

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

SHABBOS BEREISHIS, THE SALE
OF MITZVOS, PARSHAS NOACH

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752

A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar



a CALL to ACTION

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Foreword

We are pleased to bring you this newly published edition of *a CALL to ACTION*. Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu Halkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction from the Rebbe's Sichos pertaining to: Shabbos Bereishis, the Sale of Mitzvos, the conclusion of Tishrei and Shabbos Parshas Noach..

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 carefully 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 this take place completely and immediately!

Editorial Office of
HaMaaseh Hu Halkar
Tishrei, Year of Hakhel 5768

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Continue Tishrei throughout the year

FOCUS ON THE THEME OF THE YEAR

- Simchas Torah is the day that concludes and seals the festivals of Tishrei, drawing their positive influence into the entire coming year; on Simchas Torah, we should place additional emphasis on the unique theme of this year. [In 5750 (1990) the Rebbe focused on the Hebrew acronym of (5)750 being "Shnas Nisim – a year of miracles, the miracle of the true and complete Redemption."]¹

REVEAL HASHEM IN THE WORLD

- With the miracle of Redemption, nature itself will affirm that 'To Hashem belong the world and its fullness, the earth and its inhabitants!' Our re-entry into worldly affairs [following the festive month of Tishrei] should be permeated with this reality.¹

HE'S COMING TODAY

- The service of a Jew ought to be permeated with the awareness that Moshiach's coming is imminent, literally 'today'! This, however, in no way contradicts an orderly service within the parameters of the world, since our purpose is to reveal the True Existence within the world itself.²

Shabbos Bereishis

INTRODUCTION

Shabbos Bereishis, the final Shabbos of the festive month of Tishrei (itself the 'head' of the coming year)

1. Night and Day of Simchas Torah 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.212.

2. **You have been shown to make known to others**

...As the Jews were told when they first became a nation (at the Giving of the Torah), Atah Hareisah LaDa'as ... Ein Oid Milvado, 'You have been shown [so as] to know that Hashem is G-d; there is nothing else aside from Him!' The implication of this verse is that the Jews need to reveal within the world, that Hashem is its *true* existence, for 'there is nothing else aside from Him!' (ibid)

constitutes the ‘climax’ that encapsulates Tishrei.

On the other hand, the festive period is now over and we begin the new cycle of reading the Torah (starting with Parshas Bereishis); we now face the challenge of ‘unpacking’ the inspiration and spiritual powers that we have collected through our divine service from Rosh Hashanah through Simchas Torah, and utilizing them throughout the coming year in our daily divine service.

INFLUENCE YOUR YEAR

- Our manner in which we approach and perform our divine service on Shabbos Bereishis has a continuous effect on the entire coming year.³

PLAN TO FILL YOUR YEAR WITH SPIRITUALITY

- Every man, woman and child can therefore appreciate that Shabbos Bereishis is the most fitting time to formulate a program for activating the spiritual powers that we gathered during the Tishrei festivals in our daily affairs – at home, work, school and so on.³

REINFORCE YOUR TORAH AND MITZVOS

- For a start, each of us should resolve to strengthen all activities concerning Torah and Mitzvah throughout the entire coming year.⁴

3. Restocked and recharged

... A program of divine service in the spirit of VeYa’akov Halach LeDarko, ‘and Ya’akov went on his way,’ whereby we begin to ‘unpack’ [and make use of] the [spiritual] ‘merchandise’ that we acquired during Tishrei... (Parshas Bereishis 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.292) See a Call to Action, The Conclusion of Simchas Torah.

Do it now so you can do it later

... This is one of the reasons behind the long-standing custom to study in depth one verse or subject in Rashi’s commentary on the Parshah of that week ... We should certainly observe this custom during Shabbos Bereishis, so that we continue this study throughout the year – Bli Neder (‘without making a vow’). For, as the saying goes, Vi MeShtelt Zich Avek Shabbos Bereishis, Azoi Geit Ess Ah Gantz Yahr, ‘The way that the rest of the year will go, depends on how we establish ourselves on Shabbos Bereishis!’ (Parshas Bereishis 5751; Hisvaaduyos p.196)

STUDY MORE TORAH

- We should add and bolster our regular schedules for Torah study; both our personal pursuit of individual subjects as well as our maintaining the universal study cycles (such as the daily study of Chitas).⁴

IMPROVE YOUR MITZVOS

- We should further enhance our performance of Mitzvos, and particularly of the Mitzvah that equals all others – giving Tzedakah; this includes donating to the Keren Hashanah Fund (which distributes Tzedakah on behalf all donors each day of the year).⁴

DAILY CONDUCT

- We should also advance our service of ‘Let all your activities be for the sake of Heaven’ and ‘Know Him in all your ways.’ This means utilizing everything in the universe in a manner that furthers Hashem’s honor; a goal which we realize by using everything to advance the observance of Torah and Mitzvos or even as actual Mitzvos.⁴

HAFATZAH

- The main thing is that we fulfill the obligation carried by every Jew in our present generation: To disseminate Torah, Judaism and Chassidus; to bolster fellow Jews in their divine service; and particularly to draw close those Jews who did not merit an adequate Jewish education (not through any fault of their own, but rather due to Divinely-orchestrated circumstances).⁴

REACH THE LAST JEW AND BRING MOSHIACH

- The dissemination of Judaism should be given vital emphasis in our present times – for it is apparent that the *sole*

4. Parshas Bereishis 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.292 (See there at length.) See also A Call to Action, Conclusion of Simchas Torah.

*explanation*⁵ for Moshiach's delay is that there is yet a Jew (who is unaware that we are waiting for him) to whom we must reach out – in a pleasant and peaceful manner – and return to his or her true self and true 'life,' namely, a lifestyle based on Torah and Mitzvos, which constitute 'our life and the length of our days.'⁶

YOUR WORD COUNTS

- Every Jewish man, woman and child should assume an active role in this dissemination; we see clearly how a Jew who presently considers himself 'foreign' to the Torah lifestyle can be powerfully influenced by a heartfelt word – even coming from a small child.⁷

YIDDISHKEIT IS HIS ESSENCE

- Our influence on fellow Jews is particularly effective when we speak sincere words from the heart and inform them that being a Jew, he or she contains a soul that is 'an actual part of Hashem' therefore Torah and Mitzvos are in fact not at all 'foreign,' G-d forbid, but rather constitute their very own *inheritance* and essentially, their own true *existence*.⁴

WE'RE ALL WAITING

- Our message and its impact is further strengthened when we explain to our fellow Jew that the entire nation, including its greatest figures as well as all the souls of Jewry from all past generations – and even the very Shechinah (Divine Presence) which is in a state of exile alongside ourselves – are all waiting

5. *'No other explanation exists!'*

6. **A symbol of Redemption**

...And to take him by the hand (in the spirit of the verse [Yishayah 27:12], 'And you will be gathered one by one, O' Children of Israel!' – the ingathering of exiles that Hashem will perform) in a pleasant and peaceful manner, amidst Ahavas Yisrael, the love of your fellow Jew, and to return to his true self ... [See main text above for continuation]. (Parshas Bereishis 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.292)

7. **Whether you see the effect or not**

And even if this has no immediate effect, nevertheless, it will certainly take effect in due course – after the person who has heard it will dwell more deeply on the matter, and after it is further explained to him and so on. (Parshas Bereishis 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.292)

for and are dependant upon him or her in order to finally depart from Exile!⁸

KEEP REACHING OUT

- To facilitate a greater measure of success in our dissemination of Judaism, it is fitting for each of us to take stock from time to time and ask ourselves: How many Jews have I brought closer to Yiddishkeit in recent days...?⁹

DAILY DILEMMA

- One of our daily Shiurim [lit. “measures”; used to refer to regular sessions of Torah study] ought to be the following Sha’er, “evaluation”: What further could I do in order to hasten the coming of Moshiach?!⁹

The Sale of Mitzvos on Shabbos Bereishis

INTRODUCTION

Many congregations have the custom to sell the Mitzvos that will be performed in their synagogues in the course of the coming year. These include Aliyos – summons to the reading of the Torah, Hagbah – lifting the opened Torah, Gelilah – regarding the closed Torah, Pesichah – opening the Ark, Ner LaMa’or – financing the Shul’s lighting, Yayin – sponsoring wine for Kiddush and Havdalah ceremonies and so on.¹⁰

8. **It has to be done**

The absolute necessity in engaging in this service is clearly understood. (Parshas Bereishis 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.292)

9. **Positive pressure**

This matter is further advanced when we discuss [our activities] with someone else, or with many other Jews, since, as we have mentioned on numerous occasions, that accepting a resolution in public lends it greater weight. (Parshas Bereishis 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.293) See there at length.

10. Parshas Bereishis 5750, Concerning the Sale of Mitzvos; Hisvaaduyos p.294.

Shabbos Bereishis acts as a bridge between the spiritually-charged month of Tishrei and the rest of the year; by selling the Mitzvos on this Shabbos we permeate the coming year's worth of worldly involvement with the awareness that the very purpose of our re-entry into commerce and money-making is only to enable us to 'acquire' Mitzvos – to support a Shul or Yeshivah, Torah and Mitzvos.

Further, as preparation for our divine service of transforming the world into a 'dwelling' for Hashem, we begin the year by strengthening and donating to the Shul – which constitutes a mini-Beis Hamikdash; a house where the Divine Presence 'dwells.'

Lastly, Shabbos Bereishis is also Shabbos Mevarchim Marcheshvan; and since we are currently preparing for the Third Beis Hamikdash – which Hashem will consecrate in the month of Marcheshvan – we sell the Mitzvos in support of a Shul [a mini-Beis Hamikdash].¹¹

MITZVAH BID

- The procedure of 'Selling the Mitzvos' is such that the would-be purchasers compete for the highest bid to obtain the rights to a particular Mitzvah. The money of the winner, i.e., the highest bidder, goes towards the needs of the Shul and [where applicable] study hall.¹⁰

11. **The festive month of Cheshvan**

Our Sages state that the construction of the First Beis Hamikdash was completed in the month of Marcheshvan but its inauguration was postponed (by Heaven) for twelve months; it was inaugurated in the following Tishrei [and the month Marcheshvan 'lost' its only chance of hosting a festive occasion]. Therefore, Hashem will in the future 'repay' Marcheshvan by inaugurating the Third Hamikdash then. (Parshas Bereishis 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.294-6.)

Beis Hamikdash now, celebration in Cheshvan

Not that we will have to wait until the month of Marcheshvan [if the Third Mikdash arrives earlier] ... but rather the Redemption will occur immediately and the Mikdash will obviously be ready and standing when Marcheshvan arrives. (ibid, footnote 22)

THE POWER OF A GABBAI

- The regular practice [in 770] is for the Gabai of the Shul to sell the Mitzvos. He wears a Shtreimel whilst doing so, in order to emphasize the quality and importance associated with the position of Gabai;¹² it is due to the prominence of his position that he holds the power to rouse the congregation to donate their money for the needs of the Shul.¹³

COMPETE FOR THE HONOR OF DONATING

- One of the ways in which a Gabai motivates the congregation is via his public announcements.¹⁴ In this case, by announcing the figures and naming the buyers, he employs the benefits of competitive donating, spurring the congregants to increase their planned donation to the Shul; indeed, ‘all who increase are praiseworthy!’¹³

QUALITY CARGO

- The Gabai should make certain to follow the conduct of vendors and to *praise his merchandise*. [In 770,] for a start, we are selling the ‘rights’ to Mitzvos that will be performed in the Shul and study hall of the Leader of our generation – wherein he prayed, studied and so forth...¹⁵

12. **Appointed by Heaven**

This fact can be derived by obvious inference (Kal VeChomer) from the teaching [Berachos 52a] that ‘even [one’s appointment to] the [menial] position of a well-watchman is ordained by Heaven!’ Certainly, then, this is true of the appointment to the position of Gabai in a Shul or study hall – specifically to the Shul and study hall of the Rebbe, the Leader of our generation!

Hashem’s right hand

Further, the name ‘Gabai’ forms the [rearranged] acronym of [the prayer:] Anah BeKo’ach Gedulas Yeminchah, ‘Please, by the great power of Your right hand...’ In other words, [the Gabai] receives power from ‘the greatness of Your right hand’ and he holds the power to ... [See main text above for continuation].

13. Ibid. p.296.

14. **Not the time for humility**

...In accordance with the directive ‘It is a Mitzvah to publicize those who perform Mitzvos.’

15. **Own a Mitzvah in the Rebbe’s Shul**

...During the last ten years that [the Previous Rebbe] lived in this world – ‘holiness does not depart from its location’. (Parshas Bereishis 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.268)

The Conclusion of Tishrei

THE REBBE'S THANKS FOR COMING TO 770

- We should publicize a Yasher Ko'ach, appreciative thanks to all of the Tishrei guests;¹⁶ their Chassidic sensitivity (Hergesh) shone openly within them and came to actual fruition, causing them to travel and spend Sukkos – the time of Hakhel (when, in Temple times, all Jewry gathered in the Beis Hamikdash) – in the immediate proximity of the Rebbe.¹⁷

AN HOUR, MONTH OR MORE

- Yasher Ko'ach to those who spent an hour or a day here; certainly to those who were here during the entire duration of Sukkos; and particularly to the guests who stayed until the 7th of Marcheshvan.¹⁷

The main thing is the actual deed: As per the annual custom, we will now sell the Mitzvos that pertain to this Shul; this is the Shul and study hall of the Previous Rebbe, wherein he prayed, studied, engaged in Tzedakah distribution and acts of kindness and from which [location], during the last ten years of his life in this world, he disseminated all aspects of Torah, Mitzvos and the wellsprings of Chassidus throughout the entire globe.

'Holiness does not depart from its location' – on the contrary, it constantly increases until this very day with ever-greater strength. Clearly, then, all we have discussed is greatly amplified regarding the sale of Mitzvos in this Shul. (Parshas Bereishis 5750, concerning the Sale of Mitzvos; Hisvaaduyos p.296)

16. Parshas Lech-Lecha 5748; Hisvaaduyos p.429.

17. **Choose the palace over the pit**

There are those, however, who did not come here. Rather, they remained squatting in their own holes [In the original Yiddish: *gebliben zitzen bah zich in katuch*], imagining that they were seated in the king's palace ... and thus they spent [In the original: *opgeshmachtet*] the entire Festival of our Rejoicing!

The cause that allows for such a [sorry] situation, whereby they could be squatting in a hole whilst imagining they are in the king's palace, is the very darkness of Exile. Yet what connection is there between the darkness of our Exile and those [Chassidim] who are connected to the Leader of our generation, who announced that our entire service [of Exile] has already ended, including [even the final touches,] 'polishing the buttons'...?!

We could easily appreciate the great pity such people evoke, and simultaneously, the greater need to encourage them so that they do not despair and the like. On the contrary – may they achieve a redoubled comeback! (ibid, p.435)

VISIT THE OHEL – A SOURCE OF BLESSING

- Undoubtedly, they also paid a visit to the resting place of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, the Leader of our generation – who continues to serve in that capacity; such a visit serves to arouse abundant mercy that elicits all forms of blessing.¹⁸

REMEMBER WHO YOU ENCOUNTERED HERE

- Although you are now journeying apart, each of you should nevertheless recall and reflect on all the people you met during the time that you spent here;¹⁹ particularly since you spent time together during the month of Tishrei, both the Days of Awe and the Days of Joy, and Farbrenged together in the Sukkah. Further, you shared the joy of Simchas Torah, Shabbos Bereishis (which came in proximity to Simchas Torah) and were together

18. Parshas Noach 5749; Hisvaaduyos p.300.

Put the Ohel on your itinerary

...The return of guests from their trip to celebrate the month of Tishrei, the Seventh Month, within the immediate proximity (Dalud Amos) of the Leader of our generation, and to visit the sacred resting place, to participate in the Farbrengens and so on and so forth. (Parshas Vayeirah 5748; Hisvaaduyos p.158)

19. **Bless yourself by blessing others**

Here is a proposal by which we can create a fitting ‘vessel’ [to obtain the abovementioned blessings]:

We have often discussed the Torah’s rule that a particular conduct from a person elicits the exact same mode of conduct from Above. [The significance of this rule] in our case: In order to elicit the abovementioned [blessings], it is insufficient for each of us to merely exchange good wishes with someone else. Rather, actual effort is required; we should each do everything possible in order to benefit another Jew. [This applies to] men, women and children, and within each of these categories, [what is required] is specifically actual positive action (the actions of a child are also legitimate); an action that further advances the [beneficiary’s] prior standing and situation.

This will create a proper ‘vessel’ to affectively elicit the abovementioned blessings. As we have often discussed, the concept of a ‘vessel’ according to the Torah, is not merely something which [passively] accepts that which is placed within it, rather, the ‘vessel’ itself [actively] demands that whatever is meant to be supplied into it should be granted with the greatest alacrity, in the greatest measure, in the most illuminating and revealed manner and for the apparent and revealed good!

To be more specific, regarding actual practice as far as it concerns our present situation: The way of creating a ‘vessel’ by which to receive Hashem’s blessings, is that although you are now journeying ... [See main text above for continuation]. (26th Tishrei 5748, General Yechidus for the guests; Hisvaaduyos p.375)

until Erev Rosh Chodesh Marcheshvan.²⁰

THINKING GOOD OF THEM BRINGS BLESSING

- Your positive contemplation of fellow Jews and your wishing them ‘all the blessings in the world’ itself causes Hashem to yet further add in all good matters on behalf of those Jews.²¹

DWELL ON THEIR VIRTUES

- Each of us is able to do positively recall other Jews and wish them blessings each and every day – we should at least do so every now and again (particularly on auspicious occasions) and recall the people with whom you spent Tishrei. Think of their virtues; doing so will cause those very virtues to be yet further stimulated.²²

20. Until Shabbos Bereishis and Erev Rosh Chodesh Marcheshvan, by which time Shabbos Mevarchim Cheshvan has already passed. (26th Tishrei 5748, General Yechidus for the guests; Hisvaaduyos p.375-376)

21. **How do you do a favor from the other side of the globe?**

Additionally, even when we gather together one last time for the Tzeischem LeShalom (Farewell Gathering), we emphasize that the departure and separation is Tzeischem Leshalom (lit. ‘may you go to peace’), i.e., [go] with the intention to increase and ascend in all positive matters and all aspects of Judaism and certainly in the ‘Torah’s overall principle to love your fellow Jew as yourself’ – to do a favor for every Jew and for all Jews, however possible!

Firstly, do an actual favor through offering a good piece of advice or monetary assistance and the like. It is self-understood that if there a need for such a favor it should certainly be done; yet even when there is no need for physical support and our fellow Jew does not require an actual favor – as in our case, when people will find themselves at great distances from each other – it should nevertheless be clear that your positive contemplation ... [See main text above for continuation]. (ibid)

22. **Give Hashem pleasure**

This itself elicits Hashem’s blessings, for our Father in Heaven receives the greatest pleasure when He sees that the Children of Israel are united as one.

There is an adage of the Alter Rebbe, which the Leader of our generation recounted and instructed to publish, that the very greatest pleasure that Hashem receives is when He sees how, despite all of His children being scattered in diverse locations and being occupied in obtaining a livelihood in diverse fields – and their diversity even encompasses [the nature of] the missions which their individual souls entered this world to accomplish – at the same time, in whatever it may be that concerns a fellow Jew, all of [the Children of Israel] are nevertheless found to be united as one [i.e., they take each other’s needs personally]. And not merely ‘as one’, but ‘as one man with one heart’!

[Our positive contemplation of our fellow Jews, therefore, yet further increases all

Shabbos Parshas Noach

INTRODUCTION

Whereas Shabbos Bereishis merely encompassed the coming year's *potential* service, Shabbos Noach is the first *actual* Shabbos of the new year.

Shabbos Noach is the time to examine a 'real' (and the first) week of the new year, evaluate our performance and adjust our approach to divine service for the rest of the year based on 'facts on the ground.'

PERFECTING OUR PRACTICE

- On Shabbos Parshas Noach, we should make an honest accounting of our actual performance of this new year's divine service – which has already begun; we should examine the particulars of our weekday and Shabbos performance, in order to correct and perfect them to the fullest extent.²³

Translated in the memory of

Yitzchok Yosef ben Yaakov Mordechai.

Chaya Rochel bas ylicht'a Yissacher Dov Halev

manner of blessing to each member of each Jewish household – and needless to say, to each individual themselves. (ibid)

23. The week of Parshas Noach encompasses our divine service of the entire new year as far as its practical application is concerned. It is therefore understood, that Shabbos Parshas Noach ... [See main text above for continuation]. (Parshas Noach 5752; Hisvaaduyos p.219 – See there at length.)

Gather Jews for Torah study each Shabbos

Shabbos Parshas Noach is always the first Shabbos in the month of Marcheshvan and therefore the first Shabbos of the 'individual' months of the year [unlike Tishrei, which is considered an 'inclusive' month that includes all others] ... Therefore, it is now the fitting time to promote and goad ('one only goads the swift') regarding all that pertains to fulfilling the enactment that Moshe Rabbeinu enacted – that wherever Jewish people find themselves in this planet, they are to strive and promote the gathering of congregations on each and every Shabbos to study Torah and to encourage each another regarding all matter of Judaism, Torah and Mitzvos. (Parshas Noach 5750; Hisvaaduyos p.314)

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