

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

**Shabbos Mevarchim Tishrei
Erev Rosh Hashanah**

**PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752**

**A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar**

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
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a CALL to ACTION

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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

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

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)

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

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)

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 Binah 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).

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

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)

מוקדש

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