

# *Tkhines Learning Guide*



This guide will offer suggestions on how to learn Yiddish Tkhines in the way that we learn Torah or Talmud— as primary source texts from Jewish tradition. From learning tkhines as primary source text, we can learn the genre of wild para-liturgy to create our own original tkhines (spontaneous prayer), as well as new songs.

## **1. Have a Yiddish dictionary on hand.**

### **Online Yiddish Dictionaries to support your tkhines translation process:**

[Verterbukh](http://verterbukh.org) -- I highly recommend paying \$10 and subscribing to [verterbukh.org](http://verterbukh.org). It supports the living language, and is an incredible easy-to-use resource!! From the home page, click “Go to the online version”, and you can type in roman or yiddish letters. (Also works to look up english→ yiddish if you ever want to write an original yiddish tkhine :-)

<https://englishyiddishdictionary.com/> you can put entire sentences in.

[Refoyl's yidish veb-bletl](http://Refoyl's%20yidish%20veb-bletl)— many other online searchable yiddish dictionaries and resources. Keep track of words you look up in case they show up over and over. Perhaps even make a little google doc tkhines dictionary, if you'd like.

[Sefaria](http://Sefaria) can support your questions about *loshn koydesh*— about words that originally source from Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic. If you go to the search bar on the top right, you'll be able to search the meaning of the individual words or quotes of texts (usually psalms) that are often included in tkhines.

[This](#) site can also support words or phrases from *loshn koydesh*.

[This](#) web resource can help you decode acronyms.

2. **Dive in to the text!** You can find [digitized tkhines books](#) here. Either flip to a random page and start working from there, or look for themes / specific topics of tkhines in the Table of Contents at the front of the book. Some books begin with “general themes” found within tkhines, and then list off specific tkhines. You will often find tkhines for shabbes, specific holidays, a tkhine for every rosh khodesh, general life-cycle events towards the front. If you want more specific tkhines that discuss war, childbirth, ayin hore/ evil eye protection, tkhines for finding a lost object... what I like to call the more surprising and juicy tkhines, look towards the end of the Table of Contents. **Please note that some Table of Contents are confusing to navigate!** Sometimes they can be located on pages using roman numbers, and sometimes they use the [Hebrew numeral system](#), usually to the left side of the tkhine topic. Also, please note that many tkhines begin with a Hebrew opener, and are then followed by a Yiddish translation of that opening line.
3. **Open up a google doc and keep tabs of what you find.** Look for words or phrases that speak to you! I suggest going to the top of the google sheet. Press Insert→ Table→ and create a two-boxed table. Keep track of the page you are culling from, and copy and paste sections you think could turn into songs. Include whatever information you have about the book below the box. This can be

--	--

OR alternatively, you can make a three-boxed table in preparation for the next step! Below are examples of some tkhines I found. I did not do well at citing exactly where I found one of them... oh well.

**תחינה קבלת עול מלכות שמים— די תחינה זאל**

Master of all worlds—Master of all worlds! King who rules over all kings, your hand holds the collective soul of all creatures, the entire world is full of your honor, human wisdom is totally incapable of understanding your		רבון כל העולמים, הערר פֿון אלע וועלטן, קעניג איבער אלע קעניגע, וואָס אין דיין האנד איז דאָס נפש פֿון אלע באשעפענישען, די גאנצע וועלט איז פֿול מיט דיין כבוד, דער מענעליכער שכל איז גאָר ניט
---	--	---

<p>magnitude with all of your wondrous actions.</p> <p>All of the heavens-- the sun, the moon, with every star, and each star is its own completely distinct world.</p>		<p>אין שטאנד צו פארשטיין דיין גרויסקייט מיט דינע מעשים.</p> <p>אלע הימלען, די זון, די לבנה מיט אלע שטערן, וואָס יעדער שטערן איז פאַר זיך גאַר אַ באַזונדערע וועלט, אויך דער ים אוקינוס, דער ים הקרח, דער ים הגדול מיט זייערע פארשיידענע ברואים, אלע טייכען מיט זייערע פארשיידענע פֿיש, אלע באַרג און טהאלען,</p>
---	--	--

<p>Day and night we should learn the beloved holy torah.</p> <p>{if we do this} we absolutely will not need to have any fear-- at all</p> <p>Halleluyah!</p>	<p>Yoyim va'layla zol men lernen di libeh, heyliche toyre</p> <p>Vet men nit badarfn tsu hobn far keynem keyn moyre</p> <p>Halleluyah!</p>	<p>יום ולילה זאָל מען לערנען די ליבע הייליגע תורה.</p> <p>וועט מען ניט באַדאַרפֿן צו האָבן פֿאַר קיינעם קיין מורא.</p> <p>הללויה</p>
--	--	--

Tkhines Rukhl Imenu, printed in Jerusalem without year. Excerpt from "tkhines LiShvues", "The Tkhine for Shavuot" pp. 229

- 4. WRITE THE MELODY.** Work your magic at creating a melody to hold these heylike words!
- 5. Translate and create a three-boxed table of your song.** Include all the info you can as seen below! Please follow this form, and we will include it on a handout at the concert:

**\* When the Wailer Screams \* Ven Der Kloger Ruft \* ווען דער קלאַגער רופֿט \***

<p>[G-d]</p> <p>You don't shame a broken heart,</p>	<p>A tsebrokhen harts tustu nisht farshemen(4x),</p>	<p>אַ צובראָכען האַרץ טוסטו נישט פֿאַרשעמען (4x),</p>
---	--	---

You witness pain from the one who laments,	Du zest di payn fun di vos yomern (2x)	דו זעסט די פיין פֿון די וואָס יאָמערן (2x),
And when the wailer screams, you listen closely	Un ven der kloger ruft tustu im derheren	און ווען דער קלאָגער רופֿט טוסטו אים דערהערען

Shas tkhine Rav Peninim. Tekhine Teshuva, Tefila, Tsedukah, Published in 1916 in NYC by the Hebrew Publishing Company. p. 162. Melody and translation by Noam Lerman

6. **Record your song** so we can include it in a new playlist on the tkhines [soundcloud](https://soundcloud.com)! Feel free to give a listen to songs that have already been created.

7. Please email the recording, three-boxed table, and an icon to use for the song on soundcloud!

<3 !

## Dictionary of common roshey teyves / acronyms

## Dictionary of common loshn koydesh words

	[MAGI'DESTE]	מגידתטע
		די (ו)
		Jew. woman who preaches (to women)