

מוקדש

לכ"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח



*In honor of
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19 Elul 5768



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לרגל הבת מצוה שלהם בי"ט אלול

ויה"ר שיגדלו להיות חיילות נאמנות של כ"ק

אדמו"ר מלך המשיח



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

a CALL to **ACTION**

THE 18TH OF ELUL
THE 3RD DAY OF SELICHOS
SHABBOS MEVARCHIM TISHREI
EREV ROSH HASHANAH

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar

The birthday of the Tzemach Tzedek

A BRIEF HISTORY

The third Lubavitcher Rebbe is known as the Tzemach Tzedek. A grandson of the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Chabad Chassidus, the Tzemach Tzedek brought the Chabad movement to unprecedented heights in all matters. He was born on the 29th of Elul, Erev Rosh Hashanah 5549 (1789).

UTILIZING THE DAY CORRECTLY

- Every man, woman and child,²⁷ should make certain to utilize this day by increasing in Tzedakah and in many other positive matters, and in particular, by studying the Torah teachings and fulfilling the instructions of the Tzemach Tzedek.²⁸

FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS

- In the merit of the Tzemach Tzedek, we should add in those matters through which the Tzemach Tzedek chiefly expressed his service of Hashem. They are: the dissemination of Torah, and particularly Chassidus, and promulgating the service of prayer and of performing every single Mitzvah with embellishment, particularly the Mitzvah of Tzedakah.²⁹

TORAH AND TZEDAKAH

- In 5749 (1989) the Rebbe instructed: We should make certain to utilize this two hundredth anniversary of the Tzemach Tzedek's passing in order to increase in the study of the Tzemach Tzedek's Torah teachings, and to give Tzedakah in honor of the occasion – ideally in multiples of two hundred.³⁰



a CALL to ACTION

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27. Erev Rosh Hashanah 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.388.

28. Erev Rosh Hashanah 5752; Hisvaaduyos p.360.

29. “In the merit of the Tzemach Tzedek, in addition to our own merit, we should add... [See main text above for continuation].” (Erev Rosh Hashanah 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.388)

30. **200 Pennies**

“Two hundred pennies – a goal that is within reach of everyone, including children. Those who wish to add in this matter could give two hundred coins of greater value, or two hundred dollar bills and the like – doing so further adds to the abovementioned matters.” (Erev Rosh Hashanah 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.388)

feast – for they “rest secure that they will prevail in judgment.”²⁴ We should certainly do likewise (and hold a festive meal) this Erev Rosh Hashanah, whether during the preceding evening or at another time during the twenty four hours of Erev Rosh Hashanah.²⁵

SPEND TIME WITH YOUR WIFE

• Close to the commencement of Rosh Hashanah, the Chabad Rebbes would spend some time speaking with their wives. Since this custom has been revealed and publicized to us, after having been kept confidential for a long time, it is therefore to be taken as an instruction for every one of us.²⁶

24. **Farbrengen reaches Atzmus – preparation for the Shofar**

“To quote the Tur, “already on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the Jews dress in white and wrap themselves in white for they rest assured that they will prevail in judgment.” This is particularly true when on the eve of Rosh Hashanah we join together in a Chassidic farbrengen; such an occasion arouses great pleasure in the spiritual realms, and reaches Hashem’s very “essence”! This then is a fitting preparation for the arousal of pleasure that will be generated by our blowing of the Shofar.” (Sichos in English, Vol.32, Erev Rosh Hashanah 5747)

25. Tzom Gedalya 5752; Sichos Kodesh p.31.

26. **Shalom Bayis**

“Since the quality of the Jewish woman is emphasized on Rosh Hashanah ... this is a directive for every person. The implication of this instruction is the great extent to which Shalom Bayis, domestic harmony, is important and imperative.

If they did it...

It is so very fundamental and easy to appreciate the immense value and quality that each moment in time held for the Rebbes – certainly on Erev Rosh Hashanah... Yet nonetheless, they would take the time to talk with their Rebbitzens...

Cosmic harmony

This practice assumes additional significance in light of the broadest sense of ‘Shalom Bayis,’ which includes “peace in the supernal retinue and the terrestrial retinue” [and between Hashem and the Jewish people].” (2nd day of Rosh Hashanah 5748; Hisvaaduyos p.39)

See there for the particular significance of Rosh Hashanah to women, concerning the Sefirah of Binyan and the entire concept of Binyan haMalchus; see footnotes there for references.

There are many further significant links, among them: Sarah, Rochel and Chana were “remembered” regarding having children on the day of Rosh Hashanah; the birth of Rivkah is specifically mentioned in the second day’s Torah reading; Yitzchak’s stature (as seen in the Torah reading) was the result of his mother Sarah’s parenting; the Halachic sound of the Shofar is derived from the cries of a woman (either Sarah or the mother of Sisrah – as explained in Avudraham).

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Foreword

we are pleased to bring you this second, newly revised and improved edition of *a CALL to ACTION*. This special edition covers the highlights in the end of the month of Elul, from The 18th of Elul, The 3rd Day of Selichos, Shabbos Mevarchim Tishrei, Erev Rosh Hashanah, The birthday of the Tzemach Tzedek.

Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu Halkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction from the Rebbe's Sichos that pertain to the entire month of Elul and preparations for Tishrei.

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); we have expended great effort in our attempt to capture some of the Rebbe's calculated and instructive phrasing. This edition's English translation was provided 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 it happen now, completely and speedily!

Editorial Office of
HaMaaseh Hu Halkar
Erev Parshas Ki Tzeitzei, 5767

Erev Rosh Hashanah

INTRODUCTION

The last twelve days of Elul represent the twelve months of the year that is coming to a close (as discussed earlier, concerning Chai Elul).

Therefore, the last of these twelve days, Erev Rosh Hashanah, in addition to its other qualities and responsibilities, specifically concerns the outgoing month of Elul.

24 HRS TO COMPLETE OUR YEAR

- Today is the last day of the month of Elul and the entire year. We should therefore be aware of the need to utilize the twenty four hours of this day to their absolute maximum, in order to conclude and complete every matter connected with the month of Elul, and thus the entire year.²³

FESTIVE MEAL

- The Tur writes that on Erev Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish people "dress in white and enwrap in white" and hold a great

Selichos beginning on Motze Shabbos Ki Savo]). Following that, they would begin to recite the Selichos whilst yet tottering...!" (Chai Elul 5711, p.327)

23. **The King gives us power to act**

"Hashem certainly grants us the powers that are necessary to fulfill the positive resolutions we have accepted – and with an addition of His own too; moreover, He does so in the manner to which He is accustomed, namely, that the 'addition' exceeds the principle!

Further, Hashem's granting of power is greatly enhanced by that fact that we are currently in a situation where "the King is in the field" – as He is throughout the month of Elul. This last factor increase daily; for if all holy matters continually increase, then how much more so a direct bestowal from Hashem Himself. Therefore, this [steady increase of power] continues until the last day of Elul, which constitutes the "total" of the entire month – the unique month when "the King is in the field" ...

A year in one day

All of the above adds further alacrity and insight to our utilization of this day, the conclusion and "total" of the entire month and the entire year." (Eve of 29th of Elul 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.383)

Use every moment

"The great virtue, value, and importance of this time is clearly understood – and likewise the extent to which we should utilize every single moment of this time." (Rosh Hashanah after Mincha 5748; Hisvaaduyos p.387)

AT LEAST PART OF A MA'AMOR

• Sometime during the twenty four hours of the third day of Selichos, each of us should study at least a section of one of the Chassidic discourses that were delivered for the third day of Selichos; due to the profusion of such discourses, a person has a large selection from which to choose...²¹

PREPARE A LIVELY FARBRENGEN

• One should certainly make a resolution regarding the farbrengen that should be held tonight – so that it should be held with great Shturem (highly-charged and lively).²²

See also 3rd day of Selichos 5751; Toras Menachem p.296 and onwards, in the main text and the footnotes, where the Rebbe points out the relevance that the number three and especially the third of Selichos contains to a variety of concepts.

21. Action counts

“It is known that this day, as we [clearly] saw, was one of the established occasions whereupon the Previous Rebbe would publicly deliver Chassidic discourses. We likewise saw that many of these discourses were published and distributed.

Being that the whole point in mentioning these matters is to lead to *action*, it is fitting that sometime during the twenty four hours ... [See main text above for continuation].” (Roshei Devarim from 3rd day of Selichos 5751)

22. One person should drink for the rest

“Certainly they will resolve to hold a farbrengen this very night – “Ah Shturemdiker” farbrengen!

It should specifically be held with immense joy, to the extent of Ad deLoy Yoda [a state in which a person is too inebriated to think straight], at least by *one* participant of the farbrengen – who will thus fulfill the obligation on behalf of all present...

Not Purim – but almost

The limits [on drinking alcohol in excess] still apply, for after all, it is not yet Purim... Nevertheless, Purim is connected to Yom Kippurim, which being the culmination of the Ten Days of Repentance, is also bound with their onset, namely, Rosh Hashanah and therefore also the prior days of Selichos!

As in Lubavitch

There is a well known account of the Previous Rebbe concerning the farbrengen in [the original town of] Lubavitch [that took place on the Motze Shabos before Rosh Hashanah – which was *not* the first night of Selichos that year, as explained below].

[“Although we are not able to compare ourselves to the circumstances and stature of those times and that place, nevertheless, the matters were transmitted to each of us as our “inheritance” – and an heir inherits *everything*...” – subnote there]

They couldn't walk straight

[The account includes the fact] that when they reached the time for Selichos, they were tottering; their having attained a state of Ad deLo Yoda, caused them to stagger even after the concluding blessing of the farbrengen and even after many of them had in the meantime immersed in a Mikvah and so on!” (ibid)

“It is recounted regarding the Chassidim, that they would hold a farbrengen during the Melaveh Malka meal at the conclusion of Shabbos Parshas *Nitzavim*, which was also Erev Rosh Hashanah (Rosh Hashanah occurring on a Monday that year [and

Chai Elul – 18th of Elul**Birth of the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe****BRIEF HISTORY**

The 18th of Elul is a luminous day of truly immense proportion; the Hebrew number eighteen spells Chai, “life,” and on this day two lofty souls entered this world to introduce unprecedented G-dly light and life:

Reb Yisrael Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Chassidism, was born on the 18th of Elul 5458 (1698); on the 18th of Elul 5484 (1724), the prophet Achiyah Hashiloni began teaching the Baal Shem Tov – and on the same auspicious date in the year 5494 (1734), the Baal Shem Tov revealed himself and his teachings to the world.

The Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, founder of Chabad Chassidus, was born on the 18th of Elul 5505 (1745), whereupon the Baal Shem Tov proclaimed: A new soul has descended into this world, and it will illuminate the world with the light of the revealed parts of Torah and the light of Chassidus; it is a soul that will offer itself for the good of Chassidus and whose accomplishments will usher in the era of Moshiach.

Two Sayings that Capture the theme of Chai Elul**THE PREVIOUS REBBE – TWO QUOTES**

The Previous Rebbe highlighted two adages that explain the unique virtue of Chai Elul as it relates to our Divine service of the month of Elul:¹

1. Parshas Ki Savo 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.250.

The power of Chai Elul: eighteenth of Elul or two luminous births?

“The unique virtue of Chai Elul is also due to the birth of two great luminaries: the Baal Shem Tov, who was born in the year 5458 (1698), [that spells the word

1) “Chai Elul is the day that brought – and brings – vitality into the month of Elul.”

He then added by way of explanation: Chai Elul gives a vitality to the service of Ani leDodi veDodi Li, “I [the Jewish people] am to my Beloved [Hashem], and my Beloved is to me.”

2) “Chai Elul is the first of the final twelve days of the month of Elul – each of which corresponds to another of the twelve months of the year; a day for a month.

In these twelve days, one should take stock of the Divine service he performed over the twelve months of the outgoing year.

Thus, on the actual day of Chai Elul, one takes stock of last year’s month of Tishrei; and so on regarding each of these twelve days that culminate with Rosh Hashanah.”

THE REBBE – TODAY IS THE ELUL OF ELUL

It is clear from the above sayings, that it is not merely the individual details of our Divine service that receive a boost on Chai Elul – but rather, our entire service of Elul is advanced.

Chai Elul adds Chayus, “vitality,” to Elul – to the extent that it is on this day that we begin our truthful self-accounting regarding all twelve months of the past year. Now, the month of Elul is *itself* a month of stock-taking, so Chai Elul constitutes the ‘Elul’ within Elul.²

Nachas, “pleasure”], and the Alter Rebbe, who was born in the year 5505 (1745) (or ‘Kehos’).

In fact, these two aspects [1] the quality of the day due to the birth of these two luminaries, and [2] the fact that today is the Chai, the “life-force,” of Elul,] are interdependent.

It is because of the great importance of Chai Elul that the entire service of the month of Elul is elevated and renewed.” (ibid, footnote 1)

2. Ibid, Parshas Ki Tzeitzei 5750.

The Previous Rebbe did not specify the cause for the added auspiciousness of the third day (but see footnote 17).

STUDY AND IMPLEMENT THE DISCOURSE

• The Previous Rebbe¹⁸ expressed the uniqueness of this day through a Chassidic discourse, which he then instructed to be printed and publicized. This discourse contains a great number of teachings which each of us should take and apply to our Divine service, thus increasing in Torah, Mitzvahs and Chassidus.¹⁹

MAIN POINT IS TO PROCEED

• Regardless of whether or not one discovers the true reasons for the uniqueness of this day, the main point is for each of us to add yet further in Torah, and yet further in proper conduct and the like – for every addition in Torah, Mitzvahs and Chassidus is in itself the ultimate truth.²⁰

1) Always occurs on the *third* day of the week [Tuesday], “the day when ‘It was good’ was doubled” [i.e., Hashem repeated “It was good” on the *third* day of Creation as opposed to the other five days.

The reason that the third day of Selichos must always be a Tuesday, is] because [the days of] Selichos always begin at the conclusion of the Day of Rest [Shabbos]. The uniqueness of being the third day of Selichos comes in addition to the [ever-present] quality that accompanies *every* Tuesday (during both day and night) throughout the year.

2) The entire [historical] context of forgiveness [of the Jewish people by Hashem] comes from the *third* set of forty days and nights that Moshe spent on Mount Sinai, whereupon Hashem announced, “I have forgiven as you have requested.”

3) We employ *three* expressions of forgiveness in our requests: Mechilah, Selichah and Kaparah, “forgiveness, pardon and atonement.”

There are many further concepts that apply [to the third day of Selichos in particular], but a hint is sufficient for the wise.” (3rd day of Selichos 5748; Hisvaaduyos 336-337)

[In the spirit of the above license to derive further insights into the 3rd day of Selichos: note that the colossal events of 9/11 2001, the international and global impact of which are yet unfolding, occurred in New York, the “capital” of the Leader of our generation, on the *third day of Selichos* 5761 – Ed.]

18. “Note that the Previous Rebbe himself did not give a reason behind the uniqueness of this day, and every person is therefore able to seek an explanation according to their abilities. As far as we are concerned however, since the Previous Rebbe revealed ... [See main text above for continuation].”

19. Yom Gimmel, Parshas Haazinu 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.372-373.

20. **Extra Tzedakah**

“Accordingly, we should – for the first time – connect the unique virtue of the third day of Selichos with the distribution of Tzedakah. This comes in addition to the fact that we are accustomed to increase in giving Tzedakah throughout the month of Elul.” (ibid)

itself, the third day of Selichos is a particularly spiritually-charged day. (The timing of this revelation carries further significance.¹⁷)

17. Why did he wait until he came to America?

“He did not reveal this while he was yet in the “globe’s upper hemisphere” [i.e., Russia, which is amongst those lands where “the influence of Matan Torah *clearly* permeated”]. Rather, he did so upon arrival in the “globe’s lower hemisphere” [i.e., America, a land in which “the influence of Matan Torah did *not* clearly permeate”].” (Yom Gimmel, Parshas Ha’azinu 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.372)

He even changed his schedule of delivering Ma’amorim

“In general, we strive to bolster matters of good conduct that existed in former years – certainly when public awareness of their existence has, for some reason, weakened.

What concerns us is that the Leader of our generation revealed and publicized the particular importance of the third day of Selichos. Further, he did so to the extent of altering his delivery of Chassidic discourses, and the [continued theme-related series of] Chassidic discourses that pertain to Rosh Hashanah, which were normally delivered on specific dates from Rosh Hashanah onward, began to be publicly delivered in the year 5705 (1945) from the *third day of Selichos*. (As the Previous Rebbe wrote in his notes [See intro. and footnote 7, above].)

Why is the third day so special?

True, he did not clearly record a revealed reason [for the importance of the third day of Selichos] in that discourse. Nevertheless, an obvious reason does in fact exist – so patently obvious that there is no need for lengthy research...

If your idea will advance Avodas Hashem with love and awe...

Although one must generally be wary of discovering allusions and explanations of matters on his own – for not every person is qualified to do so – there is, however, the familiar words of the Rebbe Rashab (in his letter that was also printed in Kuntres Eitz Chaim) concerning reading various interpretations into the words of the Tanya. He writes that although one must be wary of doing so, nevertheless, if it will *add to the service of Hashem*, one is then able to state their interpretations.

Note that this message was transmitted even to the ordinary Chassidim, and not only to unique individuals. The message holds true for all matters – if finding one’s own interpretations and explanations will increase the service of Hashem with love and awe, it is then permissible to do so.

Three is Torah

To return to our subject: The number three carries unique significance – to the extent that even the Giving of the Torah was associated with the number three: “A threefold Torah [Torah, Neviim, Kesuvim], that was given to a threefold nation [Kohanim, Leviim, Yisraelim], on the third month [Sivan].”

Matan Torah and Rosh Hashanah

In fact, there is a link between the Giving of the Torah and Rosh Hashanah, which is reflected in the text of the Mussaf prayer on Rosh Hashanah: one of the reasons for sounding the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah is, “to recall the stand at Mount Sinai.” This then is the value of the third day of Selichos; it contains the virtue of the number three.

Three insights into the number three

Additionally, the third day of Selichos:

GIVE YOUR DIVINE SERVICE A FACE-LIFT

- From the 18th of Elul onward, we should increase all aspects of our Divine service of Elul – to the extent that it is as if a brand new nature of service has begun.

ESSENCE OF ELUL – UNITING WITH HASHEM

- We can achieve this through introducing the “life-force” of Elul into every area of Divine service, in a manner that makes discernable and emphasizes the essential *soul* of all service. In other words, we reveal and highlight the core connection that unites the Jewish people with Hashem in every aspect of our service.³

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3. Parshas Ki Savo 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.259.

In this Sichah, the Rebbe defines two aspects of our Divine service:

1) The *essence* which is equally present in each area of Divine service; this is the vivifying force behind all service and uniformly includes all the myriads of detail that emerge on the practical level.

2) The *details* and compartmentalized realms of practical service, e.g., the mode of prayer, study or charity etc.

While the details must necessarily differ from each other, yet they share the same essence and *soul* that, by definition, must constantly fill their every particular.

What is this “essence”? The Rebbe defines it as *the connection between the Jewish people and Hashem* that is generated by any mode of Divine service:

Our existence is our connection with Hashem

“The entire month of Elul represents the Jewish people’s “general” Divine service [since each moment within Elul has an effect and can rectify the entire service of the previous year, as well as prepare for the entire coming year]. On Chai Elul, however, there is added an emphasis on the very *life-force*, the inner-self and essence of this general service, namely, *the bond between the Jewish people and Hashem*. In fact, this bond is also the life-force and essential existence of the *Jewish people*, (i.e. the Jew who performs the Divine service,) for “the Jews are one with the Holy One.”

Post-Chai Elul service simply cannot be the same

With the above in mind, our truthful stock-taking during these final twelve days of Elul that stretch from Chai Elul until Rosh Hashanah (and which correspond to the twelve months of the past year), is transformed into a completely new service!

Cheshbon Nefesh – before and after Chai Elul

For the self-accounting that we perform during the first part of Elul, *prior* to Chai Elul, focuses mainly on the *generalized* entirety of our Divine service; an inclusiveness that by default includes the many details of the service we performed during the entire past year. [In other words] we contemplate the state of our *total*

BOND THROUGH PRAYER

- Since Chai Elul represents the bond of Jewry with Hashem, we should specifically increase our service of prayer from Chai Elul onward – for prayer, by definition, is the bonding of the Jew with his Creator.⁴

service of Torah, prayer, charitable deeds, and our conduct as expressed in thought, speech and action.

Conversely, the self-accounting that we make on Chai Elul and the final days of Elul primarily addresses our *essential bond with Hashem* and the amount and manner of its revelation within our actual service. In *this* self-accounting, the detailed aspects of the service – whether Torah study, charitable deeds or the like – are not felt to such a great extent. Rather, our main focus is on the essential connection of the Jew to Hashem which is the Chayus, “life-force,” of all service.” (ibid, p.253-254)

Spread the good news: each moment of Elul is priceless

“Elul is the month of reckoning concerning the outgoing year and the month of preparation for the coming year. Within Elul itself, we are currently within the last twelve days, which, one day per month, correspond to the twelve months of the past year.

This does not merely relate to each individual day alone – it is true of each *moment* within each of these twelve days! With this knowledge we can appreciate the value and significance of each moment of these days – to the extent that it is of great importance to inform every Jew that we meet [of the necessity to cherish and utilize each moment of Elul]. It was for that reason, that we devoted the central theme of this farbrengen to the value of time within Elul.” (Roshei Devarim, Parshas Ki Savo 5751)

4. Ibid, Parshas Ki Tzeitzei.

Shemonah Esrei corresponds to the spine

“Note that it is explained in Likutei Torah how the spine is a parable for prayer. [As our Sages state, “These eighteen blessings of the Amidah, correspond to the eighteen vertebrae that form the spine.”]

Chai Elul: the spine of Elul

The reason for this relationship is because [the spine] supports and establishes all the other limbs of the body, and it is through the spine that life-force is drawn from the brain to all the limbs. [The parallel to the function of the “spine,” i.e., the Amidah, within the month of Elul, is Chai Elul. It is then that the bond between the Jews and Hashem, the bond that constitutes the very life-force of our Divine service and likewise of our souls, is emphasized – Ed].” (ibid, footnote 56)

Eighteen: vertebrae, blessings and Chayus

“This is alluded to in the number of vertebrae within the spine, and the corresponding number of blessings in the Amidah, which total *eighteen* (Chai)!” (ibid, in the subnote to footnote 56)

The 3rd Day of Selichos

INTRODUCTION

“Selichah” means forgiveness. In the week prior to Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment, it is our custom to rise early each morning in order to recite the Selichos prayers before the regular morning prayers.

The Previous Rebbe wrote, in the year 5705, that the third day of Selichos was observed by the Alter Rebbe as a special day and he would privately and with utmost discretion deliver a Chassidic discourse to his son, the Mittler Rebbe. This secret practice continued on every third day of Selichos, from each generation of Rebbes to the next. The Rebbe Rashab, however, told the Previous Rebbe that he would eventually be instructed to publicize this practice.¹⁶

Sure enough, in the later years after his arrival in America the Previous Rebbe publicly unveiled the previously unknown fact that, within the Selichos period

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16. Sefer Hamaamorim 5705, p.226.

Are we worthy of such revelations?

“For many years, the concept of Chai Elul and the third day of Selichos were concealed. Now however, that permission has been granted to reveal them, the Previous Rebbe has publicized them to all corners of the world.

Although one could question whether [or not] our generation was worthy [to have received this information, especially when we are contrasted with the spiritual standing of former generations]...

Our low standing merits great revelations

The answer to that, is that this [lowly standing] is *itself* the very point [of revealing such information]: due to the concealment and obscurity of [the present times, which are referred to as] “the heels of Moshiach,” that have grown overpowering[ly oppressively], as a counter-measure, “they even opened hidden storehouses containing precious wealth and treasures that had been sealed and concealed from the eyes of all” until now.

We will prevail with the treasures of Chassidus

Specifically following the [Previous Rebbe’s] departure, it is certainly incumbent upon each of us to strengthen ourselves, and connect with the “tree of life” and our Leader, the Rebbe, with ever greater strength. With the aid of his treasures and the treasures of his ancestors [i.e., the earlier Rebbes of Chabad], who opened [these treasures] and delivered them to us, we will remove the concealments and obscurities. This is also a preparation and readying to our being “inscribed and sealed [on Rosh Hashanah] for the good.”” (Sefer Hamaamorim 5710, p.270-271)

PROMOTE THE PROVIDING OF FESTIVAL NEEDS

- It is extremely worthwhile that one who visits other Shuls for the abovementioned purpose, should also utilize this opportunity to encourage the congregations regarding providing the needy with their festival requirements.¹⁴

AV HARACHAMIM

- The Chabad custom is to recite Av Harachamim on the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah [See footnote].¹⁵

to the verse “And it was on *the day*,” which Targum Unkelos translates as, “It was on the Day of the Great Judgment.” The words “you *stand*” indicate that we stand firm and well-established, and are found meritorious in judgment.

On the Shabbos we bless the seventh month. The Hebrew word Shevii, “Seventh,” is related to the word Musbah, “satiated” – indicating that the month “is itself satiated [with holiness] and satiates all Jewry with abundant goodness for all of the year.”

Studying this teaching brings further revealed blessing

“Through studying the Torah teachings of the “three forefathers” of Chassidus concerning the blessing that Hashem gives on Shabbos Mevarchim Tishrei, namely, “You are all standing today,” we increase this blessing itself. For these teachings include the great virtue that is associated with a universal Jewish custom, as well as the virtue of a teaching from Torah’s inner dimension. Further, our study of these teachings results in “today,” i.e., light and revelation – as in the verse, “And Hashem called the light: Day.” We further accomplish all this through studying the teachings of “the two great luminaries” ([the anniversary of whose births we recently celebrated,] i.e., the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe – through the ‘mediation’ of the Maggid of Mezritch).” (ibid, page 295)

See there, p.294, for a thorough treatment of this topic, and *a Call to Action*, “Chai Elul”.

14. Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.302.

15. **When on Shabbos does Hashem give this blessing?**

“Although it was not clearly stated *when* exactly during the Shabbos preceding the seventh month Hashem gives His blessing, it would be logical to assume that His blessing comes at the very time that the *Jews* [would normally] bless the remaining eleven months of the year: [after the Amidah in the morning prayers,] following the recital of the two Yukan Purkan prayers – which reflects on a “doubling” of the Purkan, “Redemption”, and is similar to the concept of a “doubled consolation” [see *a Call to Action*, “Shabbos Nachamu”].

Arousing a father’s mercy

The bestowal of Hashem’s blessing at this juncture in the prayers is likewise emphasized in the prayer that follows [the recital of the two Yukan Purkan prayers]: Av Harachamim. For it is Chabad custom to recite Av Harachamim on the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah [as opposed to almost every other Shabbos Mevarchim], as it is explain in numerous places that there is a immense virtue to the recital of Av Harachamim, and that it is far loftier that the level represented by our recital of Av Harachaman...” (Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.299)

FOCUS ON THE CONNECTION OF PRAYER

- In addition to our general enhancement of our prayers throughout the month of Elul, we should now lay fundamental emphasis on (not merely using prayer to appeal for Heavenly pardon, but rather on) our attachment with Hashem.⁵

WHEN RECITING TEHILLIM

- Each of us should reflect this particular mode of prayer in our daily recital of Tehillim – when reciting both the three chapters that we add during Elul as well as the regular daily portions; we should do likewise regarding the additional prayers of Elul – for Chai Elul contains particular significance for *all* forms of prayer, as mentioned earlier.⁶

LEARN ABOUT THE FESTIVALS

- From Chai Elul onward, we should add in the general study of Torah, and particularly in topics pertaining to Elul, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkos.

NIGLEH AND CHASSIDUS

- This addition should be in both “Nigleh” and Chassidus, the revealed and the inner part of Torah.

FOCUS ON UNION WITH HASHEM IN STUDY

- Moreover, our study should reflect the aspect of prayer⁵ that is achieved through the study of Torah, namely, the union of the Jew with Hashem.⁷

5. Parshas Ki Savo 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.255. See *a Call to Action*, “The Month of Elul”.

6. Roshei Devarim, Chai Elul 5751. See also below, for the full text of the Roshei Devarim.

7. Parshas Ki Savo 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.260.

PROVIDE FESTIVE NEEDS

- From Chai Elul onward, we should add in the performance of charitable deeds in general, and particularly in the drive to provide the needy with their festival requirements – in generous and ample proportions.

FOR ALL COMING FESTIVAL

- The provisions we provide should include necessities for Rosh Hashanah, Erev Yom Kippur, Motzei Yom Kippur – and all the more so, for “the time of our rejoicing,” Sukkos and Shmini Atzeres.

YOM TOV HOSPITALITY

- Our preparations should include the Mitzvah that is basic to Yom Tov:⁸ general hospitality (Hachnasas Archim), and specifically the form of hospitality universally known as Eishel⁹ (לֶאֱשֵׁל, the Hebrew acronym for the provision of “eating, drinking and sleeping” requirements).⁷

Shabbos Mevarchim Tishrei

INTRODUCTION

On the Shabbos preceding every new month, we recite a special prayer to bless the coming month; such a Shabbos is called Shabbos Mevarchim.

The exception to this universal custom is the Shabbos

8. “See Torah Or, beg. of Parshas Chayei Sarah, and in many other locations.” (ibid, footnote 113)

9. We all contain Eishel seeds

[On the verse (Breishis 21:33), “[Avraham] planted an Eishel in Be’er Sheva,” the commentaries explain that Eishel refers to a guest house that Avraham established; Eishel is the acronym of Achilah, Shetiyah and Linah, “food, drink and a place to sleep” – the requirements that Avraham provided to his many guests – Ed.]

“This alludes to the fact that our forefather Avraham “planted” within the nature of all Jewish people the trait of hospitality (as indicated by the verse (Breishis 18:19), “[Avraham] will command his sons and household after him (to follow in these righteous paths),” by providing Eishel – food, drink, and sleeping requirements.” (ibid, footnote 112)

preceding the month of Tishrei, when we do not bless the coming seventh month.

The Baal Shem Tov explained that the reason behind this blatant exception, is that Hashem Himself blesses the month of Tishrei [see footnote 13] and, in fact, it is through His doing so that the Jewish people receive the ability to subsequently bless the following eleven months of the year.

TEACH TORAH IN OTHER SHULS

- We should certainly make the effort, particularly on this Shabbos, to visit¹⁰ other Shuls and study halls in order to “gather congregations” for the purpose of Torah-study.¹¹

EXPLAIN SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS SHABBOS

- In these gatherings, we should study topics which focus on timely themes, notably the teachings of the “three forefathers” of Chassidus¹² concerning Hashem’s blessing on this Shabbos Mevarchim Tishrei, which is encapsulated in the opening phrase of this week’s Parshah, “You are all standing today.”¹³

10. The directive in the name of the Parsha

“[In the spirit of the opening words of this week’s *second* Parshah,] Vayeilech, which means “And he went,” we should go visit other Shuls and study halls in order to gather congregations of Jewish people [in the spirit of the first words of this week’s *first* Parshah,] Atem Nitzavim haYom Kulchem, “You are all gathered today,” for the purpose of Torah study.” (Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.302)

11. Ibid.

12. The “three forefather” of Chassidus are, 1) the Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chassidus, 2) his disciple and successor, the Maggid of Mezritch, and 3) the Maggid’s disciple and successor, the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad Chassidus.

13. Ibid.

The Alter Rebbe’s words

“The Alter Rebbe related, “When I was in Mezeritch, I heard the following from my master and teacher, the Maggid [of Mezritch], in the name of *his* master and teacher, the Baal Shem Tov: [concerning] Tishrei, the seventh month, which is the first month from all the months of the year, Hashem Himself blesses it on Shabbos Mevarchim, which is the final Shabbos of the month of Elul. With this power, the Jewish people then bless the [subsequent] months, eleven times during the year.” (ibid, p.290)

What blessing does Hashem give?

In that Sichah, the Rebbe explains that the *content* of Hashem’s blessing is to be found in the Torah portion for this week, Parshas Nitzavim, which is always read the Shabbos preceding Rosh Hashanah. Nitzavim begins, “You are all standing today”; the word “today” refers to Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment – similar