

# Tefillah Thoughts

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**Promoting appropriate decorum and kavanah during davening**

## Pirush Ha'Milos:

**“הוד והדר לפניו עז וחדוה במקומו”**

*“Majesty and splendor are before Him, strength and joy in his presence.”*

True *atzvus* (depression) derives from the realm of *kelipas nogah*, not of holiness. For concerning the realm of holiness it is written: “Strength and joy are in his presence”. . . For this reason the AriZal writes that even worry over one’s sins is appropriate only during confession, but not during prayer and study. These must be conducted with a joy deriving exclusively from the realm of holiness.

(Tanya Chapter 31)

**“הבו לה' משפחות עמים הבו לה' כבוד ועז”**

*“Render to the L-rd, families of nations, render to the L-rd honor and might.”*

**“הבו לה' כבוד שמו שאו מנחה ובאו לפניו השתחוו לה' בהדרת קדש”**

*“Render to the L-rd the honor due His name; bring an offering and come before him, bow down to the L-rd in resplendent holiness.”*

## POINTS OF INTEREST:

Rabbi Yitzchak said in the name of Rabbah bar Mari: If a person offends a fellow human being, it is a matter of doubt whether or not the friend will be reconciled, and even if he is, it is questionable whether or not words will influence him. But in the case of Hashem, if a person transgresses in secret, Hashem is reconciled with him through words alone, as it is written (Hosea 14:3), “Take with you words and return to Hashem.”

(Yuma 86b)

## Avodas Ha'Tefillah:

One should not think, “I am worthy that Hashem grant my request, because I concentrated while praying.” On the contrary, such an approach recalls one’s sins, for due to this his deeds are examined to see if he is justified in being confident in his merits. Instead, one should have in mind that Hashem should act out of kindness. One should say in his heart: “Who am I, poor and shameful, to come and make a request of the King of kings, Hakodosh Baruch Hu? (It would not be possible) if not for the abundant kindnesses with which He relates to His creations.”

(The Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Oruch: sec. 99:5)

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## Laws and customs:

When reciting Shemoneh Esreh, one should position his feet next to each other as if there were only one leg, in this manner resembling the angles of whom it is said, “Their legs are a straight leg,” i.e. their legs appear as one leg.

(The Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Oruch: sec. 95:1)

One may pray in any language he desires when he prays as part of a congregation. When, however, one prays individually, he should pray only in the Holy Tongue, for the ministering angels do not comprehend the other languages, and a person praying individually needs an angel as an intercessor, for his prayer to be accepted. By contrast, congregational prayer needs no intercessor.

(The Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Oruch: sec. 101:5)

## A Story:

The chassid Rabbi Raphael Nachman ('Fuleh') Kahan told: In November of 1917, Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch left Rostov for a conference of rabbis in Petersburg, accompanied by Rabbi Nosson Gurary, Rabbi Ze'ev Flie, and Rabbi Shmuel Katzman. He reached Moscow as the fighting between the Bolsheviks and the 'white' forces raged in the city's streets. For several days, including Shabbos, the Rebbe was stranded in Moscow, neither able to continue to Petersburg nor to return to Rostov. My parents prepared the Rebbe's food, which we took to his lodgings with bullets whizzing over our heads.

One afternoon, my father and Reb Zalkeh saw the Rebbe pacing in his room, a distraught expression on his face. They heard him saying under his breath: "I set out for Petersburg, but remain in Moscow. Nu, it seems that this is the way it was meant to be..." He turned to my father: "I would like to get together a few chassidim. I know these are difficult times, but still..."

The Rebbe prepared a list of several wealthy members of the Lubavitcher community, and my father rounded them up. At first, the invitations were extended by telephone; but soon the lines went down and my father ventured out to call on the invited himself. Despite the menacing conditions, every last one of those invited arrived.

The Rebbe said to them: "Many Jews have been made homeless by the war and refugees are stranded throughout Europe and Russia. Many have been displaced to areas where no Jew has ever lived. They now find themselves without any of the books essential for a Jew, particularly prayer books."

The Rebbe then proposed that a printing company be formed with shares offered for 1000 rubles a share. Each participant was asked to purchase as many shares as he wished. All those present signed up.

On Sunday, the Rebbe walked to the train station (the conditions did not allow for any vehicular traffic to pass in the streets) accompanied by several Chassidim and returned home. Back in Rostov, the Rebbe formed the 'Ezra' press and published the first Tehilat Hashem prayer books (of the old thin edition) as well as prayer books according to the ashkenazic version. He then dispatched the prayer books to wherever Jews were to be found.



### ***Bior Tefillah: "Matir Asurim"***

This blessing reflects the second stage in the process of awakening. During our sleep we are not in control of our movements. We are like people who are bound with ropes. But when we wake up, we feel "released"; we are again in control of our movements, and can get out of bed.

In a deeper sense, there are people who are "tied hand and foot" in a variety of ways. One may find oneself enmeshed in economic difficulties, bound by financial obligations; one may find oneself a "prisoner" of circumstances. Worse still, a person may be a captive of his own habits and inclination, and so loses control of his actions. In all such cases, one can only turn to Hashem "who releases the bound" to help him break the chains, whatever they may be. We have this also in mind, when we say this blessing.

(My Prayer)

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