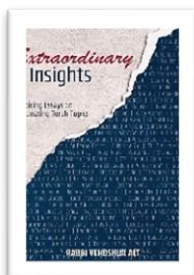
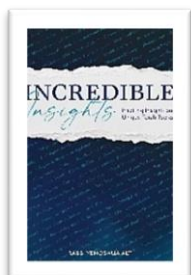


Fascinating INSIGHTS

יה' כסלו תשפ"ד
December 1, 2023

פרשת וישלח
11th year, edition 509

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Towering Tehillim

Since the Jewish people the world over have been saying Tehillim daily for the situation in Eretz Yisrael, let us discuss the power of Tehillim. The Midrash¹ states that Yaakov recited Tehillim in the house of Lavan. The Divrei Yoel² says that Yaakov already comprehended Sefer Tehillim with prophecy but it wasn't revealed until Dovid Hamelech. He prepared this power for the generations of Galus that through this the Jewish people will exist and be saved from their troubles.



An allusion to this idea is that the end letters of the words **וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים**,³ these are the names of the Jews who were coming to Mitzrayim spell תהלים. This hints to that in all pain and troubles (מצרים means straits, referring to our troubles), one can recite Tehillim, thereby bringing about a salvation.⁴

R' Yechiel Meir of Gustonon was called the Tehillim Rebbe because whenever people approached him with their problems he would prescribe a regimen of Tehillim. To some he would say, recite the entire Tehillim while to others he would suggest a section of Tehillim or a few chapters. Each person received their prescription which led to their salvation. When asked about this, R' Yechiel Meir said that he's not a man who performs miracles. He would quote the Kotzker Rebbe that Tehillim is not in the order that Dovid Hamelech arranged it. If it would be, then Tehillim would have the power of Techias Hameisim (resurrection of the dead). Because it is obviously not the time to give people such power, Dovid Hamelech rearranged the chapters of Tehillim. Despite this, all other salvations can be attained by reciting Tehillim.



¹ Breishis Rabba 68:11.

² Vayeitzei, p. 91.

³ Shemos 1:1.

⁴ Mayana Shel Torah, Shemos 1:1. A religious Jew named Naftali once invited a secular Jew named Sammy to his home for Shabbos. Sammy though remained uninspired throughout Shabbos. At the conclusion of Shabbos, Naftali walked Sammy to his car when suddenly Sammy heard

the voices of prayer coming from the adjacent shul. He saw about 300 men and women crying in tefilla and so he wondered what these Jews were doing here at 9 p.m. Saturday night. The host told him that they were praying for the recovery of a sick person, one that most people didn't even personally know. Sammy was stunned by the unity and care of the Jewish community. Based on this, Sammy now said that he was amenable to becoming religious.

A man named Levi was invited by a 60-year-old man, named Naftali, to attend his Seudas Hodaa in 2021 for surviving his month-long battle in the hospital against the coronavirus. Although Levi was unsure why he was invited as he barely knew Naftali, he still attended since was personally invited. At the seuda there were 18 other people. This crowd seemed very random as they were all from different communities. Levi struck up a conversation with one of the guests at the seuda named Binyamin. Binyamin told Levi that he was unsure why he was invited as he wasn't even sure who this person was. Levi related that he felt the same way, since he hardly knew Naftali. Then Naftali began his speech and he explained why he invited everyone. He said that when he was lying in his hospital bed, nearly dead, he ascended to heaven where he saw his mother who died a few years earlier. She told him to return to earth. He responded that he wanted to but was unable. She then replied, "Look down and you'll see you can go." He then looked from heaven and saw these 18 people that he invited to the seuda saying Tehillim for him, each one in their locale. At that moment they all mentioned his name for a Refua Shleima with the Tehillim they were reciting, although they didn't know who they were davening for. His mother told him that these 18 people are giving him the power to return alive. This is why he invited these 18 people. Look at the power of Tehillim!

[Bar Mitzva Speech of Shimon and Levi](#)

The Sefer Likutei Yehuda⁵ cites from the Siach Sarfei Kodesh what the Chidushei Harim commented on the pasuk, in the discussion of Shechem and Shimon and Levi, ויקחו שני בני יעקב...הרבו, the two sons of Yaakov, Shimon and Levi, Dina's brothers, each took his sword.⁶ The Chidushei Harim explained why the people of Shechem were liable to death. The halacha is that an *Eino-Yehudi*,⁷ i.e., idolater, that observes Shabbos is liable to death. This is because Shabbos is an אות, sign⁸ only for the Jewish people. An *Eino-Yehudi* who uses this sign is considered a stealer and a Ben-Noach receives the death penalty for stealing. Accordingly, the same would apply to Bris Mila which is also called a sign.⁹ If an *Eino-Yehudi* circumcises himself not for the sake of converting he is liable to death.

The children of Yaakov said אך בזאת...כל זכר, only on this condition will we acquiesce to you: If you become like us by letting every male among you become circumcised¹⁰ — meaning to circumcise for the sake of conversion and become full-fledged Jews. Now, concerning a ger we apply the concept of גיטו וידו באין כאחד, the get and the hand arrive simultaneously,¹¹ and therefore they can circumcise themselves. However, the people of Shechem circumcised themselves for their desires but they wanted to remain as

Eino-Yehudim. Therefore, they were liable to death for stealing the sign of the Jewish people.

The Chidushei Harim remarked that **Shimon and Levi were 13 at the time¹² and this chidush was their bar mitzva drasha they said.**

[1/8 of an 1/8](#)

Although humility is a desirable trait, the gemara¹³ enlightens us by saying that a Torah scholar should have an 1/8 of an 1/8 of *gaavah*. This is because people will disregard a Torah scholar if he is 100% humble. This is similar to a leader who requires *gaavah* in order to lead the people and not that the people lead and rule him. This is positive *gaavah* as it says ויגבה לבו בדרכי ה', his heart was elevated in the ways of Hashem.¹⁴ The following are some allusions to this idea:

1) The Gra¹⁵ tells us a hint to this in מכל ההסדים (humility), as it is the 8th Pasuk in the 8th Parsha (Vayishlach).¹⁶

2) R' Heshel of Krakow illuminates our eyes with a fascinating illustration of this. The Midrash¹⁷ says Har Sinai was 500 Amos high. Hashem wanted to give the Torah on Har Tavor, the highest mountain which is four *parsah*. A *parsah* is four *mil*¹⁸ and a *mil* is 2,000 *amos*. In summary Har Tavor is 32,000 *amos*. Har Sinai, the smallest mountain was 500 *amos*. What is an 1/8 of an 1/8 of 32,000? 500! 1/8 of 1/8 of Har Tavor was Har Sinai.



3) This idea is also shown to us in Chanuka. The Maharal points out that the word יודי (אור) yields a Gematria of 25. This alludes to Chanuka, the 25th of Kislev. The Gra tells us the 25th word in the Torah is אור alluding to Chanuka when we light the Menora.

The miracle of Chanuka points to Hashem so clearly since it was supernatural as according to the laws of nature, oil shouldn't have burned for that long. Chanuka is 8 days. The 8th letter of the Torah is ר (of the word ברא). ר symbolizes humility since when it is spelled out it spells רש, impoverished. Indeed, the pasuk ולירש אין כל, the poor man had nothing.¹⁹ The letter ר has a numerical value of 200. 1/8 of 200 is 25. This alludes to the 25th of Kislev.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of six books including the recently released *Dazzling Money Insights*. His writings, some of which have been translated into Yiddish, Hebrew, German and French, inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

⁵ Cited in Otzar Plaos Hatorah, Bar Mitzvah U'tefillin, pp. 38-39. The Sefer Likutei Yehuda was authored by R' Yehuda Leib Heyna who was a grandson of the Imrei Emes.

⁶ Breishis 34:25.

⁷ Sanhedrin 58b.

⁸ Shemos 31:13.

⁹ Breishis 17:11.

¹⁰ Breishis 34:15.

¹¹ Gittin 77b.

¹² Breishis Rabba 80, Yalkut Shimoni to Vayishlach 135 and Rashi to Nazir 29b.

¹³ Sota 5a.

¹⁴ Divrei Hayamim 2, 17:6.

¹⁵ Pninin Mishulchan Hagra.

¹⁶ The wording of the gemara is that a Torah scholar must have אחד משמונה 1/8 of an 1/8 of haughtiness. Why does the gemara use the masculine form (שמונה) and then the feminine (שמינית)? It refers to the 8th Pasuk in the 8th Parsha as the word פסוק is masculine and פרשה feminine.

¹⁷ Bo.

¹⁸ Baba Basra 73b.

¹⁹ Shmuel 2, 12:3.