

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

THE 2ND OF IYAR

Lechatchilah Aribet'

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar

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a CALL to ACTION

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Foreword

We are pleased to bring you a newly revised edition of *a CALL to ACTION*. Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu Halkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction pertaining to our bolstered ability and paralleled obligations surrounding the Rebbe Maharash's birthday.

HaMaaseh Hu Halkar is a compilation of *Hora'os* (directives) culled from the Rebbe's talks in the years 5748 to 5752 (1988-1992), from both edited and unedited sources ("*Muga*" and "*Bilti Muga*"). The text was translated into English by **Rabbi Yaakov Paley**.

At this time, when Moshiach's arrival is imminent, the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, has emphasized the primacy of action. We are now beginning to experience the era when we will fully appreciate "the superiority of deed" above scholarship. May this take place completely and immediately!

Editorial Office of
HaMaaseh Hu Halkar
Erev Shabbos Parshahs Kedoshim
27 Nissan, 5768

The 2nd of Iyar

Birthday of the Rebbe Maharash

(“*Lechat’chilah ariber*” – לְכַתְּחִילָה אַרְיָבֵּעַר)

INTRODUCTION

The Rebbe Maharash (fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe) was born on the 2nd of Iyar 5594 (1884), which coincides with the 17th day of the Omer counting, and its corresponding attribute of *tiferes shebetiferes*.¹

In the entry in *HaYom Yom* for this day, the Rebbe records how, when the Rebbe Maharash was seven years old, he was tested in his studies by his father, the Tzemach Tzedek. He did so well in the test that his teacher was enormously impressed. Unable to restrain himself the teacher said to the Tzemach Tzedek, “Well, what do you say? Hasn’t he done marvelously?” The Tzemach Tzedek responded, “What is there to be surprised about when *tiferes shebetiferes* does well...?”

The Rebbe Maharash is considered synonymous with his most famous adage:

Der velt zagt, as men ken nit arunter, darf men ariber – “The world says that only if we cannot go beneath [an obstacle], then we should climb over. *Un ich halt, as men darf lechat’chilah ariber* – but I hold that we should go over to begin with! (See footnotes 8 & 17 for an explanation of these two approaches.)

1. [“There are seven *midos* or Divine attributes, the first (and major) three being *chesed* (kindness), *gevurah* (severity) and *tiferes* (beauty). Each attribute contains elements of the others, *chesed-within-chesed*, *gevurah-within-chesed*, etc. 49 combinations in all, corresponding to the 49 days of the *omer*. The Rebbe Maharash was born on Iyar 2, the day of *tiferet-within-tiferet*, representing an extraordinarily high spiritual level” – from a footnote to the English translation of *HaYom Yom* (2nd Iyar).]

The Rebbe Maharash transmitted this approach to his son, the Rebbe Rashab, who taught it to his own son, the Previous Rebbe. *Lechat'chilah ariber*, wrote the Previous Rebbe,² served as a foundation and life-line for all his accomplishments on behalf Judaism and Chassidus, despite the immense obstacles posed by the Communist regime.

The Rebbe subsequently made the doctrine of *lechat'chilah ariber* into a natural feature of our approach to Judaism and life in general.³

HIS TEACHINGS AND DIRECTIVES

- We should use the opportune time of Beis Iyar⁴ (and the days leading up to it)⁵ to increase in our study of the Rebbe Maharash's teachings and compliance with his directives.⁶

2. [See letter dated 15 Cheshvan 5688, in the Previous Rebbe's *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 1, p. 617). This is the first recorded mention of the concept of *lechat'chilah ariber*.]

3. *Parshas Ha'azinu*, 13th of Tishrei 5749.

4. We hereby once again encourage the application of *lechat'chilah ariber* insofar as action is concerned; action, after all, is paramount.

The point is that each one of us should strive to affect and ingrain [Yid: *einfiren*] within ourselves the mode of *lechat'chilah ariber* as far as all matters of goodness and holiness are concerned. (2nd of Iyar 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 107)

The approach of *lechat'chilah ariber* also includes *retroactive* implications – so that all matters pertaining to previous days (starting with [the most recent day] the 27th of Nissan) are now elevated to the level of *lechat'chilah ariber* and *tiferes shebetiferes*. (28th of Nissan 5751; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 118)

5. The Shabbos prior to the 2nd of Iyar and certainly the actual day of the 2nd of Iyar as well, is a most opportune time to accept positive resolutions regarding everything connected with [*lechat'chilah ariber*,] the conduct in which the Rebbe Maharash (“*tiferes shebetiferes*”) directed us. (*Parshas Kedoshim*, 2nd of Iyar 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 100)

6. *Parshas Tazria-Metzorah* 5750; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 120.

The birthday of the Rebbe Maharash serves as a lesson, instruction and granting of power to each Jewish man, woman and child – regarding their daily conduct for the coming year.

... A person's *mazal* [supernal source of the soul] is predominant on their birthday. In this case, however, the one whose birthday we celebrate on the 2nd of Iyar is a *Nassi* (Leader) of all Jewry.

LECHAT'CHILAH ARIBER

- For a start, we should follow his foremost directive,⁷ which, as summarized in his famous saying,⁸ means conducting ourselves in a manner of *lechat'chilah ariber*.

Such was the Rebbe Maharash's own unique way – a “*ba'al-shem'ske* conduct”⁹ – to the extent that *lechat'chilah ariber* became his appellation.¹⁰

EVEN IN MUNDANE AFFAIRS

- We should apply this mode of conduct to our observance of Torah and Mitzvos and even to our mundane affairs – which are

And as our sages tell us (see Rashi, Bamidbar 21:21), “A Leader of a Generation is like *all* of the generation” since “the Leader is all” [Heb: *hanassi hu hakol*]. Therefore, the predominance of the Leader's *mazal* on his birthday clearly affects and influences *all* men and women of his generation.

It similarly influences all *subsequent* generations, for the members of subsequent generations are the offspring of the members of *his* generation; they receive these spiritual matters by way of “inheritance.” (2nd of Iyar 5751; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 145)

7. The predominance of the Rebbe Maharash's *mazal* on his birthday has a foremost affect on his chief “theme”:

In addition to the profusion of Chassidic discourses that he authored, as well as the abundance of [spoken or written] directives and specific public conduct [which serves as a source of instruction in our own divine service], the Rebbe Maharash had a central “theme,” a unique mode of conduct. Chassidim even refer to the Rebbe Maharash himself by this “theme,” which – as per his own adage – is best summed up as “*lechat'chilah ariber*.” (2nd of Iyar 5751; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 145)

8. The Rebbe Maharash's saying is well known: “The world says that if we cannot go underneath, then we should go over. But I hold that we should go over to begin with!”

In other words, a Jew should not reckon with the concerns, limitations and restrictions (and certainly not with the obstacles) presented by this world. A Jew stands above the world! He should reflect this truth in his conduct by stepping above these matters – applying the mode of *lechat'chilah ariber*. (*Parshas Kedoshim* and 2nd of Iyar 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 87)

9. [A “*ba'al-shem'ske* conduct” is a supernatural conduct such as that of the Ba'al Shem Tov, who was renowned for his constant miracles.]

10. *Parshas Tazria-Metzorah* 5750; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 120.

Coins will now be distributed ... These special-issue coins were minted in honor of “*tiferes shebetiferes*,” and they bear the directive of the Rebbe Maharash, “*un ich zag lechat'chilah ariber*” (“...but I hold that we should go over *to begin with!*”). (Lag B'omer 5751; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 215, with fn. 41)

to be accomplished in the spirit of the instruction “Let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven,” and “Know Him in all of your paths.”

- We should use this mode to conduct our personal affairs, as well as when interacting with others.¹¹

WHEN STUDYING

- We should certainly apply this approach in relation to our increased study of the Rebbe Maharash’s teachings. (This should be accompanied by an increase in study of *all* areas of Torah – both its “revealed” dimension as well as its inner teachings that are explained in Chassidus).
- We should use this approach when studying alone, as well as when studying with others.¹²

HAFATZAH

- We should particularly apply this approach when studying and disseminating Chassidus to every Jewish man, woman¹³ and child¹⁴ – with the result that we flood the entire world with the wellsprings of Chassidus.¹⁵

AT THE OUTSET

- The innovation approach of *lechat’chilah ariber* is mainly¹⁶

11. *Parshas Kedoshim* and 2nd of Iyar 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 100.

12. ... Disseminating the wellsprings of Chassidic teachings (together with disseminating Torah in general) in a manner of *lechat’chilah ariber*. (Ibid.)

13. Men and women are equally obligated to study the teachings of Chassidus, which explains concepts that are indispensable to our belief in Hashem, the love and awe we must have for Him ... which serve as constant obligations for all Jews. (*Parshas Tazria-Metzorah* 5750; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 129-130)

14. ... As it is written, “Educate the youth according to his way ... even when he grows old he will not turn off from it.”

15. Ibid.

16. ... After all, the very fact that Jewish people conduct themselves in a manner of *ariber* ([at least] on specific occasions and under special circumstances) is in itself not (much of) an innovation. (Ibid., p. 123)

that the mode of *ariber*, “going over,” is *not* reserved for specific occasions and circumstances. In other words, it is not a mode that should only be considered subsequent to having accomplished an orderly and progressive divine service.¹⁷ Rather, we should apply it *to begin with*.¹⁸

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17. There are two modes of conduct that accord with the Torah – one is an orderly and progressive approach, the other a mode that springs over and defies the confines of order. One might have thought to begin with an orderly conduct and only then progress to the higher mode of *ariber*... (Ibid., p. 120)

... As is emphasized in the beginning of the Rebbe Maharash’s adage: “The world says that *if we cannot go underneath*, then we should go over...” In other words, there is a mode of conduct that involves going “underneath,” and such a conduct is also *valid* according to Torah. Were that not the case, the Rebbe Maharash would not have compared the two modes of conduct in the first place [for why bother mentioning an *invalid* approach?!].

Rather, this first mode [is certainly valid, and] entails operating within the limitations imposed by the nature of the world (which was created as such by Hashem) – “The *world* says, etc.” The Rebbe Maharash’s innovation is that we should instead conduct ourselves in a manner that reaches *beyond* nature. (Ibid., fn. 10)

18. ... This then affects our subsequent conduct, so that *all* matters of divine service are accomplished in a manner of *lechat’chilah ariber* – including matters that pertain to a steady and orderly service, i.e., they too are accomplished in a manner of *ariber*!

This fact is underscored by the juxtaposition of Pesach [Pesach means “jumping over”] and the counting of the Omer:

The very *start* of the Jewish people’s divine service (that began with the birth of the Jewish nation on the first Pesach [the exodus from Egypt]) was accomplished in a mode of “leaping and jumping.” They *began* with *ariber*. Only then did they use this mode to influence their steadily-progressive conduct represented by the daily counting of the Omer.

This is alluded to in the birth of the [Rebbe Maharash,] architect of the mode of *lechat’chilah ariber*. Notably, he was born at the beginning of the month of Iyar, the month of the counting of the Omer. This teaches us that the mode of *lechat’chilah ariber* should also permeate our orderly divine service, as represented by the counting of the Omer.

Further, within the month of Iyar, his birthday is on a *regular* day – well after the conclusion of the festival of Pesach, and only after the entire month of Nissan [in which we do not recite *tachanun* due to the influence of Pesach – Ed.] has passed, and even after Rosh Chodesh Iyar [for Rosh Chodesh is also a semi-festive day]. Rather, the Rebbe Maharash was born specifically on the 2nd day of Iyar.

This serves to stress how even at the very outset (*lechat’chilah*) we should go *ariber*. (*Parshas Tazria-Metzorah* 5750; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 23)

Ariber involves a mode of conduct that is “elevated and raised.” Moreover, we

ABOVE AND THEN BEYOND

The precise wording of the adage tells us to “...go over *to begin with*.” This also tells us that we should be aware that our current mode of *ariber* is only the beginning... We should constantly advance our *ariber*, taking this approach far beyond our original “*ariber*.”¹⁹

FULL STRENGTH AT ONSET

- *Lechat'chilah ariber* also means that we can and should accept and implement new positive resolutions with the full sense of permanency and absolute strength (*chazakah*) – without having to wait until the third time that something is accomplished in order to render it the legal strength of a *chazakah*.²⁰

should act this way *lechat'chilah*, i.e., this “elevated” conduct should not come only after a while, following many accomplishments in divine service – but rather, we should act thus immediately, at the very *beginning* of divine service ... We could even suggest, with almost certainty, that the exactitude of the phrase “*lechat'chilah ariber*” also includes attaining the highest levels right at the very outset. (Eve and night after 2nd of Iyar 5748; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 217-218)

19. *Parshas Tazria-Metzorah* 5750; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 120.

Since the mode of *ariber* is not a one-time occurrence, but rather, a perpetual mode of conduct which permeates all areas of divine service, it must therefore be continuously *increased* from time to time ...

This fact is alluded to by the Rebbe Maharsh being born at the beginning of the month of Iyar, the month of the counting of the Omer – which teaches us that even subsequent to the festival of Pesach and the start of the Omer counting, and even after the passage of two full weeks of Omer counting, taking us into the *third* week, we should nevertheless add even further in our conduct of *ariber*, so that our present conduct is considered “*ariber*” compared to the former “*ariber*.” (Ibid., p.123-124)

... This serves as a directive in our daily lives, as is the case with all aspects of *Toras Chaim*, the Torah of Life; an instruction in our daily living, *in actuality*. For, in all matter of Torah, the main thing is the deed. (*Parshas Kedoshim* and 2nd of Iyar 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 87)

20. ... A lesson, an instruction and a granting of power, to each Jew in all of their affairs – beginning with matters of Torah and Mitzvos, which form the inner essence and core of our lives ... For although the worldly order is incompatible with such an approach, it is nevertheless within the power of every Jew, (and particularly) when they go in the mission of the Leader of their respective generation, to accomplish all their matters in a manner of *lechat'chilah ariber*.

Further, the ability to have the force of *chazakah* (not only after actually performing a matter three times, but rather) immediately upon beginning a particular undertaking, comes from the power of the [Rebbe Maharash. For he

LARGE *FARBRENGEN*

- We should organize well-attended *farbrengens* on the day of the Rebbe Maharash's birthday (as well as on the days surrounding it, and on Shabbos in particular).²¹

TORAH AND MITZVOS

- These *farbrengens* should be carried out in a manner that bolsters and encourages the participants to increase in all matters of Torah and Mitzvos – and to do so in a manner of *lechat'chilah ariber*.²¹

***FARBRENG* EVERYWHERE**

We should arrange these *farbrengens* in each and every location – starting right here [in 770], in close proximity to the Previous Rebbe, Leader of our generation, grandson and successor to the Rebbe Maharash.²²

READABLE CHASSIDIC TEXTS

- We should resolve²³ to reprint – using a clear “block” Hebrew

was] the Leader of the Generation that came on the heels of the completed service of *three* Leaders of preceding generations. [I.e., the Rebbe Maharash was the successor to (1) the Alter Rebbe; (2) the Mittler Rebbe; and (3) the Tzemach Tzedek. He thus inherited the power of a *chazakah*, which requires repeating something three times].

This is further underscored in our present generation, which comes after the completed service of *three* [further] generations [(1) the Rebbe Maharash; (2) the Rebbe Rashab; and (3) the Previous Rebbe,] who all conducted themselves according to the directive of *lechat'chilah ariber*. [Our generation thus rides on the] strength of a doubled three.

Moreover, our generation is *ninth* from the Ba'al Shem Tov [who first began the Chassidic approach which led to *lechat'chilah ariber*], i.e., *three* times three. (2nd of Iyar 5751; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 145-146)

21. As in the verse, “Each man will aid the other and say... *chazak* – be strong!” (*Parshas Kedoshim* and 2nd of Iyar 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 100)
22. We should make certain to organize well-attended *farbrengens* (“*Berov am hadras melech* – the glory of a king is expressed in a multitude”) ... starting right here in “*kiryas melech* – the city of the king” [i.e., the city of the Rebbe's residence, for our sages state], “Who are the ‘kings’? The Sages.” (Ibid.)
23. The 2nd of Iyar ... is a most auspicious time to accept positive resolutions in all that is connected with the conduct in which we were directed by the Rebbe Maharash

typeset – the Chassidic works of the Rebbe Maharash, most of which were originally printed with the cursive Hebrew script.

- These new books will make it far easier to read and study his texts.²⁴
- Indeed, we should do the same with *all* Chassidic texts.²⁵

PUBLICIZE THESE DIRECTIVES

- We should publicize and encourage the observance of all of the above directives in every possible place – even where the effectiveness of such publicity seems doubtful...²⁶

... including printing his works with an easy-to-read typeset. (Ibid.)

24. We should also reprint those Chassidic texts that were originally printed in “Rashi” script, now employing “block” lettering – so that [thanks to easier typeset] we could invest our efforts into gaining greater comprehension of the content of these works. (Ibid., p. 101)

25. The need for this is further emphasized in the printed Chassidic texts of the Rebbe Maharash, the majority of which were printed using “cursive” Hebrew lettering. We should reprint them, making sure to use “block” lettering. (Ibid.)

... Block letters, specifically, which are similar (although not identical) to *Kesav Ashuri* [the lettering used in a Sefer Torah]. It is quite possibly that this [similarity to *Kesav Ashuri*] is one of the reasons for many Torah authorities of previous generations (such as the Rambam) deliberately refraining from writing with “block” lettering in their handwritten works [out of reverence for the Sefer Torah]. Rather, they preferred to use other lettering such as the “Rashi” script, whose letters are slightly similar to the non-Jewish countries in which they resided. Even their printed works were generally published using “Rashi” as opposed to “block” lettering. (“Block” was [only] used for [fundamental classics such as] the Chumash, Talmud, Rambam and Shulchan Aruch).

Nevertheless, with each passing generation, more and more Torah works have been printed with “block” lettering – in accordance with the instructions of leading Torah personalities, as is well known.

This is also true of the printed Chassidic texts. [Originally, only] the Tanya was printed using “block” lettering, in the times of the Alter Rebbe. And only *some* of the works of the Mittler Rebbe were originally published this way. Nevertheless, the use of “block” lettering in printed texts has steadily increased over time, in order to make them easier for studying. (Ibid., fn. 151)

26. *Safek*, “doubt,” is the numerical value of *Amalek* [the Jewish nation’s mortal enemy and the evil force it represents]. We are commanded to eradicate anything that bears a connection to *Amalek*. Spiritually, this includes the concept of *kerirus*, “frigidity” or “apathy” – for *Amalek* was the nation who “cools us off” [from enthusiastic and passionate divine service].

Although divine service should be performed in an orderly manner and based on rational concerns, it should also be done with enthusiasm and fervor, leading us to step beyond all limitations, and serving Hashem *bechal me’odecha*, “with all your might.” (Ibid., p. 106)

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