

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

SHAVUOS

- PART II -

**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 revised 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 the festival of Shavuos – the Giving of the Torah.

HaMaaseh Hu Halkar 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 is 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 this take place completely and immediately!

Editorial Office of
HaMaaseh Hu Halkar
Erev Chag HaShavuos, 5768

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Shavuos

PART TWO

INTRODUCTION

The Talmud relates:¹ Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi stated, “When Moshe descended from before G-d [after receiving the Torah], the Satan came and asked G-d, ‘Where is the Torah [that used to belong to the Heavens]...?’”

Tosefos explains that Satan was unaware of the Giving of the Torah – although the rest of Creation knew about it – because Shavuos is a propitious time Above (*eis ratzon*); a time when G-d “confuses” Satan, the Accuser of Israel. This is similar to His “confusing Satan” during the sounding of the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah and the Yom Kippur fast.

Shavuos is an opportune time to achieve everything related to improving Torah study and Divine service marked by awe of G-d. Now is also the time to work on Teshuva regarding our record in Torah study, without interference by the accusing Satan.²

YEAR OF TORAH

- On the day of Shavuos – following the extensive preparations of the preceding days – each one of us is refreshed with new powers from Above, enabling us to create a “new beginning,” such that the coming year should be a “Year of Torah”³ – in a way that vastly exceeds all previous years.⁴

1. *Shabbos* 89a.

2. Based on *HaYom Yom*, entries for the third and fourth of Sivan. See second day of Shavuos 5710 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 92). This message is taken from a letter sent to the Yeshivah students by the Previous Rebbe (see his *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 5, p. 76). In 5710, the Rebbe instructed that we should study and publicize the letter. See also second day of Shavuos 5749 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 270).

3. **A propitious time**

There is a special granting of power and unique strength when we accept such resolutions during the time of the Giving of the Torah ... as per the Previous Rebbe’s adage, “Shavuos is a propitious time Above...” (Second day of Shavuos 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 270)

4. *Ibid.*, p. 280.

ADDITIONAL SHIURIM

- In addition to improving the quantity and quality of our existing study schedules, it is also appropriate to add *additional* sessions to our schedule.

After all, the Giving of the Torah is re-experienced on an entirely *new* level each year.⁵ Therefore, even if we are accustomed to exerting effort in Torah study, we should now go *beyond* our habitual efforts.⁶

THE LENGTH OF OUR DAYS

- According to the basic law we are required to study Torah the *entire day*.

However, due to the Torah's obligation to provide for one's wife and children – which takes up a great part of the day – we may therefore fulfill this requirement “by establishing fixed times to study Torah by day and by night, each individual according to his situation as set forth in the Laws of Torah Study.”

As our Sages state,⁷ “He who can accomplish no more, may fulfill his obligation with just one chapter in the morning and another in the evening.”⁸

5. ... Which comes in addition to our *daily* obligation to view the Torah as new.

6. ... With emphasis on the fact that it requires further effort than until now. For although our habitual study up until this point *already* requires toil and exertion, nevertheless, we have become *accustomed* to such effort; it has become second-nature. Therefore, we should now go *beyond* this effort.

This is so, even if we already increased our study beyond the “norm” (“reviewing his study one hundred and one times as opposed to the standard one hundred”), we should nevertheless increase it yet further. (*Ibid.*, pp. 280-291)

7. *Menachos* 99b. See *Tanya*, ch. 34.

8. **Rewiring physics**

Note that our Sages specifically used the term “one *chapter* in the morning and one chapter in the evening.” The word for chapter, *perek*, can also mean “to take apart” (*mefarek* – or *nemt fanander* in Yiddish).

This alludes to the fact that although we may have spent the majority of the day involved with physical and material affairs, nevertheless, our study of “one chapter in the morning and one chapter in the evening” *disassembles* and *strips* the physical aspects of their coarseness. Then, the coarseness of materiality [which serves to conceal spirituality and G-dliness] becomes nullified, and the basic [non-concealing] physicality is left.

As the Torah states, “I will give your rains (*gishmeichem*) in their times” – alluding to the physicality (*gashmius*) which “I will give”: It will become

LESS WORK, MORE STUDY

- Consequently, our obligation to study Torah is determined by the amount of time we are forced to spend pursuing our livelihood; when G-d provides us with a suitable, easy and ample income, we must *increase* our “established times” of study.⁹

PHYSICAL BLESSINGS

- Shavuos also present us with the power to increase G-d’s blessings in all of our *physical* affairs – generous measures of “offspring, life (health) and sustenance (livelihood).”¹⁰

It is these blessings that allow us to occupy ourselves in Torah study with a tranquil mind and without having to wonder “lest my bread be lacking?”

Instead, we will be able to increase our set hours of daily study and submerge our intellect in the study of Torah.¹¹

discernable that your physicality comes from *Me* [and will not conceal the spiritual].

Further, we create *spiritual* matter from our physical matter, so that the physical is merely a “receptacle” for the spiritual... (Shabbos, second day of Shavuos (first *farbrengen*) 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* pp. 292-293)

9. **Time is for Torah**

As the Alter Rebbe writes in Tanya (ch. 34), “... studying according to the extent of his available time, and according to the capacity which G-d has given him. And if Hashem grants him a greater abundance [of time for Torah study], then ‘He whose hands are pure will increase his effort.’” (*Ibid.*, p. 293)

10. **For the body as well**

In this regard too, there exists a unique granting of power during Shavuos. For the Torah states concerning Shavuos, “You shall make a festival of Shavuos unto Hashem your G-d; the voluntary offerings that you give should be commensurate with how much Hashem your G-d will have blessed you” (Devarim 15:10) ... There is therefore particular emphasis on eliciting blessings from Hashem on Shavuos.

Similarly, “all opinions agree that on Shavuos we also require *lachem* (lit., “for yourselves,” i.e., *physical* enjoyment as well as spiritual service). What is the reason for this requirement? Because the Torah was given on that day.” We could therefore appreciate that during Shavuos specific emphasis is placed on *physical* matters, “that one should rejoice with food and feast.”

It is clear from all the above that the granting of power on Shavuos does not exclusively concern the study of Torah, but also the additional blessings from G-d’s “full, open, holy and generous hand” in all that we require – not only in spiritual aspects that relate to the soul, but also in physical aspects that relate to the body and all the goodly physical prophecies [found in the Torah]. In general, these include “offspring, life and plentiful sustenance” – and *all* of them should be in abundance for each and every Jew! (*Ibid.*)

DON'T WASTE YOUR HOURS ON BUSINESS

- Needless to say, [despite our preoccupation with Torah study,] we are required to engage in physical affairs as well; as it is stated, “Hashem your G-d will bless you in *all that you do*” – we are specifically required to *act*.

Nevertheless, we should carefully weigh the precise measure of this “*all [that you do],*” and consider just how much of what *appears* necessary is in fact due to superfluous calculations – based on the approaches that people in the business world tend to assume makes them richer...¹²

LIMITED BUSINESS BRINGS G-D'S GENEROSITY

- When we conduct our business affairs in strict accordance

11. Physical blessings

... This will certainly then cause an increase in all positive matters including an addition in the blessings of Hashem for all that we need, as is clearly written in the beginning of Parshas Bechukosai (which we always read before Shavuot), “If you walk in My statutes” which Rashi interprets to mean, “if you toil in My Torah,” then “I will grant your rains (*gishmeichem* is related to *gashmius*, ‘physical abundance’) in their times” – along with all the other blessings mentioned in that portion.

As our Sages state (regarding the annual addition in nightly study that begins on the fifteenth of Av, when the nights grow longer), “Whoever adds, it will be added to him,” and as Rashi explains, “Life will be added to his life-span.” Now, if that is stated concerning an addition in Torah study that comes as a result of a *natural* phenomena (the nights growing longer in winter), then our addition in Torah study due to the renewal in *the Giving of the Torah through the hands of G-d* on Shavuot will most certainly elicit similar blessings and many more besides... (Second day of Shavuot 5750; *Hisvaadyos* p. 275)

Brings blessing and removes harsh realities

... And specifically that Hashem will add new days and months to his life, amid complete health (and remove all distractions that could possibly disrupt his tranquility of soul or body, allowing him to dedicate himself to studying Torah and observing the *mitzvos*, and to succeed in the proper manner) from “His full, open, holy and generous hand.” He will then obviously be required to utilize the time to increase his study.

And through the very act of accepting these resolutions – “G-d sees into the heart” – G-d will further increase his blessings of “offspring, life and plentiful sustenance” along with a healthy body and a healthy soul. One will then fulfill such concepts as illness and the medical expenses they entail simply by studying these concept in their Torah context [thus sparing himself the necessity to confront such issues in real life] – such as *Hilchos Da'os* of the Rambam. This is particularly true of issues that one needs to rectify... (Second day of Shavuot 5749; *Hisvaadyos* p. 281)

12. Shavuot 5749 (*Hisvaadyos* pp. 282-283).

with the Shulchan Aruch and do not allow the calculations presented by our *nefesh habehamis* (animalistic side), or even our *nefesh hasichlis* (purely rational side), to interfere, we then receive the full blessing of G-d – “from His full, open, holy and generous hand.”¹²

PROPER OBSERVANCE BRINGS WEALTH

- The blessings that result from the correct approach to earning a livelihood include the spiritual counterpart of “growing (the “thirteen stands” of) a beard” – unlike those who mistakenly assume they must *remove* their beards to advance their careers...

This spiritual dimension provides “thirteen ways and channels” to elicit physical wealth, in a measure far beyond our own input.¹³

UNDERSTANDING THE TORAH

- Each of us should reconsider our daily study schedules and resolve to add in Torah study, and especially in the *complete*

13. Divine Mercy

The *yud gimel tikunei diknah*, “thirteen strands of the beard” are associated with *yud gimel midos harachamim*, “the Thirteen Attributes of Divine Mercy,” which transcend limitation. (*Ibid.*)

Wealth over Torah?

To continue our discussion on increasing study schedules: One may claim that he only wishes to follow the strict requirements of the Shulchan Aruch in this regard, and not step beyond the letter of the law or engage in “pious conduct.” He would rather increase his *business* affairs, claiming that additional revenue would allow him to distribute additional Tzedakah...

Well, the measuring-stick by which to determine whether his intention to “increase in Tzedakah” is truly a pure one – or whether his mind is rather focused on amassing wealth – is as follows:

Let’s see how this person conducts himself in business; does he merely involve himself to the basic necessary extent required in order to produce “Hashem will bless you in all that you *do*” i.e., just enough to create a ‘receptacle’ for Hashem’s blessing and relies on that blessing – while the rest of his spare time is devoted to the study of Torah? Or is the case in the reverse? Does he throw himself into the intricate calculations of the commercial world and the like, while he limits his religious obligations to the most basic letter of the law – including finding a *heter* (Halachic waiver) to remove his beard – despite the fact that the hairs of the beard represent the “thirteen stands” which elicit thirteen paths and channels for Hashem’s blessings to grant physical wealth...?!” (Shavuos (second *farbrengen*) 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* pp. 295-296)

comprehension of the topics we study – understanding being the essential element in the study of the Oral Torah.¹⁴

MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN – “THE WISE NATION”

- This directive applies equally to men and women (who are required to study the *mitzvos* that pertain to them – such as every time-bound positive commandments, as well as every negative commandment, the Rabbinical enactments and so on). It also applies to children.

After all, Hashem blessed all of us with intelligence – further underscored by being members of the nation described by the Torah as “wise and understanding.” Therefore, *each* of us is expected to comprehend the Torah to the best of our intellectual ability.¹⁵

IMPROVE AND EXPAND

- We should add to the quality as well as quantity of our regular study, both of our pre-established commitments and (most importantly) of the new study to which we will now commit: Making new commitments will enhance our enthusiasm for study; one naturally enjoys doing something new.¹⁵

CHITAS AND RAMBAM

- On Shavuos, we should first and foremost reaffirm and strengthen our commitment to universal study cycles such as *Chitas* and *Rambam* – following the popular custom of studying either one or three chapters of *Mishneh Torah*, or a selection from *Sefer HaMitzvos* each day.¹⁶ [The study of *Chitas* is discussed below.]

14. Second day of Shavuos 5749 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 281).

15. *Ibid.*

Women and children came first

Note that the women preceded the men in the preparations for the Giving of the Torah. (Second day of Shavuos, Shabbos Parshas Naso, 5750, fn. 94; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 275)

Note that the Giving of the Torah only occurred in the merit of the young children who served as our “guarantors.” (*Ibid.*, fn. 98; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 276)

16. Second day of Shavuos, Shabbos Parshas Naso, 5750 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 274).

STUDY SELECTION IN-DEPTH

- While it is not possible to study all three chapters daily in sufficient depth, we should nevertheless make a point of studying at least one law in depth.¹⁷

APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- Studying “in depth” involves not only academic analysis of the subject matter, but also deriving *practical* lessons in our service of G-d.¹⁷

COMMUNAL SESSIONS

- In addition to personal study sessions, we should attend, support and increase sessions of communal study – and do so in every possible location. Communal Torah study has a unique and wondrously superior quality.¹⁸

“STEAL” TIME FOR TORAH

- We should go “beyond the letter of the law,”¹⁹ and “stretch” ourselves²⁰ to increase scheduled times for Torah study – as well as improving their quality:²¹

Besides dedicating every spare moment to learning Torah²² (as required by law), we should also *reduce* the amount of time

17. Shavuos (second *farbrengen*) 5749 (*Hisvaadyos* p. 296).

18. Shavuos 5749 (*Hisvaadyos* p. 282). See Avos 3:6; second day of Shavuos 5750 (*Hisvaadyos* pp. 274-527).

19. **It’s the law**

Even matters that are “beyond the letter of the law,” such as the directives found in *Pirkei Avos* (Ethics of our fathers) – described as “matters of pious conduct” – become *directives and laws* of the Torah.” (*Ibid.*, fn. 84)

20. **Immeasurable amounts**

... Giving more than “his measure.” The term “measure” here also has a loftier interpretation – for at first glance, any “*measurement*” (limit and restriction) regarding the Torah which *transcends* all limitations, appears to be an *absolute oxymoron!* However, we are discussing the positive aspect of “measure” – that the Torah, which intrinsically defies all limitations, is drawn into and permeates the “measurements” that define this physical world... (*Ibid.*, fn. 83)

21. *Ibid.*, fn. 82.

22. **Not to be treated lightly**

... Especially in light of our Sages’ teachings regarding the extreme severity (in both this world and the next) of wasting time that could have been used to study Torah – as stated by the Alter Rebbe in the beginning of *Tanya*.

Parenthetically, the title “*Tanya*” (lit., “it was taught”) stresses the concept of Torah study, as we have previously discussed at length (see Parshas Bamidbar,

spent attending to non-religious matters – making more time available (“snatching extra time”) for the study of Torah.²³

- Further, we should even reduce the time spent performing religious precepts and devote this time to the study of Torah – provided, of course, we meets all of our daily obligations, and that anything we omit is compensated for by others. For Torah study is superior to all of the *mitzvos*.²⁴

LEADS TO ENHANCED *MITZVOS*

- Our Sages state, “Great is study, for it leads to action”:²⁵ As we advance in Torah study, we further observance the *mitzvos behiddur* (in an enhanced manner). Our study assists us in inspiring even non-religious activities with awareness of G-d, and in transforming this world into an abode for Him.²⁶ Specifically, it motivates us to increase in the giving of Tzedakah.²⁷

- Torah’s “overarching principle” is to love a fellow Jew: We should see that an ever increasing number of Jews add in established Torah sessions, in their observance of *mitzvos* and in infusing their mundane affairs with an awareness of G-d.

section 5).

In fact, in the versions of Tanya that were arranged and printed under the directives of the Rebbes of Chabad – beginning with the original printing of Tanya by the Alter Rebbe himself – this appears at the base of the very *first* page...

Now, since “the measure of goodness far outweighs that of evil,” we can appreciate the great importance and reward for utilizing every spare moment to study Torah. (*Ibid.*, fn. 85, with subnote)

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 274-275.

Take a stringent approach

When we make a true self accounting to determine our standing in the requirement to establish study schedules, we should take the stringent approach – “all who wish to be stringent upon themselves are praiseworthy.” This will result in G-d increasing His blessings in all of our affairs. (Shavuos 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 283)

24. Mishnah, Pe’ah 1:1; second day of Shavuos 5750 (*Hisvaaduyos* pp. 274-275).

25. *Kidushin* 40b.

26. As we are taught, “In all your ways know him” (Mishlei 3:4) and “All you deeds should be for the sake of Heaven” (Avos 2:12). (*Ibid.*, p. 282.)

27. **All of Torah**

... Which is especially associated with Torah (“Tzedakah constitutes the entirety of Torah” – *Torah Or*, Parshas Yisro, discourse entitled *bachodesh hashlishi*, 67c), as we discussed on Erev Shavuos concerning our preparations for the Giving of the Torah. (Shavuos 5749; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 282)

Chitas

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Previous Rebbe, it became widespread custom to study – daily – a portion of:

- 1) **Chumash**; divided according to the days of the **week**,²⁸ another of the seven *aliyos* per day. This coincides with the directive to “live with the ‘times,’” meaning the daily/weekly portion of Chumash.
- 2) **Tehilim**; divided according to the days of the **month**.
- 3) **Tanya**; divided according to the days of the **year**, the cycle beginning on *Yud Tes Kislev* (nineteenth of Kislev, day of the author’s liberation).²⁹

This daily study is referred to by its Hebrew acronym *CHiTAS*.

The three figures associated with these books are also closely linked to the festival of Shavuos: 1) Moshe received the Torah on Shavuos; 2) King David passed away on Shavuos; and 3) the founder of Chassidus, the Ba’al Shem Tov, passed away on Shavuos.

During Shavuos each year, the Rebbe elaborated on the themes of these “three shepherds” and strongly encouraged the study of *chitas*.

28. Irregular portions

When a particular portion is repeated for a second consecutive week [due to a festival coinciding with Shabbos], we should again study the individual portions for each day of that second week too.

Similarly, when two portions are joined (such as Behar-Bechukosai), we should study the elongated portions as they will be read in the synagogue the following Shabbos.

29. In the days of Moshiach

From this 19th of Kislev until the 19th of Kislev that will come upon us and all Jews for the good! And Moshiach will undoubtedly already have come before then, and we will continue studying these cycles then as well, as with every positive conduct that is repeated three or more times. The difference will be, that we will then add much, much more...

See also there, fn. 166: We do not relinquish such a conduct except for great need, for the sake of a Mitzvah and the like. In our case, however, the reverse is true – we should continue and increase...

[The Rebbe subsequently added an additional daily study, in addition to *chitas* – calling for all Jews to study Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah* each day.]

REINFORCE STUDY OF *CHITAS*

- On Shavuos, when the Torah is given anew, it is an appropriate time to reaffirm and reinforce our commitment to the study of *chitas* (which is closely associated with Shavuos).³⁰
- This includes 1) being vigilant to study *chitas* every day; 2) being enthusiastic about its study; and 3) concentrating hard and gaining a good understanding of the material.³¹
- We should continuously increase our concentration and comprehension of the material – and not make do with merely mouthing the words...³²
- This is something that requires special attention, for many of us are often busy (with good things...) and tend to neglect the study of *chitas*.³³

START NOW

- Those who, until now, were unaware of the practice to study *chitas*, were unaware of its importance, or were simply not

30. Second day of Shavuos 5750 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 292).

Three leaders, three books

... This is further emphasized by the special connection between Shavuos and the three shepherds of the Jewish people: Moshe Rabeinu, David HaMelech and the Baal Shem Tov.

Moshe received the Torah at Sinai on Shavuos, and David HaMelech and the Baal Shem Tov both passed away on Shavuos. Each of these three *tzadikim* are in turn associated with one of the three books of *chitas*: *Chumash* – the Five Books of Moses; *Tehillim* – the psalms of David HaMelech; and *Tanya* – the written scripture of Chasidic thought founded by the Baal Shem Tov (*Sicha of Second Day of Shavuos 5749 - Hisva'aduyos* p. 281).

31. Shavuos 5749 - *Hisvaaduyos* p.281-282.

32. Second day of Shavuos (first *farbrengen*) 5749 *ibid.*, fn. 55.

33. *Ibid.* p. 270.

Lip service

Clearly, even saying the words of *chitas* alone without any concentration is an accomplishment (“moving one’s lips is considered a deed” – *Sanhedrin* 65a). Nevertheless, we should not be satisfied with this alone, but seek to understand the *chitas* as much as possible.

conscientious about their study until now, should begin keeping the cycles from this Shavuos onward.³⁴

FOR THE ENTIRE NATION

- The study of *chitas* is extremely important in light of the current world situation and the spiritual condition in which the Jewish people find themselves.

We should strongly promote the study of *chitas*, publicizing it in every possible location.

This applies to *all* of its components: Studying Chumash, at least with its plain meaning; reciting Tehilim, even though the overly busy will not have time to study them; and learning Tanya.³⁵

Set up public study sessions

THE CALL OF THE HOUR

- [In 5750, the Rebbe declared:] “I come with a timely proposal – *the command and ‘call of the hour’* – which assumes additional emphasis due to our proximity to the end of Exile and extreme imminence to the coming of Moshiach.³⁶ You will undoubtedly publicize the matter *everywhere*:³⁷

34. Second day of Shavuos 5750 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 291).

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 291-292.

Start right now

Start from *this* Shavuos! True, we are currently holding half-way through a subject: half-way through a weekly cycle of Chumash, half-way through a monthly cycle of Tehilim, half-way through an annual cycle of Tanya ... nevertheless, since on Shavuos there is a renewal in the entire Torah, it is the appropriate time for obstinate resolutions to bolster with far greater strength and to renew the daily study of *chitas*. (*Ibid.*, p. 292)

36. **Moshiach’s call**

There are many Jewish men, women, and children, who are at present considered “outside” the fold of Judaism (Heaven forbid). It is our sacred duty to return them to a position where they are clearly a G-d’s “child” – through their studying His Torah.

In addition, a new urgency has been added; the command and “call of the hour” (*tzav u’derishas hash’a’ah*):

We are now at the end of our Exile, very close to Moshiach’s coming. His coming is dependant upon the dissemination of the wellsprings – both the wellsprings of the Written and Oral Torah, as well as the wellsprings of its inner dimension.

In addition to our personal study commitments, which include participation in public sessions, each of us should fulfill the *mishnah's* directive to 'establish many students.'

This should be done by instituting a session where we will *teach others*. Ideally, we should draw at least *ten* participants – and continue expanding until we 'establish many students.'"³⁸

WOMEN'S SESSIONS

- Being that women are also obligated to study many parts of the Torah,³⁹ they should establish classes to teach other women.
- These classes should include the teaching of Chassidus, which strengthens one's belief in G-d and the love and fear of Him, in which men and women are equally obligated.⁴⁰
- Preferably, at least ten women should be present at each class. Although the requirement of ten participants for prayer services applies only to adult males, nevertheless, there is a

This is accomplished through our adding public study sessions and gathering "many students" – to the fullest extent, whereby "they cannot be measured or counted due to their great abundance..." (Second day of Shavuos 5750; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 276)

One of the "smart moves" a Jew makes in his divine service is to utilize every opportunity to add further in Torah and Mitzvos, regarding his personal study, as well as promoting study among the Jews surrounding him.

Especially since we are now at the end of our Exile and follow on the heels of the enormous, colossal amount of cumulative divine service that the Jews have performed throughout all the previous generations up until this point... Now, though, we do not know which final good deed will tip the scales and bring the Redemption. (Similarly, in each person's service, one cannot know in which area he should be "extra scrupulous." As the Ba'al Shem Tov said, a soul could descend into this world for sixty or seventy years just to accomplish one specific matter. However, since we cannot tell which matter is "the one"...))

We must therefore "grab" and "try out" each available opportunity to add in Torah and Mitzvos.

This is one of the reasons behind the proposal that each Jew establish new public study sessions, with each person serving as the "*magid shiur*" (main speaker). This applies to both men (with other men), women (with other women, and children (with other children). (Parshas Korach 5750; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 382)

37. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

38. Most importantly, we should teach others in a manner that will enable them, in turn, to teach other Jews. (*Ibid.*, p. 276)

39. See *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 14, p. 37 ff.

40. Second day of Shavuos 5750 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 275).

spiritual advantage in having ten or more women present in these sessions.⁴¹

KIDS LIKE TEACHING TOO

- Each boy and girl should also set up sessions to teach (ideally ten) other children the Torah that they themselves have been taught. Children, in particular, enjoy and desire to influence other children, and we should utilize this nature for the study of Torah.⁴²

TORAH CLASSES FOR NON-JEWS

- The directive to “establish many students” includes creating sessions for non-Jews, where they can study the laws that are applicable to them.

Rambam clearly states that “Moshe commanded us in the name of G-d (along with the rest of the Torah and *mitzvos* that were given at Sinai) to influence all the world’s inhabitants to accept the *mitzvos* that were commanded to the Sons of Noah (all non-Jews) ... and that they should observe them because the Holy One commanded them to do so in His Torah, and informed us through Moshe.”⁴³

INFORM YOUR RAV

- Since one performs more enthusiastically when he knows that somebody is monitoring his progress, it would be appropriate for each individual to notify their Rav of their efforts in establishing these sessions.⁴⁴

INFORM THE REBBE, RECEIVE BLESSING

- Those who wish, may also send a written report of their accomplishments here to [770,] the *dalud amos* of the Previous Rebbe.

41. ... Hence we find that the very number ten has special significance. For example, “The tenth shall be holy” (Vayikra 27:32); the ten *sefiros*, etc.

42. ... Since children like to influence other children, this nature should be utilized positively for teaching Torah. (*Ibid.* p. 276)

43. Second day of Shavuot 5750 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 276).

44. *Ibid.* p. 277.

These letters will be taken to his holy resting-place and left there, and will subsequently ascend heavenwards in flames and cause great pleasure on High.

The Previous Rebbe will definitely arouse great mercy, so that G-d will further increase His blessings.⁴⁴

Chidushei Torah

PUBLICIZE YOUR TORAH THOUGHTS

- We should “recommend, promote, encourage and push” all who are capable of producing innovative Torah thoughts to record their ideas and have them printed – either in a publication of their own or in communal Torah publications.
- These thoughts should then be publicized, not only among the author’s friends and students, but also among Torah scholars at large.⁴⁵

DISCLAIMERS

- Now, although some of these ideas may not be entirely accurate according to the strict truth of Torah, nevertheless, provided the thoughts are derived from the Torah’s own rules, recording them is a worthwhile endeavor.

There is no need for concern, for 1) we could always add a disclaimer to the effect that no-one is to rely on these thoughts when determining practical decisions; and 2) even our innovative approaches to practical rulings could be accompanied by a statement that they are no more than our personal opinion, or that one should not rely on our words alone.⁴⁵

POSITIVE PRESSURE

- When we are aware that our words will be printed and scrutinized by others, then, human nature and self-respect dictate (and even the *nefesh habehamis* (animalistic soul) concurs) that we take extra caution in reviewing and analyzing the ideas we are about to publicize...⁴⁵

45. Parshas Bamidbar, Erev Shavuot & Second day of Shavuot 5751 (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 276).

THANK YOU

- “Many thanks to all who are utilizing the inspiration generated by this Shavuot to innovate Torah thoughts – based on the Torah’s own methods, naturally – and for publicizing them...”⁴⁵

Action

INTRODUCTION

One of the main features of Shavuot is *action*: The Torah tells us that the Jews received the Torah by declaring, “All that G-d will tell us, we will do!” and again, “We will do, and we will hear!”

The Oral Torah adds that the Jews’ emphasis on action prompted the ministering angels to descend and lay crowns upon the head of each Jew. There are also further explanations by our Sages which elaborate on the fantastic virtue of prefacing action to understanding. And Chassidus teaches that giving primacy to action was the true preparation for receiving the Torah.⁴⁶

INSATIABLE FOR POSITIVE ACTION

- Our Sages teach, “We continuously rise in matters of holiness”, and “He who has 100 coins wishes for 200; and he who has 200 wishes for 400...”

From this Shavuot and on, each of us should amplify our activities – both personal and communal – acting with far greater intensity.

We should not be satisfied with yesterday’s measure of action, but double it, increasing our annual supply of “We will *do!*”⁴⁶

PREPARATION FOR GEULAH

- In our present times, the “footsteps of Moshiach,” it is all the more important that we increase our positive activities. For each day brings us closer to the very perfection of *mitzvah* performance and the fulfillment of the prayer, “There [in the

46. Second day of Shavuot 5748 (*Hisvaaduyot* p. 428).

Third Temple] we will perform before You, the commandments of Your Will.”

Without doubt, we are required to produce a similar service nowadays, in preparation for that time: We should greatly expand all activities associated with every area of Torah and Judaism, in order to merit the perfected state of activity in the future Redemption.⁴⁶

MORE EACH DAY

- Even the most superficial contemplation of the above entirely dispels the notion that “There’s nothing terrible about scaling down – or at least not boosting – my activities...”

Just the opposite! Since, today, we are *even closer* to the fulfillment of “There we will perform ... the commandments of Your Will,” we should *definitely* add to yesterday’s level of activity...⁴⁶

Customs

MEGILAS RUS

- Although, for certain reasons, it is not the Chabad custom⁴⁷ to actually read *Megilas Rus* on Shavuos, nevertheless, its message and theme is clearly not diminished – quite the opposite...!⁴⁸

Motzei Shavuos

MOTZEI SHAVUOS *FARBRENGEN*

- [In 5750, the Rebbe announced:] In continuation to the current Shavuos *farbrengen*, we should hold an additional Chassidische *farbrengen* on Motzei Shavuos – with large

47. **Dovid and Rus**

King David [who passed away on Shavuos] came from the descendants of Rus [Ruth the Moabite], which is why Megilas Rus is read on Shavuos (Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch, Orech Chaim 490:13). Rus converted to Judaism, “entering under the wings of the Shechinah” – and “a convert is like a newborn”... (Second day of Shavuos 5748; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 419)

48. The connection of Megilas Rus to Shavuos is also quoted and explained in the discourses of Chabad Chassidus (see discourse entitled *lehavin inyan megilas rus* in *Or Hatorah – Nach*, vol. 2, p. 1’28 ff.). (*Ibid.*, fn. 20)

attendance. This will further stress the immense joy that this day (of the Giving of the Torah) caused.⁴⁹

A SWEET NEW YEAR

- Various Torah sources⁵⁰ state that we should begin wishing each other a good year immediately after the Giving of the Torah; wishing *kesivah vechasimah tovah, leshanah tovah u'mesukah*, “May you be inscribed and sealed for a good and sweet new year!”⁵¹

Chag “HaMatzos”

RABBINICAL CONFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

In the town of Lubavitch, Shavuot was humorously nicknamed “*Chag HaMatzos*” (lit., “the festival of Matzos” – normally a reference to Pesach). This was because the Rabbinic authorities, or *Morei Tzedek* – the acronym of which spells *MaTZ* – would converge to spend the festival with the Rebbe.

They were not able to come for the actual festival of Pesach, or Sukkos either, for that matter, because they were needed in their own towns to answer questions involving the numerous laws of those festivals.⁵²

49. *Ibid.*, p. 293.

50. **Sweeten the new year**

... And to also prepare for the coming year. For as it is stated in *sefarim*, that we begin wishing each other a *shanah tovah umesukah* following the festival of Shavuot. We should prepare for a sweet new year through making the remaining months of *this* year goodly and sweet. (Sivan 19 5747; *Hisvaaduyos* p. 524.)

See *Darkei Chaim Veshalom* (Customs of the Sefirah period) 630, whose custom was to now begin preparing for the new year.

He based this custom on the teaching of our Sages (*Megilah* 31b), comparing the reading of the “curses” from the Torah before Shavuot with the reading of the “curses” before Rosh Hashanah – “in order that the old year with its curses should end...” He concludes that “one must prepare himself by doing complete Teshuvah to greet the new year that will come upon us in peace, so that we will merit the year that will bring everlasting redemption and that a year of blessing should commence for the entire Jewish nation.” (*Ibid.*, fn. 99)

51. Sivan 19 5750, at an address to Girl Graduates and Counselors (*Hisvaaduyos* p. 348).

52. 5750 *ibid.*, p. 278.

DISCUSS DIFFICULTIES

- The Rabbis who have come here⁵³ for the festival of Shavuos should arrange a gathering in which to discuss the Halachic queries and other matters that arise in their respective fields of duty.⁵⁴ Discussing these matters face-to-face is far more effective than corresponding via mail.⁵⁵

WE NEED CLEAR RULINGS

- There has become an urgent need for such gatherings in latter generations, and especially in our *own* times: A plethora of novel queries and uncertainties that have erupted in light of worldwide developments and innovations, and the location and situation of many Jews. These are conditions that did not exist when the Shulchan Aruch was authored.⁵⁵

53. Beyond the call of duty

We could now understand the connection of this “Chag HaMatzos” (of the Rabbis) with the Giving of the Torah on Shavuos. After all, this is when the Jews receive the Torah anew.

... All Jews in general, and the Rabbis in particular, receive the power to be “Morei Tzedek” – to guide, instruct and present the just (*tzedek*) laws of the Torah; “Tzedek” with all of its connotations: Justice, uprightness, charitable, kindness and going beyond the call of duty.

The Rabbis themselves receive extra power through coming to celebrate Shavuos in Lubavitch by their Rebbe – and in our case, in (770,) the location (the synagogue, study hall and place of kind acts) of the Previous Rebbe, Leader of our generation. This is where he performed his holy service during the last decade of his life in this world. And sanctity does not budge from its place. On the contrary, it continuously increases and radiates further, in the activities founded by the Previous Rebbe and accomplished by his students and their subsequent students.

Through celebrating Shavuos in Lubavitch, in the *daled amos* of the location from where Torah and Chassidus is disseminated, and where the teachings of the Rebbes of Chabad are reviewed and studied (particularly their Chassidic teachings), this then adds a unique power in all areas of Torah. This is especially so in the field of Morei Tzedek, including going beyond the call of duty, being that one’s conduct is founded upon and permeated with the Torah and directives of the Rebbes of Chabad, via the teachings of Chassidus, the luminary within the Torah. (5750 *Ibid.*, p. 280).

54. Spiritual instructors

... In general, to be a “Morei Tzedek,” as befits that title, and to instruct the Jews in the just path, to the extent that each Jew is affected and becomes a “Morei Tzedek” in their personal lives and personal conduct. For this there is a unique granting of power that comes from this time – the festival of Shavuos – and this location – the immediate proximity of the Previous Rebbe. (*Ibid.*, p. 281)

55. Second day of Shavuos 5750 (*Hisvaaduyos* pp. 281-282).

- Similarly, due to the dwindling spirituality of each subsequent generation, coupled with ever thickening darkness of Exile, novel queries have arisen concerning *spiritual* maladies – and these only *increase* as we approach the summer months...

It is these Rabbis duty to provide proper instruction and to form appropriate directives according to the laws of the Torah.⁵⁵

Yom Tavo'ach

INTRODUCTION

The day after Shavuos is known as “the day of sacrificial slaughter” (*Yom Tavo'ach*): Each Jewish male had to ascend to the *Beis HaMikdash* on each of the three annual festivals (Pesach, Shavuos and Sukkos). There, they had to bring certain offerings. However, if they were not able to offer their sacrifice during the actual festival, they could offer it the following day.

MONETARY SACRIFICE

- Each person's festive sacrifices came from their personal funds. Nowadays, however, although we cannot offer the actual sacrifices, we should at least perform the closest thing possible: We should increase in giving Tzedakah from our personal funds.⁵⁶

Yemei Tashlumin

INTRODUCTION

Until the twelfth of Sivan, those who had not yet brought their Shavuos sacrifices were still afforded the opportunity to do so; this grace period is known as *yemei tashlumin*, “days of recompense.”

This period is an extremely opportune time to make resolutions regarding Torah study – and to actually implement them. Knowing that the Torah has just been given anew will undoubtedly spur us to add effort to our study...⁵⁷

56. Second day of Shavuos 5749 (second *farbrengen*); *Hisvaaduyos* p. 286.

57. 2nd Day of Shavuos, Shabbos Parshas Naso 5750 - *Hisvaaduyos* p.273-274.

PERFECTING SHAVUOS

- *Tashlumin*, “to make up,” shares the root of *shleimus*, “perfection”: We should now perfect all spiritual services that relate to Shavuos.
- First and foremost, we should perfect those aspects that pertain to Torah study – regarding both our comprehension of the material as well as the activities that come as a result of our having studied. Action is of utmost importance, and our study should lead us to accomplishments in our daily lives.⁵⁸

DAILY SHIURIM

- During this period, we should bolster and increase our Torah study (even to an incomparable degree!), starting with our daily study of *chitas* and Rambam – and similarly regarding our other commitments to study the “revealed” and mystical teachings of Torah (that is, studying Kabbalah as it is explained in a comprehensive manner within the teachings of Chabad Chassidus).⁵⁹

HAFATZAH AND AHAVAS YISRAEL

- We should especially increase our *dissemination* of Torah and Chassidus – particularly during the three days leading up to the fifteenth of Sivan (which are regarded as one unique period).⁶⁰ And we should add in love and unity between fellow Jews.⁵⁹

מוקדש

לב"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח

◇

לזכות

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה

וזוגתו שלומית בת שושנה

לרגל יום חתונתם ג' סיון תשמ"ו

בניהם ובנותיהם:

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

שיחיו גודמאן

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

58. Shabbos Parshas Naso 5748 - *Hisvaaduyos* p.469.

59. Night of Sivan 12 5749 (*Hisvaaduyos*) p. 323.

60. Sivan 9 5751, at a Yechidus (*Hisvaaduyos*) p. 304. See *a Call to Action*, Sivan 15.