



זְמִירוֹת שֶׁל אִישׁ
פְּשוֹט לַה
פְּיוּטִים מִדָּוִד

Songs of a Simple
Man to Hashem

Poems from Dovid

Rabbi Dovid Adress

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שירים וזמירות הלב מאת דוד אדרעס

Author's Reflection - Poems to Hashem - Introduction

Like Dovid HaMelech, who poured out his heart in Tehillim, I too felt the need to give voice to my prayers. I am but a simple servant — small and imperfect — yet within me burns a yearning to sing, to praise, and to honor Hashem in my own way.

From that longing was born this collection of poems. They are not Tehillim, but they are my own humble songbook and personal expression of my soul reaching upward.

There is a deep truth I've come to feel: the higher one rises in kedusha, the stronger the pull from the other side. When I feel close to Hashem, inspired like Dovid HaMelech, my yetzer hara tries to drag me the other way — toward indulgence, ego, and emptiness. It's an inner war, a tug-of-war between light and dark — between the yearning to be holy and the temptation to give in to my Yetzer Harah. In my world I envision my battle to be between Dovid Hamelech and Bugsy the mobster who wants to live it up.

But this struggle itself is the essence of life. We all face it in our own ways. The goal is not perfection — it's to keep choosing light, to let the yetzer tov shine through, to become the best version of ourselves in serving Hashem.

And that's why I write these poems — because when words of the heart reach upward, even from the depths, they become a song of connection. A song of return. A song to Hashem.

-Rabbi Dovid Adress



Dedications

I am deeply grateful to Hashem for granting me the inspiration for this work and the opportunity to bring it to life. My hope is that it may inspire others as well.

I dedicate this work to Hashem.

Thanks and Mentions

A heartfelt thank you to my incredible wife, Debbie, who selflessly sacrifices our time together so I can focus on projects like this. She never complains, always supports me, and embodies generosity — always ready to help others without hesitation.

To my parents — for being the beginning of my journey.

To my in-laws — who are no longer with us, but whose presence is still felt.

To my wonderful children — Rochel & Binyamin, Yossi & Ruchie, Eli & Yehudit, Baruch & Emunah.

To my precious grandchildren — Meira, Baruch, Yehuda, Ari, Sari, Talia, Batya, Layla, Rosie, Daniel Simcha. I love you all.

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Redirecting Lust and Desire to Hashem

I'm filled with desire that stirs my Neshama's deep chime,
Awakened by sadness or the fire of anger's climb.
My brain knows no quick escape, nor gentle flight—
It hunts for some swift relief to soothe its restless plight.
Yet this fierce desire and lust, so wild, is wholly misdirected;
To Hashem alone its yearning should be redirected and perfected.
Spiritual love, not fleeting lust, is what I truly seek,
But sparks fall into Kelipah's depths, their glow grown weak.
So, I pause, reflect, and gently realign each spark,
Gathering each ember drifting in the dark.
Through mitzvahs, tzedakah, a small, sincere prayer,
A little at a time, lost love finds sacred air.

Background

This poem was inspired about having a desire or to lust after something or it can be an addiction to a craving and that the lust for the bad desire תַּאֲוָה (taavah) is actually misdirected and it should that should be redirected to Hashem. This thought and poem also inspired this card.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (Alter Rebbe)

In Tanya, Chapter 9, the Alter Rebbe discusses how the animal soul's lust can be transformed into love of Hashem. He says: "Now, the animal soul's spirit of lust is the kelipah-counterpart of the divine soul's spirit of love (for G-d). Thus, the divine soul's intense love of G-d has the power to crush the animal soul's lust for physical pleasures." Also see Tanya, Chapter 12, where the interplay of love and lust in the heart during prayer is described.

Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem



פֶּתַח אֶת־יָדְךָ, וּמְשֹׁבֵיעַ לְכָל־חַי רְצוֹן

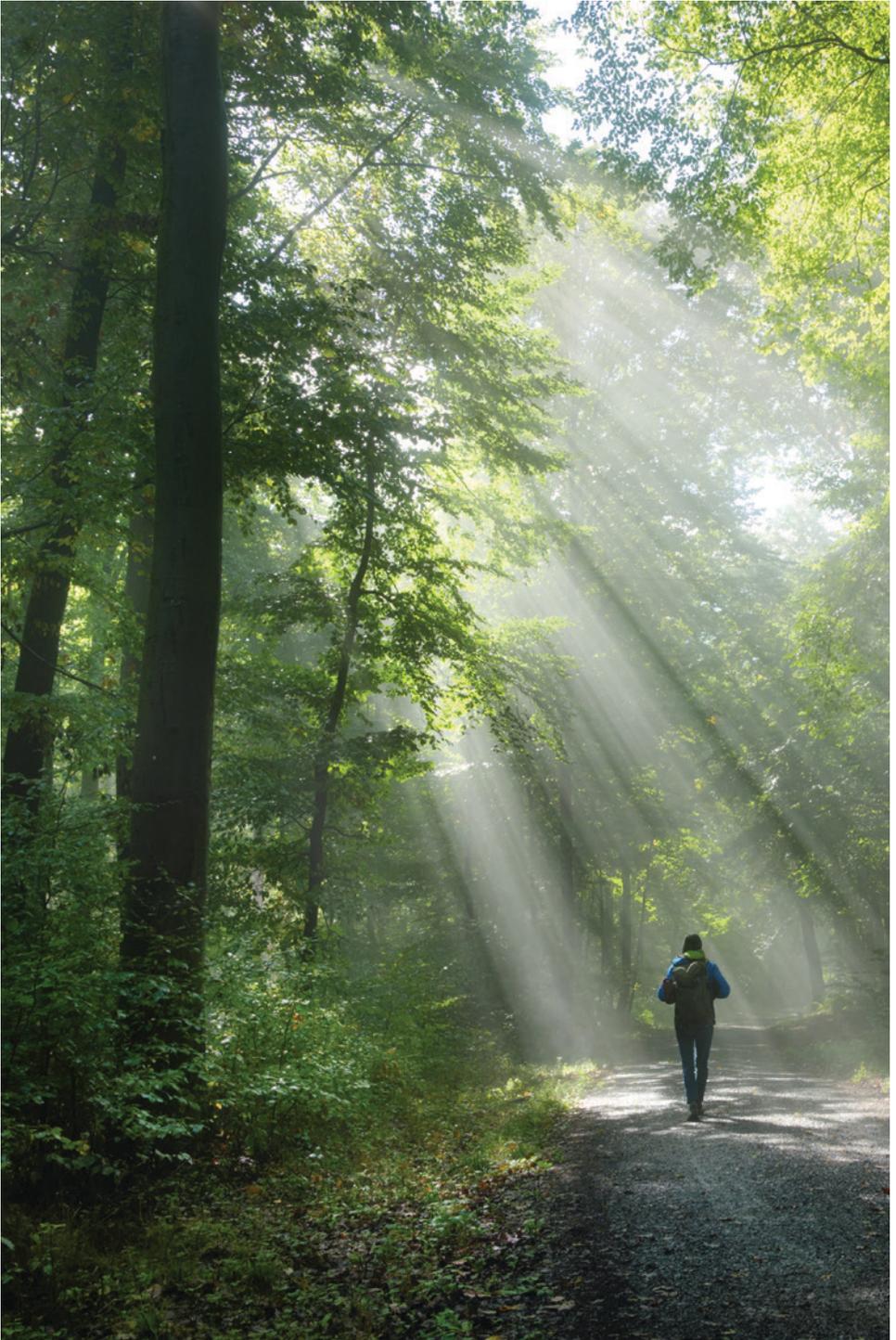
(Open up your hand and satisfy all my needs)

In aisles of plenty, colors shine,
I grab a snack and claim it mine—
Yet every leaf and crafted dish
Flows from one hand that meets my wish.
From farmer's field at break of dawn
To chef who stirs at evening's yawn,
Each step, each seed, each loving plan
Was formed by Hashem's own guiding hand.
Baruch Hashem—for bread and wine,
For every taste that's yours and mine.
Thank You, Hashem, for all You give,
Though we're unworthy, yet You let us live.
Your Chesed endless, never done,
Your mercy shines as bright as the sun.

Background

This poem was born from the realization that everything in my life comes directly from Hashem. His chesed and kindness surround me constantly, so evident that I don't even have to look far to see them. Something as simple as walking into a supermarket and finding endless varieties of food, wine to drink, fresh fish, bread, and pastries — all without needing to plow, plant, harvest, fish, and bake — is a reminder of Hashem's abundant blessings, provided to us with ease.

Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem



How Learning Torah Protects us to Stay on the Path

I keep my schedule, firm and true,
With תורה lighting each day a new;
Though sometimes meaning slips from view,
Its ripples find their path, felt through and through.

In mind's vast vault these treasures lie,
A פסוק recalled when shadows fly;
A רש"י's note, a Gemara's spark,
A halacha's grip that lights the dark.

When furthest from the true path I stray,
These vault-kept sparks renew my way;
The Torah's light guides my way back
And to Hashem my נשמה steers back on track.

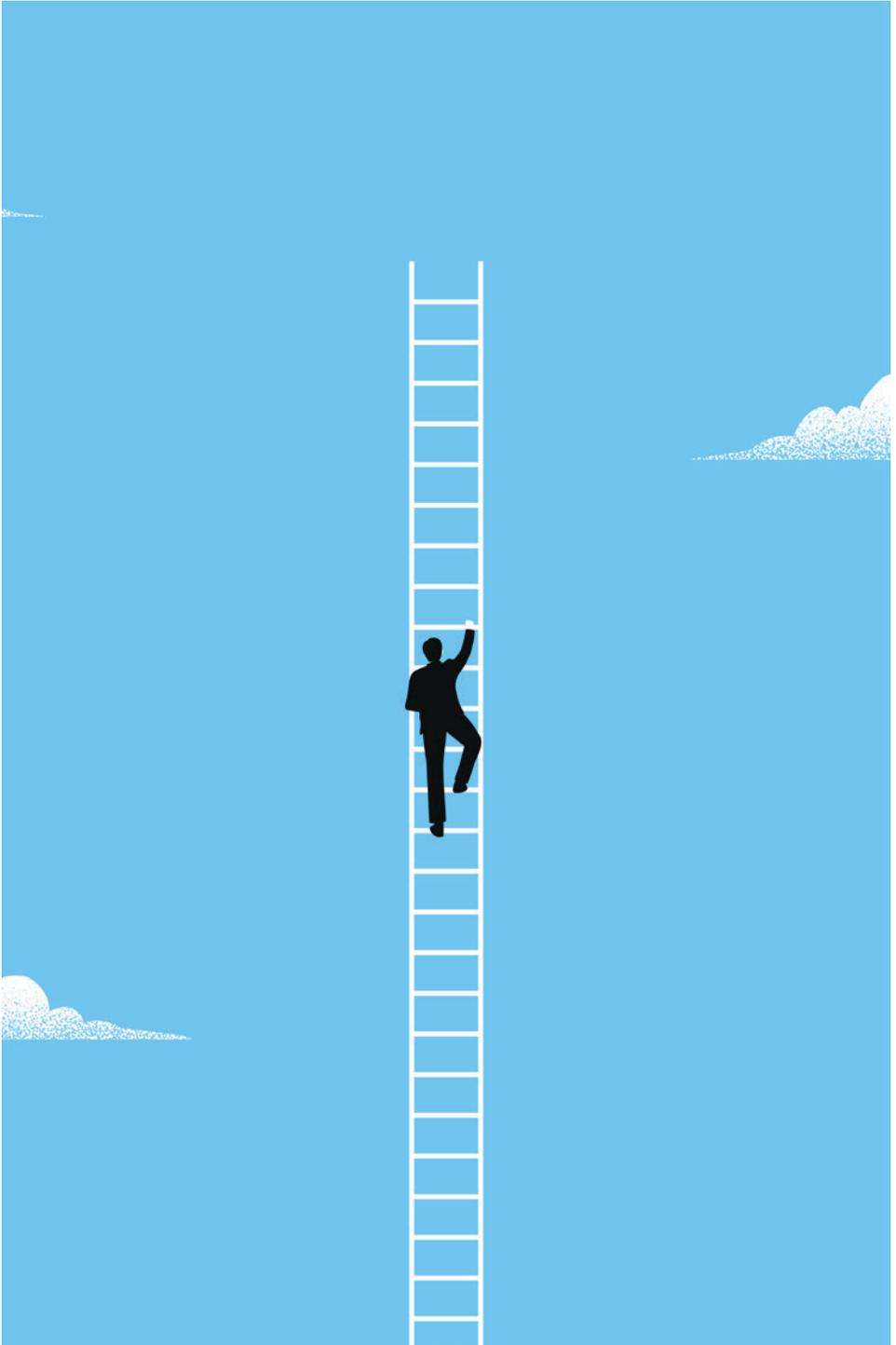
Background

This poem was inspired by the realization that Torah learning protects us. The words we study become engraved within us, and at the right moment they awaken — guiding us back on the path of teshuva. Something deep inside is stirred and reawakened, calling us closer to Hashem. That very spark is what inspired this card.

תהילים א':ב-ג

ותורת יהוה חפצו; ובתורתו יהגה יומם ולילה. והיה כעץ שתול על־פלגי־מים

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water



Dovid's Ladder – Ups and Downs

I am weak.

I sin.

Not once — again, again within.
Each fall cuts deeper than before,
A wound I bandage, but ignore.

It's not so easy to rise once more,
With guilt that chills me to the core.
There's weight that presses on my chest,
A restless doubt that steals my rest.

I wear the smile, I say the lines,
But inside—cracks, unholy signs.
A hypocrite, my heart repeats,
Afraid of eyes, afraid of streets.

The days drift by—so still, so slow,
No spark, no strength, no wind to blow.
Each hour sinks in silent stone,
I'm fading, slipping, all alone.

But then—
A breath.
A flicker. A flame.
No thunder, no flash, no mighty name.
Just a spark—a pulse unseen,
That split my night, that broke routine.

A tear. A song. A whisper near.
A sound my soul had longed to hear.
Not roaring storms, but gentle tone,
That told my heart, "You're not alone."

It didn't lift me to the skies,
But it awoke these tired eyes.
It stirred the dust, it moved the day,
And showed that grace still finds a way.

Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem

So now I climb, though rung by rung,
With trembling hands, with songs unsung.
Still weak. Still scared. But now I try—
For hope, once lit, can teach to fly.

Background

This poem was born from the realization that sometimes we sink so low we can't even find the strength to rise. The weight feels too heavy, the will too faint. We wait for inspiration, but in truth—it starts with us. All it takes is a single spark, one small push of effort, and Hashem steps in to lift us higher than we ever dreamed we could go.

Sources

Shir HaShirim Rabbah 5:2

“פְּתַחוּ לִי פֶתַח אֶחָד שֶׁל תְּשׁוּבָה כְּחֶדְהָ שֶׁל מַחֲטָא, וְאֲנִי פּוֹתַח לְכֶם פְּתָחִים שִׁיְהִיו עֲגָלוֹת וּקְרוּנִיּוֹת נִכְנָסוֹת בּוֹ”

Open for Me one opening of repentance like the eye of the needle, and I will open for you openings that wagons and carriages enter through it.

Talmud – Yoma 38b

“א. לִיטְהַר – מְסִייעִין אוֹתוֹ.”

One who comes to purify himself – they assist him.



Hashem Wages War for Klal Yisroel

Hashem may strike to teach and to mend,
But He sets the limit — beginning to end.
Not more, not less, His judgment is true,
He calls us to do teshuva, to return and renew.

Return to Me and I will return to you. (שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי וְאֶשׁוּבָה אֲלֵיכֶם - Malachi 3:7)
Through mercy and love, He makes all things new.
Yet nations that harm us will vanish from view,
For their pride will crumble — their power undo.

He who touches you, touches the apple of His eye. (נָגַע בְּכֶסֶם, נָגַע בְּכַבֵּת עֵינָיו - Zechariah 2:12)
Their banners will wither, their empires will die.

From מִצְרַיִם (Mitzrayim / Egypt), their chariots drowned,
Pharaoh's horsemen sank, no trace was found.
Hashem is a Man of War; Hashem is His Name. (יְיָ הִירָה אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה, יְיָ הִירָה שְׁמוֹ - 15:3)
Their power was shattered, their end was the same.

עַמְלֵק (Amalek) struck, but was crushed in the fight,
The שִׁבְעָה עַמִּים (Seven Nations) all lost their might.
מוֹאָב (Moav), מִדְיָן (Midian), עַמּוֹן (Amon) too,
Their kingdoms forgotten, their banners withdrew.

פְּלִשְׁתִּים (Plishtim / Philistines) boasted, their power was vain,
אַרָם (Aram / Arameans) and אַשּׁוּר (Ashur / Assyria) were brought down in pain.
בָּבֶל (Bavel / Babylonia) fell, its towers declined,
Then פָּרַס (Paras / Persia) was scattered, left behind.

Haman's plot in פָּרַס (Paras / Persia) died in shame,
יָוָן (Yavan / Greece) divided, lost its flame.
רוֹמָא (Roma / Rome), that empire fierce and tall,
Crashed into ruins, doomed to fall.

בִּזְיוֹנְטִיּוֹן (Byzantion / Byzantine) faded, its scepter broke fast,
It's might erased, just a ghost of the past.
And in our time, that Nazi horde,
Destroyed forever — by Hashem our Lord.

For Hashem goes with you, to fight for you. (Deut. 20:4 - כִּי יַהֲרִיחַ אֱלֹהֶיכֶם הַהֲלֹךְ עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לְכֶם)
He saves His people, forever true.
Empires crumble, their memory dim,
But Klal Yisroel stands — we live through Him.

Background

This poem was inspired by a Rashi on Hazino (Shishi) as well as that the door was left open in the shul on Yom Kippur.



A Poem of Thanks and Prayer for my Grandchildren

This poem was born the day my tenth arrived,
A moment when Pirkei Avos suddenly thrived:
“Grandchildren are the glory”—oh, how true,
Hashem, these gifts are all from You.

May they grow in Torah, wisdom, and light,
Spreading goodness and truth with hearts shining bright.
Each one unique, each one their own,
Each one a joy my heart has known.

Meira, who made me a Zaidy first—
A precious pearl, a heart that burst.

Baruch, first grandson, a name carried with pride,
My father-in-law’s legacy standing at his side.

Yehuda, so sweet, so vibrant, so alive—
A spark in his smile where pure joys thrive.

Ari, a cute little boy full of zest,
A bundle of sunshine who never needs rest.

Sari, charismatic, a world all her own,
Her glow is a language uniquely known.

Talia, quiet, with a soft shining smile,
Lighting the room in her gentle style.

Batya, newly born, so tiny and sweet,
A pure little miracle, perfect and complete.

Layla, imaginative—like a wise little sage,
A mini adult well beyond her age.

Rosie, who makes us laugh without end,
A smile, a giggle—joy’s truest friend.

Daniel, my tenth, with my name,
Sharing my initials, carrying our flame.

Each one a blessing, each one sent from Above,
A tapestry woven with Hashem's endless love.

They are my glory, my joy, my song,
My gratitude to You, Hashem, lifelong.

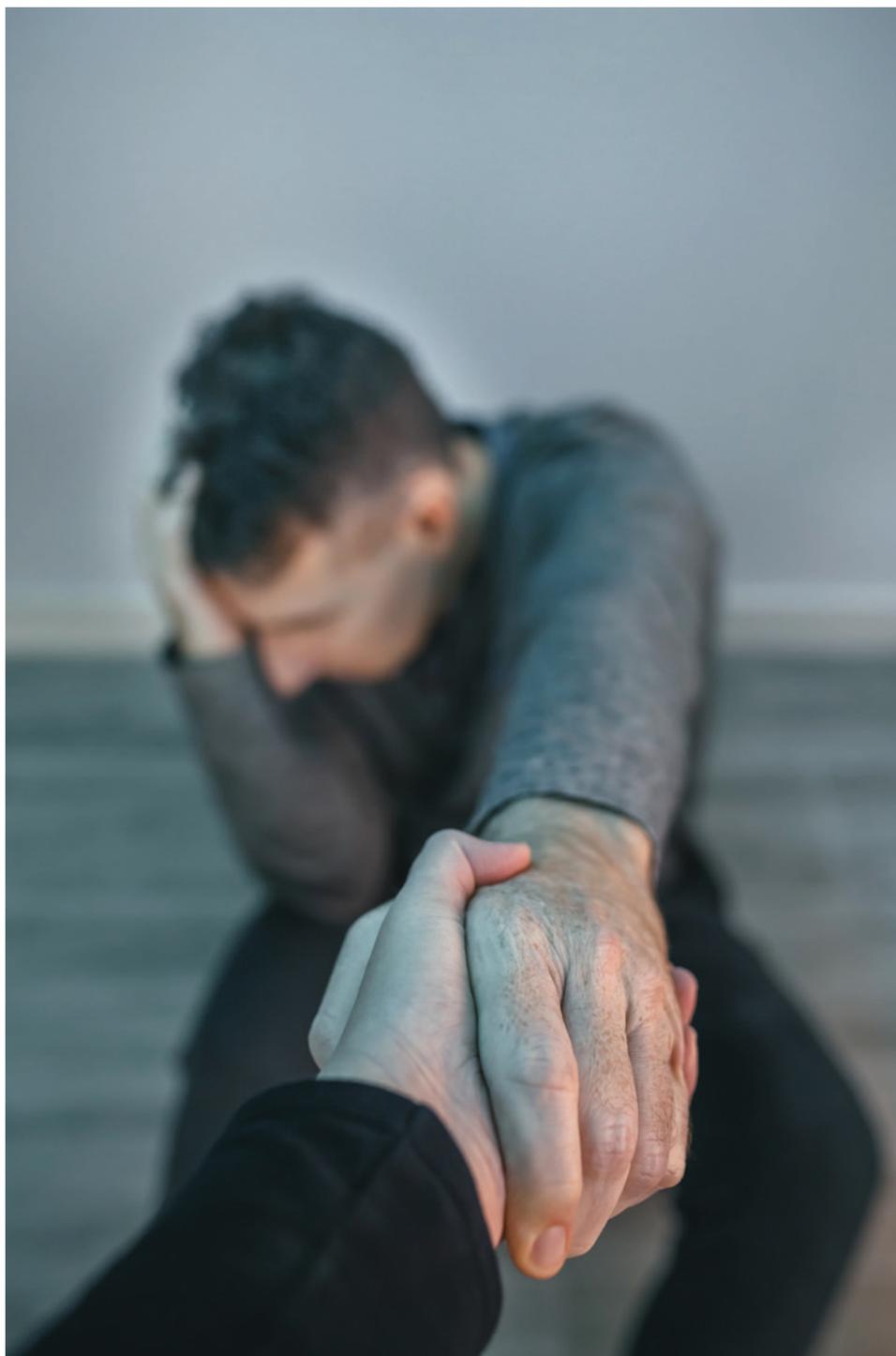
May they grow to uplift Klal Yisroel's story,
And may I see many more years
With my crown of glory.

Background

This poem was inspired by having my tenth grandkid. It's true what Pireki Avos says "Grandchildren are the glory of their elders". Hashem. I am forever grateful. May all my grandkids grow to spread Torah throughout Klal Yisroel and be blessed with all the gifts of Rebbe — health, wisdom, and the strength to illuminate the world with goodness and truth.



Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem



How Can I Help?

I hear your pain—though softly said,
It echoes loud within my head.
A sigh, a tear, a heavy heart—
And something stirs, I want a part.

Not in your burden's crushing weight,
But just to lift, to share, relate.
A dollar, dime, or heartfelt word,
A tiny gesture still is heard.

I may not know the perfect way,
To fix your night or light your day.
But I can ask, "How do you feel?"
And mean it truly, deep and real.

For Hashem, in ways concealed from view,
Is always there—He carries you.
His hand is kind, His plan is wise,
Though cloaked in clouds before our eyes.

So let me mirror, just a spark,
Of Hashem's great love that warms the dark.
A voice that lifts, a smile that stays,
A soul that reaches through the haze.

No act too small, no word too slight—
Each flicker pushes back the night.
If I can soothe, support, or guide,
Then I have walked Hashem's side.

Background

This poem was inspired by the ache of empathy — the pull to help, to heal, to lift others when they're down. I often feel the weight of people's pain and the wish to fix what's broken, even when I know I can't help everyone. Still, I try — because sometimes one small act of kindness, one word, one moment of care, can change a life.

Still, I Rise to Serve Hashem

I'm tired, Hashem.
Bone-tired.
The kind of weary that seeps into the soul
and whispers, "Stop trying."

The day was long, the plans all broke,
Dreams cracked beneath their own smoke.
It's so easy—so easy—to slip
into the soft embrace of despair.

I closed my eyes,
just for a bit—
and drifted into that quiet pit.
A nap. A pause. A mercy small,
to catch myself before the fall.

And now it's 2 a.m. again.
The world is silent, my heart is loud.
The seder waits, the seforim await—
I rise, unsure, yet somehow proud.

This merry-go-round spins night and day,
learning, failing, finding the way.
At times I'm fire, at times I'm dust,
but still—I learn, I try, I must.

For trying is the service true,
The test is not the win, but the "through."
Please, Hashem, when I grow weak,
Hold my heart when I can't speak.
Lift my hands, though they tremble so,
Remind me why I choose to go.
Even tired, even torn in two—
I'll serve You, Hashem.
Because I do.

Background

This poem came from one of those really hard days — the kind that leaves you drained in every way. We all have them. Work wouldn't stop, one issue after

another kept piling up, fires that never should have happened. The type of issues where you wish you chose a different line of work. Business is slow and stress over money was also on my mind. I felt like crying inside — tired, worn out, and honestly just ready to give up and throw in the towel. At some point, I just went to sleep. When I woke up around 2 a.m., the world was quiet again, and though I was still exhausted and in despair, I felt a tiny spark — a reminder that life keeps going, and so must I. The seder, the learning, the service of Hashem — it all begins again. There are times I'm strong, there are times I'm weak, but I realized something in that moment: trying itself is the Avodas Hashem. Even when it feels like the merry-go-round never stops, even when my heart is heavy, showing up is what counts. This poem is my way of saying — I'm tired but I will still try.





From a Flicker to a Flame

I sank beneath the weight of day,
Too tired to move, too weak to pray.
My heart was heavy, my eyes were dry,
I whispered, “Hashem... I can’t even try.”

But then — a spark, a breath, a light,
Flickered softly in the night.
A single step, a trembling start,
And Heaven rushed to lift my heart.

I opened a sefer, line by line,
And something holy stirred inside.
The fog began to melt away,
And darkness bowed to newborn day.

Now joy runs deep, not loud or wild,
But calm and steady — pure, reconciled.
The same desk, the same world — yet changed,
Because I tried... and Heaven arranged.

It’s true — one motion from below,
And streams of mercy start to flow.
A door once locked, now open wide —
Because I moved, Hashem replied.

Background

This poem came right after a moment of deep exhaustion and despair. See above poem. Earlier in the night, I felt completely drained — weighed down by work stress, financial worries, and spiritual heaviness. I just wanted to give up. But after forcing myself to do my sedarim and learn and then inspired to write the poem above something inside shifted. A small effort awakened my Neshama. It was as if Hashem infused me with renewed strength and joy. I suddenly felt alive again, filled with the energy to do good and overcome my yetzer hara. The feeling was so strong, it moved me to write this poem. It’s a living example of the Midrash:

פתחו לי פתח כחודו של מחט, ואני אפתח לכם כפתחו של אולם - Open for Me an opening the size of a needle’s eye, and I will open for you an opening like the entrance of a great hall. This poem is testament to how the smallest effort below draws down infinite strength from above.

A Cry for Kedusha

In days of old, they walked with flame,
Each breath a whisper of Hashem's Name.
Pure hands, pure hearts, their eyes would see,
A world aglow with sanctity.

I live now in a darker age,
Where sparks are lost in screens and rage.
I go to mikvah once a year,
Yet dream of waters crystal clear.

They feared a sheretz, niddah's touch,
And guarded holiness so much.
Their souls were tuned, their eyes could find
The light of Ruach in their mind.

I cry—I crave that holy fire,
That sight untainted by desire.
My eyes—so weak, my will—so small,
Yet still I try to heed the call.

Each glance I guard, each word I weigh,
Each prayer I whisper through the day.
May every act, though frail, be seen
As greater now—through dust, still clean.

For You, Hashem, know where I stand,
In exile deep, yet reach Your hand.
Please count my struggle more than fine gold,
My one small step as theirs of old.

Great rewards of Kedusha shine:
Shechinah's glow — forever mine.
Clarity in Torah's song,
Tefillah sweet and spirits strong.

Eyes of purity — guard the view,
Ears for Torah — words that's true.
Mouth of kindness — speak no hate,
Heart of love to elevate.



Mind aware — Hashem is near,
 Middos humble, motives clear.
 Run to mitzvos, honest, kind —
 That's how I'll guard my soul, my mind.

And maybe — just maybe — in that light,
 My smallness too will turn to might.
 And in this lowly generation's din,
 Holiness will rise... from within.

Background

This poem was born from a longing to feel Kedusha in our times. We live in an era clouded by immorality and distraction. I wonder how it felt in past generations when people lived with constant kudusha and awareness of Hashem. Though I fall short, my heart yearns for that kedusha and holiness. I am hoping whatever small thing we can do in our generation means more to Hashems than what was done in the past. This also inspired these cards.

וְהִשִּׁיב תְּהִיוּ בִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֱלֹהִים
 You shall be holy, for I, Hashem your God, am holy.
 וְהִיָּחֵם לִי קְדוּשִׁים בִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֱלֹהִים, וְאֶבְרַךְ אֶתְכֶם מִן־הַעַמִּים לְהִיּוֹת לִי
 And you shall be holy unto Me, for I, Hashem, am holy; and I have set you
 apart from the nations, to be Mine.
 לִמְעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֵת כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי, וְהִיָּיתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לְאֱלֹהֵיכֶם
 So that you may remember and perform all My commandments, and be
 holy to your God.
Holiness means always moving closer to Hashem.

Great Rewards of Kedusha

👁️ Eyes	Shimras Lanavim, see with purity	👁️ Behold the Shechinah
👂 Ears	Hear Torah; avoid lashon hara.	👁️ Reach HaKodesh clarity
👄 Mouth	Tefillah & Torah; speak kindness	👄 Torah sweet & clear
❤️ Heart	Love Hashem, emunah & yirah.	👂 Tefillah accepted
🧠 Mind	Holy thoughts, awareness of Hashem	👂 Shechinah rests with you
🏆 Mitzvos	Humility, chesed, honesty, run to mitzvos.	👂 Spiritual protection

I will increase my Kedusha — with every sense, every step, every moment, closer to Hashem.

קְדוּשָׁה
 שמירת עינים - Guard your eyes, guard your joy.
 שְׂוִיתִי ה' לְנֶגְדִי תָמִיד, כִּי מִיְמִינִי בִלְאֻמוֹת

The highest pleasure isn't in the glance — it's in the guard.

What would our great leaders tell you?	What are the rewards?
👁️ יוסף הצדיק	Prayers answered
👂 משה רבנו	Closeness to Shechinah
👄 אהרן הכהן	Clarity in Torah
❤️ שמואל הנביא	Abundant livelihood / parnassah
🧠 דוד המלך	Protection from ayin hara
🏆 שלמה המלך	Blessed children
👁️ אליהו הנביא	Tefillah at that moment is potent (sha's rachumim)
👂 נחמיה הנביא	Holiness & kedushah of the body
👄 רבי יצחק	Reward in Olam Habai
🏆 רבי שמעון בן יוחאי	

Serving Hashem in Our Own Voice

We all get bruised — not by stone,
but by words that strike the bone.
Embarrassed, angered, feeling small,
the ego swells — it wants to brawl.

In shul, beneath the holy air,
a moment sparked — emotions flare.
The Rav spoke softly, just to teach,
a point of dikduk, within his reach.

He quoted אָבֹן עֲזָרָא, wise and clear,
whose love for truth was sharp, sincere.
He taught that prayer, both deep and pure,
must rest on words precise and sure.

He mentioned רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר הַקַּלִּיר, of old,
whose heart spilled beauty, fierce and bold —
his verses rich with sacred art,
metaphors flowing from the heart.

Two paths of holiness — both divine,
one seeks the truth, one seeks the rhyme.
Both voices echo through the years,
in awe, in song, in joy, in tears.

And I believe each soul must find
its way to serve with heart and mind.
The heart feels what it longs to say —
each soul connects its own true way.

For some, it's order, calm, defined;
for some, it's music intertwined.
To me, the metaphors speak true —
poetry's how my heart breaks through.

The Rabbi's aim — to guide, not shame,
yet hearts are tender, words inflame.
A moment's tone, though pure intent,

became a spark of discontent.
The talk, in truth, was meant for me,
my erring word, my mispronounced plea.
The Rabbi's tone was not unkind,
but still, it wounded hearts and mind.

How fragile, then, our human frame,
how quick we burn with pride or shame.
We long for peace, for self-control,
but passions wrestle for the soul.

O Hashem, please grant me might,
to hold my tongue, to guard my sight.
When tempers flare and hearts grow sore,
teach me patience — and nothing more.

For every fire that burns inside,
can be a flame to purify.
And every hurt, when faced with grace,
reveals Your light in hidden place.

Background

This poem was born from a moment in shul that stirred both emotion and introspection. During the Rav's drashah, he was teaching about dikduk and mentioned the אָבֹן עֶזְרָא (Even Ezra), who emphasized clarity and exactness in sacred language. The Rav noted how Even Ezra had once critiqued the poetic and metaphorical style of רַבֵּי אֶלְעָזָר הַקַּלִּיר (Rabbi Elazar HaKalir), the great paytan whose piyyutim (liturgical poems) are filled with vivid imagery and deep emotion.

The Rabbi's intention was purely scholarly — to highlight the balance between emotional expression and linguistic precision. But in the course of his words, one person in shul took offense and reacted sharply, creating an uncomfortable and painful moment.

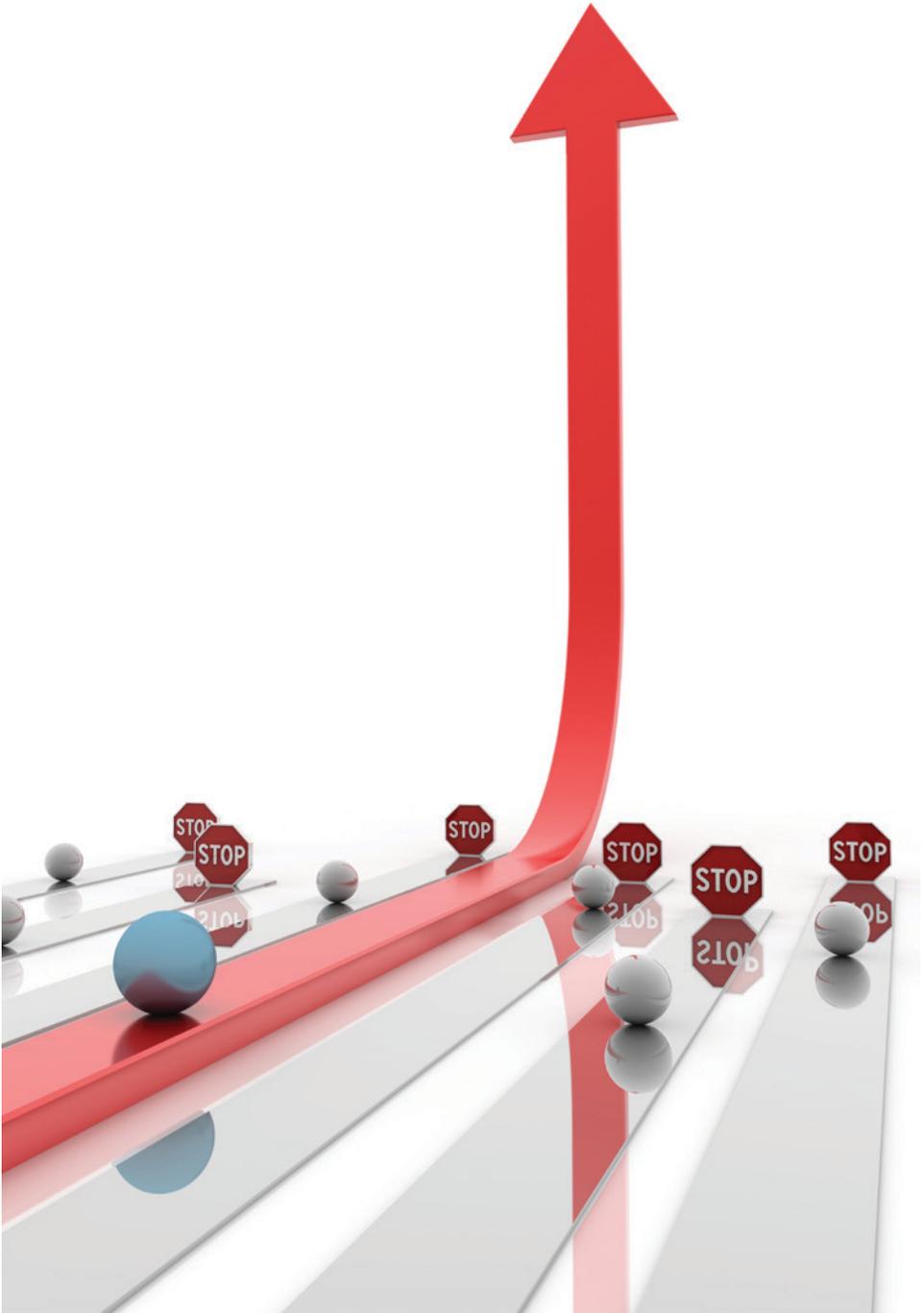
Ironically, the drashah had been inspired by a dikduk mistake I myself had made earlier, though the Rav meant no embarrassment. What struck me most was how quickly a small misunderstanding — a tone, a nuance — could ignite emotion in a place of holiness.

Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem

As I reflected on the incident, I began to see the deeper beauty of it: the tension between head and heart, intellect and emotion, law and poetry. The Even Ezra represents the disciplined mind clear, measured, precise. Rabbi Elazar HaKalir represents the overflowing heart — emotional, creative, passionate. Both serve Hashem, just in different languages of the soul.

This poem became a meditation on that truth: that each person must serve Hashem in their own authentic way. Some connect through structure, others through song. Some through precision, others through passion. For me, I realized — I am drawn to the poetic path. Words of metaphor and feeling speak my heart's language, and through them, I find my closeness to Hashem.





The Path is Clear Then Why is it So Hard? Choose Wisely.

<p>A fleeting pleasure</p> <p>A spark, a rush — the world feels wide, A wave of warmth you cannot hide. Dopamine dances, the body sings, Endorphins lift on fleeting wings. But soon the high begins to fade, The thrill departs, the calm is made. What felt like fire turns soft and small— A moment's gain, then nothing at all.</p>	<p>Reward of Restraint</p> <p>He guards his eyes; the heavens shine, The Shechinah rests, his soul divine. He holds desire, yet stands so tall, Inner strength—the greatest of all. Light fills his face, his heart at peace, Joy and calm that never cease. Wisdom deep within him grows, Secrets of Torah he now knows. Prayers rise fast, his words take flight, Speech refined and pure in sight. Blessing in work, his hands succeed, Wealth and parnassah from each deed. Children holy, future bright, Generations bathed in light. Health and life his portion stay, Protection guards his every day. Favors follow, grace bestowed, People trust him where he goes. Peace at home, true love restored, Marriage sweet, hearts in accord. Torah learning clear and deep, Memories pure, truths to keep. Confidence steady, courage found, Faith and joy in him abound. No shame nor fall, no guilt nor fear, Hashem's compassion ever near. Dreams are calm, his rest is sweet, Angels guard his every beat. Strength renewed, desires tamed, Mind at ease, ego framed. Respect and honor, good repute, Speech with grace, and deeds that suit. Clarity of thought, a humble heart, Willpower strong, a holy start. He sweetens judgments, breaks the chain, Draws blessing, clears the pain. Guided steps, a shining face, Siyata Dishmaya fills his space. Joy in prayer, delight in song, Ruach HaKodesh makes him strong. Steady faith, unbroken trust, Freedom from envy, lust to dust. Patience blooms, humility grows, Divine compassion ever flows. Tzaddikim bless the path he trod, He walks as partner close to God. Peace within, peace all around, Every loss replaced, each gift profound. Long life, health, serene old age, Dignity crowns his final stage. He sweetens Heaven, mends below, Becomes a light for all to know. Worlds align, his soul takes flight, Mashiach's dawn reflects his light. He gains not less by what he spares, But all of Heaven's love and cares. For he who guards, though few may see— Unlocks creation's melody.</p>
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Background

This poem captures the tension between fleeting pleasure and lasting fulfillment. It shows how a moment of indulgence can feel powerful—thrilling, even euphoric—but fades just as quickly, leaving emptiness in its wake. The imagery of fire that burns bright and then cools reflects how instant gratification often promises more than it delivers. Beneath the rhythm lies a quiet challenge: to question whether the brief rush of satisfaction is worth losing the deeper rewards that come from patience, clarity, and self-control. It invites reflection on what truly endures once the moment has passed.



The Battle Poem for the Moment of ניסיון

I don't know if it's addiction,
I don't know if it's a yetzer hara pull—
All I know is: I want it,
And desire speaks so full.

So before I make decisions,
I stop... I breathe... I feel.
What's my body whispering?
What's fantasy, what's real?

If I'm tired — maybe sleep.
If I'm anxious — breathe it through.
If I'm angry — let me cool.
If I'm bored — find something new.

And then I face the battle...
A warrior at the gate—
Standing in the doorway
Between destiny and fate.

Step 1 - Recognize What's Happening

When the urge begins its knocking,
I pause— and speak its name.
This isn't pleasure calling,
This is fire dressed as flame.

This is only just a feeling,
It rises, then it dies.
When I name it, it grows smaller
Truth unravels all its lies.

Step 2 - Reframe the Story

I don't say, "I cannot look."
I say, "This is my fight."
Hashem is handing me a moment
To choose darkness or choose light.

This is my soul's resistance training,
My gym of inner might.
I'm trusted with this challenge.
Hashem believes I'll choose what's right.

Step 3 - Surf the Discomfort

The wave begins to thicken—
A surge, a burn, a roar.
But waves are made for riding,
Not crashing to the shore.

So I breathe—slow and steady,
Four in, six out—again.
I daven. I walk. I move.
I let the feeling soothe.

Acknowledge... Accept... Act Wisely—
The 3A steps are so clear.
“I feel it... it will pass... and I choose what I hold dear.

Step 4 - Talk to Yourself Like a Rebbe Would

My dear soul, you're hurting.
You want comfort, you want air.
But you know this road of shadows—
It ends in empty stare.

You don't need this fleeting image,
You need presence, peace, and calm.
You need Hashem beside you,
Not a counterfeit of balm.

Gentleness defeats the darkness
More than beating with a stick;
Compassion lifts a fallen soldier
More than guilt can ever fix.

Step 5 - Replace the Energy

I won't only “not do wrong”—
I'll turn the fire to light.
Pushups, music, learning—
Transform passion into might.

A text to a friend for chizuk,
A pasuk said with flame,
I'm turning lust to life-force,
A soul too strong to tame.

After the Battle

And when the wave has faded,
I don't whisper, "I almost fell..."
I say, "I fought. I conquered.
And my soul remembers well.

I write the lessons gently—
The triggers, tools, and signs—
So next time I'll be quicker
To defend my sacred lines.

If I Fall — Fall Forward

And if I slip?
I rise again.
No drowning in the shame.
I stumbled—but I'm learning, I'm refining through the flame.

Teshuvah is the journey
Of a heart that won't give in—
Each fall becomes a stepping stone
On the long road back within.

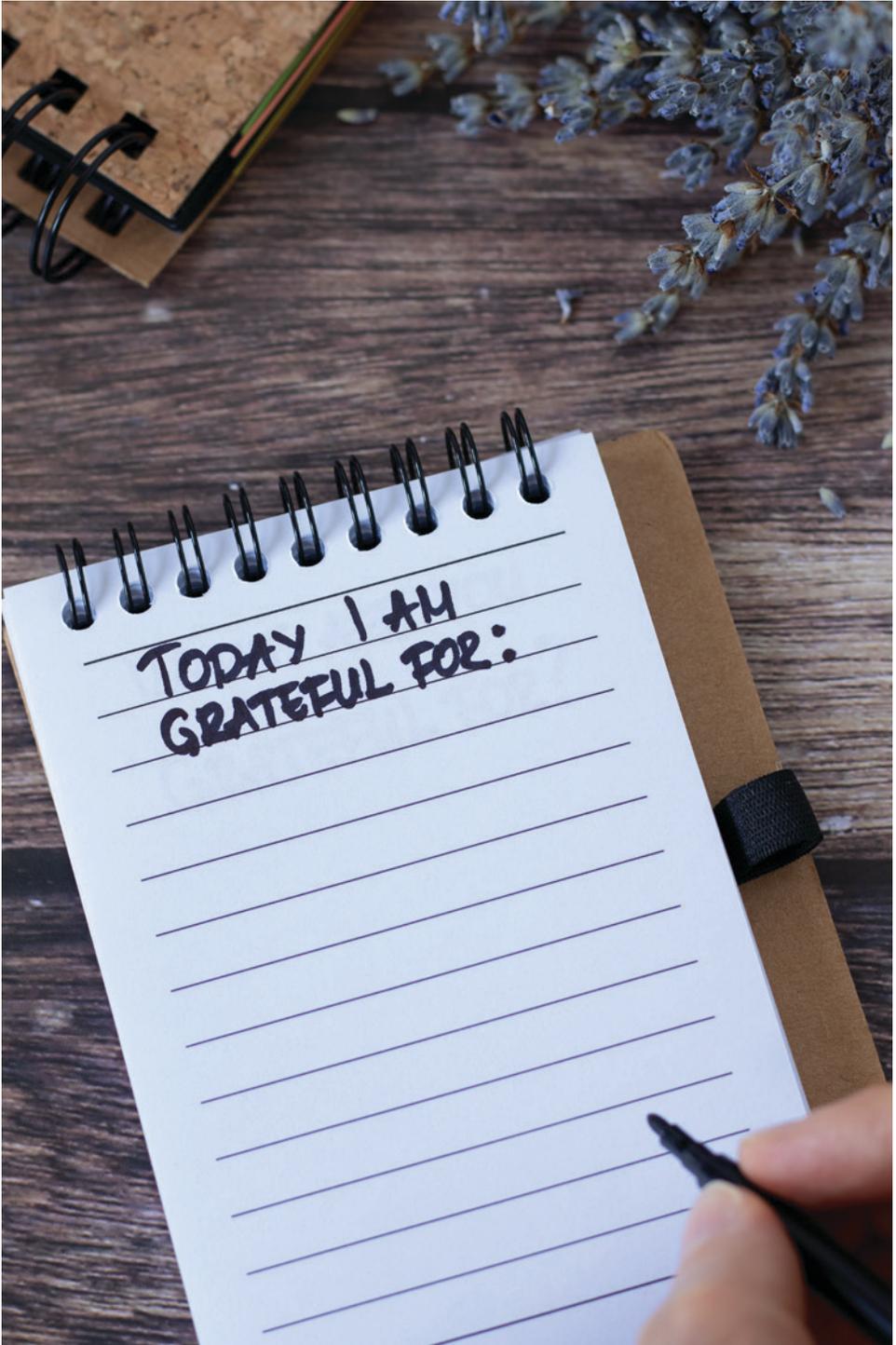
In Summary

When the Yetzer starts its knocking,
I declare with steady voice:
This is a wave. I can ride it.
My strength lives in my choice.

Hashem Himself believes in me.
I'm a warrior, not a toy.
Ten minutes of courage
Becomes eternity of joy.

Background

I was speaking to someone about a battle plan when a ניסיון (test) comes along.
A general needs a good battle plan to win the war.



The 10 Levels of Thank You to Hashem

1. Basic Gratitude - Simple “Thank You, Hashem.”

I start with simple whispers,
A quiet, modest tone:
Thank You, Hashem, for this small gift...
For not leaving me alone.

2. Specific Gratitude - Thanking for a particular gift or moment.

I thank You Hashem for the basics—
The breath inside my chest,
The strength to stand, the food I eat,
The moments I can rest.

3. Thanking for the Impact - Recognizing how the blessing changed you.

Then gratitude grows deeper,
Not what You gave—but why:
Thank You Hashem for the clarity,
For lifting me on high.

4. Thanking for Hidden Blessings - Gratitude for protection and unseen kindnesses.

I thank You Hashem for the hidden things
Your kindness tucked away:
The dangers that I never saw,
The blessings in delay.

5. Thanking for Difficulties (Nisyonos) - Seeing growth within struggle.

I thank You Hashem for the nisyonos—
The battles of the soul,
For teaching me that falling down
Is also part of being whole.

6. Thanking Hashem for Who He Is - Appreciating Hashem Himself, beyond His gifts.

Then thanks becomes relationship—
Thank You, Hashem, for there is no One like Hashem above or below.
So close inside my heartbeat,
Yet higher than the stars that glow.

7. Thanking for the Ability to Serve - Gratitude for mitzvos, Torah, and purpose.

I thank Hashem for the mitzvos—
For letting me be part
Of something so eternal
It breathes inside my heart.

8. Thanking in Advance - Gratitude that expresses trust before salvation comes.

I thank Hashem in advance as well—
Before salvation's seen,
For blessings You are shaping now
Behind a hidden screen.

9. Thanking with Praise - Turning gratitude into shevach and hallel.

And then my thanks to Hashem grows wings and soars,
Becomes a song of praise:
Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov!
My voice and soul both raise.

10. Thanking with Your Entire Being - Living life itself as gratitude.

My life itself becomes a thanks,
My heartbeat sings Thanks Hashem in song—
For everything is from Hashem,
And has been all along.

Background

I have no words to express thanks. Whatever words I express cannot encompass thanks and praise to Hashem. So, I thought of an idea to grow in 10 levels of thank you. From a simple Thank You Hashem (which is not really simple) to Thanking Hashem with all your heart.



Hashem, Open My Lips and My Mouth Will Declare Your Praise.

Today in shul, while I was davening,
A quiet truth broke through—
How blessed I am to have a mouth,
A voice that carries back to You.

That sound that rises from my lips,
That breath that shapes each word—
I've taken it for granted
Far more times than I have heard.

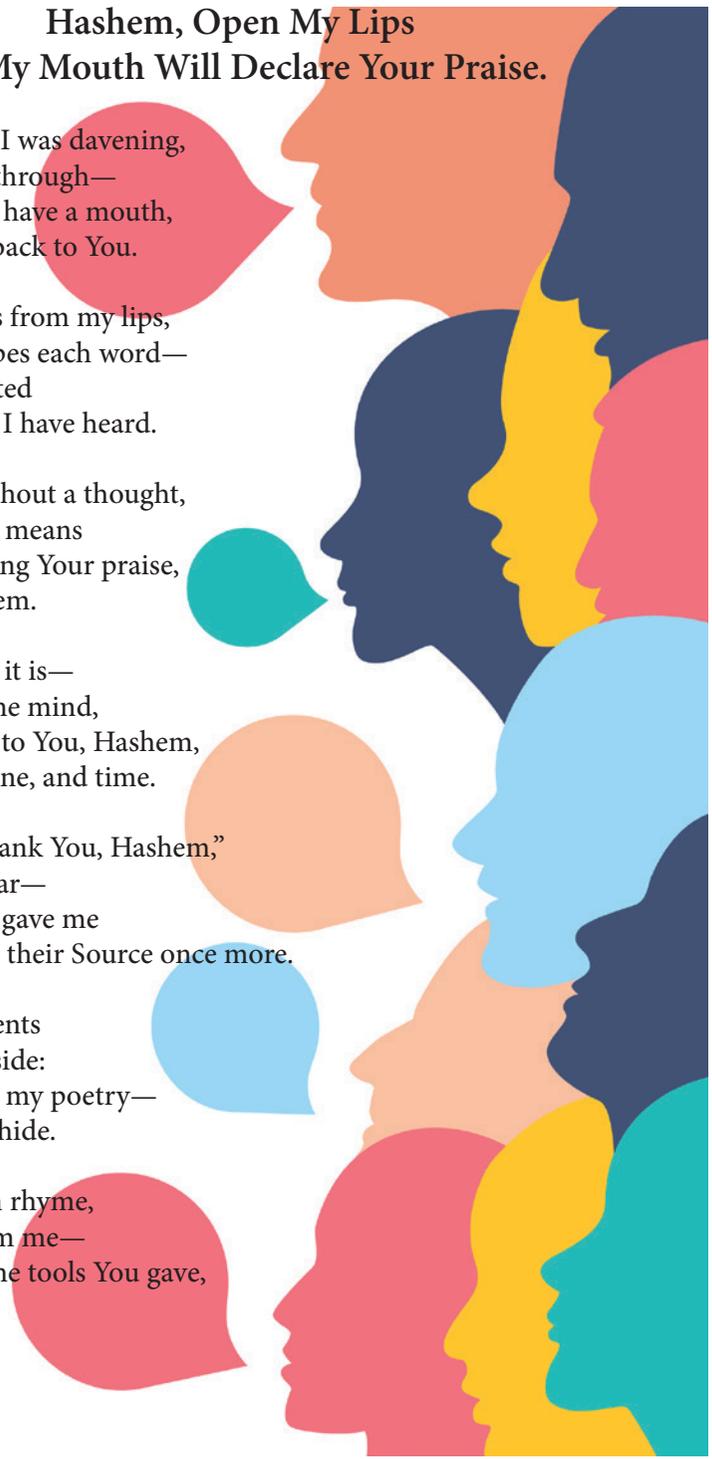
For years I spoke without a thought,
Not realizing what it means
To utter thanks, to sing Your praise,
To let my voice redeem.

Machshava—holy as it is—
Stays whispered in the mind,
But shouting thanks to You, Hashem,
Needs breath, and tone, and time.

To call out loud, “Thank You, Hashem,”
To let my feelings soar—
It takes the gifts You gave me
And returns them to their Source once more.

So let me use the talents
You planted deep inside:
My voice, my words, my poetry—
With nothing left to hide.

This is why I write in rhyme,
Why verses flow from me—
To praise You with the tools You gave,
In humble harmony.



For every sound my mouth can form,
For every line I pen—
Is one more way to thank You
Again, and yet again.

Background

I was in shul today and it dawned on me how I have to thank Hashem. I have the power of speech to utter thanks and praise. I certainly took it for granted for many years. We all have to use what we are given including talents to praise and thank Hashem.

A Tiny Spark

A whisper of kindness, a moment of care,
A pasuk you learn, or a tefillah said there—
You think it is small, barely touching the day,
But in shamayim it rises, it lights up the way.

A single spark flickers... yet look how it glows!
From heart into heart, its warm current flows.
What starts as a ember in one quiet soul
Can kindle a fire that brightens the whole.

A pebble is thrown in a lake calm and still,
Just a drop, barely felt—yet it trembles the hill.
The ripples move outward, they wander so far,
And no one can measure where their circles are.

So too every mitzvah, each word that you share,
Each shiur you support, each moment of care—
It travels through worlds you may never see,
Awakening sparks in another neshama—
because of you... quietly.

Avodas Hashem isn't loud, isn't grand;
It's one steady step, the lift of a hand.
It's choosing to learn when you're tired and worn;
It's softening your voice, it's greeting the morn.

And someone will see it—and whisper, "I can."
And someone will rise, and become a new man.
And someone will think, "If he can, then I..."
And suddenly light fills a once-darkened sky.

So go plant a spark, toss your pebble today.
Let your neshamah shine in its own simple way.
Because every small act, every thought, every word—
Can ripple through worlds...
and will always be heard.

Inspiration



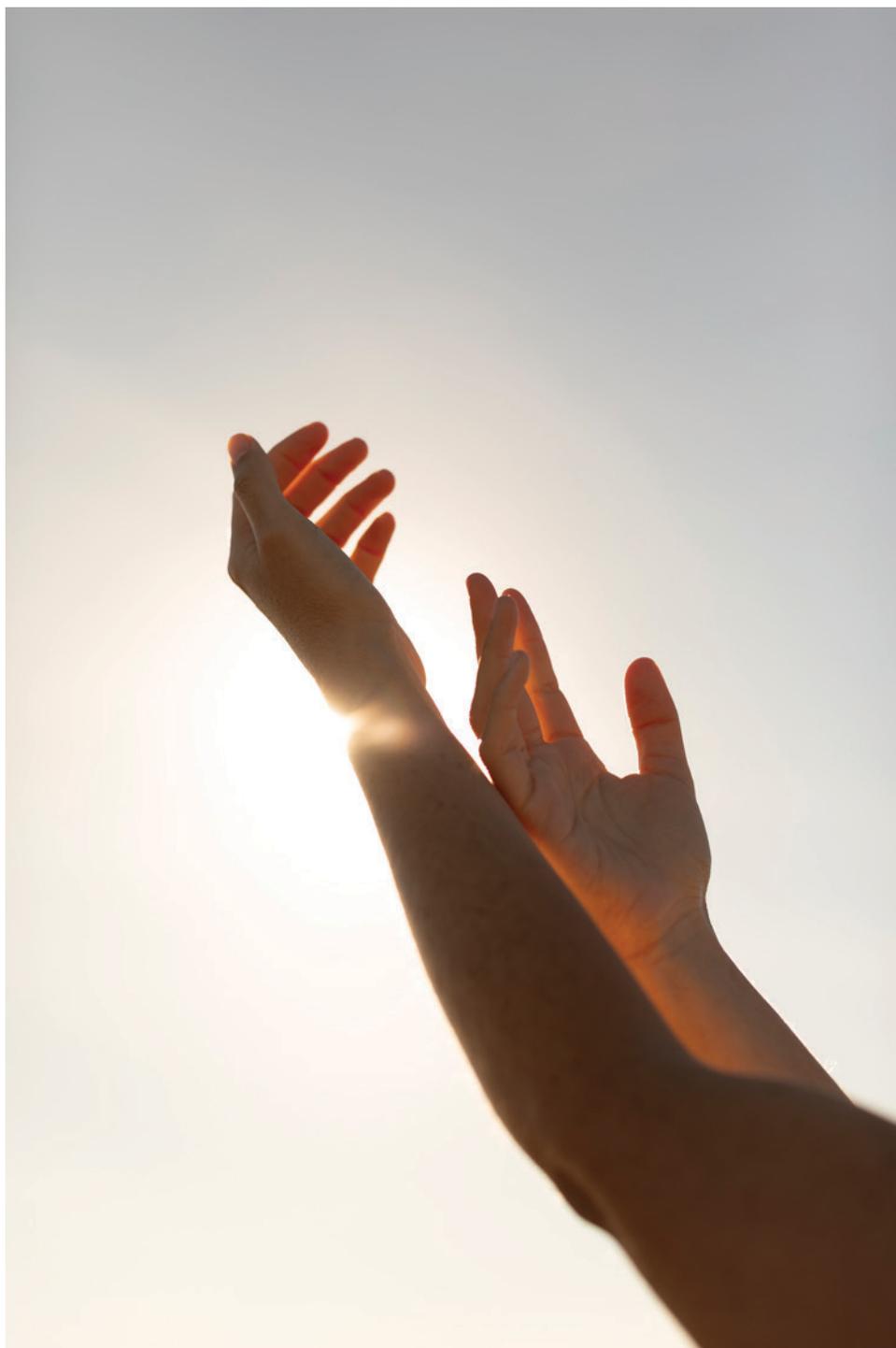
Installing...

Background

I was learning Dosh and Melabein with my brother-in-law Rafi this Shabbos, and he mentioned something beautiful about how inspiration spreads. He only joined the Hilchos Shabbos semicha program because he saw me doing it — one small action that sparked something in him.

You never know how far a little act can go. A quiet choice, a simple step... and suddenly it inspires someone else.

Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem



Hashem, I Cannot Do This Alone

Hashem, I cannot win this fight
Without Your strength, your guiding light.
I push with all the will I've got,
But on my own... it's just not a lot.

My heart is yours, my soul is true,
Yet part of me drifts far from you.
The pull of wrong is strong and near,
It whispers softly in my ear.

The struggle's real, it doesn't end—
Some days it feels, I barely bend.
Some days You give me extra might,
And darkness shrinks before my sight.

But then there come those weakened days
Where every thought becomes a maze,
And all the strength I thought I had
Feels paper-thin, feels worn, feels sad.

I know the path, I know what's right,
I know which choice leads back to light.
But willpower alone won't suffice—
Without Your strength, I pay the price.

So late at night I cry to you,
Please lift me up, please pull me through.
For I can't win this war alone—
Without Your help, darkness chills my bone.

Hashem, my King, my Father, hear my plea:
Stand by my soul, stay close to me.
The battle's fierce, the wounds are raw—
But with Your help, I'll rise once more.

The struggle's real, the fight is long,
But by Your side—I will be strong.

Background

At its core, this poem is a tefillah—a prayer in rhyme—admitting that willpower alone can't conquer spiritual struggles. Some days I feel strong, ready to rise and overpower the yetzer hara, and other days that resolve slips away and I'm barely hanging on by a thread. There are days I manage a small win and days I fall completely. But each time, I get back up and try again. Overcoming the yetzer hara requires Hashem's help, and even though the battle is long and painful, I believe that with Hashem by our side, we can rise again and come out stronger. I guess some say that this is the Avodah we need to do in this world.



A Test With My Name On It

<p>When the world comes rushing at me, and my thoughts start spinning wild, I forget Hashem is calling— Slow down, breathe, My precious child.</p> <p>For every storm that shakes me, every wave that pulls me in, is a nisayon sent from Heaven, made to lift me from within.</p> <p>It wasn't meant for someone else, not dropped on me unpredictably— this trial was woven for my path, a thread stitched in my destiny.</p> <p>Hashem designs the struggle like a song in perfect key— each note fits my own heartbeat, each line fits my destiny.</p> <p>Some tests soften hardened places, some teach courage quietly, some break patterns I've been carrying for far too long unconsciously.</p> <p>Some are here to spark my tefillah, some to heal what I can't see, some to show me hidden strength lying deep inside of me.</p>	<p>So I whisper, How do I pass this? How do I rise spiritually? And Hashem whispers in answer: This moment brings you close to Me.</p> <p>But then I fall— hard, heavy, trembling— and the shame begins to climb. Maybe I'm not worthy, maybe I've failed one too many times.</p> <p>But failing isn't final— It's a doorway, not a wall. The Ramchal says every stumble is a step inside the fall.</p> <p>Even Dovid faced deep moments, yet his heart still sang with fire. Yosef walked through years of darkness, yet kept climbing ever higher.</p> <p>Moshe carried heavy burdens, yet his light shone endlessly— their journeys teach a simple truth: growth unfolds progressively.</p> <p>For Hashem does not seek perfect, nor a life lived flawlessly— He asks us to keep returning with renewed sincerity.</p>	<p>The purpose isn't spotless steps, nor winning every fight— the nisayon is the rising as we turn back toward the light.</p> <p>So when life feels sharp and heavy, and my heart drops to its knee, I pause— I breathe— I listen: This test was handcrafted just for me.</p> <p>Every fall becomes a chorus, every tear a harmony— if I get back up with courage and let Hashem walk next to me.</p> <p>Because each nisayon has a purpose, each storm holds a melody— and the song my soul is singing is the one Hashem wrote lovingly.</p>
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Background

Life moves so quickly that we forget to pause and listen. But every struggle carries a message: Stop. Ask yourself—what is Hashem telling me right now? Is this a test? Each nisayon is crafted specifically for your soul and designed to lift you higher. You already have the strength inside to pass.

A–Z - Praise of Hashem

A

All creation proclaims the greatness of Hashem — from galaxies above to water and light,
and every sunrise whispers that Hashem guides the world with wisdom shining bright.

B

Beauty fills the earth because of Hashem's chessed in every color and ray,
and Hashem's goodness flows through nature, guiding even the smallest creature on its way.

C

Complex wonders reveal Yad Hashem — the eye, the heartbeat, breath, and every sign,
and each intricate system of life testifies to Hashem's design so divine.

D

Delicate miracles occur constantly — a seed splitting open beneath the ground,
and Hashem's hidden hashgachah pratis nourishes it silently without a sound.

E

Every breath is placed in my Neshama by Hashem with infinite care,
and even when I feel alone, Hashem's presence is always there.

F

Fields burst with life because Hashem commands the earth to grow,
and each blade of grass stands only because Hashem wills it to be so.

G

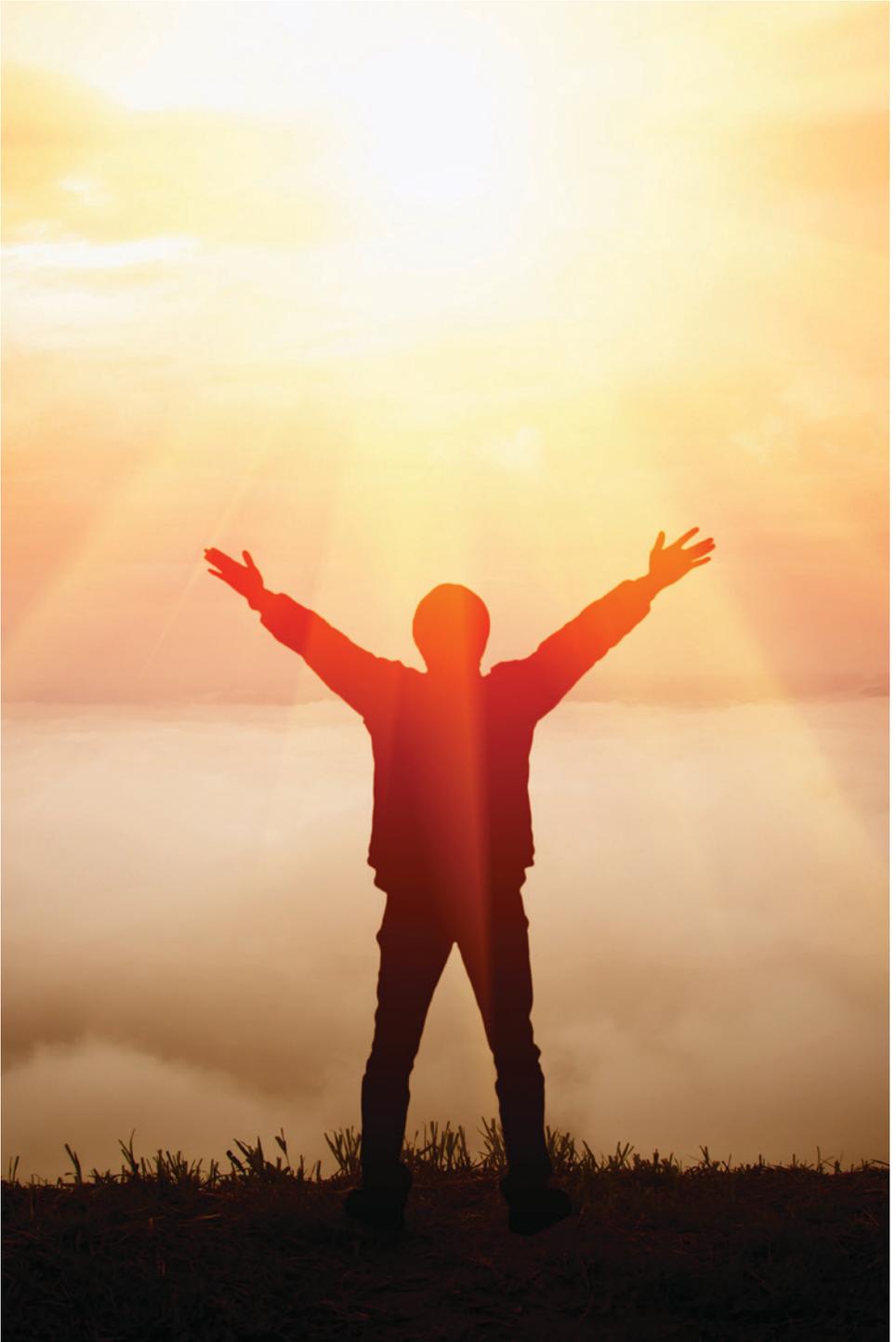
Great oceans roar in awe of Hashem, displaying depth and might,
and every crashing wave obeys boundaries Hashem set with perfect right.

H

Heavens proclaim Hashem's glory — stars arranged in flawless form,
and Hashem holds every galaxy in place through calm and storm.

I

Infinite is Hashem's wisdom — from the orbiting moon to the wings of a bee,
and the balance of the Olam reveals Hashem's brilliance that eyes barely see.



Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem

I

Joy fills the world because Hashem sustains every creature, big and small, and Hashem's rachamim extends equally — He forgets none at all.

K

Knowledge flows from Hashem — in animal instincts, weather, and flight, and even the smallest detail reveals Hashem's perfect light.

L

Life flows only because of Hashem — from a baby's first cry to an elder's grace, and the world overflows with nifla'os Hashem in every time and place.

M

Mountains stand tall as monuments to Hashem's strength and power, and their mighty peaks inspire awe with every passing hour.

N

Nature's balance testifies to Hashem — seasons turn, rivers flow, and every harmony in creation reveals truths only Hashem's masterpiece could show.

O

Order fills the universe — planets, physics, and patterns in sand, and behind it all stands Hashem, shaping existence with His mighty hand.

P

Plants rise from tiny seeds because Hashem directs their hidden birth, and even the simplest flower reveals greatness far beyond its worth.

Q

Quiet miracles sustain us — thought, memory, breath, and sight, and every internal system reveals Hashem's compassion and might.

R

Rain falls by Hashem's timing, watering fields as Hashem does will, and each drop reminds me the world continues only because Hashem sustains it still.

S

Stars sparkle with ancient brilliance, shining by Hashem's command, and the heavens declare Malchus Hashem with every flash of beauty from His

hand.

T

Thunder echoes through the sky proclaiming Hashem's unmatched might, and lightning's flash reveals Hashem's mastery across the deepest night.

U

Under every stone, hidden life exists only because Hashem called it into being, and countless tiny wonders praise Hashem in ways beyond human seeing.

V

Vast forests breathe because Hashem made every tree a whispered prayer, their branches dance in gratitude, like souls rejoicing in His presence there.

W

Waves rise and fall in perfect rhythm, guided by the limits Hashem set in place, their eternal movement singing of His glory, His kindness, and His grace.

X

eXalted is Hashem, whose glory fills every place, and every creature lives only through Hashem's sustaining embrace.

Y

Your creation, Hashem, reveals wisdom — in breath, in birds, in sound, and every moment uncovers another layer of Hashem's greatness all around.

Z

Zeal awakens in my heart as I witness Hashem's wonders each day, and all of creation rises with me in praise — for Hashem leads the way.

Blessed is Hashem, whose light surrounds His world, whose kindness never fades, whose glory fills the highest heavens and whose mercy fills our days.
Blessed is Hashem, whose wisdom wrote the stars, whose breath awakens clay, whose power stirs the mighty seas and whose love renews our way.
Blessed is Hashem, the One who hears all cries, who gathers every praise, whose truth stands firm forever and whose faithfulness remains.
Blessed is Hashem, eternally — the King of Kings whose radiance fills all space; whose mercy reaches every world and crowns each moment with His grace.

Background

I've been staying on top of my learning schedule and just completed my Ta'aroves test. Baruch Hashem, I've been feeling lighter these last few days, and I felt inspired to write something to praise Hashem with all the letters of the alphabet.



Slingshot

Every stumble is a whisper: Start again, don't fear the fall.
For the holiest victories begin when you rise after feeling small.

You're building a sacred muscle— the power to restart anew,
to flex that spark of courage that Hashem Himself placed in you.

The yetzer hara pulls you backward, a tension you almost can't bear...
but like a slingshot drawn tight with pressure, that pull is what sends you
through the air.

Higher than you ever stood before, further than you thought you'd go—
each restart fires your neshama, each comeback makes you grow.

Don't fear struggle's weight; it's shaping strength you can't see. Every try gets
lighter—
what was once a mountain becomes a hill you climb with ease.

And the more you choose to rise again, the more kedusha fills your way...
for Hashem treasures every restart, every "I'll try again today."

So pull back, breathe deep, begin once more— you're not falling, you're
gathering might.
Your restarting muscle is lifting you into holier, brighter light.

One day you'll look back and smile, seeing how far those struggles brought
you—for every restart was a
slingshot aimed toward the best
version of you.

Background

The battle with the yetzer hara is real. But the moment you make
even the smallest dent, you're
slingshotted forward—rising
higher in kedusha. It's a muscle
you must keep exercising: never
give up, keep trying, and no matter
how many times you fall, get up
again.





Yo-Yo Soul

(A poem of struggle, gratitude, and longing for Hashem)

I feel like a yo-yo swinging low, then rising high,
Wondering why my heart can't hold steady beneath the sky.
Why can't I stay consistent? What's this all about?
Some days I'm filled with clarity, some days shadowed by doubt.

A yo-yo with a thread so thin it feels it might just tear,
Yet somehow it holds together — because Hashem is there.
Every bounce-back that lifts me when I'm ready to fall,
Comes only from Hashem, the One who carries it all.

Without Hashem's help, my yetzer hara would swallow me whole,
But He breathes in new strength and whispers courage to my soul.
Thank You, Hashem — for breath itself, for sparks of inspiration,
For every moment You pull me back from spiritual suffocation.

Help me be complete in Your ways, to know You in all I do,
“בְּכֹל דְרָבְרָיָךְ דְעֵהוּ” — let that be my path, my view.
Help me return, do teshuvah, become holy, become true,
To be worthy of Your Shechinah that rests where hearts renew.

Someone once told me the battle You gave me means something great,
That You entrusted me with this nisayon, this heavy weight —
Not to break me, but to shape me, to help me rise above,
To spread kedusha, Torah, and Your infinite love.

I dream of generations past, whose holiness reached the sky,
Whose souls were pure enough to speak to You,
Whose spirits soared so high.
And though I am nothing — even less than nothing next to them —
Let me at least aim upward, reaching again and again.

Maybe with lofty goals, I can move the needle just a bit,
For even a tiny step toward You is already infinite.
Hashem, help me, please — guide me to who I'm meant to be,
A better version of myself, aligned with Your eternity.

Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem

I love You, Hashem —

Through the highs, through the lows, through every rise and fall.

You hold my thin thread gently...

And You lift me through it all.

Background

I was talking with someone about overcoming nisyonos, and we were saying how sometimes it feels like we're hanging on by a thread. Another person shared a beautiful idea: the greater the nisayon, the greater the person you can become by overcoming it. So remember this in your heart — if the struggle feels overwhelmingly strong, it means you've been given an equally powerful, if not greater, potential on the side of kedusha to rise, to grow, and to become truly great. **Stay strong, Klal Yisroel.**

It Starts With a Thought

It starts with a thought...Just one...
Because my mind needs a rest.
A tiny spark, barely a flicker,
Yet somehow it settles in my chest.

Then the thought grows stronger,
Winding left, twisting right,
Turning shadows into colors,
And daydreams into night.

It takes on a life of its own—
A wildfire with borrowed flame,
A fantasy so sweet, so vivid,
I almost forget my name.

And though I know it isn't me,
This voice that whispers soft and low,
The fantasy wraps around my mind,
And suddenly I want to let go.

By the time it reaches action,
My will is tired, worn, and thin.
The yetzer hara has patience like no other—
It knows just how to pull me in.

Because the battle isn't at the action,
Not at the fall, the slip, the break—
The battle is the moment
When that first thought starts to wake.

It's the sizzle of dopamine,
The mental play, the inner show,
Like buying a lottery ticket
Just to feel the thrill of "maybe so."

But oh—if I could stop it early,
Catch the spark before it burns,
Redirect that restless energy
Back to Hashem, where my heart yearns...



What peace would fill my weary mind,
What holiness my soul could keep,
What strength I'd gain to fight the storm,
What depth, what calm, what perfect sleep.

Devoting every thought to Hashem—
It's the hardest work we'll ever know.
But with each small win, each breath, each prayer,
We rise, we shine, we grow.

And slowly, surely, thought by thought,
We weaken what once held us tight—
We become קְדוֹשׁ לַיהוָה,
Warriors of His holy light.

So guard the mind's first whisper,
Stop the spark before it's caught—
Because every fall or every rise
Begins with just...
One...
Thought.

Background

We all go through this. I was doing well, feeling strong, and just wanted a simple break. I tried to relax, and then one tiny thought slipped in. That's all it takes. Science actually calls this the beginning of The Intrusive Thought Loop — when a single thought activates the brain's default mode network, the part that wanders, imagines, and fantasizes.

I let the thought sit for a moment, and then I fed it. Dopamine started to flow — not pleasure, but anticipation — pushing the thought forward, whispering: “Keep thinking about this... keep chasing it...” Before I realized it, the spark had turned into a full fantasy. More dopamine → more focus → the fantasy felt alive. My mind was hijacked. Neuroscience calls it "attentional capture". Torah calls it the yetzer hara taking hold.

Then suddenly, something snapped me out of it. It did take a full day later. Science says this is a real neurological event — a cognitive interruption, a pattern break, or what researchers call a cognitive snapback. It can happen for three reasons:

(1) An outside interruption — a salience shock.

It can be anything: a sound, a shift in the room, a sudden wave of awareness.

Torah calls this *Siyatta Dishmaya* — Hashem gently shaking a person awake. Sometimes it's something as simple as Hashem making you tired for a moment, you close your eyes, take a short nap, and that tiny break is enough to dissolve the entire fantasy and reset your mind.

(2) A dopamine peak followed by a dopamine crash.

Fantasies rise on dopamine... but dopamine always drops.

When it drops, the prefrontal cortex — the “self-control center” — turns back on.

Chazal say this is the *Neshama* overpowering the *yetzer hara*.

(3) A reactivation of higher values.

Your mind contains two systems:

- lower brain: desire, impulse, fantasy
- higher brain: conscience, identity, *neshama*

When the higher brain reactivates, it shuts the fantasy down completely.

All three matched exactly what happened to me and maybe us.

One moment I was deep in the fantasy — the next moment I was awake, calm, myself again. The thought lost all power, as if the monster dissolved. Science calls it executive override. Mindfulness calls it “waking up from thought.” Torah calls it Hashem's loving intervention before sin.

And that's when it hit me: This wasn't luck.

This was exactly how Hashem designed the mind:

Thought → dopamine spark → fantasy builds → mind gets hijacked → dopamine peaks → Hashem gives clarity → higher mind returns → *yetzer hara* loses grip → calm returns.

In that moment, it was Hashem's kindness and the astonishing, intricate system He built into human biology that rescued me. The mind is complicated — a single thought can grow into a monster. But Hashem can break the loop in a second and return you to yourself. That alone is the greatest *chizuk*: No matter how strong the fantasy becomes, Hashem can awaken you in an instant.



Fight Fantasy With a Better Fantasy

A Poem for Rewriting the Narrative

In my mind a thought awakens—
A spark, a whisper, faint and small.
It drifts within my restless heart,
Yet somehow tries to claim it all.

A wandering thought begins to gather,
A shimmer turning strangely clear—
It forms a tale I never wanted,
Yet draws me in and pulls me near.

And then the yetzer harah starts its shaping,
Turns gentle sparks to burning heat—
A whisper bending into נצח,
An urge I never meant to meet.

One step unguarded, heart unsteady—
And darkness starts to take its toll;
A harmless thought becomes a struggle,
A climb to reclaim my soul.

But somewhere deeper than the struggle,
Beneath the noise, the pull, the ache—
A holier voice inside me whispers:
You can choose which world you make.

Because the mind is Hashem's creation—
A garden rich with hidden fire.
It follows any seed you plant there,
It grows according to desire.

And if one story steals my focus,
Another story can take its place;
For the brain seeks rush, not darkness—
It craves the spark, not sin's embrace.

So why not craft a purer story,

A vision soaked in Heaven's glow?
Why feed my mind a fleeting shadow
When I can let my spirit grow?

Why chase illusions built on emptiness
When I can soar beyond the sky?
When as a child my heart believed
That every dream could truly fly?

When I believed I could rise like Superman,
Cape whipping through the winds of night—
Outrun the world with fearless wonder,
Leap across rooftops in one flight.

Super-strength and blazing courage,
A spark no fear could ever drown—
A hero-rush that filled my chest
Before life's weight pulled it down.

And I dreamed of bending time itself,
Of stepping through the years gone by—
Racing clocks and folding moments,
Touching futures with a sigh.

The thrill of slipping through the ages,
Of worlds unknown just waiting near—
A rush of wonder, wild and endless,
A magic untouched by fear.

I dreamed of spells and glowing sorcery,
Of wizards wise with timeless lore.
A world where magic danced in moonlight,
And every moment promised more.

But now my soul yearns for something higher—
A trembling pull toward the Divine,
A hunger born from deeper places,
A thirst no fleeting thrill can bind.

A longing to grow purer, holier,
To feel Hashem so near, so real;

To let His presence shape my footsteps,
And lift me from the places I conceal.

And in that climb toward light and purity,
Another vision floods my sight:
To sit with Moshe Rabbeinu,
And learn Torah through the night.

To walk through Yetzias Mitzrayim,
Hear the sea stand straight and proud;
To be at Matan Torah trembling
As Heaven wrapped us in a cloud.

To sit inside Avraham's tent,
Where kindness warms like sacred gold;
To stand beside Yitzchak's altar,
Watching courage pure and bold.

To dine with Shlomo HaMelech
Where wisdom flows like endless streams;
To walk the Beis HaMikdash courtyards,
Where holiness exceeds all dreams.

To bask beneath the Shechinah's radiance—
The pleasure no soul can contain;
A joy more fierce than mortal sweetness,
A light that heals the deepest pain.

To learn with glowing bands of tzaddikim,
Where every soul shines warm and bright;
To join my voice with theirs in Torah,
And feel my spark burst into light.

To sit with Rebbe shaping Mishnah,
Hearing halachah as it's born;
To meet Rav Elazar ben Azariah,
Young with wisdom, old with dawn.

These visions spark a higher rush—
A dopamine that lifts, not falls;
A pleasure carved of pure kedusha,

A strength that lifts me higher, standing proud and tall.

A holy fire, sweet yet mighty,
A surge that fills my soul with light;
A fantasy that doesn't chain me,
But raises me from lonely night.

Because the brain does not choose morals—
It only follows where I steer;
It fires the chemicals I ask for,
It dances to the thoughts I near.

So if I shift the inner picture,
The story, the scene, the pulse, the frame—
My mind begins rewiring circuits,
And holiness becomes my flame.

To learn with Rabbi Shimon
In his cave of blazing firelight;
To sing with Dovid HaMelech
As his harp brings dawn into the night.

These are the tales that lift my spirit,
These are the dreams that make me whole;
This is the narrative of healing—
The sacred architecture of my soul.

For every mind just seeks a story,
A place to run, a pulse to chase;
So give it visions born of Heaven,
Not the shadows that erase.

And when temptation tries to grip me,
I don't collapse—
I recreate.
I build a world of light inside me,
I choose the path that makes me great.

One gentle shift toward You, Hashem,

And suddenly my heart can see—
That no fantasy on earth compares
To the holiness
You dream for me.

Background

This poem grew out of the one before it, “It Starts With a Thought.” One tiny thought slipped in, dopamine started flowing, and the fantasy began building a life of its own. There are many ways people try to get that rush — exercise, distractions, anything — but I realized something simpler:

Why not fight fire with fire?

Why not use the same imagination that drags me down... to lift me up?

A thought is the easiest thing to change.

So if my brain wants a dopamine rush, why not feed it a different fantasy — one that’s pure, holy, and uplifting? The brain doesn’t care which story it follows; it just follows the strongest one. So this poem is my attempt to rewrite the narrative — to choose a fantasy that brings me closer to Hashem instead of farther away.



The Only Joy That Lasts

From Koheles we learn
Vanity of vanities, Koheles cries,
“Vanity of vanities — all is futile, he sighs.
For all that glitters fades with time,
And pleasures slip like hours gone by.

When I was a child, I chased the thrill,
The latest game that gave a chill.
But soon it gathered dust on the floor —
The joy was gone, I wanted more.

As a young adult I chased the trend,
A gadget here, a car to send
A message of power, of shine, of style —
But even that grew old after a while.

Motor boating once filled my days,
Speed and spray in sunlit haze.
But now that thrill has sailed away,
It couldn't keep my heart at bay.

Vacations too once called my name,
Exotic sights, the travel game.
But later I found them empty, bland —
A moment's thrill that slipped like sand.

But Torah...

Ah, Torah is different, it never grows old.
Its sweetness increases, its stories unfold.
The more I learn, the more I yearn,
A fire inside begins to burn.

And davening... singing to Hashem above,
There is no pleasure that feels like love.
Even when tired, or burned out a bit,
I return again — my soul won't quit.

Oh, poor me — I wasted years,
Drifting far, shedding tears.

Not learning, not davening with fiery heart —
How did I let myself live apart?

So wake up, dear reader — this warning is true:
Don't waste life on things that don't last for you.
Keep learning — it grows, it deepens, it shines,
It sweetens your days, it strengthens your mind.

Learning is joy. Joy is learning.
Avodas Hashem — the sweetest yearning.
Davening — singing — rising above,
Hashem's Torah is life, is truth, is love.



And remember the words with which Koheles ends,
When all illusions finally bend:

The end of the matter, after everything is heard:

Fear God and keep His commandments For this is the whole purpose of man.

Background

This poem was inspired by a deep realization that has grown clearer with age: everything I once chased for joy eventually faded. The games I begged for as a kid, the gadgets and cars I wanted as a young adult, the hobbies and vacations that once excited me all of them lost their taste with time. But the one pleasure that never stopped growing, the one joy that deepened instead of disappearing, is the joy of learning Hashem's Torah and pouring my heart out in davening. Even when I feel burned out, I return to it again and again, because it is the only thing that fills me with real life, real connection, and real meaning. As I learned Koheles more deeply — "Vanity of vanities... all is futile" I understood that Shlomo HaMelech wasn't talking about despair, but about clarity. True satisfaction comes only from closeness to Hashem. That truth moved me to write this poem as a confession, as gratitude, and as a wake-up call for anyone still searching for joy in places it will never last.

The More I Give, The More I Live

A poem on the miracle of tzedakah

Tzedakah saves from death, our Sages taught,
A truth the world denies until life proves it not.
For giving never lessens what Hashem has decreed;
If anything, it opens gates to every future need.

I never lost a penny from charity's embrace,
For every act of kindness brought a blessing in its place.
When my heart feels stirred to give, I simply don't resist
It's Hashem who sends the money, I'm just adding to the list.

Story one—Brooklyn sidewalks, a little girl so sweet,
Collecting hachnasas kallah, worn shoes upon her feet.
A lonely hundred dollars was all my wallet had inside,
But I handed it to her gladly, almost bursting with pride.
And maybe in that zechus, beyond what eyes can see,
My children found their basherts with perfect harmony.



Songs of a Simple Man to Hashem

Story two, a year I stretched to give far more than before,
Pushing past my limits, though unsure what lay in store.
Yet that year Hashem repaid me with abundance from above
For charity brings blessing, like a kiss of Heaven's love.

Story three—in Eretz Yisrael, on a quiet Friday morn,
A man said he needed money so his Shabbos could be warm.
I asked him what he needed, then doubled it instead
So the next week he'd have comfort, not a worry in his head.
And then a giant blizzard struck; the streets were locked and bare
No way he could have gathered funds from anyone out there.
But running after mitzvos brings more mitzvos in return
For kindness lights a fire that continues bright to burn.

Story four —I tried an experiment, maaser down to the cent,
Tracking every in and out, wherever each dollar went.
For though I gave generously, I wanted truth, not guess—
To honor the halacha with precision, nothing less.
And after two exacting weeks, with every penny clear,
Hashem sent a major deal—His message ringing near:
When you measure what you give, I will measure what you earn;
And blessings flow like rivers when your heart begins to turn.

So hear my simple message, from the stories that I've lived:
Tzedakah isn't losing, it's the greatest gift to give.
It lifts the ones who need it, but it elevates you too,
For kindness shapes the giver more than those it passes through.

And Pirkei Avos teaches us the truth of every man:
There are four who face tzedakah—each with a different plan.
But the one who wants to give, and hopes all others give as well
He's the pious one whose deeds the heavenly courts tell.

So open up your heart, let generosity begin,
For every coin you give away brings blessing flowing in.

May Hashem grant you kindness, wealth, and joy that's always new
And may the light of giving be a guiding flame for you.

Background

This poem was inspired by a lifetime of seeing, again and again, how tzedakah doesn't take, it gives. I've never once lost by giving. On the contrary, every time

I stretched myself, every time I followed that quiet inner voice urging me to help someone else, Hashem showed me that charity opens doors no human effort ever could. Over the years, I experienced moments that were so clear, so unmistakably tied to acts of giving, that they became etched into my heart: the little girl in Brooklyn who walked away with my last hundred dollars, the struggling collector in Israel who ended up protected during a blizzard the week after, the year I gave more than ever and earned more than ever, and the recent decision to track my maaser with exactness—only to see a major deal close immediately afterward. These weren't coincidences; they were reminders that tzedakah creates blessing.

What moved me most was realizing that every act of giving changed me more than it changed the recipient. It shifted my mindset, made me more connected to Hashem, and showed me how real Divine providence is. Tzedakah saves a person—not just from danger, but from smallness, from selfishness, from the illusion that we control our own success. The poem grew out of that understanding. It's a message to myself and a message to anyone who reads it: when your heart feels inspired to give, don't hesitate. Run toward the mitzvah. Hashem always replaces what you give, sometimes in the most unexpected and miraculous ways. May this poem be a reminder that tzedakah isn't a burden, it's a privilege and a blessing that comes back to you many times over.

Clothed in Rachamim (Mercy)

Hashem's kindness has no end in sight,
His mercy flows both day and night.
Each step I take, each path I roam,
Is guided Above, I'm never alone.

Gemora Chullin teaches, clear and true,
No wound below comes without You.
A finger scraped, a drop of red,
First whispered Heaven's words instead.

Not chance, not luck, not random play,
My steps are set, the verses say.
Man walks his road, yet cannot see
The hidden kindness meant to be.

A bug at night, a silent bite,
No roar of pain, no public sight.
A hidden place upon the leg,
No trumpet blast, no shame to beg.

I scratched, it opened, then it bled,
Again, again; the wound re-spread.
And in that moment, soft and still,
My heart stood quiet before Your will.

If this was kaparah, I cannot know,
For secrets rest with You alone.
But look, Hashem, how gentle, kind,
How wrapped in mercy is Your design.

Not fire, not fear, not open disgrace,
Just quiet pain in a hidden place.
A bug, a scratch, a drop unseen
So clothed in love, so small, so clean.

Thank You, Hashem, for all You do,
For judgment sweetened through and through.
For kindness dressed as something slight,
For mercy hidden in the night.

I know so little, yet still I know:
Your rachamim follow me wherever I go.

Background

This poem was written during a quiet moment of reflection late at night (3:30AM). A small, almost insignificant incident; a bug bite that itched, was scratched, and the wound reopened. It became an opportunity to pause and think about Hashem's constant presence in even the smallest details of life. Chazal teaches us that nothing happens by chance, that even a minor wound is not random, and yet we are never given the right to know why something happens or what it means. That uncertainty itself became the inspiration: not fear, not guilt, but awe at Hashem's compassion. If pain or a cut ever serves as atonement, it is known only to Him. I know nothing. In any case, what was clear in that moment was Hashem's kindness. How gently it came, how quietly it stayed hidden, how mercifully it avoided shame or harm. This poem is not an explanation, but a thank-you. An expression of gratitude for Hashem whose judgment is clothed in rachamim, whose care is constant, and whose love is felt even in the smallest, unseen moments.



Inspirational Cards

Late at night, I often feel inspired to create small spiritual reminder cards that people can keep in their wallets. If anyone would like one, just let me know. You can see samples on my website: RabbiDovidAdress.com.



Other Books by Rabbi Dovid Adress

