

SEFER TEHILLIM

THE LARGEST AND FANCIEST TEHILLIM IN THE WORLD



Judaica artist Shuki Freiman of Yerushalayim designed and illustrated the world's largest and most expensive Sefer Tehillim. This exclusive Tehillim was created for philanthropist Yehoshua Eliezer (Jay) Schottenstein and his wife, Jeanie.

The Tehillim is written on parchment, with an English translation, illustrations on every page, and genuine gold leaves for decoration. Due to the thickness of the parchment, the Tehillim is divided into 5 separate volumes. Each volume is 20.5 in (52 cm) high, 14.5 in (37 cm) wide, about 3.2 in (8.2 cm) thick, and weighs over 17 lb (8 kg). The average height of each letter is about 0.6 in (1.7 cm).

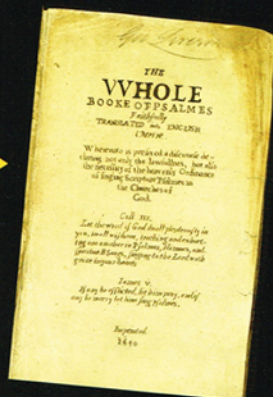
It took a month and a half for each volume to be hand-bound. The entire project took 4 full years to complete and it is estimated to be worth \$300,000.

THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE TEHILLIM AND THE FIRST BOOK EVER PRINTED IN AMERICA

The most expensive Book of Psalms in the world was printed by Stephen Daye in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1640,

and is the first book ever printed in North America. The book was printed for the first settlers of Plymouth, Massachusetts. The settlers brought a number of English Psalms with them from England, such as the 1562 Sternhold and Hopkins Edition, the 1612 Ainsworth Edition, and the 1621 Ravenscroft Edition, but the settlers felt that these English translations were not close enough to the original Hebrew. They hired "30 pious and learned ministers" to produce a new translation for them.

The book, known as the Bay Psalm Book, had 148 pages, including a 10-page introduction, and a list of corrections, as common in old books. In the first edition, 1,700 copies were printed, and all the mistakes that were found were corrected in the third printing in 1651, which became the standard for all



future editions of what became known as the New England Version.

Only 11 copies of the first edition still exist today. One of them was auctioned at Sotheby's in New York in April 2013, for a record-setting \$14,650,000. Another copy was sold in 1947 for \$99,000 (about \$150,000), which was a world record at that time.

FAST FACTS

In the 10 *perakim* of Tehillim that Rabbi Nachman of Breslov chose to include in the *Tikun HaKlali*, Hashem's 4-letter name appears 26 times, which is the *gematriya* of the Name itself.

NAME THAT PSALM

The name "Tehillim" is a plural form of the word "tehillah," which means praise. In the writings of Chazal, the word is often used without the letter *hei* and is called "Tillim," while in Aramaic it is commonly referred to as *Tillin*.

Some medieval commentators, such as the Ramban and especially the Ibn Ezra, refer to it as *Tehillos*. In the *Targum Shiri'im* (Septuagint) it is known as *Psalmoi*, and the same word is used to translate the word "mizmor" in Tehillim. The Greek word *psalmoi* means "instrumental music" or "the words accompanying the music," and that same Greek root appears in other common Hebrew words, such as *psanter* (piano). From Greek, the name Psalms became common in European languages, and is used today in languages such as English, German, French, and Russian.

THE WORLD'S MOST VALUABLE MINIATURE SEFARIM

Judaica artist Shuki Freiman of Yerushalayim created a stunning set of 20 miniature *sefarim* for philanthropist Jay Schottenstein, all written on parchment and beautifully illustrated. The set includes 5 volumes of Tehillim in Hebrew and 5 books in English; *Mishlei* in Hebrew and in English; *Pirkei Avos* in Hebrew and in English; a unique *bencher* with *Kiddush* for every *yom tov*; and a set of the 5 Megillahs — *Rus*, *Eichah*, *Kohelos*, *Esther*, and *Shir HaShirim*. All of the Megillahs are kosher and can be read with a *berachah*, and they are written on parchment that is folded up, accordion style.

Each miniature book is 2.3 x 2.3 in (6 x 6 cm). The 20 volumes contain a total of 1,570 pages written on high-quality parchment, 500 of which are in English. All of the volumes were written in *ksav stam* (the

script used for *sifrei Torah*, *tefillin*, and *mezuzahs*) and each letter is just 0.05 in (1.5 mm) high.

Freiman also built a special cabinet with 20 little drawers to house the *sefarim*. The cabinet is made of pure silver and plated in gold. The designs on the sides of the cabinet, as well as on the book covers, are rare examples of exquisite, artistic handwork and the project required the collaboration of a number of artists in various fields to ensure that all of the elements would blend together seamlessly. Three years and \$400,000 later, the value of this one-of-a-kind creation just keeps increasing.

In addition to this special set, custom made for Jay Schottenstein, another 4 sets of miniature *sefarim* were produced in Hebrew only.

