

a Call to Action

Foreword

This publication of *a CALL to ACTION* marks the onset of a most elevated and potent time of year. *Hosha'ana Rabbah*, *Sh'mini Atzeres* and *Simchas Torah* follow a month of lofty days, and are a culmination and fulfillment of our *avodah* throughout *Tishrei*.

Presented here is a translation of *HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar*, a compilation of *hora'os* culled from the Rebbe's talks in the years 5748 to 5752 (1988-1992), from both edited and unedited sources (*muga* and *bilti muga*). This English translation is rendered by **Rabbi Shais Taub**, who has made it available in pamphlet format for the first time.

The Rebbe, *Melech HaMoshiach*, has emphasized the primacy of action at this time, when Moshiach's arrival is imminent. 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 HaIkar
Chol HaMoed Sukkos, 5764

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Hosha'anah Rabbah

CONTINUING SIMCHAS BEIS HASHO'EVA

• Although there is much to be done as far as Torah study, prayer and acts of kindness on the night of *Hosha'anah Rabbah* and the following day, we still continue – and even increase – our *Simchas Beis Hasho'evah* celebration, for a Jew is able to condense an

entire world into just a second.¹

EATING AN APPLE WITH HONEY

• As it was in the past, the *gabaim* of the *shul* should hand out apples and honey to those who say *Tehilim*.²

• It used to be that if one would say *Tehilim* in the *sukkah* – which is really as it should be – then the apple would be eaten there immediately. If this is not possible, one should at least make mental note to eat the apple later in the *sukkah*, or outside of the *sukkah* once we are able to eat outside of the *sukkah* again.³

A DAY TO INCREASE

• The task of the day is like its name, "*Hosha'anah Rabbah*" – *Rabbah* meaning large and great. On this day, we increase in many facets of divine service. For instance, on this night we say the whole Book of *D'varim* and the entire *Tehilim*.⁴

• Beyond the increase in prayer and Torah study which distinguishes all of the days of *Sukkos*, there must be a further, extra effort in all of these things on *Hosha'anah Rabbah* in keeping with the greatness of the day. This includes assisting Jews in performing the mitzvah of *lulav*. This way, we will be sure to get '*a guten kvitel* – a good note,' as some say.⁵

• These tasks all demand time – both quantity and quality. This is especially so when it comes to prayer, which includes saying *Hosha'anah*. Most certainly, however, G-d grants the abilities to accomplish all of this

1. *Sichas Night of Hosha'anah Rabbah 5750 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 194).
2. *Sichas Night of Hosha'anah Rabbah 5752 (Sichos Kodesh*, p. 180).
3. *Ibid*. See *Sichas Fifth Night of Sukkos 5749 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 161): "On the night of *Hosha'anah Rabbah* we say the Book of *D'varim* together with the Book of *Tehilim* without a break in between, even though many congregations do stop at that point to eat an apple with honey." See also *Ibid*, footnote 44: "However, in many places they do not have this custom. Especially in Chabad where we are stringent not to eat anything outside of the *sukkah*, we are unable to eat the apple between the reading of *D'varim* and *Tehilim*; and it would be a great trouble for the entire congregation to all go out at once into the *Sukkah* with their books of *Tehilim* – particularly, since the *sukkah* is not even big enough to fit everyone inside. Also, we might add," [said the Rebbe jokingly], "It is the *gabaim* of the *shul* who hand out the apples, and since 'whenever there is a change of place, there is a change of *mazal*,' we will have to check the *mazal* of everyone here and find out who is fitting to be the special *gabai* just for the *sukkah*, as it is entirely possible that the *gabai* appropriate for the *sukkah* is not at all the same *gabai* who is fitting for the *shul*."
4. *Mayonai Hayeshuah 5751 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 148).
5. *Mayonai Hayeshuah 5751 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 148-9).

in its fullest sense even in this very small amount of time.⁶

Sh'mini Atzeres and Simchas Torah

SH'MINI ATZERES

• In recent generations, particularly in this generation, and especially in the past few years, the joy of *Sh'mini Atzeres* has come to exceed all measure and limitation.⁷

• This recent increase in joy is particularly connected to our going out on *tahaluchah* marches to other congregations. The word *tahalucha* comes from the root word "*halicha* – going," like 'going from strength to strength.' By our going out to different places – at least three places altogether – we bring joy to many, many Jews.⁸

SIMCHAS TORAH

• *Simchas Torah* is not just a continuation of the days before, but a day to itself. The joy on this day is incomparable to the joy of the days before. Likewise, every minute of *Simchas Torah* is also something to itself so that we must increase our joy incomparably each moment.⁹

HAKAFOS

• We are about to begin *Hakafos*, and although we must be especially careful when holding the *sefer Torah*, it is proper that everyone should say "*L'chaim*" – a **big** "*L'chaim!*"¹⁰

• Concluding the entire Torah is an occasion for the utmost joy that encompasses and unites all Jews – men, women and children. Accordingly, it is the custom that we bring the children to *Hakafos* – which is likewise the case with the reading of the Ten Commandments on *Shavuos*.¹¹

• It is the custom that the joy of *Simchas Torah* should surpass even that of *Sukkos* and we should dance in the street – until the street dances, too – even in a city where most of the people are non-Jews. And how much more so in a neighborhood and a city where most of the people are Jews.¹²

• It is unnecessary to mention that the joy and dancing should not be in a way that we feel like we are being forced to dance – like a person who has no choice and dances quietly and deliberately with his arms at his side. Rather, we rejoice and we dance of our own heartfelt desire.¹³

• According to Chabad custom, we call out the verses beginning, "*Ato Horaiso loda'as ki Hash-m hoo HoElokim*," three times before *Hakafos*. This is at all three occasions, outside of the Land of Israel, in which *Hakafos* are held according to Chabad custom – the night of *Sh'mini Atzeres*, the night of *Simchas Torah*, and the day of *Simchas Torah*.¹⁴

• After the verses of "*Ato Horaiso*," we conclude by reciting the verse, "*Av HoRachamim heitiva*." This is said quickly and quietly in the manner of a prayer¹⁵ – not in the loud, festive manner¹⁶ in which we say the verses of "*Ato Horaiso*." We also say this verse quickly in order to get to the verse "*U'faratzta*" right away, which we say with a festive roar.¹⁷

• In recent years, it has become Chabad custom to recite the verse of "*U'faratzta*" three times at the end of the "*Ato Horaiso*" verses.¹⁸

וְהָיָה זְרָעְךָ כְּעַפְרֵי הָאָרֶץ וּפְרִצְתָּ יָמָה וְקִדְמָה וְצַפּוֹנָה
וְנִגְבָּה וְנִבְרָכּוּ בְּךָ כָּל מְשַׁפְּחֹת הָאֲדָמָה וּבְזָרְעֶךָ
(בראשית כח.)

• In the *Hakafos* of the day of *Simchas Torah*, we circle

⁶. *Mayonai Hayeshuah* 5751 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 149).

⁷. *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5752 (*Sichos Kodesh*, p. 206).

⁸. *Ibid.* (p. 210): "Particularly, as the Alter Rebbe writes before *Hakafos* in his *siddur*, 'Even if you have already completed *Hakafos* in your own synagogue, if you come to a synagogue where they have yet to finish, you should sing and rejoice along with them.'"

⁹. *Sichas Day of Simchas Torah* 5749 (*Hisva'aduyos*, pp. 226-7).

¹⁰. *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 220).

¹¹. *Sichas Shabbos Haazinu*, 13 *Tishrei* 5749 (*Hisva'aduyos* p. 87 and footnote 49). See also *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5751 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 173): "This is a joy that reaches and permeates all Jews, old and young, down to the bottoms of their feet, to the point that all Jews dance equally – men, women and children. [The Rebbe then indicated a small girl in the crowd.] Including this little girl who had the privilege of being brought to the men's section so she could set an example even for the grown men with white beards and show them how to rejoice and sing,

being that she is under three and there is no *halachic* problem that men hear her singing, and it is recognizable that she is a modest, lovely and *chasidic* girl."

¹². *Sichas Shabbos Vayeilech, Shabbos Shuvah*, 6 *Tishrei* 5749 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 48). See also *Mayonai Hayeshuah* 5751 (footnote 32): "Thus we find that on *Sh'mini Atzeres* the Rebbe of Chabad would close themselves off from the festivities - although we generally ascend in matters of holiness - in order to feel the joy of *Simchas Torah* even more strongly.

¹³. *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5748 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 307).

¹⁴. *Sichas Shabbos Noach*, 5752 (*Hisva'aduyos* p. 221 footnote 62).

¹⁵. See *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5752 (*Sichos Kodesh*, p. 200).

¹⁶. *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 184).

¹⁷. *Sichas Day of Simchas Torah* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 235-6).

¹⁸. *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 211). See also *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah* 5750 (*Sichos Kodesh*, p. 200).

"HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar" - Hosha'ana Rabbah, Sh'mini Atzeres and Simchas Torah

the *bimah* only three and a half times, not seven, as on the night of *Simchas Torah* and *Shmini Atzeres*.¹⁹

- When we dance with the *sefer Torah* we leave its crown on.²⁰

VISITING EACH OTHER'S HOMES

- It is known to have been a Jewish custom go around from house to house on *Simchas Torah* saying "*L'chaim*," eating some food, singing a happy melody and dancing.²¹
- Although this custom does not appear to be in practice today, essentially it does continue, just in a different manner. Instead of going from house to house, we all come to one place, a holy place – the house of prayer and house of study of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, the Leader of our Generation.²²

V'YA'AKOV HALACH L'DARKO

- At the conclusion of *Simchas Torah*, we call out, "*V'Ya'akov Halach L'darko* – And Ya'akov went on his way."²³
- In Israel, where there is no second day of *Yom Tov*, it is the custom of Chabad *chasidim* there to make additional *Hakafos* after *Yom Tov*, and that the joy of these *Hakafos* should even exceed that of the *Hakafos* on *Yom Tov* just as the joy of *Simchas Torah* incomparably exceeds that of *Sh'mini Atzeres*.²⁴

KEREN HASHANAH FUND

- On *Simchas Torah*, we make announcements encouraging everyone to contribute to the "*Keren HaShanah Fund*."²⁵

CHITAS

- As is our custom every *Simchas Torah*, let us make an

announcement promoting the learning of *Chitas*.²⁶

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Sukkos is a holiday of unity crowned by the dancing on *Simchas Torah*, an act that supercedes the myriad levels of scholarship and character that typify our service of G-d and our connection to the Torah throughout the year. This essential unity of all Jews is especially significant this year, as it is a year of *Hakhel*. On *Simchas Torah* during previous *Hakhel* years the Rebbe added a *posuk* to our recitation of *Ato Horaiso*, emphasizing the prominence of *Hakhel*.

The Rebbe, *Melech HaMoshiach*, has emphasized the primacy of action at this time, when *Moshiach's* arrival is imminent. 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 HaIkar
Chol HaMoed Sukkos, 5762
Year of Hakhel

Editor's note: In *Hakhel* years, in addition to the verse "*U'faratzta*," the Rebbe also added the following verse.²⁷

הַנְּנִי מִבֵּיא אוֹתָם מֵאַרְבָּע צְפוֹן וְקִבְצָתִים מִיַּרְבֵּיתִי-אַרְבָּע
בָּם עָנַר וּפְסַח הָרָה וַיִּלְדֹת יַחְדָּו קֵהֵל גְּדוֹל יִשׁוּבוּ הָנָה
(ירמ"י לא)

¹⁹. *Sichas Night and Day of Simchas Torah 5750 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 208): "In this way, we emphasize that our role in *Hakafos* is only 'half' of an accomplishment and that the other half is done by G-d."

²⁰. *Sichas Day of Simchas Torah 5750 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 234).

²¹. *Sichas Night of Simchas Torah 5748 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 301).

²². *Ibid.*

²³. *Sichas of Shabbos B'reishis 5750 (Hisva'aduyos*, pp. 308-311).

²⁴. *Sichas Day of Simchas Torah 5752 (Sichos Kodesh*, p. 206).

²⁵. *Sichas Day of Simchas Torah 5749 (Hisva'aduyos*, p. 246).

²⁶. *Ibid.*

²⁷. *Otzar Minhagei Chabad*, p. 356.