

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

THE 11TH OF NISSAN

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar

The 11th of Nissan

The Rebbe's Birthday

INTRODUCTION

The Rebbe was born in Nikolayev, Russia, on *Yud-Alef* (the 11th of) Nissan, 5662 (1902), and was named after the Tzemach Tzedek (the third Lubavitcher Rebbe).

Notably, the first time that the importance of a birthday was made known to the public – and indeed, publicized as an instruction for all to follow – was the Rebbe's entry for 11 Nissan, in *HaYom Yom*:

“On a birthday, one should spend time in seclusion. He should recall his experiences [of the past year] and contemplate them deeply. He should then repent and correct whatever requires repentance and correction.”

Clearly, being the birthday of the Leader of our Generation, the 11th of Nissan is a significant day for all Jews.²¹

SPIRITUAL: TORAH, MITZVOS, FESTIVE FARBRENGEN

- We should utilize this special day in a manner that will cause an increase in all matters of Torah and *mitzvos*, amidst joy.
- This is accomplished by holding a joyful *farbrengen*, attended by many Jewish men, women and children (obviously with a *mechitzah* [partition] in accordance with *Shulchan Aruch*).²²
- The atmosphere should be charged with a joy that stems from

21. See the Rebbe's discussion of this *HaYom Yom* on 11 Nissan, 5748 (1988), *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 36.

22. **To distinguish between diverse forces of holiness**

... The *mechitzah* is a “barrier” that stems from holiness, from the Torah, and it serves to emphasize the unique qualities of the people on either of the two sides. A *mechitzah* announces that those on either side of it carry an advantage which those of the other side do not possess (11 Nissan, 5748; *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 38, fn. 16).

Torah and *mitzvos*.²³

PHYSICAL: GOOD FOOD AND DRINK AT FARBRENGEN

- We should also make the *farbrengen* joyful in a physical sense, by providing food and drink:²⁴ “bread that satiates the heart of man,” and especially the kind of food and drink that naturally causes joy.

GREAT JOY, LITTLE MASHKEH

- Needless to say, the participants of these *farbrengens* should drink within the established limit of four shot glasses [of alcoholic beverage] – *small* shot glasses at that – and even this amount should not be drunk if it will “go to your head.”²⁵

STUDY THE REBBE’S KAPITL WITH CHASSIDUS

- Many follow the custom of studying the chapter of *Tehillim*²⁶

23. *Ibid*, p. 38.

24. **Why stress physical food in a spiritual celebration?**

[*Chassidus* explains that it is specifically the greatest of spiritual rungs which are able to manifest themselves within the most mundane realms. In this case] the *mazal*, the supernal source of the Jewish soul [which is most effective on one’s birthday,] is so extremely lofty, that it can even be elicited and revealed [and yet retain its spiritual potency] in the very lowest of levels and matters that concern one’s corporeal body, [imbuing even physical food and drink with sanctity] (*ibid.*, fn. 17).

25. **Not more than four**

There is no need to elaborate on a matter that is straightforward and understood even by the most simple-minded, who, [were they not specifically informed,] may have otherwise assumed that things should be done differently; [i.e., that it is permissible to drink in excess of the Rebbe’s “decree” of not drinking more than four shot glasses].

Don’t be more righteous than the Rebbe

[They would have justified their drinking, claiming that drinking more than four shot glasses was necessary] to indicate their participation in *simchah shel mitzvah*, “the joy of a *mitzvah*,” which they are ready to celebrate to an immeasurably greater extent than that which they were instructed by Chassidic elders (*Ziknei HaMashpiim*) – even “outdoing” the clear and explicit instruction of the Leader of this Generation [not to drink more than four shots]... (*ibid.*, fn. 19).

26. **A psalm a day**

[There is a custom, passed down from the Baal Shem Tov, for each person to recite each day, the chapter of *Tehillim* corresponding to his or her age [plus one:

– the psalms written by [King David,] the “sweet singer of Israel” – which we begin reciting daily [on the Rebbe’s birthday; i.e., corresponding to the Rebbe’s new age,] along with its Chassidic explanations. This material has been published [in the annual *Kovetz Yud-Alef Nissan*].²⁷

e.g., if one is celebrating his 40th birthday, he begins saying *kapitle* 41]. According to Chabad custom, one also recites the chapter that corresponds to the Rebbe’s age.

This year, beginning with the Rebbe’s 106th birthday (11 Nissan, 5768 / April 16, 2008), we will begin reciting Psalm 107 – *Hodu Ladoshem Ki Tov* (the Psalm of Thanksgiving).]

27. Night of 13 Nissan, 5751, fn. 77; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 48.

מוקדש

לכ"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח



לזכות

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה

וזוגתו שלומית בת שושנה

בניהם ובנותיהם:

יוסף יצחק, משה, מנחם מענדל, חנה וחי' מושקא

שיחיו גודמאן



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד