

Day-by-Day Halachic Guide

Detailed instructions on the
laws and customs for the
month of Tishrei 5776

Year of Hakhel

Part One: Friday 20 Elul 5775 to
Shabbos 13 Tishrei 5776

From the Badatz of Crown Heights

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת אליהו ציון
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת חנני' ז"ל
נפטר ז"ך ניסן תשע"ג
ת.ג.צ.ב.ה.

ע"י משפחתו שיחיו



לזכות

לוי יצחק בן רייזל

לרפואה שלימה



לזכות

הרה"ת שניאור זלמן

וזוגתו מרת שמחה רבקה שיחיו

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Year of Hakhel

**Part One: Friday 20 Elul 5775 to
Shabbos 13 Tishrei 5776**

The following points were distilled from a series of public shiurim that were delivered by
Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun,
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

The basic laws and customs presented below are derived from multiple sources. Due to a dearth of space and time, they are presented without their references and halachic notes. Primary sources include: Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch, Mateh Ephraim, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad, Lu’ach Colel Chabad, Sichos, Ma’amarim, and Igros Kodesh.

The intention of this summary is to inform you of some of the relevant laws, not to replace each person’s obligation to review the Halachos comprehensively.

In a sichah on the second day of Rosh Hashanah in the year 5752, the Rebbe stated, “We need to focus on studying the laws that apply to this time of year, during which many changes are made to the standard prayers, and there are numerous customs that apply. We should make certain to study these laws.

... Recently, yearly calendars have begun to include many of the laws that apply to the relevant time of the year and are necessary to know. This is of particular use to those who, for whatever reason, do not have *sefarim*, or they do not know how to find what they are looking for in the *sefarim* that they own. Now, however, they can simply examine such calendars and easily find the relevant laws.

It is extremely appropriate for each person to peruse the contents of such calendars in such a manner that the laws which apply to this time of year will become fixed in his memory. After all, it sometimes happens that a halachic question arises precisely at a point during which it is forbidden to interrupt and ask for someone’s guidance – or when there is nobody around to ask. Furthermore, [not having familiarized himself with the relevant laws beforehand,] it can happen that one does not even realize that there is a problem to begin with.”

* * *

Hakhel: Once every seven years, on the second day of Sukkos immediately following the conclusion of a shmitah year, the entire nation – men, women, and children – would gather at the beis hamikdash and hear the king read aloud from the Torah. The incredible setting was compared to the receiving of the Torah on Mount Sinai and inspired all present with commitment, love, and awe of Hashem. This mitzvah is known as hakhel, “assembly” of the Jewish nation. Moshiach himself will read from the Torah in the third beis hamikdash each hakhel year – may this Sukkos be the first such occasion!

The Rebbe calls attention to the concept of *hakhel* to an extraordinary degree and with increasing intensity, to the point that his *sichos* and letters are filled with *hakhel*-related directives. *Hakhel* is not limited to Sukkos. It remains a timely and urgent concept throughout a *hakhel*

year. We are expected to raise awareness of *hakhel* at every possible opportunity and in every possible way, to draw associations between all our activities and the “call of the hour” – *hakhel*. Leading by example, the Rebbe went to unusual lengths to draw such associations in his many *sichos*.

During Simchas Torah 5748, the Rebbe called for a *hakhel*, assembly, of literature on *hakhel*, meaning that information from all relevant Torah sources on the concept of *hakhel* should be published in a single volume. It was to include teachings from *nigleh* and especially from the inner dimensions of Torah, primarily as those teachings are explained in *Chassidus*. The goal of the volume would be identical to the goal of an actual *hakhel* experience: to inspire the people to greater fear and awe of Hashem.

On Shabbos *Mishpatim* 5741, the Rebbe called for studying the “laws of *hakhel*.” It is an obligation to study the laws of each festival every year thirty days in advance of the actual festival. We should similarly study the spiritual laws of *hakhel* as they are recorded in the Torah teachings of *Mussar*, *Chassidus*, and *Kabbalah*.

This year is a *hakhel* year. It is not the purpose of this publication, nor is it within its scope, to record all the relevant information on *hakhel*, but we have made an effort to include snippets of relevant material wherever appropriate, culled from *sichos* that the Rebbe delivered at *farbrengens* in 770 – or, to borrow a phrase from the laws of *hakhel*, that “the king would read ... at a wooden table in the courtyard of the *beis hamikdash*.” This is no exchange for the need to study the topic from the original sources. The Rebbe’s *sichos* and letters on the matter are incredibly extensive.

For more on *hakhel*, see ***Kovetz Hakhel*** published by *Vaad Lehafatzas Sichos* in 5755; ***Kehal Gadol*** (*Otzeros Mitzvas Hakhel*), republished this year by *Mamash*; ***Encyclopedia Talmudis***, entry “*Hakhel*”; ***Hakhel*** (*Kovetz leMitzvas Hakhel u’Birurei Hilchosehah*), authored by Rabbi Eliyahu Dovid Rabinowitz-Teomim in Yerushalayim, published in 5706 and 5733; ***Sefer Hakel*** (*Mitzvas Hakhel – Asufas M’amarim*), published by *Machon HaTorah ve’HaAretz* in 5761.

This guide incorporates several reminders about laws that will only be applicable during the Era of Redemption, with the hope that Moshiach will come speedily, allowing us to implement these laws in practice. The concept of studying these *halachos* is based on several *sichos*, some of which are quoted below:

“Hashem **begs** the Jewish people,” the Rebbe passionately stated, “to occupy themselves with the study of the laws of the sacrificial orders ... which [as our Sages state,] is considered as if we had actually offered the sacrifices. This study will bring about the actual offerings because it brings [to quote the Rambam,] ‘King Moshiach [who] will build the *beis hamikdash* ... and restore the laws of the Torah ... so that the Jewish people will again offer the sacrifices ... in accordance with all the *mitzvos* that are stated in the Torah,’ speedily, in our time – literally! [Then, to quote the festival liturgy,] ‘We will offer before You there the offerings of our obligations ... in accordance with the commandments of Your will.’” (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 341 – *Emphasis in original.*)

“We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demanded. “One of the ways this is accomplished is through studying more Torah on the subjects of the Redemption and the *beis hamikdash*. Studying these topics greatly hastens their actual realization, to the extent that we will go directly from studying these subjects to greet our righteous Moshiach. We will inform him, ‘We have just completed studying the laws associated with your coming!’ An additional motivation to study these laws is that we must expect Moshiach’s arrival each and every day. In that case, these laws [concerning the Redemption and the *beis hamikdash*] are matters that every Jew – men and women alike – must know, in order to put them into practical use on a daily basis, such as many of the laws of the offerings.” (*From a Sichah addressed to N’shei u’B’nos Chabad – Sefer HaSichos 5750*, vol. 2, p. 485)

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General Note: The times listed below are for Crown Heights only. Since one can never achieve complete precision, and many factors may influence the accuracy of these times, it is recommended to begin earlier than the time listed and not wait until the last minute (e.g., for the start of Shabbos), or to wait extra time, when that is the appropriate precaution (e.g., the close of Shabbos).

The Month of Elul

On Shabbos *Re'eh* 5748, the Rebbe presented two directives for the month of Elul:

1. Each person should bless others (and be blessed in return) with the wish of *kesivah vachasimah tovah le'shanah tovah u'mesukah* (“May you be inscribed and sealed for a good, sweet year!”). It is appropriate that men bless men, women bless women, boys bless boys, and girls bless girls. This blessing should be extended to each individual Jew as well as to the entire Jewish nation as a whole. It should be expressed directly or in writing – as noted by latter halachic authorities, “It is customary when one pens a letter to send regards to a friend, from Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur, that he add a prayerful wish that his friend merit to be judged favorably in the approaching days of judgement and to be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Good Life.” The blessing of a Jew, especially at an auspicious time – during the month of mercy when “the King is in the field ... and displays a benevolent countenance to all, and fulfils their requests” – serves to increase Hashem’s blessings in fulfillment of the requests of each and every Jew for all they need, both materially and spiritually!

2. Latter halachic authorities record [see *Mateh Efraim, Orach Chaim*, 581:10], “The scrupulous are accustomed to have their *tefillin* and *mezuzos* checked during Elul, as well as seeing to the repair of all other aspects that concern the performance of *mitzvos*; this is a fine custom.” Indeed, this is a way to increase the blessings we receive from Hashem – especially the blessing to be inscribed and sealed for a good, sweet year!

Friday, Elul 20

The twentieth of Elul (and another eight specific dates each year) is a day of celebration for the Kohanim and specific families who in the days of Ezra had undertaken to supply vast quantities of wood for the Altar. Each of these families received a date to bring wood and they would offer a special sacrifice and treat the day as a personal *yom tov*. The twentieth of Elul is celebrated by the descendants of Adin ben Yehudah. According to Rabbi Yehudah, these are descendant of Dovid *HaMelech*, from the tribe of Yehudah. According to Rabbi Meir, these are descendants of Yoav ben Tzeruyah. The Rebbe explains this concept in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4 (pp. 1104 ff.) and in vol. 9 (pp. 86 ff. – and especially in fn. 16, where the Rebbe clarifies the superiority of the wood donation on the twentieth of Elul over the wood donation on the twentieth of Av.)

- ♦ Shulchan Aruch states that although a person hears the entire Torah read in Shul on Shabbos morning, he also needs to read it himself every week. We recite *shnayim mikra ve-echad targum*, i.e. we read twice each verse and once the commentary of *Onkelos*. It is customary to do this Friday after *chatzos*, midday.
- ♦ Today, we recite *shnayim mikra* of *Parshas Ki Savo*.
- ♦ **Candle lighting** is at **7:05pm** (in New York), which is 18 minutes before sunset.

Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo, Shabbos Selichos, Elul 21

Today is the seventy-fifth anniversary of the *chanukas ha-bayis* (inauguration) of 770, the central *shul* and *beis midrash* of Lubavitch (referred to as *Lubavitch she-b'Lubavitch*), which occurred in the year 5700 (1940).

In 5750, in honor of the then-fiftieth anniversary of the inauguration, the Rebbe had a special *kuntras*

(booklet) published, entitled, *Kuntras Chof-Alef Elul Tof Shin Nun*. It included a *ma'amar* (*Al Sheloshah Devarim* 5714). The *ma'amar* is printed in *Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat*, vol. 4, p. 383. In that discourse, the Rebbe explains an earlier *ma'amar* (with identical title) that was delivered by the Rebbe Rayatz during the actual inauguration of 770.

In *Sichas Rosh Chodesh* 5710, while discussing mortgage payments for 770, the Rebbe described the Rebbe Rayatz's initial entry into the newly acquired 770, which occurred on a Sunday, Elul 19, 5700:

“When my holy father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz], entered his home for the first time, he entered the *Beis Knesses* and *Beis Midrash*, and he proclaimed [see *Sefer HaSichos Kayitz Tof Shin*, p. 175]: ‘*Yehi ratzon*, May it be Hashem’s will, *az der tefilos zol zein mit ah penimius*, that the prayers be recited with innermost sincerity, *un es zol zich davenen mit dem emes-avodah-penimiusdiker geshmak*, and that the prayers be conducted with delight inspired by truth, inner toil in divine worship, and innermost sincerity!’ We might wonder at the association of prayers with the purchase of a new home. The explanation is that this house was to serve as a *bayis klali*, an inclusive home for the entire Jewish nation! The one entering the building at that very moment was a *neshamah klalis*, an inclusive soul. Such a soul is occupied with *tefilah*, meaning “connection” (as in *ha-tofel*), whose goal was to connect all Jews with their Father in Heaven.”

The significance of the name “Shabbos Selichos” is explained in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 24, p. 647, as well as in the *sichos* delivered on Shabbos *Selichos* in the years 5728, 5734, 5745, 5748, and elsewhere.

The following is an excerpt from the English version of *Likkutei Dibburim* (p. 244):

Pesach 5694 (1934), Warsaw:

Every day brought you nearer to the Shabbos before *selichos*. The Chassidus which was delivered that Shabbos was listened to with a special degree of concentration. On that Friday night, people slept less than usual. Quite spontaneously, you woke up early, a little restless, and you went to the mikveh before dawn.

Arriving there, you found quite a number who had come before you, and all of them seemed to be in a hurry. You could see it on their faces: this Shabbos was different from all others. This was the Shabbos before *selichos*!

All kinds of ideas are running around in your own head, too. One thought that suddenly presents itself is a clarion call: *Lecha Hashem Hatzdakah* – “Righteousness belongs to You.” But more insistently than that, you are now reminded of the continuation of that verse: *Vilanu Boshes Ha’Panim* – “And we are marked by shamefacedness.” With a contrite heart, you immerse in the mikveh, asking yourself meanwhile whether this *tevilah* is a real immersion of *teshuvah*, accompanied by remorse over the past and a resolve for the future, or whether it is perhaps (G-d forbid) an instance of *tovel vishretz biyado* – one who immerses in the mikveh, but while still grasping a reptile in his hand.

...The way people read their Tehillim on this Shabbos was also different from the way they read Tehillim throughout the year.

..At the table of my father, the Rebbe, the midday meal of the *Shabbos* preceding *selichos* was much shorter than that of any other Shabbos.

- ♦ The latest time for reciting *shema* is at **9:38 am** (in New York).
- ♦ *Parshas Ki Savo* is read from the Torah during Shacharis. The reader raises his voice for the verse *hashkifah min ha-shamayim* (“Gaze from the Heavens and bless Your people, Yisrael...”). For the sixth *aliyah*, the *ba’al korei*

himself takes the *aliyah* (without being summoned), and recites the blessings before and after. The passages of rebuke are read in a slightly lowered voice, but in a manner that the crowd can hear it properly.

- ♦ Today's *haftorah* begins *Kumi Ori*...
- ♦ The reading at Minchah is from *Parshah Nitzavim*. For the third *aliyah*, the final verse – *Ha-nistaros* (“The hidden things are for Hashem our G-d, and the revealed things are for us and our children forever to perform all the words of this Torah”) is read in a louder voice.
- ♦ *Tzidkascha* is recited as usual.
- ♦ Minchah is followed by *Pirkei Avos*, chapters 3 and 4. [The Rebbe often mentions the debate whether to recite the passages of *Kol Yisrael* and *Rabbi Chananya* twice, before and after each chapter when two chapters are read together. See *Sefer HaSichos* 5750 (vol. 2, p. 681, fm. 104); *Sefer HaSichos* 5751 (p. 797, fn. 15); as well as the following *sichos*: *Ki Teitzei* 5741, *Ki Teitzei* 5745, *Nitzavim-Veyeilech* 5746, *Ki Savo* 5747, *Nitzavim-Veyeilech* 5747, *Ki Teitzei* 5749.]

Motza'ei Shabbos

- ♦ **Shabbos ends at 8:04 pm** (in New York).
- ♦ A *melaveh malka* (“the meal of Dovid, King Moshiach”) is held as usual.

On Shabbos *Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech* 5743, the Rebbe recounted that the *chassidim* “once arrived to recite *selichos* – *vakeldikerkeit* (wobbling unsteadily)!” He explained that “since a *chassidishe farbrengen* was held that Shabbos, at which the *chassidim* drank *mashkeh*, it had an effect on their heads, which in turn had an effect on their feet, and so off they went to *selichos* – *vakeldik!*” On *Chai Elul* 5741, the Rebbe identified an alternative catalyst – “since they heard a *ma'amar* of *chassidus* from the Rebbe that Shabbos...” On Shabbos *Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech* 5742, the Rebbe referred to yet another cause – the nature of the Shabbos preceding Rosh Hashanah, when the *haftorah* beginning *Sos Asis* (“I will greatly

rejoice in Hashem...” is read, and when a joy similar to *zman simchaseinu* prevail. (For a source for this in Gemara, see *Sichas Chai Elul* 5741. See also below, entries for the Night of Erev Rosh Hashanah.)

During “Shabbos Selichos” of 5734, the Rebbe declared: “It would be beneficial to combine the recital of *selichos* – which is a prayer service – with Torah study. Since public study would delay the congregation unnecessarily if it were conducted after *selichos*, it would be better to study before *selichos*. The same is true of giving *tzedakah*. Some refrain from giving *tzedakah* at night, but after *chatzos* (halachic midnight) it is unquestionably permissible.

“The association of *selichos* with both Torah study and *tzedakah* should continue throughout the week of *selichos*. The topics chosen for study should conclude with practical *halachah*, lending the superiority of having just studied practical *halachah* to the *selichos* service.

“At the beginning of the book of *selichos*, there is a *ma’amor* of the Alter Rebbe entitled *Lecha Hashem HaTzedakah*. That discourse includes teachings from both the Written and Oral Torah, as well as a practical halachic conclusion.

“It is worthwhile to publicize in every possible location that before *selichos*, one should study Torah and give *tzedakah*. And it is therefore worth studying that *ma’amor*, or at least its start and conclusion.

“In short, practical terms: Before *selichos*, one should study a halachic topic. The study should be preceded by *tzedakah* so as to enhance the understanding of the Torah as well as the prayers that will follow. This sequence will enhance the requests for forgiveness (*selichos*) as well as that which is elicited as a result.”

♦ *Selichos* is begun soon after midnight. This is because one of the sections begins with the words *be-motza’ei menuchah* – “At the termination of [the Day of] Rest,”

and *selichos* and the Thirteen Attributes are not recited before midnight.

- ♦ In 770, ***selichos*** is called for **1:00 am**.
- ♦ One who leads the *selichos* service wears a *tallis*, but he does not recite a blessing over the *tallis*. If a *bachur* serves as *chazzan*, he should nevertheless wear a *tallis* on this occasion, because *selichos* is centered on the recital of the *Yud Gimmel Midos Ha-rachamim* (thirteen attributes of divine mercy), and the Gemara states that Hashem wrapped Himself in a *tallis* like a *shliach tzibbur* when teaching Moshe to recite these attributes for forgiveness.
- ♦ It is customary to say *selichos* while wearing Shabbos clothing.
- ♦ Preferably, one should stand when reciting *selichos*. If this is difficult, one should ensure to stand at least while reciting *Keil melech yoshev*, the *Yud Gimmel Midos Ha-rachamim*, and when reciting *vidui*.

Sunday, Elul 22

This year, the Torah portions of *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech* are separated. The current week is associated with *Nitzavim* exclusively. This occurs whenever Rosh Hashanah occurs on a Monday or Tuesday. The mnemonic for this sequence (פתב"ג המלך) is explained at length in *Sefer HaSichos* 5752 (p. 12).

Hakhel: “Since the coming year is a *hakhel* year, which invokes the *mitzvah*, ‘*Assemble the men, the women, and the children,*’” the Rebbe announced on Shabbos *Parshas Ki Savo*, *Chai Elul* 5733, “it would be good and appropriate during Elul and especially the days of *selichos* to organize *hakhel* gatherings for Jewish children: Gather even the youngest children, both boys and girls, and certainly those who are older. Explain to them the parable presented in *Likkutei Torah*: During the month of Elul, Hashem is like a king in the field – before he enters a city, the inhabitants leave their city in order to greet him as he approaches, and they greet him in the outlying fields....” (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 14, p. 262.)

[See the rest of that *sichah* for details regarding these assemblies. For more information about this directive and specific details

regarding the manner in which the assemblies are to be held, see the Rebbe's letter dated "Following the Shabbos of Chai Elul of the seventh year – 5733," addressed to "those involved in providing a kosher education in each and every location." It is published in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 14, p. 265.]

Hakhel: The Rebbe issued "a proposal and request" on Elul 14, 5740, that "in association with *hakhel*, three children's rallies be held for the purpose of engaging the children in the "threefold cord" of Torah, *tefillah*, and *tzedakah*. These should be held before Rosh Hashanah, again during *Aseres yemei teshuvah*, and then once more during *Chol ha-mo'ed Sukkos*." (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 24, p. 310.)

Monday, Elul 23

Today is the *yahrtzeit* of the Rebbe's maternal grandfather – "My grandfather, the *Rav*, *Gaon*, *Chassid*, etc., Rabbi Meir Shlomo *HaLevi* Yanovsky, one of the close disciples of the Rebbe Maharash and the *Rav* of Nikolayev." (*Sefer HaSichos* 5749, vol. 2, p. 713, fn. 83. See also *Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim Vayeilech*, Elul 23 – 5746 and 5749.)

♦ From Monday and on, *selichos* are recited early in the morning. They may be recited at night, following *chatzos*. When reciting *selichos* earlier than the time of *misheyakir*, the *chazan* dons a *tallis* without a *beracha*.

♦ It is important to remember to recite the morning *berachos*, and at least *birchas ha-torah* before starting *selichos*.

♦ One who recites *selichos* without a minyan should omit the *Yud Gimmel Midos Ha-rachamim*.

Hakhel: In numerous *sichos* and *igros*, the Rebbe repeatedly discusses the need to prepare for the year of *hakhel*. On Av 15, 5747, the Rebbe stated, "It is necessary to already start preparations for the *hakhel* year so that the concept of *hakhel* will take place in its true form and with a great *shturem*. The preparation for this is accomplished through the concept of *hakhel* itself, through organizing large public gatherings (similar to a *farbrenge*) for the purpose of strengthening and

increasing in study of Torah (with study that leads to action, i.e., performing *mitzvos* with more *hiddur*.)” [Similar directives are found in several other places; see also the end of the *sichah* of Tuesday, Sivan 19, 5747 (*Sefer HaSichos 5747*, vol. 2), as well as the general letter dated Erev Chai Elul 5740, printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 611 ff., regarding preparations for the year of *hakhel*.

Hakhel: The Rebbe often explored associations as well as distinctions between *shmitah* and *hakhel*, and the ways in which *shmitah* serves as a preparation for *hakhel*. See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol., 4, pp. 200 ff.; *Michtav Klali Rosh Chodesh Marcheshvan 5747*; *Sichas Gimmel DeChol HaMo’ed Sukkos, Simchas Beis HaSho’eivah 5713*; and elsewhere. See also *Reshimah* of *Simchas Beis HaSho’eivah 7692* and in *Kahal Gadol*, ch. 5.

Tuesday, Elul 24, 3rd day of Selichos

The Rebbe wrote the following in a public letter on 13 Elul 5710. (The translation is excerpted from **Proceeding Together** pp. 147-9 by Sichos in English):

Concerning the third day of *selichos*, my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz], once recounted that this day was “the day set aside by the Alter Rebbe (and likewise for his successors) for the private delivery of a *maamar* in the presence of his illustrious son, the Mittlerer Rebbe (and when my great-great-grandfather, the *Tzemach Tzedek*, was about ten years old, he delivered it for him, too), with the instruction that no one was to know of it. On the third day of *selichos*, the *Tzemach Tzedek* used to deliver a *maamar* of the Alter Rebbe in the presence of the Rebbe Maharash, with the instruction that no one was to know of it. On the third day of *selichos*, the Rebbe Maharash used to deliver a *maamar* in the presence of my father, the Rebbe [Rashab], and on the third day of *selichos*, 5655 [1895], my father delivered this *maamar* for me, instructing me to keep this a secret until he told me otherwise.”

... For many years, the content of *Chai Elul* and the third day of *selichos* were hidden away. Now permission has been given to make them known, and indeed, my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz], has made them known in all corners of the earth. One might well ask, “But is this generation worthy?!” The response will be that for this very reason, these things should be made public, because there is such an increasing obscurity and screening of spiritual light in this generation [that can hear the approaching] footsteps of *Mashiach*; “even the store-houses of precious treasures that [until now] were hidden and locked away from all eyes are opened up.”

♦ The Previous Rebbe revealed many deep concepts in Chassidus in *ma’amorim* that were delivered on the third day of *selichos*, many of which were published and widely distributed. The Rebbe related on this day in 5751: “The practical implication of speaking about the multitude and scope of these *ma’amorim* is that each individual should take the time during these days to learn from these *ma’amorim*, each according to his ability and his particular interests,” the Rebbe directed.

The Rebbe continues: “Certainly it will be decided that already tonight a *shturemdike farbrengen* should be held, with unique joy but with limitations, since it is not actually Purim.... Nonetheless, Purim is connected with Yom Kippur which concludes the Ten Days of Repentance, and therefore is associated also with its beginning – Rosh Hashanah, including the days when *selichos* are recited.”

♦ In the *sichah* of the third day of *selichos* 5749, the Rebbe said: “The unique significance of the third day of *selichos* was revealed to us by the [Previous] Rebbe. On that day, he also recited a *ma’amar* and asked that it be printed and publicized. Significantly, the [Previous] Rebbe did not reveal this concept until the later years, after moving to America. Since the [Previous] Rebbe did not provide an explanation for the significance of this day, we can each try to understand its meaning according to our individual capacity.” (In the *sichah* of the third day of *selichos* in 5748, the Rebbe suggests that the significance of this day

is associated with the number three itself). Whether or not we discover the true reasons that made the third day of *selichos* unique, the main point is that it each of us further increase in Torah, in proper conduct. and the like. For every addition in Torah, *mitzvos* and *chassidus* is in itself the ultimate truth.

Wednesday, Elul 25

On this day, the world was created. Chassidim of early generations would study the first portion of *Bereishis* on this day, the second portion on Elul 26, and so forth. The intention behind this conduct is as follows: the creation of the world – described in the mentioned portions – was an *isarusa dile'eila*, uninitiated from below [i.e., man's service] and was spurred solely by Divine desire. We study these portions, in order to achieve the unique advantage of *avodah*, man's effort from below (which, in many ways, is far greater than which is accomplished from above). These portions are studied on days which represent *isarusa dile'eila*, to effect a fusion between these two methods of relationship which the Jewish people have with their Creator. (*Likutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 488, fn. 54.)

Hakhel: The difference between Elul 25 and Rosh Hashanah is similar to the difference which exists between the *shmitah* and *hakhel* years. (*Michtav K'loli Elul 25*, 5747. See there at length.)

This day has been established as the *yahrtzeit* for Reb Dov Ber Schneerson, the Rebbe's brother, who was murdered by the Nazis towards the end of 5741. May Hashem avenge his blood!

Thursday, Elul 26

The Previous Rebbe relates: "I personally remember that when I, as an eight-year-old, experienced such Elul *farbrengens*, it affected me to improve my conduct, during my childhood days. As the *selichos* days approached, the atmosphere of sincerity

strengthened and the awe-inspiring days began to move in.” (*Sefer HaSichos*, Summer 5700, p. 10.)

Friday, Erev Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim, Elul 27

The *Shelah* (tractate *Rosh Hashanah*) states that the one leading the prayers must separate himself from all matters that lead to impurity three days in advance, and he should study the intentions (*kavonos*) behind the prayers and the sounding of the *shofar*, and that this directive is based on the Zohar. (*Magen Avraham* 581:9.)

- ♦ We recite *shnayim mikra* of *Parshas Nitzavim*.
- ♦ **Candle lighting** is at **6:53 pm** (in New York), which is 18 minutes before sunset.

Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim, Shabbos Selichos, Elul 28

- ♦ This Shabbos is the second Shabbos *Selichos* (occurring within the days of *selichos*). The Rebbe explains the uniqueness of this occurrence in *Sefer HaSichos* 5752 (p. 24, fn. 136).
- ♦ Recite the entire Tehillim in the morning, before Shacharis. The Rebbe explains this practice, as well as the custom to *farbreng* on this Shabbos, in *Kovetz Michtavim* (published at the back of the Tehillim) fn. 5, as well as in *Likkutei Sichos* (vol. 4, p. 184, fn. 8), and elsewhere.
- ♦ The latest time for **reciting Shema** is at **9:40 am** (in New York).
- ♦ *Birchas ha-chodesh* is not recited this Shabbos, because Hashem personally blesses the month of Tishrei. (*HaYom Yom*, entry for Elul 25. This insight was given by the Alter Rebbe, who heard it from the Maggid, who received it from the Baal Shem Tov. For elaboration, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1139; vol. 9, p. 184; vol. 29, p. 173, as well as many *sichos* delivered on this Shabbos). It is also not recited in order to confuse the Satan, who will be left unaware of the approach of Rosh Hashanah. (See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 24, p. 222.)

- ♦ The new moon will appear on Sunday, at 5:07 pm, 9 *chalokim*.
- ♦ Recite *av ha-rachamim*.
- ♦ As on every Shabbos *mevarchim*, conduct a *farbrengen*.
- ♦ Recite *tzidkascha* during Minchah.
- ♦ Study chapters 5 and 6 of *Pirkei Avos* following Minchah.

Motza'ei Shabbos

Shabbos ends at **7:52 pm** (in New York).

- ♦ Do not recite *vihi no'am* and *ve-Atah kadosh* following Maariv.

The Rebbe explains the superiority of this year's sequence of special dates, containing three consecutive uniquely holy days – Shabbos, Erev Rosh Hashanah and Rosh Hashanah – in *Sichas Erev Rosh Hashanah* 5752 (a year with an identical calendar).

Sunday, Erev Rosh Hashanah, Elul 29 – “Z'chor Bris”

Today is often referred to as *Z'chor Bris*, after the opening words of today's *selichos*. Nevertheless, it is not Chabad custom to recite this particular section of *selichos*. This is explained in *Sichah Erev Rosh Hashanah* 5723.

Today marks the birth of the Tzemach Tzedek in 5549 (1789) – *erev* Rosh Hashanah 5550.

“The night preceding the Eve of Rosh Hashanah was a *vach nacht* – a night to remain awake. Since my sixth year of life, I do not recall sleeping on this night as on usual nights. Each person according to their level prepared for the approaching Rosh Hashanah and the following days of judgement.” (*Sefer HaSichos*, Summer 5710, p. 10.)

“Chassidim would dance even on the first night of Rosh Hashanah, but primarily at their private accommodations. The same happened after *selichos*.

It once happened, that as they approached *selichos* on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, they were tottering on their feet [after farbrenging the entire night]!” (Elul 5694)

♦ Recite the lengthy *selichos* service for *erev* Rosh Hashanah. Include the *tachanun* sections of *selichos* (*vayomer Dovid el Gad*) even if the sky has already grown light.

As we conclude the *shmitah* year, it is noteworthy to mention that the spiritual theme of *shmitah* – that Hashem annuls our spiritual debts, i.e., shortcomings – is addressed in today’s *selichos*, in the section beginning *ana orerah*. The Rebbe discusses this idea and the association with today’s *selichos* in numerous *sichos*. (See *Sefer HaSichos* 5749, vol. 2, p. 441, fn. 67; *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 2, fn. 18; *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 724, fn. beg. *tashmet*.)

♦ During Shacharis, do not recite *tachanun*, *lamnatze’ach ya’ancha*, and *tefilah le-Dovid*.

♦ Do not blow the *shofar*. This applies throughout the day. Whether one may blow privately, behind closed doors, in order to practice, see *Magen Avraham* (581:14) and *Peri Megadim*, *ibid.*, as well as *Hashlamah LeShulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* (end of 581).

♦ Recite *hataras nedarim* (annulment of vows) **before** midday. According to the strict law, this must be done in the presence of three men. The custom, however, is to do it with a *minyan*.

♦ One who does not comprehend the Hebrew text must recite it in a language that he understands.

♦ It is not a widely accepted custom for a child who is old and mature enough for his vows to be binding to recite *hataras nedarim*. This is because the **Biblical** prohibition against breaking his word does not yet apply to him (*Rambam, Hilchos Nedarim*, 11:4), and according to many opinions, his vows cannot be undone. He is not afforded the opportunity of reciting *hataras nedarim* in order to discourage him from making vows in the first place. (See *Rema, Yoreh De’ah* 233:1. See *Sha’alos u’Teshuvos Divrei*

Moshe, 66.)

- ♦ It is customary that the one requesting the annulment of their vows stands, while everyone else sits.
- ♦ This *hataras nedarim* only annuls vows that you no longer recall having made (because there is no other option). Similarly, the concluding statement regarding any future vows is to be used only under extremely pressing circumstances.
- ♦ In general, if you make a vow at any point in the year and still recall its existence, or if you observe a positive practice and intend to continue observing it forever, or even if you observed a positive practice three times without specifying that you are not binding yourself to continue observing it forever, then you are fully obligated to fulfill your vow or continue observing that practice. It is therefore crucial to state when making a decision or performing an action that it should *not* assume the force of a vow. Always remember to specify that you are performing an action *bli neder*.
- ♦ If you realize that you have made a vow that you cannot keep, or if you find yourself unable to maintain a positive practice that you took upon yourself, you must visit a Beis Din whose members are fluent in the laws of vows. You will need to tell the Rav your vow and explain the circumstances under which it was made. He will then ask two men to join him in formerly annulling the vow (any two men can join the Rav for this purpose).

Pruzbul

Pruzbul, the annulment of debts in the *shemita* year, applies also nowadays, rabbinically, both in Eretz Yisroel and in *Chutz La'aretz*. When our sages saw that people were not lending money when the *shemita* year was approaching, thereby transgressing the prohibition of (*Devarim* 15:9) “Beware, lest there be in your heart an unfaithful thought, saying, “The seventh year, the year of release, has approached,” and you will begrudge your needy brother and not give him ... and it will be a sin to you,” they enacted the *pruzbul*: the lender transfers his debts to the *Beis Din*, by declaring to them before *shemita*, “I hereby transmit my debts to you so that I may collect them whenever I want”. When he says this, it is considered as if

he handed over his documents to the *Beis Din* and asked the *Beis Din* to collect the debts for him. Therefore, his debts do not become annulled by Torah law.

Every G-d fearing person* should be stringent to make a *pruzbul*, especially as it involves no expenditure and is easy to do. This is done by gathering three men who serve as a *Beis Din*, and telling them, “I hereby transmit my debts to you so that I may collect them whenever I want”.

*The Rebbe adds that nowadays this is applicable to all individuals. Furthermore, from the Alter Rebbe’s words, we can infer that this is the correct mode of conduct *l’chatchillah*.

The Alter Rebbe rules that the correct time for making the *pruzbul* is at the end of the sixth year, before Rosh Hashanah of *shemita*. **It is a *mitzvah* to publicize this matter.** In order that one should not forget, the best time to do the *pruzbul* is right after *hataras nedarim*, because at that time there are three men present who serve as a *Beis Din*, and he could then say the phrase for the *pruzbul*:

הריני מוסר לכם כל חובות שיש לי שאגבה אותם כל זמן שארצה.

(“I hereby transmit my debts to you, so I may collect them whenever I want.”)

The *pruzbul* can function only if the borrower has some real estate, even if it is a tiny parcel of land, even if the real estate is his only temporarily, and even if it is only rented or lent to him. (See details in the *Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch, Hilchos Halva’ah, 35 ff.*)

The annulment of debts applies to women as well [who have their own money]. Some are of the opinion that it also applies to children who have a personal bank account.

Husbands may make a *pruzbul* on behalf of their wives and fathers on behalf of their daughters, but they should inform them of the fact that a *pruzbul* was made on their behalf.

If she cannot gather three men, nor does she have the ability to make someone else her *shliach*, a *pruzbul* document may be written and handed to the *Beis Din*. The documents for transmitting debts to the Crown Heights *Beis Din* are printed separately.

The *pruzbul* form should be submitted to the *Beis*

Din before Rosh Hashanah. The forms can be placed in the mailbox at the door of the Badatz office: 390a Kingston Ave. (between Crown & Montgomery St.), or faxed to: 718-773-0186. They may also be e-mailed to: shtarpruzbul@gmail.com.

The Rebbe writes that even those who are sure that they have no collectable debts, and thus have no need for a *pruzbul*, should nonetheless attempt to fulfill the institution of *pruzbul*. This can be achieved through lending a small sum of money to someone else in order to be able to observe the rabbinical institution of *pruzbul*. Writing a *pruzbul* is a means to express our affinity to rabbinic rulings. In this case, we use this opportunity as well to express our affinity of following the ruling of the Alter Rebbe to make a *pruzbul* at the end of the sixth year of *shemita*.

For the spiritual significance of debt annulment and the connection with Rosh Hashanah, see the *Sicha* of 24 Elul 5725. On *Erev* Rosh Hashanah 5726 after *hataras nedarim* and the recital of the *pruzbul* formula, the Rebbe said, “May you be inscribed and sealed for a good and sweet year,” and then added with a smile, “because we already made a *pruzbul* here below, there will not be a *pruzbul* Above.”

***Pruzbul* at the conclusion of a *shmitah* year:**

The following letter of the Rebbe is published in *Likkutei Sichos* (vol. 12, p. 256). It is dated Tishrei 4, 5719, and comes in response to the query: When one follows the Alter Rebbe’s opinion (*Shulchan Aruch, Hilchos Halva’ah*, 36) and arranges a *pruzbul* on *erev* Rosh Hashanah going into a *shemita* year, what is the status of loans subsequently extended during the year of *shmitah*?

“Loans with established times for repayment are not cancelled by *shmitah*. (If the time for repayment is set for within the year, it serves as an explicit condition that prevents the loan from being annulled, as per *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 35). For loans extended without specific times of repayment and which are extended more than thirty days prior to the end of the year, one should make a *pruzbul* in the seventh year. There is room to debate how the Rosh and the Tur would solve the difficulty of such loans, seeing as they are of the opinion that one does not make a *pruzbul* in the seventh year.”

In the introduction to *HaYom Yom* (section entitled *Shalshelless HaYachas*), the entry for 5747 includes the following statement: “The Rebbe encouraged that the text of the *pruzbul* be recited at the conclusion of the seventh year as well.” This practice similarly appears in *Lu’ach Colel Chabad*.

Here are some examples of the Rebbe’s own conduct regarding *pruzbul*:

In 5712, after *Shacharis* and *hataras nedarim*, the Rebbe announced: “Since we are now at the close of the *shmitah* year, we need to also recite the text of *pruzbul* as recorded in *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken – hareini mosar lachem kol ha-chovos she-yesh li....*” The Rebbe recited the text in Yiddish, and then extended his holy blessings.

In 5719, after reading the *pan klali*, the Rebbe announced: “This was also a *shmitah* year. Although the Alter Rebbe states that ‘the time for *pruzbul* is *lechatchilah* at the end of the sixth year, before Rosh Hashanah of the seventh’ – and no doubt, this was observed – nevertheless, new loans have been created during the seventh year. Undoubtedly, there is a kosher *beis din* present....” The Rebbe then read the text of *pruzbul* from a copy of the *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken – “hareini mosar lachem....*” The Rebbe then concluded, “May Hashem absolve all the debts of the His nation, Yisrael, and may He grant them all their material and spiritual needs with His full, open, holy, and broad hand! *Kesivah va-chasimah tovah, le-shanah tovah u’mesukah!*”

In 5747, after *hataras nedarim*, the Rebbe announced: “Since we are now concluding a *shmitah* year, in order to fulfill our obligation according to those who hold the opinion that a *pruzbul* must be created at the close of the seventh year as well, we will now do so once again.” The Rebbe then recited the text of *pruzbul*, delivered a brief blessing, and went upstairs to his office.

[The Rebbe did not recite the text of *pruzbul* in the years 5726, 5733, and 5740.]

Advisory: The Badatz issued a letter on *erev* Shabbos *Parshas Toldos* (Cheshvan 28, 5775) that included an advisory calling on people to notify those who unwittingly used a false document for *pruzbul* last year to be aware

that they did not create a *pruzbul* at all in the appropriate time. They should rectify this by preparing a valid *pruzbul* this year, before three people, no later than this *erev* Rosh Hashanah. Those forms were invalid because Rabbi Raitport *shlita*, one of the three rabbis whose names were presented on the document, did not in fact join the other named individuals to complete a *beis din*. His name was used without his awareness.

♦ To avoid misunderstanding, Chazal forbade bloodletting procedures, practiced in former times as a standard form of improving the body's health, on every *erev* Yom Tov. They were primarily concerned with bloodletting performed on *erev* Shavuos, in which case a degree of actual danger exists. Regarding bloodletting on *erev* Rosh Hashanah and *erev* Yom Kippur, see *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Rivavos Efraim*, vol. 1, 340 in the name of my grandfather *zt"l*. I found the same concept explicitly mentioned in *Noheig Katzon Yosef*, p. 262.

♦ Write a *pan* to the Rebbe on your behalf and on behalf of your entire household.

♦ Pay a visit to the cemetery, recite many supplications there, and give *tzedakah* to the poor. It is customary for those who are within a reachable distance to pay a visit to the Ohel. Do not eat before visiting the cemetery, but you should drink.

This law will become relevant with the Redemption:

We do not separate *maaser beheimah* from animals born in one year for those born in a different year. All those born between 1 Tishrei and 29 Ellul may be combined, and we separate *maaser* from these for those. The Sages established three annual dates for tithing animals. Once such a date arrives, no animal may be sold or slaughtered before *ma'aser* has been taken. These dates are referred to as the harvest time of *ma'aser beheimah*. If an animal was slaughtered at this point despite *ma'aser* not having been taken, it is permissible. One of these dates is fifteen days before Sukkos, i.e. the final day of Elul. These three dates precede the major festivals so that many animals will be made available at that time, to the advantage of the Jews who ascend to Yerushalayim for the three festivals.

T'rumas halishkah: At the start of Tishrei, before or after Rosh

Hashanah, silver coins are removed from three giant coffers that sit in one of the side chambers of the *beis hamikdash*. The money is placed into smaller containers so that it is accessible for the *kohanim* to purchase sacrifices as necessary, until the next scheduled date for removing the next enormous sum from the three giant coffers. The Sages deliberately timed this removal at the start of Tishrei, well in advance of Sukkos, so that it would receive much public attention. This way, those who live at a distance from Yerushalayim will hear about it, and they will make certain to bring their contributions with them when they travel to Yerushalayim and deliver them to the *beis hamikdash* prior to the start of Sukkos.

♦ As necessary, launder your clothes, take haircuts, clip your fingernails, take a warm, full shower, and then immerse in a *mikveh*. Subsequently, dress in Shabbos clothes to indicate trust that Hashem will vindicate us in judgment.

♦ Bake or buy round challahs for Rosh Hashanah. Put aside apple, honey, pomegranates, fish, a head of ram (or head of another creature such as a lamb or a fish) and a “new fruit” to be used over Yom Tov. Any seasonal fruit (a fruit which grows only at a certain time every year or twice a year) which has not been eaten yet this season qualifies as a “new fruit.”

♦ Avoid using vinegar when preparing food for Rosh Hashanah.

♦ Resolve to pay greater attention to specific aspects of your observance during the coming year.

♦ Study the festival prayer service in advance in order to familiarize yourself with the *nusach* and the meaning of the words. It is critical for a *chazzan* to know the translation of the prayers, particularly on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. He must know all of the prayers, including the many liturgical poems that are difficult to understand without prior study because they are based on *midrashim* and similar sources. The Rebbeim have instructed that every *chazzan* should know at least the literal meaning of what he recites, and that he should review the material afresh each year before leading the congregation in prayer.

♦ From approximately an hour before Minchah until the

conclusion of Rosh Hashanah, use every available moment of the day and night to recite Tehillim. Avoid mundane conversation to the extreme, trim your sleeping hours, and increase your concentration in prayer from the depths of your heart and soul.

- ♦ Spend extra time and concentration praying the final Minchah service of the outgoing year (5775).
- ♦ Provide the needy with ample Yom Tov supplies.
- ♦ Give *tzedakah* in advance for both days of Yom Tov (and donate to the Keren Hashanah Fund in multiples of 385 (the largest number of days that a year can have; not 383 or 384 like other leap years, for this year is *shleimah*, not *chaseirah* or *k'sidrah*) for the entire coming year in advance). See *Sefer HaSichos* 5752, p. 171, regarding the advantage of a year that has the largest and most complete number of days.
- ♦ The Rebbeim would make a point of conversing with their wives on *erev* Rosh Hashanah, close to the onset of the festival. In his *sichos*, the Rebbe directs every husband to adopt this practice.
- ♦ It is forbidden to generate a new flame on Yom Tov because creating something new is akin to performing a prohibited activity, and since you could have easily prepared a flame in advance of Yom Tov, you are forbidden to do so on during Yom Tov itself (*Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZaken* 502:1). You must prepare a flame today that will remain lit long enough to provide fire for candle lighting on the second night of Yom Tov. You may keep a gas burner lit for this purpose.
- ♦ Those who regularly make use of Shabbos timers should plan ahead for all days of Yom Tov when setting their timers.
- ♦ **A word of caution:** Fire and safety organizations recommend that if you leave a burner lit over Yom Tov, make sure that a nearby window is open at least 4 inches, and another window is open on the other side of the house, to allow proper ventilation. Also, make sure that smoke detectors and a carbon monoxide detector are present and active.
- ♦ If you use Neironim liquid wax candles that are inserted

into glass holders, it is advisable to place a little water or oil into the glass before inserting the candle. Do this today, on *erev* Yom Tov, so that the metal disk that supports the wick will not stick to the bottom of the glass, causing a halachic issue on the second night of Yom Tov. (See below, entries for the second night of Shemini Atzeres.)

♦ Light the Yom Tov candles before reciting the blessings, as on *erev* Shabbos. Recite *le-hadlik neir shel yom hazikaron* and *shehechyanu*. If a man lights the candles, he should reserve the blessing of *shehechyanu* for the *kiddush* he will recite later tonight. In New York, today's **candle lighting** is at **6:44 pm** (in New York), which is 18 minutes before sunset.

♦ If you are running late and are pressured for time, you may light the candles during Yom Tov. Draw a light from a pre-existing flame for this purpose.

The Year 5776

This year's *siman* is *beis-shin-zayin*, indicating that Rosh Hashanah occurs on a Monday (*beis*), the year is *shleimah*, "complete," (*shin*), i.e., the months of Cheshvan and Kislev consist of 30 days each, and that *Rosh Chodesh* Nissan will occur on a Shabbos, the seventh day of the week (*zayin*).

It is a leap year, with 385 days and 55 *shabbosim*.

It is the first year into the current *shemitah* cycle.

It is a *hakhel* year.

This year marks the conclusion of the moon's *machzor katan* cycle. See *Sichas Vav Tishrei ve-Sabbos Parshas Noach* 5738, and elsewhere.

Hakhel: Our Sages state that "at the conclusion of the seventh year, Moshiach will arrive." The connection between Moshiach and *hakhel* is that Moshiach will gather the dispersed Jews, as explained in *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Pekudei* 5741, and elsewhere.

"We should therefore make a *shturem* of the fact that 5741 is not 5740, which was not a *hakhel* year, but rather, it is

now indeed a year of *hakhel*!” (From a tape of the *sichah* of Cheshvan 20, 5741.)

Hakhel: The introduction to *HaYom Yom* quotes the Rebbe’s calls regarding *hakhel* in various *hakhel* years. See entry for 5741: “This year is a year of **hakhel** – gathering of men, women, and children ... to do all the words of this Torah.” Entry for 5747: “The coming year (5748 – *tismach*) is a *hakhel* year whose subject is “they will hear ... will teach ... will guard and do all the words of this Torah ... all the days ...” Entry for 5748: “Each and every man, woman, and child should participate in activities of *hakhel* during this *hakhel* year, through each of them gathering the Jewish men and women in their neighborhood and encouraging them to do acts of Torah and fear of Heaven. Once a month, each person should report (to a central office), supplying the details of their activities”. The Rebbe then called for an emphasis on joy during the year of *hakhel* (year of *tismach*), which should last the entire year.

Hakhel: For insight into the description of the entire year as *shnas hakhel* (a “*hakhel* year”), see *Sichas Purim* 5727; *Ha’azinu* 5728; *Shabbos Parshas Pikudei* 5741; *Va’eschanan* 5741; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 198, fn. 16; *Sefer HaSichos* 5748, vol. 2, p. 682 (and in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 34, p. 329), note beg. *shnas hakhel*; *Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha* 5748; *Acharei Kedoshim* 5748. [See also *Introduction to Kahal Gadol* at length. Also note commentaries of *Ibn Ezra* to *Vayeilech* 31:12 and *Chizkuni* to *ibid.*, v. 10 – “So that they study the entire year....” For an alternative perspective, see the Rebbe’s reply dated *Marcheshvan* 6, 5748, to a non-Chabad author regarding the option of referring to *shnas hakhel* in the introduction to his *sefer* – “There is concern whether it will arouse wonder (or even might be perceived as arrogance) with no benefit, unlike a *Hakhel* gathering with Torah teachings.”]

This year, Rosh Hashanah is on the second day of the week, and the new year is also a leap-year. For the significance of these details, see at length, *Sefer HaSichos* 5752 (pp. 12 ff.)

The Rebbe issued numerous public letters “to all Jews wherever they may be” in honor of the New Year.

Many of these letters address the theme of the *hakhel* year. Refer to the following public letters: *Chai Elul* 5712 (in Yiddish and in Hebrew); *Yemei Selichos* 5726 [and at the conclusion of the *hakhel* year, the Rebbe wrote about taking stock of what had been accomplished – see *Yemei Selichos* 5727 and *Yud Alef Nissan* 5727]; *Vav Tishrei* 5734; Beg. *Marcheshvan* 5734; *Chai Elul* 5740; *Yemei Selichos* 5740; Between Yom Kippur and Sukkos 5741; *Zayin Marcheshvan* 5741; *Chol HaMo'ed Sukkos* 5741 (addressed to “All Jewish children over the age of bar and bas mitzvah”); [Also see the following public letters: *Rosh Chodesh Shvat* and *Yud Alef Adar Sheni* 5741; *Yud Gimmel Iyar* 5741.]; *Vav Tishrei* 5748 [also see *Yud Alef Nissan* 5748, and at the conclusion of the *hakhel* year, *Chai Elul* 5748].

In the following public letters, the Rebbe addresses the theme of a leap year: *Vav Tishrei* 5736; *Vav Tishrei* 5738 (and at its conclusion, *Chai Elul* 5738); *Shishi LaChodesh HaShevi'i* 5744; [also see *Rosh Chodesh* and *Yud Alef Nissan* 5744]; *Vav Tishrei* 5749; [also see *Rosh Chodesh* and *Ohr LeYud Alef Nissan* 5749].

Most of the above-referenced public letters are published in the *hosafos* (appended material) to various volumes of *Likkutei Sichos*, generally in the books on Devarim. They also appear in the *hosafos* to *Sefer HaSichos*; in various volumes of *Igros Kodesh*; in *Kovetz Hakhel*; and in Hebrew translation in *Igros Melech*.

Hakhel: Someone once wrote to the Rebbe, claiming that he feels purposeless, empty, without a *shlichus*. In his response, dated Cheshvan 27, 5748, the Rebbe circled the word *shlichus*, and remarked as follows:

“?! – I am screaming about *hakhel* activities. Have you not heard about this?”

Sunday Night, Tishrei 1, First Night of Rosh Hashanah

♦ If you are accustomed to smoking during Yom Tov, refrain from doing so throughout Rosh Hashanah, even in private. Try your best to influence others to refrain from smoking during Rosh Hashanah as well.

♦ Recite Tehillim before Maariv. Immediately before Maariv, the congregation sings *avinu malkeinu*.

♦ It has been the custom of the Rebbeim to *daven* this Maariv at length. On some level at least, this practice is applicable to all the Chassidim.

♦ Remember the numerous additions to the *amidah* for the *yamim noraim* and *aseres yemei teshuvah*. [These are: *zochreinu, mi chamocha*, (on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur only: *le-dor va-dor*), *hamelech ha-kadosh, u-kesov, u-ve-sefer, oseh ha-shalom* (remember this in *kaddish* as well). The laws that apply if you omitted any of these are recorded in the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch 582:1,2,6.]

Specifically: If you forget *zochreinu, mi chamocha, uch'sov, u'veseifer* – if you remember before saying Hashem's Name at the end of the *berachah*, say it where you remember, but if you remember after saying the *Shem* at the end of the *berachah*, do not say it. If you forget to say *le-dor va-dor, u'vechein tein pachdecha*, etc.: if you have not yet said the *Shem* of *ha-Melech ha-kadosh*, go back and say it; if you have already said the *Shem*, e.g., *uk'doshim bechol yom yehallelucha selah, baruch Atah Hashem ha-Melech ha-kadosh*, do not say it, just continue *atah vechartanu*. If you mistakenly said *ha-E-l ha-kadosh* (or even if you are in doubt), if you remember immediately, go back and say *ha-Melech ha-kadosh*, and you have fulfilled the obligation. However, if you remember after a short while has passed, or if you already started the next *berachah*, go back to the beginning of *shemone esrei*. If you only said *ha-E-l* but did not say *ha-kadosh*, even if some time has passed, you may conclude *ha-Melech ha-kadosh* and need not restart the *shemone esrei*. If you are in doubt as to whether you said *ha-Melech ha-kadosh*, but you are sure that you said the complete text of *le-dor va-dor, u'vechein tein pachdecha*, etc., you do not need to restart the *shemone esrei*.

♦ The congregation recites *le-Dovid mizmor* with deep

concentration following the *amidah* of Maariv. This is followed by *kaddish shaleim* and *aleinu*.

♦ We wish each other “*le-shanah tovah tikaseiv(i) ve-seichaseim(i)*” – using the Hebrew singular.

♦ For kiddush, recite (1) *borei peri ha-gafen* (2) *mekadesh yisrael ve-yom ha-zikaron*, and (3) *shehechiyanu*.

♦ If a woman recites *kiddush*, she does not repeat the blessing of *shehechiyanu* that she recited earlier over the candles.

♦ Dip your slice of challah into honey. This custom applies from Rosh Hashanah until Hoshana Rabbah included. For further details, see *Sefer HaSichos* 5704, p. 24; *Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad*, p. 67; and *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 14, p. 372, fn. 27.

♦ After eating the challah, take a piece of sweet apple, dip it in honey, recite (1) *borei peri ha-eitz* and (2) *yehi ratzon milfanecha she-techadeish aleinu shanah tovah u'mesukah*—and then eat it. For insight into this custom, see *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 3, p. 146.

♦ It is a *mitzvah* to eat, drink, and rejoice on Rosh Hashanah.

♦ It is customary to eat fish (symbolic of the blessing for offspring).

♦ Avoid eating all nuts and bitter foods on Rosh Hashanah.

♦ It is customary to eat a pomegranate, whose wealth of seeds is symbolic of the multiplicity of merits, as well as the head of a ram to recall *akeidas Yitzchak*. If that is not an option, the head of a lamb can be used. If that is similarly unavailable, the head of another creature—fish heads are common—is used as a symbol that “we should be at the head and not at the tail” during the coming year. In any case, we do not recite a *yehi ratzon* over these items.

♦ During *birchas ha-mazon*, add *ya’aleh ve-yavo, ha-rachaman hu yanchileinu* for Yom Tov, as well as *ha-rachaman hu yechadesh*. *Oseh shalom* is said, not *ha-shalom*.

♦ If you forgot to recite *ya’aleh ve-yavo* on the night (specifically) of Rosh Hashanah, and recalled the omission after you already began to recite *baruch ... ha-E-l avinu*, you must restart the entire *birchas ha-mazon*.

Monday, Tishrei 1, Rosh Hashanah Day I

- ♦ Rise early in the morning. *Neitz ha-chamah* (sunrise) is at approximately 6:30 am (in New York).
- ♦ **Shema** can be recited until **9:41** am (in New York).
- ♦ Individuals in good health should not eat before shofar. Many women are lenient, as they are not formally obligated to hear shofar.
- ♦ Do not blow the shofar or recite Musaf privately during the first three hours of the day, i.e. before the final time to recite *shema* – unless it will be impossible for you to do so later in the day.
- ♦ The one who blows the shofar for the congregation prepares in advance by studying in the morning the *ma'amar* entitled *Le-havin Inyan Teki'as Shofar* that is printed in *Siddur Im Dach*. Needless to say, he must have also familiarized himself with all of the laws of shofar sounding.

Hakhel: The concept of accepting Hashem's kingship on Rosh Hashanah through sounding the *shofar* is associated with the public reading of the Torah by the king at the *hakhel* event in the *beis hamikdash*. See *Michtav Klali Yemei Selichos* 5726. That letter concludes with, "May it be Hashem's will that He whom the Jewish people coronate on Rosh Hashanah as *Melech Yisrael* (King of the Jews) and as *Melech al kol ha-haretz* ("King over the entire earth") will grant each and every Jew success in accomplishing the above-mentioned and to the fullest extent, and that this will also bring closer and hasten the era in which we will be able to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *hakhel* in all of its details, in the *beis hamikdash*, with the coming of our righteous Moshiach speedily in our days!"

Hakhel: On Shabbos Shuvah 5748, the Rebbe explained that the theme of Rosh Hashanah, accepting Hashem as King, is a principal point that includes everything else within it:

"The Jewish people perform the coronation, the service of 'Make Me King over you!' through their act of *bitul*, whereby they surrender their entire beings to the King. This *bitul* forms a principle core which includes and is subsequently drawn into every part of the soul's powers. In this sense, *shofar* is related to the phrase *shapru ma'aseichem*, "improve your

actions,” meaning that the acceptance of the King pervades even a person’s actions. The other partner in the coronation is Hashem, who accepts the Jewish people’s act of coronation. Within Hashem, the coronation touches upon His most essential point of *malchus* that transcends actual rulership. It touches the innermost point that includes everything else. This is also the theme of *hakhel*: *Bitul*, complete surrender of one’s entire being and the dissolving of division of people into men, women, and children. Instead, the entire nation become a single entity, a solitary principle point that includes all of the details in a single, core unit.” (See also *Michtav Klali Yemei Selichos* 5740.)

Hakhel: The association between Rosh Hashanah and *hakhel* is that the concept of *hakhel* begins as soon as the *shmitah* year end and the following year begins, i.e., on Rosh Hashanah. In addition, the spiritual revelations of Sukkos (which is when *hakhel* occurs) exist in concealed form on Rosh Hashanah. These concepts are explained in *Sichas Yom Sheni D’Rosh Hashanah* 5741.

♦ Regarding children going on *mitzva’im* and sounding the *shofar*, it is preferable to be stringent and to not allow a boy who is not an adult according to Torah law (having sprouted two pubic hairs) to perform this *mitzvah* on behalf of others. (*Mateh Efrain*, 589:7). Whether a child younger than that could sound the *shofar* on behalf of others on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, when the requirement of *shofar* is Rabbinical in nature, in a matter of debate.

♦ Before Shacharis, the congregation sings *avinu malkeinu*.

♦ During Shacharis, add *shir ha-ma’alos mima’amakim* as well as *avinu malkeinu*. This is continued throughout the *aseres yemei teshuvah*.

♦ While reciting *avinu malkeinu*, take care to recite *ro’a gezar* (“evil [aspect] of the decree”) in one breath.

♦ Upon the opening of the *aron ha-kodesh*, recite *Hashem Hashem Kel rachum*, etc. three times, followed by *Ribono shel olam*.

♦ Two *Sifrei Torah* are read today. In the first, the story of Yitzchok’s birth is read because it began with Hashem

remembering Sarah on Rosh Hashanah. In the second, Maftir is read from *Parshas Pinchas* (*u'va-chodesh ha-shevi'i*). The *haftorah* is from the start of the book of Shmuel (until *v'yaraim keren meshicho*) because Chana's inability to conceive was similarly removed on Rosh Hashanah. The honor of reading the *haftorah* is granted to a person worthy of reverence.

- ♦ *Maftir* is given to a respected individual.
- ♦ Before the shofar is blown, each person should ready himself spiritually, mentally, and emotionally, and he should consciously intend to fulfill his obligation of hearing the shofar.
- ♦ Do not respond *baruch hu u'varuch shemo* to the blessings recited by the shofar blower.
- ♦ At a minimum, listen to 30 complete blasts of the *shofar*.
- ♦ A child who has reached the age of *chinuch* is obligated to hear the *shofar*.
- ♦ It is customary to bring children to hear the sounding of the shofar. Do not bring young children who will disturb the adults around them during the blowing of the shofar to the **men's** section of the synagogue.
- ♦ The *shevarim* and *teru'ah* in the first set of blowing (referred to as *meyushav*) are sounded in one breath, but with a slight pause between them. Chabad *minhag* calls for three and a half *shevarim*.
- ♦ Do not speak until the conclusion of all one hundred blasts (towards the end of Musaf), unless it is critical to the prayers or the blowing of the shofar.
- ♦ Look at the individual blowing shofar after he concludes blowing.
- ♦ During Musaf, recite *mi chamocho av ha-rachamim* and not *ha-rachaman*. This follows the opinion of the Arizal and applies to every Musaf, as well as the Minchah of Shabbos and Ne'ilah.
- ♦ We sound another 70 blasts of the *shofar*, bringing the total to 100. These additional blasts are sounded during the silent recital of Musaf, during the *chazzan's* repetition, and during the *kaddish shaleim* that follows.
- ♦ During these additional 70 blasts (referred to as

d'me'umad), we sound the *shevarim* and *teru'ah* in two separate breaths.

♦ We bow on the floor in the recital of *aleinu* during *chazaras ha-shatz*. If the floor is made of stone or stone tiles, place a cloth or something similar on the floor before bowing on it.

♦ The *kohanim* recite *birchas kohanim*. While they do so, the congregation should move their heads in the following sequence: *yivarechaha* – head erect, *Hashem* – lean head to the right, *ve-yishmerecha* – head erect, *ya'eir* – lean head to left, and so on until *shalom* when the head is erect.

♦ Recite the *Ribono Shel Olam* prayer only while the *kohanim* are singing, but not when they pronounce the actual words. At that point, you must remain silent and listen carefully. The prayer is split into three parts: While the *kohanim* sing before *ve-yaseim*, recite from *Ribono* until *ha-tzaddik*. While they sing before *lecha*, recite from *ve-im* until *Elisha*. While they sing before *shalom*, recite from *u'kesheim* until *le-tovah*. Then, as they pronounce *shalom*, recite the three final words *ve-sishmereini*, etc. Once the *kohanim* conclude *shalom*, say *amein* followed by *adir ba-marom*, while still covered by the *tallis*.

♦ After the prayers have concluded, it is our custom to sound another 30 shofar blasts to “confuse the Satan.”

♦ It is forbidden to blow the shofar needlessly on Rosh Hashanah.

♦ For daytime *kiddush* recite: (1) *tiku ba-chodesh... ki chok hu...* and (2) *savri maranan... borei peri ha-gafen*. We do not recite *askinu seudasa*.

♦ On Rosh Hashanah, it is the Jewish custom to eat a large meal including meat, for on this day one cannot do without meat and everyone purchases it in honor of yom tov, because at the beginning of the year it is a good omen to eat a large meal; therefore, the Sages relied on the original law of the Torah on *erev yom tov*, that by paying the money one legally acquires the meat, without needing to take physical possession (and someone who sells an animal to another on *erev yom tov* must inform him if he has sold its mother or its child to be slaughtered (so that the second animal will not be slaughtered the same day).

♦ If you forgot to recite *ya'aleh ve-yavo* during *birchas ha-mazon* for the daytime *seudah*, do not repeat *birchas ha-mazon*.

♦ It is customary to refrain from napping throughout the day. Idling the time is considered equal to napping.

♦ *Mivtza Shofar*: We reach out to Jews who have not had the opportunity to hear the *shofar*.

Hakhel: “First and foremost, we should utilize the spiritual awakening during Tishrei and especially during Rosh Hashanah, Shabbos *Shuvah*, and so on, to assemble Jewish men, women, children, and even infants; to gather them into a holy location, meaning a sacred atmosphere, in order to fulfill the purpose of the *mitzvah* of *hakhel*, as expressed in the Torah, ‘So that they may hear and so that they may learn to fear Hashem your G-d and to be careful to perform all the words of this Torah.’” (*Michtav Klali Vav Tishrei 5748*.)

Hakhel: For the significance of *hakhel* even after the spiritual service of Rosh Hashanah – referred to as *binyan ha-malchus* – has certainly been accomplished, see *Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu 5728*. The Rebbe explains there that our *avodah* carries on from one Yom Tov to the next.

If the Redemption occurs in time, this law will become relevant: During Musaf, we offer the following in the *beis hamikdash* in honor of Rosh Chodesh: two bulls, one ram, seven lambs as burnt-offerings, and one goat for a sin-offering, and the following in honor of Rosh Hashanah: one bull, one ram, seven lambs as burnt-offerings, and one goat for a sin-offering.

“It is an ancient custom, on each Rosh Chodesh, to study one verse of the chapter of Tehillim that corresponds with the current years of a person’s life. The verse should be studied with the commentary of Rashi, and additional commentaries may be added as well. If the current chapter contains less than twelve verses, or in a leap year, when there are more than twelve months, verses that have been studied on a previous Rosh Chodesh should be studied a second time. Similarly, if the current chapter contains many

verses, then two or three verses should be studied at once on each Rosh Chodesh of the year.”

Regarding the above directive, which on the one hand is a Rosh Chodesh custom, whereas we pointedly refrain from referring to Rosh Hashanah as a Rosh Chodesh and do not mention Rosh Chodesh in the prayers of the day. On the other hand, it would appear that Rosh Hashanah is included in this monthly study, since the custom speaks of twelve verses to be divided between every month of the year. As far as an explicit directive is concerned, I have never seen or heard anything about it.

- ♦ Recite *avinu malkeinu* during Minchah.
- ♦ Go to a spring or other natural source of water that contains live fish after Minchah – but before sunset – in order to recite Tashlich. Following Tashlich, shake the corners of your *tzitzis* (*tallis katan*).
- ♦ Poskim warn that women should not go to tashlich in an area where men are saying tashlich.
- ♦ It is forbidden to prepare anything on the first day of Rosh Hashanah for the second day of Rosh Hashanah **until nightfall** – at **7:48 pm** (in New York).

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah in the year 5507 (1746), the Baal Shem Tov experienced an ascent of soul into the highest heavenly realms. He entered the Palace of Moshiach and asked him, “When will the Master come?!” King Moshiach replied, “When your teachings will become known and revealed throughout the worlds; when your wellsprings, what I have taught you and you have understood, will have spread outward.”

Monday Night, Tishrei 2, Second Night of Rosh Hashanah

- ♦ Light the Yom Tov candles **after**—not before—**7:48 pm** in New York, taking a flame from a source of fire that had been lit before the onset of Rosh Hashanah.
- ♦ Recite two blessings over the candles: (1) *le-hadlik neir*

shel yom ha-zikaron and (2) *shehechyanu*.

- ♦ During the recitation of *shehechyanu*, either wear a new garment or gaze at a “new fruit” that will be eaten immediately after *kiddush*. Even if none of these are available, *shehechyanu* is nevertheless recited.
- ♦ Some are careful to avoid using the *yom tov* candle to light a flame that is not specifically for *yom tov* or to light the gas.
- ♦ Do not warm the base of a candle and stick it to its holder. This is prohibited as a precaution, so that you will not come to directly smoothen or straighten the bottom of the wax candle. Similarly, do not trim the bottom of a candle to insert it more easily into its holder. This would violate the prohibition of *mechateich* (cutting to shape or size). However, you may firmly press a candle into its position in the holder, even if this will cause its base to erode somewhat to fit the holder – this action is not considered *mechateich*.
- ♦ Technically, you may clean out a used candle holder on Yom Tov without fear of violating the prohibition of fixing an article on Yom Tov. Similarly, if using Neronim, you may clean a used glass holder from the metal disk that held the used wick in order to insert a new candle in its place. There is an issue, however, of *muktzah* with the remnants of used wax, charred wicks, or spent metal disks. These items are considered *muktzah* and may not be moved on Yom Tov. (This is especially an issue nowadays, when such items are considered disposable and will not be reused. Even in pre-modern times, when such materials were indeed reused, moving them was somewhat problematic. As the Alter Rebbe explains, “Although according to the strict letter of the law these items are not *muktzah*, it is appropriate to be careful not to move them unless for great need”. It is prohibited to move them even when moved for the sake of food preparation.”).
- ♦ The solution, if you are using wax candles, is to take the holder over to the garbage (since the glass holder is not *muktzah* (for reasons beyond the scope of this publication), and shake it out so that the remnants of wax and wick fall directly into the garbage can. If it cannot be removed through shaking, or if you are using liquid wax candles and

the spent disk has become stuck to the base of the glass holder so that it cannot be removed without prying it out with a knife or a similar object, you may not do so during Yom Tov. There is no difference in this case between using a knife and using your fingers – the issue of *muktzah* remains. One may however remove it with a *shinui*, using an item which is not the normal way to remove it. The preferred solution is to think ahead (as mentioned earlier) and pour a small quantity of oil into the holder on erev Yom Tov, which would prevent the disk from sticking to the glass in the first place. This would enable you to take the holder to the garbage can during Yom Tov and to empty its contents directly into the garbage.

- ♦ We recite Tehillim before Maariv.
- ♦ Immediately before Maariv, the congregation sings *avinu malkeinu*. This was the common practice in “770” over the years. However, during some years, the Rebbe did not encourage the singing before Maariv.
- ♦ “Perhaps, we should wish each other *le-shanah tovah tikaseiv(i) ve-seichaseim(i)* on the second night of Rosh Hashanah as well.” (The Rebbe)
- ♦ Recite the same *kiddush* as the first night of Rosh Hashanah, including *shehechyanu*.
- ♦ During the recital of *shehechyanu*, gaze at a “new fruit.” *Shehechyanu* is recited even if no such fruit is present.
- ♦ Immediately after *kiddush*, before washing your hands for *ha-motzi*, eat the “new fruit.” Remember to recite *ha-eitz* before eating the fruit. Eat enough to recite the *brachah acharonah*.

Tuesday, Tishrei 2, Second Day of Rosh Hashanah

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah in the year 5703 (1942), Rebbetzin Sheina Horenstein, the youngest daughter of the Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe’s sister-in-law, was taken to the gas-chambers in Treblinka. May Hashem avenge her blood! (See the Rebbe’s Introduction to *Kuntras* 86 that appears in *Sefer HaMa’amarim* 5711, p. 106.)

- ♦ Shacharis is the same as on the first day of Rosh Hashanah.
- ♦ The Torah portion of the *akeidah* is read in order to invoke its merit in our favor. The *maftir* is identical to yesterday's. The *haftorah* is from Yirmiyah (*Ko amar... ha-bein yakir...*) due to the obligation to recite verses of remembrances today (in this case, "Is Efraim not My beloved son ... whenever I speak of him, I recall him even more....").
- ♦ The *minhag* of our Rebbeim is to silently and discreetly recite *yizkor* on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. Each person can decide for himself whether to follow suit.
- ♦ Musaf is the same as on the first day of Rosh Hashanah.
- ♦ Mivtza Shofar: We reach out to Jews who have not had the opportunity to hear the shofar.
- ♦ Following Minchah, a *farbrengen* is conducted at which the *nigunim* of all the Rebbeim are sung – making mention of each of them before singing their respective *nigun*.
- ♦ "Before nightfall on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, it is the custom of the Rebbe *shlita* to wash his hands for a meal, in the course of which he delivers a *maamar*. This is followed by *birchas ha-mazon*, Maariv, *havdalah*, and the distribution of wine to all those present from *kos shel berachah*, the cup over which the blessings *birchas ha-mazon* were recited." (*Sefer Haminhagim Chabad*.)
- ♦ It is customary to join the final moments of Rosh Hashanah and the initial moments of *motza'ei* Rosh Hashanah in the study of Chassidus.

The Rebbe writes: "My revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, once related the following: 'On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, my father (the Rebbe Rashab) would continue delivering his *maamar* until it was night. The reason: He wanted to draw down into the material world, represented by the onset of *motza'ei* Yom Tov, all [the influx of spiritual light] that had been brought down during the forty-eight hours of Rosh Hashanah – so that the light of *Chassidus* should illuminate the world in all its aspects, and be perceptible within it.'

"And I for my part would like to suggest that each and every individual should do likewise, fusing the hours of

Rosh Hashanah with the following weekday hours through the study of *Chassidus*. Then, by virtue of - *and through* - the path that our Rebbeim have paved for us, the light of *Chassidus* will be drawn down for us, too, all the way down into the most material of our activities.”

A law that will become relevant with the Redemption: Towards evening (according to some opinions – tomorrow morning), the Kohen Gadol leaves his house and does not return until after completing his Yom Kippur service. From this point on, he remains in the *lishkas parhedrin* in the *beis hamikdash*.

Tuesday Night, Motza'ei Rosh Hashanah

- ♦ Rosh Hashanah **ends at 7:46 pm** (in New York).
- ♦ During Maariv on *motza'ei* Rosh Hashanah, include the additions for the *aseres yemei teshuvah* as well as *atah chonantanu* and *ha-melech ha-mishpat*. For the laws about one who forgets these additions, consult the guidelines printed in the Siddur.
- ♦ Recite *havdalah* without a flame and spices.

Wednesday, Tishrei 3, Fast of Tzom Gedalya

Today is the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, daughter of the Alter Rebbe, mother of the Tzemach Tzedek. She passed away in the year 5553 (1792).

- ♦ The third of Tishrei, *Tzom Gedaliah*, marks the assassination of Gedaliah ben Achikam. *Chazal* consider his assassination a tragedy equal to the destruction of the *beis hamikdash*.
- ♦ The fast begins at the break of dawn, at **5:14 am** in New York.
- ♦ Those who are ill, and pregnant or nursing women who are caused pain by the fast do not need to fast.
- ♦ It is customary to give an abundance of *tzedakah* during public fasts. It is customary to calculate the cost of the food that you would have eaten were it not a fast day – and to give that amount to the poor during the evening of the fast.

The Rebbe explains the association between *Tzom Gedalya* and *hakhel* in *Sichas Tzom Gedalya* 5748.

- ♦ Only the *chazzan* recites *aneinu* during Shacharis.
- ♦ *Selichos* are recited as part of Shacharis, not before. (These *selichos* are found in the book of *Selichos*). *Avinu malkeinu* is recited. We recite the *nusach* for *aseres yemei teshuvah*. We read the Torah portion of *va-yechal*.

A law that will become relevant with the Redemption:

For seven days (starting from today), the Kohen Gadol is personally involved in sprinkling the blood of the daily *tamid* offerings, offering incense, trimming the lamps, and burning the parts of the daily *tamid* offerings in order that he become accustomed to the Yom Kippur service. Each day, the elders of the *Beis Din* read to him and teach him the order of the Yom Kippur service. They would say to him: read yourself with your own mouth; perhaps you have forgotten.

- ♦ We repeat the reading of *va-yechal* during Minchah, followed by the *haftorah* of *dirshu*.
- ♦ At Mincha prayers, each person recites *aneinu* in the blessing of *shome'a tefilah*. The *chazzan* recites *aneinu* following the blessing of *go'eil yisrael*. The *chazzan* also adds the *nusach* of *birchas kohanim* as he regularly does during Shacharis. *Avinu malkeinu* is recited. We recite the *nusach* for *aseres yemei teshuvah*.
- ♦ Following Minchah, it is traditional to attend a lecture aimed at inspiring us to improve ourselves and enhance our observance.
- ♦ The **fast ends** at **7:31 pm** in New York.

Thursday, Tishrei 4, Aseres Yemei Teshuva

- ♦ Throughout the *aseres yemei teshuvah*, each person scrutinizes his conduct over the past year and amends their ways in the spirit of *teshuvah*. During this time, one should be punctilious to observe extra stringencies, even if they does not observe these stringencies throughout the year, being especially careful regarding *kashrus*.
- ♦ One who has not arranged for the annulment of his vows on *erev* Rosh Hashanah should do so during these days.

♦ Those who are eager to perform mitzvos use this earliest opportunity to purchase their set of *arbah minim* – unless they are able to acquire better quality *minim* by waiting until after Yom Kippur.

♦ Make certain that the *minim* you buy are entirely kosher and also *mehudar*; buy an esrog which is not grafted, without a doubt. **Buy them only from reputable vendors who are known to be scrupulous in their observance of mitzvos.** The *minim* to be used on the first day of Sukkos, including *aravos*, may not be purchased from a minor. The detailed laws are recorded in the Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch (645-9).

♦ If you are unsure whether you are obligated in the Yom Kippur fast (due to illness, giving birth, etc.) ask a Rav well in advance.

Hakhel: “It is preferable that in addition to *hakhel* gatherings during the days of Sukkos, they should hurry to make gatherings earlier, during the *aseres yemei teshuvah*.” (Public letter dated Tishrei 6, 5748). In the *sichah* of Tishrei 6, 5748, the Rebbe explained that the gatherings should be on special dates, beginning with *aseres yemei teshuvah* that are similar to *chol ha-mo’ed*. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 24, p. 310 ff., which appears above, Sunday, Elul 22.

Erev Shabbos, Tishrei 5

The following law will apply with the coming of the Redemption: The Kohen Gadol is sprinkled with the ashes of the Red Heifer on the third day of his isolation.

♦ We recite *shanyim mikra* of *Parshas Vayeilech* with the *haftarah* of Shabbos *Shuva*.

♦ Do not recite *avinu malkeinu* during Minchah.

♦ It the custom in the household of the Rebbeim to light a *teshuvah licht* in honor of Shabbos *Teshuvah*.

♦ It is a *mitzvah* to check your pockets before Shabbos to make sure that you will not inadvertently carry in the public domain on Shabbos.

♦ Candle lighting is at **6:42 pm** (in New York), which is 18 minutes before sunset.

Shabbos Shuvah/Teshuvah, Tishrei 6

Hakhel: The Rebbe explains the association between Shabbos *Shuvah* and *hakhel* in *Sichas Shabbos Shuvah* 5748. (Among other considerations, Shabbos *Shuvah* is the day of rectification for every Shabbos of the outgoing year. Since the outgoing year was a *smitah* year, it is referred to in entirety as “Shabbos.” All this serves to influence each Shabbos of the coming year to a far greater degree). For an alternative approach, see *Shabbos Shuvah* 5741.

Today marks the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbetzin Chanah, the mother of the Rebbe, who passed away in 5725 (1964).

- ♦ Recite *ha-Melech ha-kadosh* in the blessing of *magen avos* that is recited after the Maariv *amidah*.
- ♦ Some say that if you forget *retzei vehachalitzeinu* in bentching on the day of Shabbos *Shuva*, and you remember after beginning the beracha of *ha-tov ve-ha-meitiv*, you do not have to repeat bentching, because some say that one ought to be fasting on this day. In actual fact, this needs to be clarified (see *Matteh Efraim* 583:3) even when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbos. (Also, note what is implied by the text of the Alter Rebbe in *Shulchan Aruch* 188:10, that on Rosh Hashanah there is no obligation to eat bread. See Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch* 529:6. Even according to those who permit fasting on Shabbos *Teshuva*, it is apparently not a *mitzvah* like on Rosh Hashanah, but merely on account of the laws of teshuva, like a *ta’anis chalom*). If you remember after *baruch atah Hasham boneh Yerushalayim*, before beginning the fourth beracha, everyone agrees that you must say the *berachah* of *asher nasan*....
- ♦ *Avinu malkeinu* is not recited on Shabbos because it is forbidden to request personal needs during Shabbos.
- ♦ It is reported that when the *sefer torah* was removed from the *aron ha-kodesh* during Shacharis on Shabbos *Shuvah*, the Rebbe would recite the *yamim nora'im* phrase of *kadosh ve-norah shemo*.
- ♦ Some make a point of only calling an esteemed individual to the *maftir* on this Shabbos.
- ♦ Recite *av ha-rachamim* following the reading of the Torah.

- ♦ The Torah portion of *Ha'azinu* is read during Minchah. Recite *tzidkasecha* following the *amidah*.
- ♦ Beginning this week, *Pirkei Avos* is no longer said.
- ♦ Regarding *hakhel* gatherings on Shabbos *Shuvah*, see public letter dated Tishrei 6, 5748, part of which is quoted above for the first day of Rosh Hashanah.
- ♦ In 770, the Shabbos *Shuvah drashah* will be held at 6:30 pm.

Hakhel: In a public letter dated Iyar 13, 5741, the Rebbe called for Torah gatherings during the year of *hakhel*, to be held according to the instructions by the local *Rav*. Notably, in several *sichos*, the Rebbe mentions that *hakhel* activities are to be conducted via the local *Rav* of the city.

Sunday, Tishrei 7

- ♦ Shabbos ends at **7:40 pm** (in New York).
- ♦ In *Maariv* at the conclusion of Shabbos, add the additions for the *aseres yemei teshuva* as mentioned earlier; also *atah chonantanu*.
- ♦ Do not recite *vihy no'am* and *ve-Atah kadosh* on this *Motza'ei* Shabbos.
- ♦ Recite *havdalah* over wine, spices, and a flame, followed by *veyiten lecha*.
- ♦ Even if one usually makes do with fruit or other light refreshment on *motza'ei* Shabbos, he should nevertheless spread a tablecloth and eat at least a *kezayis* of bread for *melava malka* tonight. This should indeed be done every *motza'ei* Shabbos, but especially tonight, because the *aseres yemei teshuvah* is a time to put extra effort into each *mitzvah*.

Monday, Tishrei 8

Today marks the *yahrtzeit* of the *tzaddik* Rabbi Baruch, the father of the Alter Rebbe, in 5552 (1791).

- ♦ Whoever was unable to perform *tashlich* on Rosh Hashanah should do so on this day, which is referred to as “the day of the thirteen attributes of mercy.”

Tuesday, Tishrei 9, Erev Yom Kippur

♦ From the ninth of Tishrei until the second day of Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan (not included), do not recite *tachanun*, *lamnatze'ach ya'anacha*, and *tefilah le-Dovid*.

♦ It is forbidden to fast on this day.

♦ It is a *mitzvah* to increase the number of meals eaten on this day so that we eat the equivalent of two days' worth of meals. According to some opinions, the obligation to eat more than usual begins the night before.

♦ *Kapparos*: We *shecht* the *kapparos* chickens at the break of dawn (the significance is explained in the *siddur*). We use one chicken per household member, a chicken for a female and a rooster for a male. A pregnant woman uses two chickens and one rooster. It is a *hiddur* to personally cover the blood of the chicken or rooster *kapparos* after it has been *shechted*, and to recite the blessing *al kisuy ha-dam be-afar*. Donate the monetary equivalent of the *kapparos* to the poor.

♦ It is customary to wear Yom Tov clothing on *erev* Yom Kippur. The Rebbeim wore silk garments (as on Shabbos and Yom Tov) in the morning following *kapparos*.

♦ Immerse in a *mikveh* before Shacharis.

♦ Do not spend a great time in prayer during Shacharis. Do not recite *mizmor le-sodah*, *tachanun*, *avinu malkeinu*, *lamnatze'ach*, and *tefilah le-David*.

♦ Request a piece of *lekach* (honey cake) from another person and partake from what you receive.

♦ On *erev* Yom Kippur, the Rebbe would distribute *lekach* (honey cake) to each individual who approached him. The Rebbe wore his silk Shabbos *kapota* and his *gartel* for this occasion. He wished each individual *shannah tovah u'mesukah*, a good and sweet year. (*Sefer Minhagim Chabad*.)

The following two laws will apply with the coming of the Redemption: The Kohen Gadol is sprinkled with the ashes of the Red Heifer on the seventh day of his isolation. The Kohen Gadol stands in the Eastern Gate of the *beis hamikdash*. We parade bulls, rams, and lambs in front of the Kohen Gadol so that he is familiar with them for the sake of the following day's service.

In the daily morning prayers, when discussing how the incense was prepared, we mention as follows: “and the other three *manim* from which the *kohen gadol* took two handfuls [into the Holy of Holies] on Yom Kippur. These [three *manim*] were put back into the mortar on the day before Yom Kippur and ground again very thoroughly so as to make the incense extremely fine.

- ♦ Eat the *erev* Yom Kippur meal before midday (*chatzos*). Dip the challah in honey, and eat fish and *kreplach* (small pouches of meat-filled dough, generally served in soup).
- ♦ Eat foods that are easily digestible such as fish and fowl. Avoid garlic, eggs, and sesame seeds. Restrict milk products to the morning meal.
- ♦ Before immersing in a *mikveh* and praying Minchah, ask someone to administer 39 *malkos* (lashes) to your back while you bend over facing north. These are struck lightly, preferably with a leather strap or belt, although any kind of material can be used. Begin with one strike to the right shoulder, a second to the left shoulder, and a third slightly lower, in the center of the back. This counter clockwise pattern is repeated 13 times, in total 39 times. Both you and the one administering the lashes should together recite the verse *ve-hu rachum yechaper avon...*—one word per strike.
- ♦ Following the lashes, immerse in a *mikveh* to achieve purity and *teshuvah*. Immerse 3 times. Be careful to avoid any adhering substance that could be considered a *chatzitzah*.
- ♦ Give a lot of *tzedakah*. It is our custom to drop many coins into *tzedakah* boxes and plates as we make our way to Minchah.
- ♦ Recite *vidui* and *al cheit* during Minchah, following the first *yiheyu le-ratzon*. Pray at length, with profound feelings of *teshuvah* from the depths of your heart and soul. Do not recite *Avinu Malkeinu*.
- ♦ Recite *vidui* while standing upright; do not lean heavily on anything. (This is also true of each time that *vidui* is recited in the *chazzan's* repetition). It is preferable to bow slightly while reciting *vidui*, as when reciting *modim*. Lightly strike your chest with your fist while reciting

ashamnu, etc., as well as *al cheit shechatanu*, *ve-al chata'im she-anu chayavim*, and *selach lanu*, etc.

♦ If you are reciting *vidui* during the silent *amidah* and the *chazzan* begins the repetition, you may respond *amein* after the *chazzan's* recital of *ha-Melech ha-kadosh* and *shome'a tefilah*. If the *chazzan* begins *kedushah*, you may respond for *kadosh*, *baruch*, and *yimloch*. You may also answer *amein yehei Shmei rabba* and *amein* after *d'amiran b'al'ma*.

♦ Yom Kippur does not atone for wrongs done to others, unless the wronged parties express their forgiveness. One should take pains to appease whoever they wronged—even if it was “only” a matter of spoken words. When requesting forgiveness, specify the wrong that you performed unless it would embarrass the injured party. The wronged party should forgive immediately. The laws of forgiveness are detailed in *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 606.

The following law will apply with the coming of the Redemption: The elders of the *Beis Din* hand over the Kohen Gadol to the elders of the priesthood, and they in turn would take him up to the upper chamber of the house of Abtinas to teach him the particulars of scooping the incense. An oath is administered to him that he does not alter the service.

♦ For the *se'udah ha-mafsekes*, wash your hands for *hamotzi* and eat at least a *kebeitzah*, dipping the challah in honey. Avoid salt in foods during this meal. Avoid fish and dairy products, sharp spices, and any food that causes the body temperature to rise.

♦ If you intend to eat or drink after reciting *birchas hamazon* at the conclusion of the *se'udah ha-mafsekes*, state so explicitly before concluding your meal.

♦ Some are accustomed to immersing in the *mikveh* following the *se'udah ha-mafsekes* in proximity to the onset of Yom Kippur. This can only be done if there is ample time to conclude before sunset.

♦ Wear clean clothes in honor of Yom Kippur. Spread a tablecloth as you do for Shabbos and Yom Tov. (See below in the introduction to Yom Kippur).

♦ We are stringent to avoid *hatmanah*, setting up food today to be kept warm throughout Yom Kippur to be used

after the fast, unless it is needed by those who are weak.

♦ Nowadays, universal custom prohibits preparing food on the actual day of Yom Kippur to be eaten after the fast. Therefore, extra care should be taken that all preparations should be completed before the fast.

♦ Every married man should light a *lebidike licht*, a candle for the living, in the *shul*. One also lights *yahrtzeit* candles (*ner neshamah*) for departed parents at home. Prepare a candle that will be used on *motza'ei* Yom Kippur (see below in connection to *havdalah*).

♦ **Candle lighting** is at **6:35 pm** (in New York), which is 18 minutes before sunset. Recite two blessings: (1) *lehadlik ner shel yom ha-kipurim* and (2) *shehechyanu*. The candles should burn long enough so that they are still lit when you return home from *shul* after Maariv. One should also leave a light on in the bedroom. Regular electric lighting is sufficient for this purpose.

♦ Men should stop eating and observe the other restrictions of Yom Kippur in advance, no later than visible **sunset**, which is at **6:53 pm** (in New York). Women accept Yom Kippur at candle lighting time.

♦ Married men wear a *kittel*, unless they are in their first year of marriage and wore a *kittel* for their *chupah*. Do not enter a bathroom while wearing a *kittel*. Put on your *tallis* with a blessing before sunset (*sheki'ah*). If you only do so after sunset, do not recite the blessing.

♦ Check your pockets in advance of nightfall—you have been wearing your Shabbos clothes today and may not remember that you are carrying something.

♦ Bless your children with *birchas ha-banim* before leaving your home for *kol nidrei*. It is customary to recite the text of *birchas kohanim*.

♦ When you notice nightfall approaching, stand and recite *vidui* (*ashamnu* and *al cheit*). Men and women are equally obligated in the mitzvah of *vidui*.

Tuesday Night, Tishrei 10, Yom Kippur

“There are no greater festivals for the Jewish people than ... Yom Kippur.” (*Taanis* 5:8)

Hakhel: The theme of *hakhel* is that the whole nation becomes one congregation and one entity. This theme is also expressed on Yom Kippur, referred to in the Torah as “one day in the year,” meaning the most auspicious, unique day of the year. “One day” also means that it is a day of oneness and unity. (See at length, the Rebbe’s public letter issued between Yom Kippur and Sukkos 5741.)

♦ It is a Torah obligation (*d’Oraisa*) to commence Yom Kippur a little early, to add from the mundane and to sanctify it— at least from the time of visible sunset, 6:53 pm in New York.

♦ There are five Yom Kippur restrictions:

(1) No eating or drinking even the slightest quantity, although food may be handled. Children from the age of nine or ten are trained to fast an age-appropriate number of hours. Children under that age must not be allowed to fast even if they so desire. Someone suffering from a life-threatening illness eats and drinks; if medically permissible, they should restrict themselves to specific quantities (*shiurim*) at a time. Obviously, this should be under the direct guidance of a Rav. They do not recite *kiddush*, nor do they use *lechem mishneh*. If they will be eating a bread, they should wash their hands first; if they eat small quantities at a time (*shiurim*), they do not recite the blessing of *al netilas yadayim*. If they eat a *kezayis* in the amount of time known as *k’dai achilas pras*, they must recite *birchas ha-mazon*; they include *retzei* and *ya’aleh ve-yavo*, and use the phrase *es yom selichas ha-avon hazeh es yom mikra kodesh ha-zeh*.

(2) Any washing of the body is forbidden, even to remove sweat. Rinsing the mouth is prohibited. If a person became sullied with dirt or excrement, he should wash the sullied area only. One who touches a part of the body that is normally kept covered should wash his fingers until the knuckles. When visiting the bathroom, touch such a covered area of the body so that you can wash your hands as described. If you are about to pray, wash your hands in this manner even if you did not touch a covered area. An ill person washes in their ordinary manner.

(3) It is forbidden to place oils or lotions on the skin, even

in the tiniest amount and even for the sake of removing sweat. It is permissible for medical reasons.

(4) It is forbidden to wear leather footwear, even if only the outer covering is made of leather. It is preferable not to use wooden footwear either. Chabad *minhag* does not follow the opinion that bans rubber galoshes and the like. A woman within 30 days of childbirth, someone who is ill, and someone with a foot injury—who find cold floors particularly uncomfortable—are permitted to wear regular footwear. However, they still should invite some discomfort such as switching the right shoe for the left, if feasible. Nowadays when non-leather shoes are very common and comfortable, one should not seek to be lenient in this regard.

(5) Married couples must observe all of the *harchakos* by night and by day.

- ♦ It is forbidden to dress children with leather shoes, even if they are under the age of *chinuch*. They should not be bathed, and creams or oils should not be applied on them. If they do so of their own accord, their father must stop them. Once they reach the age of *chinuch*, they should fast an appropriate number of hours, during which time it is forbidden to give them food and drink; if they take it themselves, their father must stop them.

- ♦ Before *kol nidrei*, *avinu malkeinu* is sung. Recite chapters 115-123 of Tehillim, open the *aron*, and recite *kol nidrei* followed by the blessing of *shehechyanu*.

- ♦ The congregation recites *shehechyanu* quietly, making a point of concluding before the *chazzan* so that they can respond *amein* to his blessing. It is a *mitzvah* to publicize that whoever recited *shehechyanu* earlier over the candles should not do so now.

- ♦ During the *shema* of Maariv, recite *baruch shem...* in a loud voice. After *aleinu* and *kaddish yasom*, recite chapters 1-4 of Tehillim, followed by another *kaddish yasom*. Then read the entire book of Tehillim, from its beginning.

- ♦ Recite *kri'as shema al ha-mitah* as on every Shabbos and Yom Tov. Recite *baruch shem* out loud. Do not recite *tachanun* or *al cheit*. Before going to sleep, recite chapters 124-132 of Tehillim. Do not wrap yourself snugly in blankets and covers; at least leave your feet uncovered.

Wednesday, Tishrei 10, Day of Yom Kippur

♦ Rise early in the morning. Wash your fingers until your knuckles only. Do not intend to derive personal pleasure from the washing. Kohanim wash in the morning upon arising and again before *birchas kohanim* in the regular manner—until the wrist. Dry your hands and pass the damp towel over your eyes in order to remove the sleep from your eyes. If your eyes are sullied, you may clean them. Do not rinse your mouth.

♦ Do not recite *she-asah li kol tzarki* at all on Yom Kippur.

♦ If during the course of the day you removed your *tallis* for a few hours, you must repeat the blessing on the *tallis* whenever you put it back on. If you removed it with the intention not to wear it for a few hours, but then changed your mind and put it on immediately (i.e. before a few hours elapsed), you do not repeat the blessing on the *tallis* provided you are wearing a *tallis katan*.

♦ *Avinu malkeinu zechor rachamecha* is recited during each *tefillah* of Yom Kippur daytime.

♦ Recite *avinu malkeinu* after the conclusion of *chazaras ha-shatz*.

♦ Upon opening the *aron ha-kodesh*, recite *Hashem Hashem Kel rachum* etc. three times, followed by *Ribono shel olam*.

♦ In order to complete the daily quota of 100 blessings, concentrate on the blessings that are recited over the *aliyos* and *maftir*. If possible, recite a blessing over spices. You may recite the blessing upon smelling spices repeatedly throughout the day, as long as you focused your attention on something else and forgot about the spices in the interim.

♦ *Yizkor* is recited after the reading of the Torah and *haftarah*. Anyone who has both living parents must exit the shul during *yizkor*. During the year of mourning, one remains inside the shul, but does not recite *yizkor*.

♦ Recite *av ha-rachamim*.

♦ Whether those who are not saying *yizkor* should say *av ha-rachamim*: they should do as they wish. This is a public

hazkaras neshamos, and so it is not said on days when *tachanun* is not said; but on Yom Kippur, when we say individual *hazkaras neshamos*, this may also be said.

♦ Kneel on the floor four times during Musaf – during *aleinu* and the *avodah*. While reciting *vidui* as part of the account of the *avodah*, strike your chest in the usual manner.

♦ The *kohanim* recite *birchas kohanim*. While they do so, the congregation should move their heads in the following sequence: *Yivarechaha* – head erect, *Hashem* – lean head to the right, *Ve-yishmerecha* – head erect, *Ya'eir* – lean head to left, and so on until *Shalom* when the head is erect.

♦ Recite the *Ribono Shel Olam* prayer only while the *kohanim* are singing, but not when they pronounce the actual words. At that point, you must remain silent and listen carefully. The prayer is split into three parts: While the *kohanim* sing before *ve-yaseim*, recite from *Ribono* until *ha-tzaddik*. While they sing before *lecha*, recite from *ve-im* until *Elisha*. While they sing before *Shalom*, recite from *u'kesheim* until *le-tovah*. Then, as they pronounce *Shalom*, recite the three final words *ve-sishmereini*, etc. Once the *kohanim* conclude *Shalom*, say *amein* followed by *adir ba-marom*, while still covered by the *tallis*.

♦ Do not recite *ein keilokeinu*. It is postponed until after the conclusion of *Ne'ilah*.

♦ Recite the daily portion of Tehillim, followed by chapters 133-141 and *kaddish yasom*.

♦ There is a break between Musaf and Minchah. If possible, it should be at least three quarters of an hour.

Hakhel: On Tishrei 6, 5748, the Rebbe stated, “*Hakhel* events should be held especially on important dates, and even more so on Yom Kippur, [which the Torah refers to as] ‘one day in the year.’” [Yom Kippur is the most auspicious date in the calendar. “One day” also reflected the unity of *hakhel*, when the nation assembles as one].

The following law will become relevant with the coming of the Redemption: We offer two lambs as *temidim*, as we do each day of the year. For the Musaf offering (described in *Parshas Pinchas*): An ox, a ram, and seven lambs

as burnt-offerings, and a goat for a sin-offering (performed outside and eaten in the evening). For the Yom Kippur service (described in *Parshas Acharei*): The Kohen Gadol's ox and ram, the communal ram, as well as a sin-offering goat offered "for Hashem" (performed in the Temple building and burnt). This brings us to a total of 15 sacrifices, in addition to the goat dispatched "to *azazel*." The Yom Kippur Temple service is described in all its details in the *avodah* section in the *machzor*. In the sicha of 6 Tishrei 5748, it is mentioned that the gatherings of hakhel should be held especially on festival days, and most certainly on Yom Kippur, the **one day** in the year.

♦ As mentioned, nowadays, universal custom prohibits preparing food on Yom Kippur that is to be eaten after the fast. A weak person may prepare food after the time of *minchah ketanah* (4:21 pm in New York); in such a case, it is preferable that they give some of the food to a child who is not fasting to eat before the conclusion of Yom Kippur.

♦ Recite *va-yedaber* and *ketores* before Minchah as usual. Do not recite *ashrei*, *u'vo le-tzion*, and *va-ani tefilasi*. *Va-ani tefilasi* is recited in praise of the Jewish people who return to shul to daven and read from the Torah after their Shabbos meal, and this reasoning does not apply on Yom Kippur.

♦ The end of the Torah portion of *Acharei Mos* is read, followed by *maftir Yonah*.

♦ Minchah is concluded with *avinu malkeinu*, *kaddish tiskabel*, *le-Dovid Hashem ori*, and *kaddish yasom*. Do not recite *aleinu* at the conclusion of Minchah.

♦ Begin *Ne'ilah* in proximity to sunset (*sheki'ah*). "Now is the concluding time of the sealing [of the decisions for the entire year] and we need to request mercy. If not now – when?" (Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*).

♦ Open the *aron* before reciting *ashrei*. During *kaddish*, repeat *le-eila u'le-eila*.

♦ Replace all mention of "inscribing" with "sealing" – *chasmeinu be-sefer ha-chayim... va-chasom le-chayim tovim... nizacheir ve-neichaseim le-fonecha*. In *avinu malkeinu*, say *chasmeinu be-sefer*. Recite *mi chamocho av ha-rachamim* and not *ha-rachaman*.

♦ At the conclusion of Ne'ilah, after proclaiming *Shema Yisrael*, *Baruch Shem*, and *Hashem hu ha-Elokim*, the *chazzan* recites *kaddish tiskabel* as far as *da'amiran b'al'ma v'imru amen*. Then Napoleon's March is sung, followed by a single blast of the *shofar*. The *shofar* may not be sounded until after nightfall. Then *le-shanah ha-ba'ah* is called out, and the *chazzan* completes *kaddish tiskabel*.

♦ Recite *kavei*, *pitum ha-ketores*, *kaddish d'rabanan*, *aleinu*, *kaddish yasom*, followed by chapters 142-150 of Tehillim.

♦ After nightfall, do not perform any *melachah* until you have recited *atah chonantanu* in Maariv or *baruch ha-mavdil*.

♦ All the restrictions of Yom Kippur are lifted immediately upon its conclusion, which occurs a brief time into the night (*le-hosif me-chol al ha-kodesh*). Eating remains forbidden until after *havdalah*.

♦ Recite Maariv and *havdalah* while dressed in your *kittel* and *tallis*. Make sure that your *tallis* is only over your shoulders, not your head. Wear a hat (and not just a *yarmulke*) for Maariv and *havdalah*. Remember to add *atah chonantanu* during Maariv.

♦ If you said *ha-Melech ha-kadosh* or *ha-Melech ha-mishpat* during Maariv, correct yourself immediately. If you only realized at a later point in the prayer, do not repeat the *amidah*.

♦ Do not recite *vihy no'am* and *ve-Atah kadosh*.

♦ If you said *zachreinu le-chayim* up to and including the word *v'chasveinu*, conclude the *amidah* and then repeat the entire *amidah* without those insertions as a *nedavah* (voluntary prayer).

♦ The fast ends—after *havdalah*—at **7:33 pm**.

Motza'ei Yom Kippur

♦ After Yom Kippur, we wish each other “*gut yom tov!*”

♦ Before reciting *havdalah*, wash your hands until the wrist, three times each, but without a blessing. Kohanim must do so as well, despite having washed in this manner in the afternoon before *birchas kohanim*. Wash your face

and rinse your mouth.

♦ Recite *havdalah* as usual and with a flame, but without spices. For the flame, use a source of fire that has remained lit from before the onset of Yom Kippur—or light a candle from such a source. Customarily, we use both: Light a second candle from the original candle that remained alight in the home throughout Yom Kippur and then use the two of them together for the blessing.

♦ On every *motza'ei* Shabbos, if you have no flame, you need not go after it the same as you would go after other *mitzvos*. However, on *motza'ei* Yom Kippur, some say that you must go after the *berachah* on fire, because this is like the *berachah* of *havdala* when we bless the Holy One who set aside for us this day from other festivals by forbidding us to extinguish flames until presently, at night.

♦ Women (who are unable to wait for their husbands to return from *shul* before eating) may recite their own *havdalah*. They may use wine, grape juice, or *chamar medinah* such as tea or coffee.

♦ Recite *kiddush levanah* from a *siddur* after *havdalah* while wearing a *gartel*.

♦ In a *sicha* on Simchas Torah in the year 5750, the Rebbe stated, “We have only just prayed Ne’ilah ... until its conclusion, *Avinu Malkeinu* and *Shema Yisrael*, etc., including *le-shanah ha-ba’ah bi-Yerushalayim* with the *teki’ah gedolah* that precedes this proclamation...Coming from such an elevated spiritual position as this, what is the frantic rush to eat?! ... We should work and toil on ourselves until we are in such a position ... that upon the conclusion of the holy day, we do not think about food and drink ... Rather, we eat *lishmah*—for the sake of fulfilling the Torah’s instruction, ‘Go eat your bread in joy,’ and without mixing in the material enjoyment derived from consuming physical food!”

♦ Upon the conclusion of Yom Kippur, a *bas kol* proclaims, “Go eat your bread in joy.” Eat and rejoice; it is considered a partial Yom Tov. We eat a *seudah*. Partake of a large and plentiful meal and dip your *challah* in honey.

♦ Involve yourself in the construction of a *sukkah*. Most people do not observe this in actuality, but instead fulfill their obligation by discussing the construction of a *Sukkah*

(and studying the laws of the *sukkah*).

Thursday, Tishrei 11

- ♦ This day is known as *G-t's Nomen* (Hashem's Name). Go to *shul* early for Shacharis.
- ♦ The days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos are joyful days during which time the Jews inaugurated the Temple Altar in the times of Shlomo *HaMelech*. Do not fast until after *isru chag* (included), unless a chosson and kallah on their wedding day.
- ♦ One who pledged to give *tzedakah* during *yizkor* should not delay in fulfilling their pledge.
- ♦ Busy yourself in constructing a Sukkah and purchasing the *arba minim*. Make certain that the *s'chach* is placed in such a manner that enables it to withstand an ordinary wind throughout the duration of *Sukkos*. This is a particular issue with mats. The *s'chach* may not be supported with material susceptible to *tum'ah* such as plastic cuffs. The *s'chach* may be supported with wooden slats or fastened with unprocessed threads (e.g. jute). (If using mats ensure that they are kosher for *schach*). Complete the Sukkah walls before you put on the *s'chach*. Chabad custom insists on four walls and plentiful *s'chach*. The *esrog* should appear yellow like wax. The *lulav* should not have rounded tips which are known in Yiddish as *kneplach* (lit., "buttons"). We add multiple sets of *hadasim*—at least another three—to the standard three *hadasim*.

Today in the year 5553 (1792), the Tzemach Tzedek was brought to *cheder* for the first time by his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe.

Hakhel: "It is desirable that – in addition to *hakhel* gatherings during the days of *Sukkos* – they should hurry and make gatherings earlier, also during the four days between Yom Kippur and *Sukkos*" (Public letter dated Tishrei 6, 5748). In the *sichah* of Tishrei 6, 5748, the Rebbe called for *hakhel* gatherings especially during days of festival, and more so during the four days between Yom Kippur and *Sukkos*, when the Jewish people are completely occupied with preparations for matters of Torah and *mitzvos*, as described in the Midrash.

This year, these activities include preparations for *hakhel*.

Erev Shabbos, Tishrei 12

- ♦ Today is the *hilula* of the *tzaddik* Reb Avraham “the Malach,” the son of the Maggid of Mezritch, who passed away in 5537 (1776).
- ♦ It is best to avoid building a *sukkah* after *chatzos* (midday) on *erev* Shabbos.
- ♦ We recite *shanyim mikra* of Parshas *Ha’azinu*.
- ♦ **Candle lighting** is at **6:31 pm** (in New York), which is 18 minutes before sunset.

Shabbos Parashas Ha’azinu, Tishrei 13

Today is the *hilula* of the Rebbe Maharash, who passed away in 5643 (1882).

Hakhel: The *hakhel* campaign is to be conducted in the manner of the Rebbe Maharash – *lechat’chilah ariber!* On Tishrei 13, 5748, the Rebbe called to rally the Jewish people around the *mitzvah* of *hakhel* (*Hisva’aduyos*, p. 152):

“We are now close to Sukkos, which is when *hakhel* is performed in the *beis hamikdash*. We must utilize this time, as well as the actual days of Sukkos, for *hakhel* activities, generating great excitement about *hakhel*. We must approach Jewish people – men, women, and children – with words that come from the heart.

“Words that do not come from the heart may be taken badly. Words that come from the heart, but only from an external level of heart – or from an internal but not innermost level of heart – are well accepted, and they indeed achieve their goal. We, however, must reach out and explain the concept of *hakhel* from the innermost depths of the heart! Such words will certainly achieve their intended results.

“We must explain to each individual on his or her level, adding explanation and clarification to the extent necessary, regarding the essence of *hakhel* and how it was observed in the *beis hamikdash*. We must say, **“Listen up, fellow Jews! We have been given meritorious days in which to ‘assemble the**

nation’ and to become inspired to greater awe of G-d! Each individual Jew is able to immediately ascend to a status of being G-d-fearing all the days of his life!”

The Rebbe continued this theme a few day later, on the first night of Sukkos (*ibid.*, p. 176):

“One might be confused and uncertain. He is not sure that all this talk about *hakhel* activities are relevant to him. Or he has no idea how to implement the call is in actuality, how people might react to such an effort, and so on and so forth. The directive that answers this confusion comes from today’s portion of Rambam. (The Rambam serves as *Moreh Nevuchim*, the Guide for the Perplexed of all generations....) He discusses the concept of a natural spring whose waters are constantly connected to their source. To apply this to our case: The solution to this confusion and uncertainty is *hiskashrus*, deep connection to the **Rebbeim**, for the *nassi* (leader) is all of the nation. One who is connected to the Rebbe can accomplish everything in a manner of *lechat’chilah ariber* [aiming high from the onset and leaping over every obstacle in pursuit of the goal]. **When the Rebbe goes together with each *chassid***, he will certainly not permit himself to be dragged under [obstacles], for the very existence of a Rebbe – his beginning, middle, and end – are all in the manner of ***lechat’chilah ariber!***”

♦ During Shacharis, the Torah portion of *Ha’azinu* is read according to the breaks printed in the Chumash (known as “*haziv lach*”). Do not recite *av ha-rachamim*.

♦ During Minchah, the Torah portion of *Vezos Haberachah* is read. Do not recite *tzidkasecha*.

Motza’ei Shabbos

- ♦ Shabbos ends at **7:28 pm** (in New York).
- ♦ Do not recite *vihi no’am* and *ve-Atah kadosh*.
- ♦ Recite *ve-yiten lecha* as usual after *havdalah*.
- ♦ If you did not yet recite *kiddush levanah*, do so by tonight.

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