

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

15TH OF SIVAN

KINUS TORAH

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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“HaMaaseh Hu Halkar”

280 Troy Av, Brooklyn, NY 11213

Tel: (718) 363-3448 • Fax: (718) 467-6919

e-mail: act-now@juno.com

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Foreword

We are pleased to bring you this newly published edition of *a CALL to ACTION* in honor of Isru Chag and the Kinus Torah, and in anticipation of the 15th of Sivan. Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction from the Rebbe's *sichos* pertaining to the Kinus Torah and the 15th of Sivan.

HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar is 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*). Great effort has been extended to remain faithful to the Rebbe's calculated and instructive nuance. This English translation was rendered 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 HaIkar
Erev Parshas Naso, Sivan 5767

Kinus Torah

A Torah Convention

INTRODUCTION

From the earliest years of the Rebbe's leadership, he strongly encouraged the practice of holding a convention where many people deliver and discuss Torah thoughts. These conventions are held on the day of Isru Chag, the day following Pesach, Shavuos, and Sukkos.

During every gathering (Farbrengen) that was held prior to Isru Chag (the day following a festival), the Rebbe would mention¹ (and occasionally instruct that a full announcement be made²) concerning the Kinus Torah. The Rebbe would personally participate by delivering an insight in Nigleh [the revealed dimensions of Torah]³ on a timely topic such as the current section

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1. 2nd Day of Shavuos (2nd Farbrengen) 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.294.
See there, footnote 47: "Not only did they make a verbal announcement concerning the Kinus Torah, but even a physical one too: They printed a poster announcing the Kinus Torah with bold letters on Erev Yom Tov, and stuck it onto the wall of the synagogue and study hall in a manner whereby it is impossible to be removed during Yom Tov i.e., it became 'part of the wall' and by extension a 'part of the entire building!'"
"We should announce concerning the Kinus Torah which will be held on Motze Yom Tov and continued after Shabbos Parshas Naso..." (2nd Day of Shavuos 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.293)
"As is our annual custom, we will now make an announcement concerning the arranging of a Kinus Torah on Isru Chag..." (Acharon Shel Pesach 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.78)
 2. "First and foremost, they should announce the Kinus Torah, citing its time and location along with the other particulars. The main thing is that everyone participates in the Kinus Torah." (Acharon Shel Pesach 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.61)
See also 2nd Day of Shavuos (2nd Farbrengen) 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.298 and Acharon Shel Pesach 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.175.
 3. "As is customary, I will participate with a concept in Nigleh - briefly at least, just presenting the main points." (Day of Simchas Torah 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.250 and Simchas Torah 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.250)
"This is the fitting opportunity to participate in the Kinus Torah by delivering a concept in Nigleh (as is customary by every Kinus Torah), or to at least raise a issue which requires further analytical debate - which you will undoubtedly look into..." (Parshas Acharei 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.72)

of the study cycle of Rambam⁴ or something related to the present time.⁵

PROMOTE THE CUSTOM

- We should remind everyone and promote the custom of recent years to arrange a Kinus Torah⁶ on the day following the

"We should remind and promote regarding the Kinus Torah, as is customary each year, and is certainly pertinent to this current year, the "Year of Miracles". (Day of Simchas Torah 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.174)

"We will conclude on a positive note - the announcement concerning the Kinus Torah which will beheld tomorrow, the day of Isru Chag, and the invitation to everyone present... As every year, a concept within Nigleh will be spoken about in order to participate in the Kinus Torah." (2nd Day of Shavuos 5748 - Hisvaduyos p.345) See also Shabbos Bereishis (2nd Farbrengen) & Continuation to Simchas Torah 5748 - Hisvaduyos p.366.

4. "You will undoubtedly discuss this matter in the Kinus Torah which will be held the day after Yom Tov, in order to make a connection with the regular study cycles currently being learnt - in this case with the current study of Rambam." (2nd Day of Shavuos (2nd Farbrengen) 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.283)

"We will connect this with the widespread custom to study a daily section of Rambam. The section for Isru Chag is the end of a particular set of laws as well as an entire book [of the fourteen books of Rambam], and the commencement of a new set of laws in another book ... Since the Kinus Torah coincides with the day when we study this particular section according to the custom that has been practiced for many years already (even prior to the establishment of the common Rambam study cycle), we should therefore connect the study with the Kinus Torah." (Acharon Shel Pesach 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.78)

"Since my participation in the Kinus Torah is usually done during the Farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach, which is when we complete the laws of Terumos in Rambam ... it is therefore fitting to participate in the Kinus Torah by an analytical discussion on the words of the Rambam..." (Parshas Acharei, Shabbos Mevarchim Chodesh Iyar, 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.72-73)

5. "As is customary, we will now announce specific details concerning the Kinus Torah, and May it be Hashem's Will that it be with great success." (Acharon Shel Pesach 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.78) See also Shabbos Bereishis (2nd Farbrengen), Continuation to Simchas Torah 5748 - Hisvaduyos p.371.
6. "One of the reason behind the custom (which has been in place for a number of years now), that in continuation of, and in proximity to, the festival of Pesach - we arrange a Kinus Torah ... where numerous people debate and analyze Torah concepts. Since following Pesach, the entire concept of "Moshe received the Torah at Sinai..." (Avos 1:1) begins anew, which includes both Written and Oral Torah (as well as any innovative thought derived by future scholars). This is therefore the appropriate time to increase our study of Torah. True, the Kinus Torah is merely a custom and not an obligation according to law, we nevertheless fulfill a positive commandment of the Torah via holding a Kinus; the commandment of Torah study, and of public Torah study at that! Moreover, there is also the sentiment and

festival of Pesach [and likewise following the other festivals] (in addition to the Kinus Torah that was held during the intermediary days of Pesach). That is the custom here [in 770,] and has also spread to numerous locations worldwide (and is undoubtedly the custom in the Holy Land too⁷).⁸

AT LEAST WISH TO BE PRESENT

- One who cannot physically participate in the Kinus Torah for whatever reason,⁹ should at least participate mentally. Being that "in the setting of a person's thought, that is where he is to be found", one will be considered having been bodily present at the Kinus.¹⁰

EVERYWHERE AND EVERYONE

- We should strive to publicize this custom wherever it has not yet been implemented, so that the people of those locations will likewise arrange a Kinus Torah in continuation of, and in proximity to, the festivals - i.e., on the day of Isru Chag. They should consider

enthusiasm that accompanies a Jewish custom, especially one that is observed with a public." (Parshas Acharei 4749 - Hisvaduyos p.68)

"Even those study sessions that occur at intervals or even just a few times a year, nevertheless, when they are held at permanent, established times, they assume the same strength as a regular session. We find an example of this regarding the sacrifices, whereby any offering with a fixed time will override the laws of Shabbos, with the same legal validity as the Korbon Tamid (lit. "constant sacrifice") which was literally offered every day. In other words, the custom which has been established over a number of years and in numerous locations, to arrange of Kinus Torah following and in close proximity to all of the three major festivals [Pesach, Shavuos, and Sukkos] ... and especially Shavuos - for being the "time of the Giving of the Torah, it is the most appropriate time to hold a Kinus Torah..." (2nd Day of Shavuos (2nd Farbrengen) 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.294)

7. "They undoubtedly observe this practice in the Holy Land too - on the contrary, since they celebrate Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah together on one day, they have more time for Isru Chag!" (Day of Simchas Torah 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.250)
8. "May it be Hashem's Will that this practice increase, spread, and be accepted in all other locations too!" (Acharon Shel Pesach 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.61)
9. "The main thing is that everyone actually participates in the Kinus Torah ... by physically attending. And as for those who are unable... [See main text above for continuation]." (Day of Simchas Torah 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.61 - See there p.269)
10. "Particularly since the location of the Kinus Torah - the synagogue and study hall of the Previous Rebbe, Leader of our generation - helps and aids that the person be considered physically present." (Acharon Shel Pesach 5750 - Hisvaduyos p.78)

the local conditions and hold the Kinus during subsequent days instead, if doing so will allow for a larger attendance.¹¹

IF ISRU CHAG IS A FRIDAY

- When the day following Pesach coincides with Erev Shabbos, the Kinus should begin on Friday and continue on Sunday, to facilitate greater participation. If the duration of the Kinus could be extended beyond Sunday, then all the better...!¹²

PRINT THE DIVREI TORAH

- The words of Torah that are discussed at the Kinus should be printed in a booklet (with quality paper, a pleasant font, etc.¹³), so that others may study it too. This way the participators of the Kinus will have fulfilled the directive to "establish *many* students" (which is also the purpose of the Kinus itself).¹⁴

11. "This is the time to propose that we all strive to publicize ... In addition, in regards to all these matters ... there is a unique granting of power (not only from the theme of the Giving of the Torah, but also) from 'preceding 'we will do' to 'we will hear' that prefaced the Giving of the Torah. So that even if one lacks a complete comprehension of all that we have discussed, we should nevertheless do so in the obedient manner of preceding 'we will do' to 'we will hear'." (2nd Day of Shavuos (2nd Farbrengen) 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.294)

"...Including an announcing and promoting that we now resolve to arrange a Kinus Torah in those locations where for whatever reason they have not followed this practice until now. May it be Hashem's Will that others will see their example and follow suit in all other locations too - particularly when people notice that in those places where this practice is already being followed, further additions in both quality and quantity are being added to the Kinus Torah, including a higher turnout of participants that in any previous year, and is held amidst joy and gladness of heart! (Parshas Acharei 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.62)

"It is worthwhile to arouse the Jews in each and every possible place, that it is an extremely correct and good thing to make a Kinus Torah during this week (in proximity to Pesach), or at least on next Shabbos or the subsequent days (each location according to its local conditions). And in those locations where a Kinus Torah is already being held, they should increase it in both quality and quantity." (Parshas Acharei 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.69)

12. "On Erev Shabbos, not everyone is able to come and participate in a Kinus Torah lest they lose out in their work and accomplishments for Shabbos." (Acharon Shel Pesach 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.61-62.)

13. "So that the Torah discussion will be easily accessible, "like a set table that is prepared for a person to sit down and eat".

14. Parshas Acharei 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.71.

15th of Sivan

Imprisonment of the Previous Rebbe

INTRODUCTION

The Previous Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, was arrested at midnight on the eve of the 15th of Sivan 5687 (1927), due to his incessant activities on behalf of Jews and Judaism throughout Communist Russia. He was incarcerated in the Spalerno prison whose name, as he later wrote, "was enough by itself to strike dread, fear and trepidation in the heart of all who heard its mention..."

However, as the Rebbe later explained, "during the imprisonment there was a 'sowing' which then enabled a tremendous growth in the dissemination of Chassidus". The sequence of events triggered by this arrest culminated in the Previous Rebbe immigrating to New York and turning the Chabad movement into a worldwide tool for spreading Torah Judaism and Chassidus.

CONTEMPLATE AND ACT ACCORDINGLY

- "These days are commemorated and actualized" (Megilah 9:28). We should recall the happenings of "those days" in order to again "actualize" all of the goodly influences that were then conferred. (Moreover, we should do so as soon as possible, so "that they not be delayed (even) as a wink of an eye"!)¹⁵

A LIBERATION FOR JEWRY

- On the night of the 15th of Sivan, an overarching and unique incident occurred to my father-in-law, Leader of our generation.¹⁶ Although only the negative dimensions of the event

15. "...Or on an even loftier level that that of the original event!" (Night of 15th of Sivan 5748 - Hisvadyuos p.478)

16. "This was an episode involving the "Nassi" (Leader) of the generation, "who bore (Nasah) our ills (i.e., the illness that was truly meant for us)". The word "nasah" -

were apparent at the time, it was subsequently clarified the entire episode was in fact the catalyst of a great salvation.¹⁷ The affair

he bore" in this case also carries the connotation of 'uplifted' and 'elevated'. In other words, he raised us to the extent that from that point onward we are no longer required to undergo episodes of a similar nature, and may suffice with accomplishing the equivalent via our spiritual service." (ibid p.480)

17. "On this night, the eve of the 15th of Sivan in the year 5687 (1927), ???, the infamous prison ordeal of the Previous Rebbe began. At that time, only the negative aspect of the episode was apparent and it appeared to be wholly undesirable (to make an understatement...), and this outlook was expressed by an outpouring of prayers and pleas, as is well known.

However, it has become clear in retrospect that the ordeal was the catalyst of a great salvation. It was this incident that eventually enabled the Previous Rebbe to exit that country altogether along with his family and all of his books, manuscripts, and other possessions. According to the ways in which that country was then run and based on its laws, such an exit would have not been possible were it not for the events of the incarceration and so on. The Previous Rebbe was then able to go to a place and lifestyle wherein he was capable to engage in all of his activities - the chief among them being the dissemination of Chassidus amidst the general dissemination of Judaism - without any restrictions whatsoever. These activities then continuously expanded and flourished until they reached the advanced state that we witness today...

The beginning of this salvation began on the 3rd of Tammuz, when the Previous Rebbe was partially released, and subsequently developed into a state of complete redemption on the 12th and 13th of Tammuz - days which became a Yom Tov for all Jews worldwide and whose observance as such continues to proliferate." (ibid p.478-479)

"Although during that year we only saw the events as a completely and utterly undesirable episode, it later became apparent how the events allowed the Leader of our generation to arrive in the 'lower hemisphere' [i.e., America]. That in turn allowed an even further intensification of the dissemination of Chassidus, amidst the general dissemination of Torah and Mitzvos via the spread of Judaism in general. In particular, this resulted in Torah and the wellsprings [of Chassidus] being disseminated in many foreign languages." (Night of 12th of Sivan 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.313)

"Although the original 15th of Sivan occurred in a very undesirable manner, nevertheless, in the subsequent years (i.e., following the redemption of the 12th of Tammuz whereby it was revealed that the intention behind the incarceration was only in order to facilitate the subsequent redemption), the 15th of Sivan too bears the theme of redemption.

This is somewhat similar to the enslavement of the Jews in Egypt, whereby following their servitude involving the literal building with "mortar and bricks", the same theme was accomplished during their subsequent exiles via engaging in the intense study of Torah - "the 'mortar' (חומר - Chomer) refers to a קל וחומר (Kal v'Chomer - one of the Thirteen Methods of deriving Torah laws), and the 'bricks' (לבנים - Levenim) refers to the clarification of practical rulings (הלכתא ליבון - Libun Hilchasah)". (Parshas Naso, 15th of Sivan 5749, footnote 101 - Hisvaduyos p.344-345)

is therefore one that concerns the entire generation.¹⁸

A PERSONAL HEARTFELT REQUEST

- On this day there is emphasized the command, directive, and soulful plea (Bakashah Nafshis¹⁹) that is accompanied with a granting of power to each and every Jew: Increase all of your activities to disseminate Torah, Judaism, and Chassidus, with ever greater strength!²⁰

UNLEASH YOUR G-DLY ESSENCE

- Begin with yourself! Reveal the wellspring that is concealed within the inner recess of your soul and which is bound up with the inner dimension of the Torah; draw it forth and let it be revealed within the intellect of your "G-dly soul" (Chochmah Binah v'Da'as d'Nefesh Elohis). Furthermore, let it enter and radiate within your "animalistic soul" (Nefesh Habehamis) too!²¹

LIBERATE THE TORAH'S SOUL

- Then do the same with the wellsprings of Chassidus at large; due to the darkened state of the world, there are matters from the inner dimensions of Torah that have not yet been brought to light, but rather remain exiled and imprisoned. It is

18. "In addition to the fact that every aspect of a Leader of the generation must bear relevance to the entire generation, since **הנשיא הוא הכל** - The Leader is all [-Rashi]", there are nevertheless numerous matters amongst the happenings of life of the Leader in which the relevance to the entire generation is not really emphasized - and then there are unique events (such as the one under discussion) in which the significance for the generation is clearly underscored. And for that reason we are required to perform the directive of "These days are commemorated and actualized"..." (Night of 15th of Sivan 5748 - Hisvaduyos p.478)

19. "The 15th of Sivan, the start of the imprisonment and subsequent redemption, creates a directive and granting of power to each person, to fulfill the soulful plea (Bakashah Nafshis) of the one who was imprisoned and redeemed to engage in the dissemination of Chassidus; both within his own self as well as having an influence on others." (ibid p.480)

20. Parshas Naso, 15th of Sivan 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.345.

21. "For when there exists a concealment and obscurity concerning the full comprehension of the inner dimension of the Torah, then its teachings are in a state that resembles 'incarceration'. When the mask and obfuscation is then removed, the teachings have been 'redeemed'. (Night of 15th of Sivan 5748 - Hisvaduyos p.480)

our duty to redeem these matters and free them from their incarceration and exile.²²

TAKE STOCK OF THE MONTH'S DIVINE SERVICE

- On the 15th of Sivan the "moon (and the theme of the month that it represents) is at its fullest". Now is the time for each of us to make an honest self-accounting; how have we performed our duties that pertain to "the third month" (Sivan)? Once we have made this reckoning, we should then fix that which requires repair and complete (Mashlim) that which was lacking. We should also perfect (Mashlim) our service, honing it to the height of perfection.²³

TOTAL UNITY BETWEEN ALL JEWS

- The first duty of the month of Sivan that we should examine is that of its first day - the day of Rosh Chodesh. It was on Rosh Chodesh Sivan that the Jews reached the Sinai Desert and "He, Israel, camped there facing the mountain". It does not say "they camped", but "he camped (ויחן)", which indicated that the Jews were united "as one man with one heart"...²³

REFINEMENT, SUBSERVIENCE, AND TORAH

- Our subsequent services respectively reflect the three days of preparation (Sheloshes Yemei Hagbalah) for receiving the Torah; the preceding "Na'aseh - We will do (as You instruct)" to "Nishmah - We will hear (the rational behind Your instruction)"; the actual receiving of the Torah; and the subsequent days of Tashlumin (when the Jews would bring the festive sacrifices that they were unable to offer during the festival itself).²³

22. "...So that they may exist in a state of luminance and revelation." (ibid)

23. "Having come from the Giving of the Torah on Shavuot, through the days of Tashlumin and then the first Shabbos that follows the Giving of the Torah, and having arrived at the 15th of Sivan, when the moon... [See main text above for continuation]." (Parshas Naso, 15th of Sivan 5749 - Hisvaduyos p.344.

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