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Mentioning a *Pasuk* at the End Of *Shemonei Esrei*

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► Halachically Speaking is a monthly publication compiled by Rabbi Moishe Dovid Lebovits, a former *chaver kollel* of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath and a *musmach* of Harav Yisroel Belsky *zt"l*. Rabbi Lebovits currently works as the Rabbinical Administrator for the KOF-K Kosher Supervision.

► Each issue reviews a different area of contemporary *halacha* with an emphasis on practical applications of the principles discussed. Significant time is spent ensuring the inclusion of all relevant *shittos* on each topic, as well as the *psak* of Harav Yisroel Belsky, *zt"l* on current issues.

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Mentioning a *Pasuk* at the End Of *Shemonei Esrei*

Many siddurim have a list of *pesukim* that correspond to one's name, which are meant to be recited at the end of *Shemoneh Esrei*. What is the nature of this practice? When is the proper time to say the *pasuk*? Should women say it as well? What should a person do if his name does not appear on this list (which is common for people with more modern names)? These questions will be addressed in this article.

The Source

The custom of saying a *pasuk* corresponding to one's name at the end of *Shemoneh Esrei* is not mentioned in the Gemara or Shulchan Aruch.¹ However, it is mentioned by some *poskim*.² The Elya Rabbah³ says that this custom is found in the Beis Yosef, although it is not there.⁴ It is possible that the Elya Rabbah meant a different source.⁵ The *pasuk* can be from Torah, Neviim or Kesuvim.⁶

1 See *Vayizbar Yosef* 3:12.

2 *Shlah* (quoted in *Yabea Omer*, O.C. 9:13, although some didn't find it in the Shlah's writings. See *Siach Tefillah* 6:5:page 126; *Lekutei Maharich* 1:page 169, *Elyah Rabbah* 122:2, *Tzapichas B'devash* 55:page 149b, *Daas Torah* 156:1, *Taamei Haminhagim* 90:page 12, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 18:15, *Yufei Eleiv* 1:122:3, *Aruch Hashulchan* 122:8, *Kaf Hachaim* 122:11, *Shemiras Halashon* 2:page 102:footnote, *Yabea Omer*, O.C. 9:13, *Yalkut Yosef* 122:6, *Doleh U'mashkeh*, page 82, *Shaarei Halachah U'minhag* 1:pages 164-165 (custom of Chabad). See *Rashi* in *Michah* 6:9.

3 122:2.

4 *Halachah Berurah* 122:footnote 3.

5 *She'arim Metzuyanim B'halachah* 18:footnote 35. See *Vayizbar Yosef* 3:12.

6 *Elyah Rabbah* 122:2, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 18:15.

כל השנה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (מדה עב)

The Purpose

We have established a source for the practice to say the *pasuk*, but what is the purpose of it?

Rashi says that saying this *pasuk* saves one from Gehinom.⁷ The Chofetz Chaim⁸ elaborates on this in his *sefer Shemiras Halashon*.⁹

Saying the *pasuk* is a method to remember one's name on the Day of Judgment, when one is nervous and scared.¹⁰ The nature of man is that he goes around and talks badly about others, or embarrasses them. Because of this he is filled with sin. Each sin has a name on it — specifically the sinner's name. If one talks badly about hundreds of people, since people have many names they will all be mixed up and he will have to be punished for all of them.

Even if one says that his name is not the one under which the sin is labeled, he will be punished anyway because on the Day of Judgment he will forget his name. However, if one says the *pasuk* daily during his lifetime, this will help him to remember his name on the Day of Judgment and he will not receive a punishment he does not deserve. Saying the *pasuk* that corresponds to one's name reminds him not to speak badly about others. His name will then be only his, and not a mixture of many other names.¹¹

7 Michah 6:9. See *Lekutei Maharich* 1:page 169. See *O'ver Orach* 122. Refer to *Otzer Kol Minhagei Yeshurin* 70:25:page 222.

8 *Shemiras Halashon* 2:page 102:footnote.

9 This practice is not mentioned in the *Mishnah Berurah*. See *Siach Tefillah* 6:5:page 128-129.

10 Refer to *Shemiras Halashon* 2:page 102:footnote. Also see *Taamei Haminhagim* 90:page 12.

11 For more on this, see *L'haer Lehoros U'lihaskel* 3, pages 109-112. With this we can explain why the book of *Shemos* is called *Sefer Shemos* (lit., Book of Names), when in actuality this has nothing to do with what is written there. When Bnei Yisrael were in Mitzrayim, they did not speak badly about one another and therefore they did not receive other people's names. This is why Chazal say they

What and When to Say It

The practice is to say a *pasuk* that starts with the first letter of one's name and ends with the last letter of the name.¹²

Some *poskim* say that one may mention a *pasuk* that has one's entire name in it. For example, someone whose name is Avraham may say a *pasuk* that contains this name.¹³ This may be even more preferable, since one may be able to better remember his name if the name itself appears in the *pasuk*.¹⁴

The *pasuk* is recited before saying the last of the two *Yehi Ratzons* in *Elokai Netzor*.¹⁵ Some *poskim* say that this *pasuk* should not be said during Shemoneh Esrei, since doing so is a *hefsek*.¹⁶ However, others counter that this is baseless, since it is permitted to be *mafsik* at the point when the *pasuk* is said.¹⁷

Changing a Pasuk

If one wishes to say a different *pasuk* that corresponds to his name, he may do so, but he should not keep switching the *pasuk* since he won't remember it on the Day of Judgment.¹⁸ This is common if one has a name that does

did not change their name, and it was a big *zechus* for them to be redeemed (ibid., page 113).

12 *Elyah Rabbah* 122:2, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 18:15.

13 *Siach Tefillah* 6:5:page 127.

14 *Siach Tefillah* 6:5:page 127.

15 *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 18:15, *Yabea Omer*, O.C. 9:13, *Yalkut Yosef* 122:9. See *Yufei Leleiv* 1:22:3. Based on what we mentioned earlier, it makes sense to mention the *Yehi Ratzon* here since in *Elokai Netzor* we talk about not speaking badly about others. (For more on this, see *L'haer Lehoros U'lihaskel* 3, page 112.)

16 *Meorei Ohr*, page 31. See *Orchos Chaim* 122:4, who says to say it after one takes three steps back.

17 *Kaf Hachaim* 122:11, *Vayizbar Yosef* 3:12, *Yabea Omer*, O.C. 9:13, *Halachah Berurah* 122:7. See *Oz Nidberu* 4:45, *Rivevos Ephraim* 3:83.

18 *Rivevos Ephraim* 3:83, *Siach Tefillah* 6:5:page 127.

not appear in the list of names (see below). He may find any *pasuk* that best corresponds to his name.

Multiple Names

One who has multiple names should say a *pasuk* that corresponds to each of his names.¹⁹ If a name was added to a sick person's name, *R"l*, and he recovered and is no longer called by that name, there is no need for him to say a *pasuk* that corresponds to this name.²⁰

One who is called by a nickname says a *pasuk* that corresponds to his real name. For example, if one is called Izak but his name is Yitzchak, he says the *pasuk* corresponding to Yitzchak.

Pasuk for Women

Based on the reasoning of the Chafetz Chaim, as mentioned above, women should also say a *pasuk* corresponding to their name at the end of *Shemoneh Esrei*.²¹

Reciting *Pasuk* by Heart

Many people recite the *pasuk* by heart. Is this permitted?

The halachah is that one is not allowed to say a *pasuk* that is written without reading it from the text.²² However, it is permitted if one is fluent in the *pasuk*.²³ Since one who recites the *pasuk* many times is fluent in it, there is no

19 *Siach Tefillah* 6:5:page 127, *Doleh U'mashkeh*, page 82:footnote 29, quoting the practice of Harav Elyashiv, *zt"l*. See *Yaskil Avdi O.C.* 8:10 (end). Refer to *Kesser Shem Tov*, page 162.

20 *Yaskil Avdi*, *O.C.* 8:10 (end).

21 *Vayizbar Yosef* 3:12, *Siach Tefillah* 6:5:page 127. See *ibid.*, where he quotes the opinion of Harav Ben-zion Abba Shaul *zt"l*, who says women do not need to recite it.

22 *Maseches Gittin* 60b; *Shulchan Aruch*, *O.C.* 49:1.

23 *Bach*, *O.C.* 49, *Birchei Yosef* 5.

concern of saying it by heart.²⁴ Other *poskim* maintain that the concern is when one is exempting others for a mitzvah, but this is not this case here.²⁵

Some *poskim* maintain that although there are leniencies if one knows *Tehillim* by heart, when it comes to a *segulah* this is different.²⁶

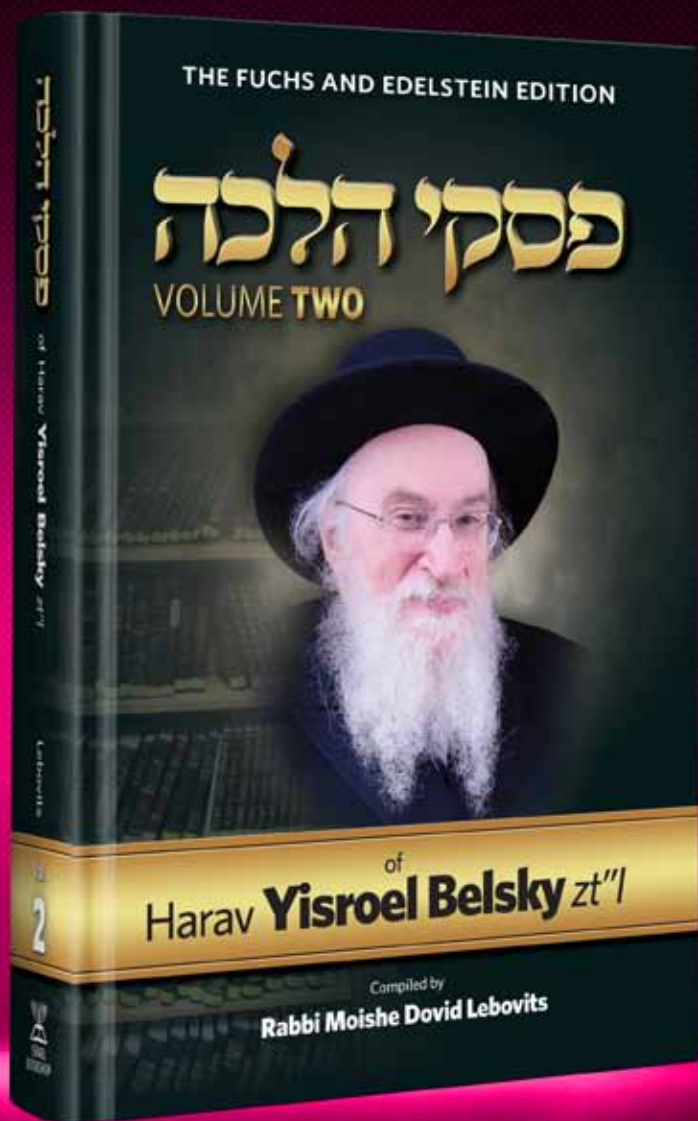
אין לו להקדיש"ה בעולמו אלא י' אמות של הלכה בלבד.... (ברכות ה')

24 *Yabea Omer*, O.C. 9:13. See *Yalkut Yosef* 122:7. Also see *Halachah Berurah* on *Shulchan Aruch*, O.C. 49:1.

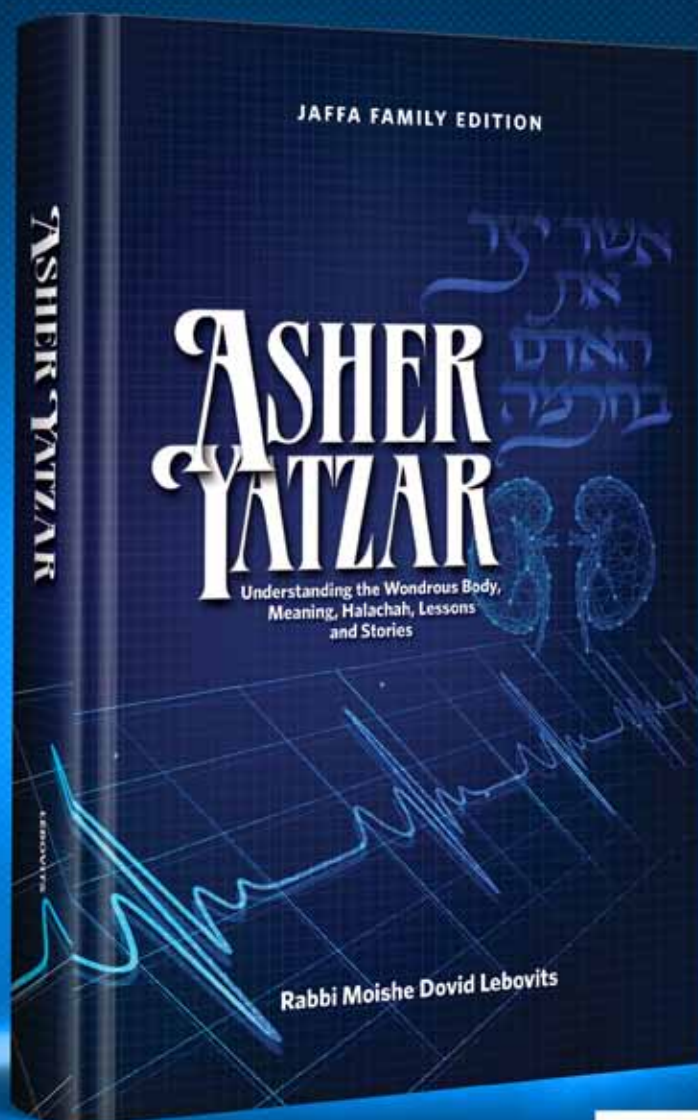
25 *Gam Ani Odecha*, page 129:2.

26 *Hisorerus Teshuvah* 1:52.

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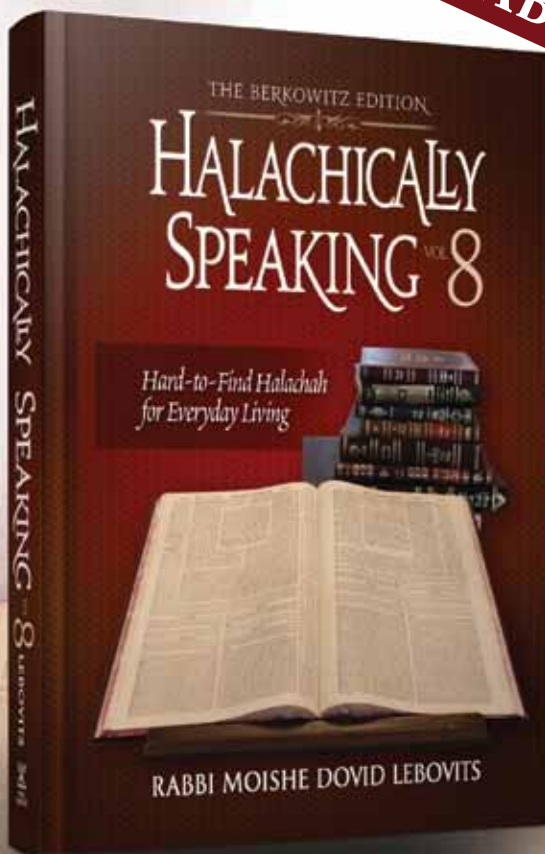
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