



## THE TEFILLIN CAMPAIGN – SAVING LIVES Farbrenge – 11 Nissan, 5743-1983

There are those who demand: "What is the result of these Mitzvah campaigns? You put on Tefillin with a Jew just once, and you don't know what will be with him tomorrow morning and in the days that follow?"

Regarding the Tefillin campaign, such a question cannot be posed by a learned person.

Anyone who has studied Talmud Tractate Rosh Hashana with the commentaries, knows, that through donning Tefillin one time, a Jew is removed from the category of "a head that has not donned Tefillin" earning him a share in the World to Come! Through putting on Tefillin but one time, he is entitled to a place in the World to Come.

It is not merely a simple deed; fulfilling any Mitzvah "unifies the supernal realms for eternity." It has an everlasting effect. Through donning Tefillin one connects with G-d, Who commanded to do so – even if the individual doesn't know any deep meditations on it.

However, the Mitzvah of Tefillin has an added element – that it removes a Jew from the category of "one that never wore Tefillin" to the category of "one that wore Tefillin." Thus, not only does he receive a reward, and another Mitzvah but it transforms his entire future – his eternal life.

Life in this world is limited: "Eighty years of strength," or, "His life will be "one hundred and twenty years." Life in the World to Come is eternal life. Thus, through putting on Tefillin with someone one time, he brings him eternal life.

Then there are those who seek to criticize. So they devised a new objection,

– Or perhaps they wish to rationalize their own inaction in the face of all that is occurring in this world; the world is shaking and trembling... And Maimonides rules that "One mitzvah can bring salvation to the entire world." In regard to saving lives, even if there is doubt whether the efforts will be in vain, we must do everything possible. Moreover, Maimonides does not even speak in terms of doubt; rather he states it as a Torah law: "A person must view himself and the entire world as being in the balance" – waiting for one more mitzvah.

So this is their objection:

Occasionally, or quite often, we meet someone, and we do not know whether he is Jewish or not. This doubt dare not cause us to remain inactive – for he may indeed be a Jew who can be elevated to "one who has worn Tefillin." Therefore he must be asked, regardless of any doubt. So, the person is approached, and it is has happened that upon being questioned, he responded that he is not Jewish.



## פרשת זאתן

To this, some critics complain, "How can you do this on the street? – True you have saved hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands of Jews – transforming them into 'one who has worn Tefillin,' or caused them to eat kosher, or other Mitzvot..." Nevertheless this is improper," since, in their opinion, "you may have disgraced yourself by approaching a non-Jew who responded that he is not Jewish."

In truth, in speaking to the non-Jew, speaking "words that come from the heart";

– for if they are not from the heart, it is not really a Mitzvah Campaign – he's thinking about himself.–

"Words that come from the heart," Rabbeinu Tam, a rabbinic authority and surely a master in matters of human nature, writes in his oft-quoted Book of the Upright: "Words that come from the heart penetrate the heart."

So it causes the person to think: "A complete stranger left his own personal affairs to ask if he can do me a favor; and he does not ask for honor, pleasure, money, or a position of some sort – only to do me this favor!..." "He doesn't offer his name, he doesn't ask for anything, not even a 'thank you.' He only wants the opportunity to do me this favor."

Ultimately this good deed "will bring forth others" and as a result, from time to time, or perhaps more often than that, this person will seek to do a favor for someone else!

