

Day-by-Day Halachic Guide

**Detailed instructions on the
laws and customs for the
month of Tishrei 5777**

**Part Three:
Hoshana Rabbah
until Shabbos Bereishis**

From the Badatz of Crown Heights

לזכות
ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה
וזוגתו מרת שלומית בת שושנה
וילדיהם:
יוסף יצחק וזוגתו מרים דבורה
וילדיהם: חנה שפרינצא ופייגא אידל, ארי' ליב
משה וזוגתו רבקה
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laws and customs for the
month of Tishrei 5777**

150th Anniversary
of the Tzemach Tzedek’s Histalkus

Part Three:
Hoshana Rabbah until Shabbos Bereishis

Distilled from a series
of public shiurim delivered by
Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun,
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

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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 in the Code of Jewish Law.

Recently, yearly calendars have begun to include many of the laws that apply to the relevant time of the year and that are necessary to know. This is particularly useful for those who, for whatever reason, do not have sefarim or 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 therefore extremely appropriate for every single person to peruse the contents of these calendars, such as the Kollel Chabad calendar (available both in wall size and pocket size formats) in such a manner that the laws that 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.

* * *

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.

* * *

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)

* * *

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).

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Motzei Shabbos, Eve of Hoshana Rabbah

Regarding the two versions of the name Hoshana Rabbah (either the Hebrew word “*Rabbah*”, with a *hei* at the end of the word, or the Aramaic “*Rabba*” with an *alef*), see *Leil Hoshana Rabbah* 5751.

Shabbos ends at **6:46 pm** (in New York).

Ata chonantanu and *ya’aleh veyavo* are added to tonight’s Ma’ariv *amidah*, which is followed with *kaddish shaleim*, and then *aleinu*. *Vihy noam* and *ve’Atah kadosh* are not recited.

Havdalah: One who recites *havdalah* over a cup of wine must enter a *sukkah* and recite it there. This is necessary because throughout the year, he enters his home and recites *havdalah*, and he must treat the *sukkah* as his home in this regard. The regular *havdalah* text is recited along with the blessings over spices and a flame. *Havdalah* concludes *bein kodesh le-chol* (and not *bein kodesh le-kodesh*). If he concluded with the word *le-kodesh*, it is best for him to listen to someone else reciting *havdalah* in order to fulfill his obligation. If this is not possible, he must repeat *havdalah* himself. If wine is used, then the blessing *leisheiv ba-sukkah* must be added.

“Practically speaking: We are about to celebrate *simchas beis ha-sho’eivah*. Whoever has not yet recited *havdalah* should do so first, and then immediately proceed to the *simchas beis ha-sho’eivah* with even greater vigor. As a result, they will have to consult a *Rav*: Are they supposed to recite the *brachah acharonah* over the wine from *havdalah* immediately or, since they will continue directly with the meal of the *simchas beis ha-sho’eivah*, is the obligation to recite a *brachah acharonah* over the wine discharged with the *birchas ha-mazon* that will be recited at the conclusion of the meal of the *simchas beis ha-sho’eivah*? (See *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken*, 174:5-6; *Seder Birchas HaNehenin*, 4:8-9, 12.) Anyhow, according to all opinions, all the *maamarim*, and all the *halachic* rulings, now is the time – immediately, at this very moment (at the conclusion of Shabbos) – for the arrival of the time that is ‘a day that is entirely Shabbos and tranquility for eternity!’” (*Sichas Leil Hoshana Rabbah* 5752 – when like the current year, Hoshana Rabbah began on *motza’ei* Shabbos.)

Ve-yiten lecha is recited in an undertone.

A *melaveh malkah* is held tonight. In the *sichah* quoted above, the Rebbe refers to the meal as “the *seudah* of *simchas beis ha-sho’eivah*”. On the same night in the year 5751 and in other places, the Rebbe refers to it as “the Yom Tov *seudah*.”

Tonight's *ushpizin* are led by Dovid *HaMelech* and the Rebbe Rashab.

Ya'aleh veyavo and the *harachaman* for Sukkos are included in *birchas hamazon*. The *harachaman* for Yom Yov is not recited.

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. The Alter Rebbe (*Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZaken, Orach Chayim, 468:22-23*) clarifies that although there is room to be lenient if the procedure is performed on the **eve** of *erev* Yom Tov and not during the actual day, nevertheless, one should be stringent on the eve of Hoshana Rabbah. For in addition to being *erev* Yom Tov (i.e., *erev* Shemini Atzeres), Hoshana Rabbah is also a day of judgment, and all risks should be avoided. (See the above source for an additional matter against which the Alter Rebbe cautions for the identical reason.)

It is not our custom to wish each other *gmar chasimah tovah, a gut kvittel*, or similar wishes on Hoshana Rabbah. At the same time, the Rebbe often made a point of discussing the concept underlying such greetings, without explicitly expressing the wish, in his many *sichos* on the eves of Hoshana Rabbah.

The superior spiritual power of Hoshana Rabbah lies in the fact that it is the seventh day of Sukkos, and as Chazal state, "All sevenths are precious." The Rebbe explains the significance of this teaching in *Sichos Hoshana Rabbah 5747*.

Addressing the nature of Hoshana Rabbah, the Rebbe stated: "The portion of Zohar that is recited on the night of Hoshana Rabbah explains that the King issues forth notes containing His decrees regarding the future on the seventh day of Sukkos. It is clear from this statement that the nature of Hoshana Rabbah is the same as the nature of Rosh Hashanah ... 'The day of the *aravah* (Hoshana Rabbah) is similar in nature to the day of the *shofar* (Rosh Hashanah).' Both are times to seek G-d's closeness." The Rebbe explained this concept at length in *Sichas Leil Simchas Torah 5716*. Many additional sources describe Hoshana Rabbah in similar terms.

See *Ohr HaTorah (Chukas, 1647)*, based on Zohar: "Hoshana Rabbah is the fashioning of the vessel that enables the revelations of Shemini Atzeres to be fully received." Tzemach Tzedek (*Ohr HaTorah, Ki Seitzei, 980*) quotes *Megaleh Amukos (Ofan 107)* in explanation of the verse,

“Hashem your G-d transformed for you the curse into blessing” (*Devarim* 23:6): The numerical equivalent of the word *lecha*, “for you,” is fifty, representing the fifty days from Rosh Chodesh Elul until Hoshana Rabbah, which is the *gmar chasimah*, the finalization of the determination for the coming year. These are all days of *teshuvah*. The verse states, “...transformed for you – es haklalah livrachah – the curse into blessing.” The extra word *es* (spelled *alef-tav*) form the initials of Elul and Tishrei, the months in which the evil, the *gam es zeh l’umas zeh* (“Hashem has made this one as a counterforce to that one” – *Koheles* 7:14) is transferred into goodness.”

The Mittler Rebbe (*Sha’arei Teshuvah*, p. 83c) states: This is the seal (*chosam*) that is granted to a person on Hoshana Rabbah to guard him from the evil influences throughout the year. It acts as a shield for the light and vitality of the soul and also for the vitality of the body, so that a person is not harmed by evil, physical, sources of harm to his body and his money... Through this seal, he is rescued from all spiritual accusatory forces in the heavens that are adverse to the life of his soul, as well as physical adversaries that could harm the life of his body. To the contrary! They will personally assist the person, for his spiritual and physical enemies will be subdued and toppled, in the spirit of, “When Hashem accepts a person’s ways, He will cause even his enemies to make peace with him” (*Mishlei* 16:7), whereby the prosecutor becomes an advocate and the hater becomes the enemy.”

In numerous *sichos* (*Simchas Leil Hoshana Rabbah* 5742, 5743, 5745, etc.), the Rebbe instructed us to amplify the joy of *simchas beis ha-sho’eivah* on the night of Hoshana Rabbah: “There must be more dancing accompanied to musical instruments than on all previous nights of Sukkos. Tonight’s joy should be incomparably greater, in keeping with the principle that we must always ascend and increase in matters of holiness. This is obvious even from reflecting on the fact that from the very start of the night we have entered the day known as Hoshana Rabbah, a title that emphasizes the greatness of the day and its superiority over all other days of Sukkos. The great quality of this day is further emphasized in the additional prayers recited on Hoshana Rabbah. Furthermore, the Zohar as well as sources in *nigleh* elaborate on the special quality of Hoshana Rabbah. In fact, the Zohar (recited in the *Tikkun Leil Hoshana Rabba*) teaches that ‘in that rejoicing, none but the Jewish people alone are to be found together with the King.’”

“On the other hand,” the Rebbe explained, “on this night,

the eve of Hoshana Rabbah, there are a number of additional customs, in addition to the *simchas beis ha-sho'eivah*, such as reciting the *Tikkun Leil Hoshana Rabbah*, reciting the book of Tehillim along with the special *yehi ratzon* prayer for the eve of Hoshana Rabbah, reciting excerpts of Zohar, and so on. These undertakings require considerable time. They must also be done with due attention and concentration – for all matters of serving Hashem must be done “*with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might*” (*Devarim* 6:4). And since we must devote considerable time to matters reserved for the eve of Hoshana Rabbah, undertakings of utmost importance on this night, we cannot participate in *simchas beis ha-sho'eivah* – or even engage in a *sichah* regarding *simchas beis ha-sho'eivah* – at the same time, for according to *halachah* we cannot focus on two distinct thoughts at an identical moment.

“We must therefore conclude that on this night, special power is granted from Above that enables us to accomplish all our responsibilities regarding *simchas beis ha-sho'eivah* – including the ability to celebrate in a way that exceeds all previous nights of Sukkos. This power allows us to act according to a phenomenon that applies to numerous sacred matters, whereby the few can contain the many. In the short amount of time available tonight (relative to previous nights of Sukkos), we are able to contain all of the dynamic activity of the previous nights’ *simchas beis ha-sho'eivah* and with a major increase!”

All Jews are accustomed to remain awake and study Torah tonight, “the Night of the *Aravah*.” During Sukkos, the world’s water needs are judged and apportioned. Mankind cannot survive without water, and tonight is the final day of Sukkos – the conclusion being the moment of ultimate decision. We therefore remain awake and recite the *Tikkun Leil Hoshana Rabbah*, which is comprised of the entire book of Devarim, followed by the entire book of Tehillim, and selections of Zohar.

We read the book of Devarim (as opposed to any of the earlier books of the Torah) because the concepts and directives regarding love and awe of Hashem are primarily recorded there.

The Arizal gives a Kabbalistic explanation: “Hoshana Rabbah is the time when the second, final seal on decisions regarding the coming year is issued. The first act of sealing transpired at the closing of *Ne’ilah* on Yom Kippur. That sealing came after the rebuilding of the *sefirah* of *malchus* that was accomplished during the *aseres yemei teshuvah*. Consequently, the first act of

sealing occurs in the *sefirah* of *yesod*, and it affects the internal dimensions of the *sefiros*.

“The second sealing, by contrast, is a ‘seal within a seal.’ It affects the external dimensions of the *sefiros*, and takes place in the *sefirah* of *malchus*. (This concept is explained in numerous places in *Chassidus*, e.g., *Toras Chayim, Beshalach*, p. 233a. See also the Tzemach Tzedek’s explanation in *Peleah HaRimon, Vayikra*, p. 240.) This second seal is a repetition of the first, and similarly, the book of Devarim is called *Mishneh Torah* (Repetition of the Torah). Also, Devarim similarly corresponds to the *sefirah* of *malchus*.

“The divine sealing issues from specific forms of Hashem’s names [which the Arizal specifies], the numerical value of which spells the word *mishneh* (repetition). We read Devarim before the halachic hour of midnight because the judgment is essentially completed during the first half of the eve of Hoshana Rabbah. Then, at the moment of midnight, the sealing is finalized – the seal is issued with *malchus*, the *sefirah* in which the judgment is ultimately completed.”

Some authorities state that the Book of Devarim is read because it contains the Torah’s main discussions on love and awe of Hashem. According to numerous sources, the reading of Devarim is associated with the fact that selected sections of Devarim are read aloud by the king before the entire Jewish nation at the *hakhel* event in the *Beis Hamikdash*.

Recite the entire book of Devarim. It is not recited together as a congregation. Do not repeat the verses or read the Targum (as is customary on *erev* Shabbos), even when you reach the verses of this week’s *parshah* – *VeZos HaBrachah*.

Read the book of Tehillim after *chatzos* (halachic midnight). As a rule, we do not recite Tehillim at night, from nightfall until midnight, with the exception of the eves of Rosh Hashanah, Aseres Yemei Teshuvah, Yom Kippur, and Hoshana Rabbah. Even so, in the case of Hoshana Rabbah, we defer the official customary reading of the entire book of Tehillim until after *chatzos*.

Recite Tehillim together with the congregation. In New York, *chatzos* is at **12:41 am**. In 770, the congregation begins at **1 am**. Wear a *gartel* while reciting Tehillim. Do not draw out the reading with time consuming concentration or the like.

After each of Tehillim’s five *sefarim*, recite the special *yehi ratzon* prayer for the eve of Hoshana Rabbah, as well as the *yehi ratzon* for Tehillim “after the appearance of the moon”, for Tehillim

recited at night. These appear at the back of the Tehillim. Traditionally, the *yehi ratzon* for Shabbos and Yom Tov was not recited tonight. However, as mentioned in numerous *sichos* and in keeping with the practice in 770 in recent years, the *yehi ratzon* for Shabbos and Yom Tov is also recited tonight.

The *yehi ratzon* for Hoshana Rabbah that is recited after each book of Tehillim mentions “the book of substance and good livelihood” (after the third *sefer*), “the book of the upright and the wholesome” (after the fourth *sefer*), and “the book of the righteous” (after the fifth *sefer*). That is how the prayer appears in the printed versions of Tehillim. However, in the *avinu malkeinu* prayer that appears in our *siddurim* (according to the *nusach* prepared by the Alter Rebbe), a varied form of the equivalent requests appears. There, we ask for “the book of good life,” “the book of redemption and salvation,” “the book of livelihood and sustenance,” “the book of merits,” and “the book of forgiveness and pardon.” We should defer to the text as it appears in the *avinu malkeinu* prayer.

(It should be noted that the *Yahel Ohr* Tehillim includes slight textual variations in the *yehi ratzon* prayer that is to be recited after concluding Tehillim when it is read at night after the appearance of the moon.)

The *gabbai'im* distribute sweet apples to the congregation who arrive to recite Tehillim. After reciting Tehillim, return to your home or place of lodging to eat the apple in a *sukkah*. Dip the apple in honey. (There is a halachic debate regarding the need to wash your hands for *netilas yadayim* without reciting the blessing (*al netilas yadayim*), as is usually required when eating a food that is dipped in a liquid. See *Gilyoinei HaHa'aros*. It is somewhat implied from *Igros Kodesh* (vol. 3, p. 209) that this may be necessary.)

After reciting Tehillim, remain awake and study Torah for the remainder for night. You can chose to study whichever part of Torah you like.

In Lubavitch of old, the Chassidim did not sleep at all on the eve of Hoshana Rabbah. As the Rebbe Rayatz recounted, “There were certain nights in Lubavitch during which we never recited *kerias shema sheal hamittah* ... on the eve of Hoshana Rabbah. As a rule, my father the Rebbe [Rashab] was accustomed to reciting *keri'as shema* on the approach to midnight, each night, even if he would lie down at a later hour – this was done without anyone noticing. On those nights during which he would not recite *keri'as shema sheal ha-mitah* at all, as mentioned earlier, he would instead

sometimes discuss the concept of *keri'as shema*, and at other times, he would discuss the meaning of the words of *keri'as shema*.” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5702, p. 100.)

Although it is best to remain awake the entire night, if you find yourself falling asleep despite your efforts and you are concerned that you will not be able to remain awake and alert for Shacharis, it is a *mitzvah* for you to rest a bit towards dawn so that you can pray at the proper time and fully concentrate on your prayers the next morning. Bravely defying sleep only to nod off during *keri'as shema* and the *amidah* on the morning of Hoshana Rabbah is ultimately self-defeating.

The laws governing one who remains awake the entire night are detailed in the Shavuos edition of *From the Desk of the Badatz* – please refer there.

The *gabbai'im* or those who work on behalf of the community bring *aravos* to Shul to sell to the congregation. This reflects the method of preparation of *aravos* that was practiced in the *Beis Hamikdash*. (The *beis din*'s emissaries would bring *aravos* from Motza, bordering Yerushalayim.)

In the *Beis Hamikdash*, they would encircle the altar seven times while holding *aravos* on Hoshana Rabbah. As a remembrance to this practice, the *Nevi'im* (Prophets) instituted the custom of taking an additional *aravah* today, in addition to the *aravos* that are included in the set of *arbah minim*.

Prepare bundles of *aravos* bound together with rings fashioned from strips of a *lulav* branch, for each member of your family – men, women, and children. Technically, you may even use a single willow branch with just a single leaf left on it. However, unless you truly have no other choice, this is considered disgraceful. To the contrary, it is customary to seek beautiful willow branches rich with fresh leaves for the sake of glorifying the *mitzvah* (in keeping with the principle of *zeh Keili ve-anveihu*, “This is my G-d and I will glorify Him”).

Following the opinion of the Arizal, we take five *aravos* that are kosher for use in the *arbah minim*.

Like the *aravos* in the *lulav*, they should be at least three *tefachim* in length. They also share the same disqualifications such as being withered or stolen property. However, if the majority of their leaves have fallen, they remain valid (unlike the *aravos* in the *arbah minim* that would become invalidated).

It is recorded in *sefarim* that those who are extra scrupulous in their service of Hashem immerse themselves in a *mikveh* tonight, shortly before dawn. This *tevilah* is associated with

Hoshana Rabbah and not Shacharis. However, this custom is not regularly practiced.

Dawn is at **5:55 am** (in New York, according to the calculation that employs 16.1 degrees).

Sunday, Hoshana Rabbah Day

Today marks the launch of the 36th cycle of Rambam study for those studying three chapters a day (the cycle lasts from Tishrei 21 5777 until Tishrei 6 5778).

The Rebbe called for restarting the cycle with increased vigor, so that this cycle will be studied on a far superior level than the previous cycle. The purpose of reviewing the identical laws is not due to forgetfulness, G-d forbid, but in order to add to the previous study – even to the point that the current study of laws is of an entirely incomparable nature.

Rise early and go to *shul* early for Shacharis, Wear your Shabbos clothing, but not your *kittel*, even if you will serve as the *chazan* today. Extra candles are lit today in Shul. Try to refrain from ordinary weekday tasks until after completing Shacharis and leaving Shul. Some even leave their wallets at home this morning, to avoid carrying any money except for money needed for *tzedakah*. The prayers are the essentially the same as on all other days of *chol ha-mo'ed*.

Recite *shema* before 9:55am.

In a *sichah* on the eve of Hoshana Rabbah in the year 5744, the Rebbe stated: “How good and how pleasant it would be if on this day – a day whose theme is the sweetening of divine judgments – each and every person would give more *tzedakah* than what they would ordinarily.”

Sha'ar HaKavanos states that “a person must take care to concentrate extremely well on the prayers of the day of Hoshana Rabbah, and to pay extreme attention to his every action on this day, for he still has the opportunity to rectify himself [and positively influence divine judgment regarding his future].”

As on all days of *chol ha-mo'ed*, do not wear *tefillin*. Recite the ordinary weekday Shacharis. Include *ya'aleh ve-yavo* and recite the complete *hallel*. Before beginning *hallel*, however, remove the two uppermost rings on your *lulav*, leaving only the three rings near its base that bind the *lulav* with the two other species.

The most basic explanation for removing the *lulav's* upper rings is that they retain the *lulav's* rigidity by reducing the extent

to which it can be shaken and rattled. As a result, they also limit the joy associated with shaking the *lulav*. Once the rings are removed, shaking the *lulav* is a more dramatic act and is therefore considered more enjoyable. Since Hoshana Rabbah is the climax and defining day of Sukkos, we want to maximize the shaking and its associated joy. The Rebbe explains this concept in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1368. An additional reason is that the movements to and fro prevent destructive dew as well as destructive winds, and since it is now the time for *gmarchasimah*, the moment of final approval on this year's verdict, the rings are removed in order to shake extra well at this critical time.

After *hallel*, recite *hosha'anos*. For *hosha'anos*, every *sefer Torah* in the *aron* is removed and held upright beside the *bimah*. Take your *arbah minim* and encircle the *bimah* seven times. As mentioned above, this is done to resemble the encircling of the altar in the *Beis Hamikdash*, which was surrounded with tall willow branches whose bent heads would drape over the altar, while the people circled it seven times.

While circling the *bimah*, recite all seven stanzas of *hosha'anos* and hold your *arbam minim*, not your *hosha'anos*.

The Arizal strictly warned against holding the *hosha'anos* together with the *lulav* and other *minim*. It is therefore best to avoid joining them in any way.

After *hosha'anos*, recite out loud the passages unique to Hoshana Rabbah, as printed in the *Siddur*.

There is much debate about reciting the *hosha'anos* for the sixth day – which were omitted yesterday because it was Shabbos – due to the fact that Hoshana Rabbah occurs on a Sunday this year. Should the sixth day's *hosha'anos* be recited silently immediately prior to beginning today's lengthy recitation of *hosha'anos*? According to those who claim to be in the know, in the year 5752, the Rebbe paused for a while before reciting today's *hosha'anos*. It appeared that the Rebbe was in fact catching up silently on the sixth day's *hosha'anos*. This is possibly supported by *Sichas Leil Hoshana Rabbah 5752*, although that *sichah* requires clarification. Here are the Rebbe's precise words, taken from an audio recording of that *sichah*:

“Today is given the name *Rabbah*, “great.” For all matters of this day are in a manner of **greatness**. This is observable in the fact that we recite **all** the *hosha'anos*, despite the fact that during the previous days [of Sukkos], we recited only each day's individual *hosha'anos*. And afterwards – we recite the reminder quietly, or as others are accustomed to doing it in

an alternative manner. This is not the place to elaborate on this matter.”

We recite many supplications today at the conclusion of *hosha'anos* because, as mentioned earlier, the world's water supplies are determined during Sukkos, and mankind's survival hangs in the balance. Today, this determination reaches its climax. (In *Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZaken*, the Alter Rebbe records that on this day, it was customary for the congregation to be lenient and recite *shema* at dawn.)

It is explained in the teachings of *Chassidus* that the *aravos* represent channels of elicitation from Above to this world (*Sefer HaSichos* 5699, p. 304), and that they are sweetened severities, the elicitation of *rav chessed*, abundant kindness, in a manner of revealed goodness (*Ibid.*, 5704, p. 30). The Rebbe explains this in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1367.

In a public letter, the Rebbe writes: In one of the special prayers for today, there is a sentence whose Hebrew wording could be read in two ways. *Sha'arei shamayim pesach, ve'otzarcha hatov lanu tiftach*. If we pause between the words *hatov* and *lanu*, the implication is: “Open the gates of heaven, and Your storehouse of goodness open for us!” However, if we read the words *hatov* and *lanu* together as a joined phrase and we pause afterwards before the word *tiftach*, we imply, “Open the gates of heaven, and open Your storehouse of *that which is good to us!*” We make a point of reading the two words as a **joined** phrase in order to imply the latter meaning. What is the difference between the two? We do not merely want Hashem to give us “goodness,” because sometimes divine goodness enters this world in forms that are perceived by us as intense suffering, although they are undoubtedly sublime, concealed goodness. Rather, according to the second method of reciting this phrase, we ask for what is “good to us” – revealed goodness that we can readily appreciate as welcomed blessings. (See *Likkutei Dibburim* 59a. See also *Shmuos V'sippurim* I:159.)

The *arbah minim* and today's *aravos* are two distinct *mitzvos* that must not be confused. After fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *lulav* and after completing everything associated with it – the *hosha'anos* and the additional supplications of Hoshana Rabbah, until the loud recital of *kol mevaser* three times (creating a *chazakah*) – the *lulav's* service is over. Put it aside, in a respectful place. Then take the five *aravos*. Do not reuse the *aravos* from the *arbah minim* for this purpose; these five *aravos* should be new ones that you have designated specifically for the service of Hoshana Rabbah in fulfillment of the custom instituted by the *Nevi'im*,

with all the sublime qualities that such a practice brings with it. Before beating the *aravos*, all *sifrei Torah* are returned to the *aron*. The *arbah minim* are set aside, and the *chazzan* recites *kaddish tiskabel*.

Take the *aravos* and strike them five times against the floor. This action mirrors the sweetening of the five divine elements of severe judgment. This and similar customs are also associated with joy. In *Sichas Leil Simchas Torah* 5716, the Rebbe explains that beating the *aravos* is similar to sounding the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah in that they both imply *kabbolas ol*, complete dedication to Hashem's will.

Do not strike the *aravos* more than five times, even if no leaves were shed in the beating. In fact, according to the teachings of the Arizal and the Mekubalim, the leaves are not meant to be removed. The *aravos* should remain kosher as *aravos* used in the *arbah minim* throughout the beating.

Strike the *aravos* directly on the floor or ground, not on an intervening object.

After beating the *aravos*, recite the *yehi ratzon* that is printed in the *Siddur*.

The Rebbe would part the *aravos* from each other while they were still bound, before beating them. He would then beat them lightly on the floor, not on the rug upon which he stood during his prayers.

The custom of beating the *aravos* is practiced equally by men, women, and children.

The following laws will become relevant with the Redemption: Tall willow branches are propped up along the sides of the *mizbei'ach* (altar), with their heads draping over the edge of the actual altar – they should extend one *amah* over the altar. The *kohanim*, and according to some opinions also the elders of Yerushalayim (although they are not *kohanim*), walk around the *mizbei'ach* holding either a *lulav* or an *aravah*. They circle seven times, exclaiming: *Ana Hashem hoshi'ah na! Ana Hashem hoshi'ah na!* – “Please save us, Hashem!” “Please save us, Hashem!”

The following laws will become relevant with the Redemption: For today's Song of the Day, the Levi'im in the *Beis Hamikdash* chant *Hasirosi miseivel shichmo*, etc. (*Tehillim* 81). The Rebbe discusses this at length in *Sichas Hoshana Rabbah* 5745.

The Rema (in *Hilchos Hoshana Rabbah*) and the Alter Rebbe (in *Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZaken, Hilchos Pesach*) record the

custom of stowing away the *aravos* for use in a future *mitzvah* (see below, entries for Isru Chag). Some are accustomed to throwing them above the *aron kodesh*. Although there is a specific reason for doing so, many authorities argue against this custom. The Rebbe would never throw them above the *aron*; he would leave them on the floor beside his chair or else on the seat of his chair, and on some occasions, he would take them with him at the end of Shacharis (the latter custom is recorded by early halachic authorities).

Although the *aravos* used for the *arbah minim* may be discarded, do not step on them or discard them in a disrespectful manner. Some authorities state that they should not be thrown into the garbage can along with other garbage; they may be placed in a separate bag and discarded.

It is forbidden to derive benefit from the *aravos* after using them until Hoshana Rabbah has passed, because they were set aside for a *mitzvah* and can technically still be used all day for the *mitzvah*.

Recite *shir shel yom*, followed by *LeDavid Hashem ori*.

After *kaddish yasom*, if applicable, one *Sefer Torah* is removed from the *aron* for *kriyas haTorah*. There are four *aliyos*. The reading is followed by *chatzi kaddish*, *Ashrei*, *u'va letziyon*, *yehallelu* (upon the return of the *Sefer Torah* to the *aron*), and *chatzi kaddish*.

Recite the *musaf* for the *shalosh regalim*. Include the paragraphs: *u'vayom hashishi*, *u'minchasam veniskeihem* and *u'vayom hashevi'i*, *uminchasam veniskeihem*.

The Rebbe would distribute *lekach* (the traditional piece of honey cake) today for those who have not received on erev Yom Kippur.

Try to eat the Yom Tov meal in honor of Hoshana Rabbah before *chatzos* (**12:40pm in NY**) (halachic midday), if possible. At the very least, eat it before the tenth halachic hour of the day (**3:21pm in NY**).

Dip your *challah* in honey. This is also associated with sweetening the divine severities (as explained by the Alter Rebbe in *Ma'amarei Admur HaZaken HaKetzarim*, p. 454).

Eat *kreplach*, traditional pastry pockets filled with meat, usually cooked in soup. (The reason for this custom is explained in *Sefer HaMinhagim*, in the footnotes to the customs of Yom Kippur. See Sichas Shabbos Bereishis 5751)

Although you will not be using your *arbah minim* at this point,

you are not permitted to eat the *esrog*. If you are in *Eretz Yisrael*, you may eat it if you wish only after the conclusion of Hoshana Rabbah. If you are outside the Holy Land, you must wait until the conclusion of Shemini Atzeres.

The *lulav* with its *hadasim* and *aravos* are considered *muktzah* over Yom Tov, now that the time for their use in the *mitzvah* has expired. They must be stored away where they will not be disturbed for the duration of Yom Tov. The *esrog* is not considered *muktzah* because it may be used for its aromatic scent.

[Although it is best to avoid enjoying the *esrog*'s fragrance for the duration of Yom Tov in order to avoid the doubt involved in reciting a blessing over its scent, however, *Magen Avraham* (and also *Chiddushei HaTzemach Tzedek*, 198:4) considers it permissible to benefit from its fragrance whenever it is not being used for the actual *mitzvah*. In addition, once its *mitzvah*-use has expired on Hoshana Rabbah, there is no longer a doubt as to whether a blessing should be recited. (See *Pri Megadim* 653, *Mishbetzos Zahav*, 1. However, see *Pri Megadim* 216, *Mishbetzos Zahav*, 14, that according to *Taz*, it is proper to avoid enjoying its fragrance on Shemini Atzeres as well. See *Bikurei Yaakov*, 653:2.) Most importantly, one can avoid any issue by smelling another fruit first with a blessing and only then enjoying the *esrog*'s scent. (See *Magen Avraham* 658, 1. *Taz* *ibid.* 4].

You may not derive personal benefit from the walls, beams, decorations, etc., of the *sukkah* until the end of Shemini Atzeres and also Simchas Torah (the latter being an extension of the former).

Recite Minchah at greater length and with more concentration than usual. Recite *LeDavid Hashem ori* at the conclusion of Minchah for the final time this year. *Sha'ar HaKollel* (ch. 45, sec. 6) explains that today is the finalization of our judgment, beyond which there is no further need for the request, *veniflinu ani ve'amecha* – “Make me and Your nation distinguished from all other nations!” – which is accomplished by reciting *LeDavid Hashem ori*. As long as the day has not ended, however, despite having completed the extensive Hoshana Rabbah supplications during Shacharis, we still need to recite *LeDavid* a final time.

The Rebbe Rashab conducted the Minchah prayer on the afternoon of Hoshana Rabbah in a manner similar to the Minchah on the afternoon before Rosh Hashanah (see *Sefer HaSichos* 5697, p. 189).

Throughout Sukkos, we go out of our way to locate Jews who have not performed the *mitzvah* of *lulav* in order to provide them with the opportunity to perform the *mitzvah*. In a *sicha* on the eve of Hoshana Rabbah in the year 5751, the Rebbe urged us to invest extra effort in this campaign throughout the day of Hoshana Rabbah due to the unique spiritual quality of the day.

In the homes of the Chabad Rebbes, it was customary for the Rebbes' immediate family to gather in the *sukkah* on Hoshana Rabbah in order to receive the Rebbes' blessing. They would also sit down to eat something and recite *leisheiv basukkah*. (See *Sefer HaSichos* 5705, p. 52. See there, regarding the Rebbes' custom of tapping their children with the *aravos*. See also *Roshei Devarim* of Sukkos 5693).

It is a *mitzvah* to avoid eating a full meal on *erev* Yom Tov from the tenth halachic hour of the day (**3:21pm in NY**), so that one can fully appreciate tonight's Yom Tov meal.

Magen Avraham states: "Do not be like those who eat, drink, and grow intoxicated on Hoshana Rabbah to the point that they cannot recite *kiddush* the following night!"

Rambam states: "When one eats and drinks, he is obligated to feed the convert, the orphan, and the widow, along with the other paupers and disadvantaged. By contrast, one who bolts the doors of his courtyard so that he can eat and drink along with his own children and his wife, without supplying food and drink to the poor and the bitter of spirit – this is not the joy of a *mitzvah*, but the joy of his own stomach! Such a celebration is disgraceful."

Visit the *mikveh* today, as on every *erev* Yom Tov.

The following laws will become relevant with the Redemption: *Rambam* states: "All Jews are commanded to ensure that they are ritually pure for each of the festivals (Pesach, Shavuos, and Sukkos) so that they are ready to enter the *Beis Hamikdash* and partake of the holy sacrifices." The Rebbe explains this requirement at length in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 32, *Parshas Shemini*.

Give *tzedakah* in advance for both days of Yom Tov.

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 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.

If you use a timer, remember that it should be set to run repetitively for two consecutive days.

Safety Alert: Safety and Hatzalah organizations recommend that if you leave a gas stove burner lit for the duration of Yom Tov, make sure to leave the kitchen window open at least 4 inches, and another window open on the other side of the house, to allow adequate cross-ventilation. Also make sure that your carbon monoxide detector is functioning.

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.)

If possible, and if safety concerns, weather conditions, and other factors permit, light your Yom Tov candles inside the *sukkah* because that is the location at which you primarily eat your meals. It is sufficient to light just one or two candles in the *sukkah* and the remainder inside your house.

Light the Yom Tov candles before reciting the blessings, as on *erev* Shabbos. Recite *lehadlik ner shel Yom Tov* 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 **5:45 pm** (eighteen 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.

Monday Night, Eve of Shemini Atzeres

The Mittlerer Rebbe explains: "Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah represent the internalization of G-dly light that radiates from *chochmah ila'ah* (supernal wisdom) into the hearts of all Jewish souls in particular, in a state of complete unity and utter self-nullification, as expressed through the fulfillment of the positive commandments that are specifically observed in actual deed. For that reason, the rejoicing of the Simchas Torah segment of Shemini Atzeres is also observed specifically through actual deed, namely, dancing in circuits, encircling the *bimah*. This is the place where the Torah is read with actual speech during the rest of the year, while on

Shemini Atzeres we encircle the *bimah* specifically with bodily dance and joy. The *hakafos* are performed while holding the *sefer torah* – we specifically grasp the physical dimension of the *sefer torah* ... This rejoicing is with dance and action in the physical realm, the source of which is far above *chochmah ila'ah*, which is the source of the Torah that we elicit via reading the Torah throughout the year.” (*Ma'amarei Admor HaEmtzo'i, Devarim*, vol. 4, p. 1306.)

“Shemini Atzeres is a day that is *shamein* (fat, i.e., rich) with all types of goodness. All the spiritual goodness and the bestowals of [blessings regarding] children, life (health), and livelihood that was apportioned on Rosh Hashanah are elicited in an all-encompassing manner on Shemini Atzeres! This is the implication of [the verse,] ‘*On the eighth [shemini] day*’ – the day that is *shamein* (rich) and satiated with all types of goodness. The *kesivah va-chasimah tovah* of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur as well as the appendage of final seals on Hoshana Rabbah [comes to a head with Heaven’s] distribution of the actual edicts sealed with blessings on Shemini Atzeres. Thus it is stated, ‘*On the eighth day it shall be an Atzeres [stopping work] for you*’ – meaning that on the day that is rich and satiated [with goodness], you will experience an *atzeres*. There are two [alternative] meanings to this word. The first is absorption, and the second is leading or conducting, as in the verse, ‘*This one will rule over [yatzor (יעצור)] My people*’ (*Shmuel* 1:9:17). Our personal mode of divine service on Shemini Atzeres is in accordance with the second interpretation, *kabbalas ol malchus shamayim*, acceptance of the yoke of heaven for the entire coming year.” (*BaYom HaShemini* 5695; *Sefer HaMa'amarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 2, p. 338. See there, at length.)

“Rabbi Shmuel Gronem mentioned that in the discourse entitled *Tzidkas Pirzono* it is stated that on Shemini Atzeres, we can ‘revoke the seal.’ To this, the Rebbe [Rashab] responded: This is after the act of sealing that occurs on Hoshana Rabbah. For the purpose of this seal is as in the case of one who sends a letter; he seals it so that no foreign entity can lay hands on its contents. However, once the letter has reached its intended recipient, it is then possible to revoke the seal. Similarly, Shemini Atzeres is [a day referred to as] *lachem*, ‘for you’ [the Jewish people, to the exclusion of all others]. Consequently, the seal is no longer necessary.” (*Sichas Leil Shemini Atzeres* 5675; *Sefer HaSichos Toras Shalom*, p. 210.)

The Rebbe notes that “the Zohar includes two statements

(approaches) regarding the time in which the *piskin tavin*, ‘good notes’ (*ah gutten kvittel*) are received – during Hoshana Rabbah or during Shemini Atzeres. This can be explained as follows: Hoshana Rabbah is *erev* Shemini Atzeres. Therefore, we achieve the acceptance of the good notes on Hoshana Rabbah, so that they can be internalized on Shemini Atzeres, for the extent to which these matters are absorbed during Shemini Atzeres is in direct relation to that which was accomplished through the previous day’s divine service – on Hoshana Rabbah.” (*Sichas Leil Shemini Atzeres* 5746.)

A great number of *sichos* and *ma’amarim* regarding the theme of Shemini Atzeres were compiled in *Likkutei Sichos Mo’adim, Shemini Atzeres*. The Rebbe summarized it this way: “During Shemini Atzeres, all the inclusive lights and revelations that are elicited during the month of Tishrei are absorbed and retained in a goodly sowing, so that they will produce a sprouting of abundant goodness.” (*Pesach Davar* [Preface] to *Kuntras Shemini Atzeres Simchas Torah* 5711; also published in *Igros Kodesh*, vol., 4, p. 18.)

The Rebbe explains this concepts behind the dancing and *hakofos* at length in countless *sichos*, which are beyond the scope of this publication. However, it is worth noting the following directive: “My father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz] warned in the name of his father the Rebbe Rashab, that ‘the forty-eight hours of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah must be greatly treasured. With each second, we can draw bucketfuls and barrellfuls of material and spiritual treasures. This is accomplished through dancing!’” (*Pesach Davar* [Preface] to *Kuntras Shemini Atzeres Simchas Torah* 5711.)

“Time was considered extremely precious on Shemini Atzeres. In truth, the spiritual intentions of Shemini Atzeres are the same as for Rosh Hashanah.” (*Reshimah, Leil Shemini Atzeres* 5695, Warsaw.)

For more on the comparison of Shemini Atzeres to Rosh Hashanah, see *HaYom Yom*, entry for Tishrei 22.

It is noted in the above mentioned Reshima, that the Rebbe Rashab “once spent half an hour in discussion with certain individuals, and he stated that this was *mesiras nefesh* (self sacrifice) for him,” apparently due to the preciousness of every moment on Shemini Atzeres. See there for further explanation.

“Listen, we have to talk this through...,” said the Rebbe Rashab on Simchas Torah 5664. “Until now it was all *makifim* [generalized spiritual experiences]. We had Rosh

Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkos – [all the way] until Shemini Atzeres [which is no longer considered *makif*]. And Simchas Torah is included in Shemini Atzeres. Now, when it comes to *makifim*, we cannot discern its parameters ... And I might well add, that the same is true Above: During the time of *makifim*, we do not know [how things will turn out]. Even He does not know, so-to-speak [See the Rebbe's note to this statement in the original], because *ki im'cha ha-selichah*, 'For forgiveness is with You' (*Tehillim* 130:4), meaning that Forgiveness is deposited with You from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. We do not know what is going to do happen with him, with the individual! [Naturally,] we are not discussing *da'as elyon*, Hashem's supernal knowledge, for He certainly knows everything. Rather, we are talking in a more general sense.

"...*'For it is a statute for Yisrael, a judgment of the G-d of Yaakov'* (*Tehillim* 81:5), meaning that a decision and judgment is made regarding a Jew's level of G-dliness. A decision is made regarding just how much G-dly revelation will be drawn down to an individual through the Torah and *mitzvos* he performs throughout the coming year ... However, this is dependent upon the individual's input; it corresponds to his divine service of the previous year, and how his Torah and *mitzvos* ascend [on High]. If it was good, Heaven supplies him with [the ability for] further good ... However, if by Sukkos, he has still not done *teshuvah*, it is already known Above that the situation isn't good, and that his "G-d of Yaakov" [i.e. the individual's G-dly appreciation and experience] is "*milbig*" [Yiddish for spoling or wormy}, as the expression goes..

"Nevertheless, until Shemini Atzeres he still has time. He can still do *teshuvah* ... Until Shemini Atzeres it is still a mode of *makifim* and it is still possible for him to do *teshuvah*. By contrast, Shemini Atzeres is [when the G-dliness is] drawn down and internalized (*b'penimi'us*). By then, I already know [how things have turned out!]" (*Toras Shalom*, p. 28 ff. See there at great length regarding the divine service required on Simchas Torah.)

Ma'ariv for Yom Tov begins with *shir hama'alos*. Recite the *amidah* for *shalosh regalim*. The precise wording of the text in the *amidah* as well as in *kiddush*, *birchas hamazon*, etc., is *yom shemini atzeres hachag hazeh* (unlike all other festivals, where the word *chag* precedes the name of the festival). For insight into this distinction, see *Sefer HaMa'amarim* 5683, p. 136; *Sefer HaSichos* 5706-5710, p. 72; *Sichas Acharon Shel Pesach* 5724; *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5751.

If you accidentally recited *chag hasukkos* instead of the wording for *shemini atzeres*, there are a number of conflicting opinions as to the best course of action. If you have not yet concluded the blessing, simply return to *atah vechartanu*. If you have already concluded the blessing, do not repeat anything to avoid the possibility of reciting a blessing in vain. If this occurs during Shacharis or Minchah of Shemini Atzeres, it is best to ask the *chazzan* to have you in mind during *chazaras hashatz*, when he recites the identical blessing correctly. There is no *chazzan* during Ma'ariv; nevertheless, you should not repeat the blessing.

The law will be different tomorrow night, on the eve of Simchas Torah, when the lack of *chazzan* during Ma'ariv will indeed force you to repeat the blessing – unless you definitely had in mind to recite the wording appropriate for Simchas Torah, but *chag hasukkos* rolled off your tongue by mistake.

Here is what to do if you accidently recited the ordinary weekday *amidah*:

If you realize your error while reciting one of the weekday blessings (*atah chonein* or any subsequent blessing), complete the blessing you have already begun and then continue with the Yom Tov blessings (*atah vechartanu*, etc.).

If you completed the entire *amidah* without making any mention of Yom Tov (such as *ya'aleh veyavo*), you must repeat the Yom Tov *amidah* from its start. If you did mention the Yom Tov, even if you did not recite any complete blessing devoted to Yom Tov, you do not need to repeat or recite anything further.

If you realized your error after the blessing *hamachazir shechinaso letziyon* but before *modim*, then simply recite *ya'aleh veyavo* and continue with *modim*, etc.

If you already began *modim*, as long as you have not recited the second *yihyu leratzon* at the conclusion of the *amidah*, you should return to *atah vechartanu*, towards the start of the *amidah*.

If you concluded the *amidah*, having recited the second *yihyu leratzon* and not having intended to recite any further supplications, repeat the entire *amidah* (because you neglected to mention Yom Tov altogether, as mentioned above).

Here is what to do if you recited the Shabbos *amidah* by mistake: If you are the middle of the section devoted to the Shabbos *amidah* (i.e., *atah kidashta*, etc., in Ma'ariv; *yismach mosheh*, etc., in Shacharis; *tikanta shabbos*, etc., in Musaf; *ata echad*, etc., in Minchah), you should immediately interrupt and begin the Yom Tov section (*ata vechartanu*). Although you have

falsely declared this day Shabbos, you do not need to repeat the *amidah*.

If you realized your error further into the *amidah*, as long as you have not recited the second *yihyu leratzon* at the conclusion of the *amidah*, you should return to *atah vechartanu*, towards the start of the *amidah*.

If you concluded the *amidah*, having recited the second *yihyu leratzon* and not having intended to recite any further supplications, repeat the entire *amidah*.

After tonight's *amidah*, the *chazzan* recites *kaddish tiskabeil*. Do not recite *aleinu* at this point.

Immediately after Ma'ariv, recite *kiddush* and sit down to a lively *farbengen* to rejoice together in the joy of the festival. Only then can we consider ourselves fit to conduct *hakkafo*s with the appropriate enthusiasm.

On the eve of Shemini Atzeres in the year 5752, the *gabbai* in 770 announced that a *kiddush* would be held in the *sukkah*. The Rebbe then stated: "When the *gabbai* announces that we may recite *kiddush*, then since the concept of a *gabbai* is alluded to in Torah – for the initials of *ana ba-ko'ach gedulas yemin'cha* ("We implore You, by the great power of Your right hand...") form the letters of '*gabbai*' – we **must** recite *kiddush*! Moreover, the *kiddush* should be held in a manner that makes it discernable that it is associated with "*You shall sanctify yourselves [v'hiskadashtem] and you shall be holy [kadosh], for I am Holy!*" Since this is the *kiddush* of Shemini Atzeres, which is when all the spiritual accomplishments of the preceding days are retained and internalized, then all [good] matters are drawn from it for the entire coming year, ensuring that it is a year of light, a year of blessing, and so on."

Recite *kiddush* and eat in a *sukkah*. This is necessary due to the halachic consideration that today may be the genuine seventh day of the festival, not its eighth day. However, due to the same uncertainty, do **not** recite the blessing *leisheiv basukkah*. Halachic authorities such as the *Magen Avraham* record varied customs on this issue. We, however, follow the directive of the Rebbe Rayatz to eat in the *sukkah* by night and also the following day. In fact, those who are meticulous to avoid drinking outside a *sukkah* continue this practice throughout Shemini Atzeres.

In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe states that sitting in a *sukkah* during Shemini Atzeres serves to transform the *sukkah* into a house, similar to the era of the Redemption. (See also *Roshei Devarim*, during the meal on the night of Shemini Atzeres 5730.)

Since there is an issue with reciting *leisheiv basukkah*, as described above, avoid eating in the evening until the night has completely set.

For tonight's *kiddush*, recite *askinu se'udasa* (the Yom Tov version), *borei peri hagafen*, *mekadesh yisrael vehazemanim* – do not recite *leisheiv ba-sukkah* – and then *shehechyanu*. (This blessing is required because Shemini Atzeres is an independent Yom Tov, distinct from the preceding days of Sukkos).

If a woman recites *kiddush*, she should not recite the *shehechyanu* blessing – presuming she already recited it that afternoon, at candle lighting.

In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe states that tonight's *ushpizin* are Shlomo *haMelech* (as mentioned in Zohar) and the Rebbe Rayatz. On many occasions, the Rebbe explained that Yosef *haTzaddik* is associated with Shemini Atzeres. (See *Leil Shemini Atzeres* 5744.) The Rebbe also explained that on Shemini Atzeres, the *ushpizin* are no longer *ushpizin*, “honored guests,” at all. Rather, they become *ushpizichin*, “honored hosts,” the *ba'alei batim*. [Their influence is not temporary or superficial, but permanent and dominant.]

According to ancient practice, we perform *hakafos*, circling the *aron* or *bimah* while holding the *Sifrei Torah* and dancing and singing with great joy on the eve of Shemini Atzeres, just as we do on the eve of Simchas Torah. If you have conducted *hakafos* in your own *shul* and then visit another *shul* where the *hakafos* are ongoing, you should participate in their *hakafos* and dance and sing along with them.

According to *minhag yisrael* (which is treated as an organic part of Torah), we rejoice on Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah to a far greater extent than during the *simchas beis hasho'eivah*, and more so than on any other Yom Tov.

We recite the seventeen verses of *atah horeisa* that are printed in the Siddur. (Seventeen is the numeric value of *tov*, “goodness”.) We repeat the entire passage three times, separating the repetitions with lively *niggunim*. Following that, we recite *av harachamim*, etc. In numerous instances, the Rebbe instructed that specific additional verses be added for that particular occasion. In more recent times, it became the Chabad custom to add the verse beginning with *Vehayah zaracha* (which contains *U'faratztah*), and to repeat it three times in a row.

וְהָיָה זְרָעֶךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ וּפְרֻצַּת יָמָה וְקִדְמָה וְצִפּוֹנָה וְנִגְבָּה וְנִבְרָכוּ בְּךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה וּבְזָרְעָךָ.

“And your seed shall be as [numerous as] the dust of the earth,

and you shall spread to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south; and in you and in your progeny shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Bereishis 28:14)

These verses were usually only added on the eve of Simchas Torah, but in the years 5750 and 5752, it was added on the eve of Shemini Atzeres as well.

It is explained in many Chassidic discourses that the verses of *atah hareisa* that are recited aloud before *hakafos* express the reasons for our rejoicing. In this, they serve as similar function to the verse of kingship (*malchuyos*), remembrances (*zichronos*), and *shofar*-sounding (*shofaros*) that we recite on Rosh Hashanah by way of explanation and scriptural proof texts for the themes of Rosh Hashanah.

During the *farbrengen* on the eve of Simchas Torah in the year 5751, the Rebbe explained that “in addition to these verses presenting the reasons and scriptural proof texts for the concept of *hakafos*, the act of **reciting** these verse are also an **actual prayer**. The effect of this prayer is that the themes described in these verses are accomplished in actuality, overtly, and in our reality.”

The Rebbe explained the spiritual meanings and deeper implications of these seventeen verses during the eve of Simchas Torah *farbrengens* in the later years. Much of this material has been compiled in *Likkutei Sichos Mo’adim*, Shemini Atzeres, and in *Sha’arei HaMo’adim*, Shemini Atzeres. See in detail, *Sichas Leil Simchas Torah 5750-52*. In addition, countless *sichos* of the Rebbeim explain select portions of these verses.

“In truth, I should clarify all of the verses of *atah hareisa*, but I rely on the *chassidim* – that they [already] know. Oh, they know! I only wish they would put into practice as much as they know!” (*Sichas Leil Simchas Torah 5707*.)

“It is the Chabad custom” to recite the verses of *atah hareisa* three times. (*Sichas Leil Simchas Torah 5752*. See also, *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis (II) 5727*.)

“Since we recite these verses before *hakafos* three times, and since we hold *hakafos* three times (i.e., on the eve of Shemini Atzeres, and during both the eve and day of Simchas Torah), we recite them a total of three-times-three. The significance of this is that [as our Sages inform us], ‘Three times forms a *chazakah*.’ By doing so, we emphasize that our recital of these verses is for the sake of introducing the elicitation and revelation into the reality of this world in a manner of strength and forcefulness.” (*Leil Simchas Torah 5751*.)

After elucidating the seventeen verses of *atah hareisa* on the eve of Simchas Torah in the year 5750, the Rebbe stated, “We conclude with *av ha-rachamim*... ‘Most compassionate Father! May it be Your will to do good to Tziyon – rebuild the walls of Yerushalayim! For we put our trust in You alone, King, sublime and exalted G-d, G-d of all the worlds!’ Then, according to the Chabad custom of the latter years, we add the following verse, *ve-hayah zar’acha*... ‘And your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will burst forth westward and eastward and northward and southward; and through you will be blessed all the families of the earth and through your seed!’ (Bereishis 28:14). This conclusion implies that all of the preceding matters are fulfilled in a manner of bursting through limitations to the extent that they are even brought to and achieved among all the families of the earth!” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5750, p. 60.)

“We add the prayer *av ha-rachamim* ... and according to Chabad custom, we then add by way of conclusion, *ve-hayah zar’acha*... (At this point, the Rebbe recited the entire verse in the tune reserved for the verses of *atah hareisa*. He did so three times, and each time, the congregation repeated it after him in similar fashion.)” (*Sichas Leil Simchas Torah* 5752.)

We then remove all the *Sifrei Torah* from the *aron* and circle around the *bimah*. As we do so, we recite *ana Hashem hoshi’ah na* and the verses printed in the *Siddur*, followed by further singing and dancing (as per custom and as stated in the *Siddur*). For an explanation of the text of all seven *hakafos*, see for example, *Sichas Yom Shemini Atzeres* 5704, *Address to the Yeshivah Students* (published as *Kuntras HaKafos* 5704).

The following laws will become relevant with the Redemption: During a *sichah* on the night of Simchas Torah in the year 5749, the Rebbe stated that we will go to *hakafos* together with all of the *ushpizin*, led by our righteous Moshiach. And then, the Rebbe added, we will ask Moshiach whether we are to perform seven or ten circuits of *hakafos*.

It is traditional to honor the Rebbe himself with the first and last *hakafah*.

One who is in their year of mourning should not go alone to the *hakafa*; he should designate someone to accompany him.

The *chazzan* concludes each *hakafah* with the cry of “*Ad kan hakafah alef!*” “*Ad kan hakafah beis!*” and so on. *Sha’ar HaKolel* (ch. 45, sec. 106) clarifies in the name of the Alter Rebbe that in this proclamation, the intention of *ad kan* is “until here” – and no further. This means that the revelation achieved

through each *hakafah* concludes within the realm of holiness and not dissipate further into the realm of the unholy, so that the *kelipah* cannot siphon vitality from the abundance of revelation. In *Sichas Leil Simchas Torah* 5735, the Rebbe explained that the Chabad Rebbeim insisted on this announcement because the revelation of each *hakafah* is infinite. Without this proclamation it would continue indefinitely, whereas the goal is to introduce the revelation into the finite details of this world.

At the end of each *hakafah*, we return all *Sifrei Torah* to the *aron*.

In *Sefer HaSichos* 5704 (p. 31), the Rebbe Rayatz explained the phrase “*ozeir dalim*”. Among other things, he directed that “after we recite the word ‘*ozeir*’ we must pause, and only then recite the word ‘*dalim*’. We attain the level of *ozeir dalim* through dancing on Shemini Atzeres and on Simchas Torah. However, our dancing must be done with truth so that the Torah will rejoice together with us.”

After the *hakafos*, recite *aleinu*. *Kaddish yasom* is then recited. Those who need to recite *kaddish* should read the customary *mishnayos* and conclude with *kaddish derabanan*.

The Badatz has repeatedly issued advisories to remind and warn about the necessity of adhering to the Rebbe’s *takanah* (enactment) regarding alcoholic beverages. Do not drink too much alcohol! This is especially important for those under the age of forty, and particularly for *bachurim*. Even those over forty must exercise restraint. See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shemini* 5723. It is the responsibility of *mashpi'im* to reach out and clarify all the details of this *takanah*, as explained in *Sichos Kodesh*. The *takanah* remains in force during Simchas Torah as well – see *Sichas Yud Beis Tammuz* 5745. Moreover, it is insufficient to exercise restraint personally; each of us must see to it that those around us follow suit, as explained in *Sichas Shabbos Parshas No'ach* 5727 and *Shabbos Parshas Balak* 5744.

During the meal tonight, do not dip your *challah* in honey. In *Likkutei Dibburim* (p. 8.), the Rebbe Rayatz clarifies that “on Shemini Atzeres and on Simchas Torah, we have no need for honey because everything is already prepared Above. If, however, there happens to be honey on the table, then we go ahead and dip in honey as well.”

Remember to include *ya'aleh ve-yavo* in *birchas ha-mazon*. If you forgot but realized your omission before beginning the blessing of *hatov u'meitiv* (i.e., *baruch ... haKeil avinu*

malkeinu), then recite the following blessing immediately: *Baruch ... melech ha-olam asher nasan yamim tovim*, etc. – as printed in the *Siddur*. However, if you have already recited even the first word (*baruch*) of the blessing of *hatov u'meitiv*, you must return to the start of *birchas hamazon*.

Recite the *harachman* for Yom Tov but **not** the *ha-rachaman* for Sukkos.

The Rebbeim would study laws from *Choshen Mishpat* during Shemini Atzeres.

“What should one do if he did not study any laws from *Choshen Mishpat* during Shemini Atzeres, and he now claims that [as a result,] he also does not wish to rejoice?! Why, such a claim comes from the Other Side [the *yetzer hara*!]! This is similar to the adage of Rabbi Nachum of Chernobyl, as related in the *sichos* of my father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz]:

[Reb Nachum’s planned to give a pauper the vast sum he desperately needed, but then thought to multiple his *mitzvah* by giving him only part and dividing the rest among many other paupers. He then realized that this second, seemingly righteous idea was actually the *yetzer hara*’s way of preventing him from fully assisting this man! The Rebbe Rayatz added that “From this we see how important is discernment, always knowing from where a thought is coming.” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5703, p. 67.)]

“Look, on Shemini Atzeres, this fellow perused a newspaper, or went for a stroll, or downed sweet tea accompanied by a slice of cake, and his *nefesh ha-behamis* left him alone in all this. But when it comes time to dance, he suddenly claims that since he is a Lubavitcher *chassid* and he failed to study, at the very least he should not be dancing!

“He finds himself with two choices: He can either drag the *nefesh ha-behamis* into the dance with him, or he can simply leave altogether.... What a pathetic situation to find oneself in!

“Rather, *yishte ve-yishkach risho*, “Let him drink and forget his poverty!” (*Mishlei* 31:7). Let him drink with abandon and crawl his way out – together with me – from a place where we should not be, to the extent that even ‘a hoof shall not remain’ there (*Shemos* 10:26)!” (*Sichas Yom Simchas Torah* 5726.)

“Our rejoicing on Shemini Atzeres is cloaked by the mantle of *kabbalas ol*, acceptance of the yoke of heaven.” See at length, *Sichas Simchas Torah* 5664 (*Sefer HaSichos Toras Shalom*, p. 33 ff.). Also see *Sefer HaSichos* 5702, p. 6, where the Rebbe Rayatz explains that the two themes are united through the Torah that has the power to unify opposites. See *Rashei*

Devarim of *Se'udas Yom Alef DeChag HaSukkos* 5729, where the Rebbe explains that the *kabbalas ol* of one who has attained the spiritual stature of *eved ne'eman*, “a faithful servant,” is powerful enough to also include delight and joy.

“During Simchas Torah in Lubavitch, we would seek ways to laugh! It once happened that during the recital of the verses of *atah hareisa*, an individual intoned the verse, *v'imru hoshi'einu* (‘Say: Save us, G-d of our salvation! Gather us and deliver us from among the nations!’ etc.), but he recited it with tremendous seriousness. The Rebbe [Rashab] said, ‘Why so serious?! Simchas Torah is an entirely different theme!’” (*Sichas Leil Shemini Atzeres Ba-Hakafos* 5704.)

Tuesday, day of Shemini Atzeres

In New York, **the latest time to recite *shema*** in the morning is at **9:56am**.

Recite the Shacharis *amidah* for *shalosh regalim*, followed by the complete *hallel* (it is a positive command of Rabbinic origin to recite the entire *hallel* on each of the eight days of the festival, i.e., Sukkos and Shemini Atzeres). There are no *hosha'anos* today.

During Musaf, we exchange *morid hatal* for *mashiv haru'ach u'morid hageshem*. However, if before reciting the *amidah* of Shacharis you happen to hear an official announcement of this change, you must apply this change to your Shacharis *amidah* as well, provided you are not praying Musaf with a different *minyán*.

The Rebbeim would sometimes make a point of concluding Shacharis on Shemini Atzeres before *chatzos* (halachic midday).

When the *aron* is opened for the reading of the Torah, recite the *yud gimmel middos* (*Hashem Hashem Keil rachum*, etc.) just once, followed by the *Ribbono Shel Olam* prayer. Two *Sifrei Torah* are removed and five people are called up for *aliyos*. The Torah reading is the portion beginning *Aseir Te'aseir*. (This is the Torah reading whether Shemini Atzeres coincides with Shabbos or a weekday, for Shemini Atzeres is the time for separating *ma'asros*.)

Following that reading, the second *Sefer Torah* is placed alongside the first (we do not remove the first so as not to lose focus on a *mitzvah* that is presently before us), and *chatzi kaddish* is recited. After the first Torah has been raised and wrapped, the second is opened for the reading of *maftir*. The reading is *u'bayom hashemini*, from *Parshas Pinchas*. The *haftorah* is then

read (from *vayehi kechallos* until *u'leyisrael amo*.) The book *Sefer HaHaftoros Chabad* unintentionally includes an additional verse in the *haftorah*; this should be ignored.

Yizkor is recited today. If you pray alone at home, you should nevertheless recite *yizkor*, if necessary. *Yizkor* if followed by *av harachamim*. Those who do not need to recite *yizkor* may recite *av harachmim* if they so wish (*Sichas Acharon Shel Pesach* 5702).

Recite *Ashrei* and *yehallelu* (as the *Sifrei Torah* are being returned to the *aron*). The *chazzan* then recites *chatzi kaddish*.

The congregation is not permitted to recite *mashiv haru'ach* until they first hear the *chazzan* recite it in his repetition of the *amidah*. However, it is customary for the *gabbai* to announce, “*Mashiv haru'ach u'morid hageshem!*” This is announced immediately prior to the congregation beginning their silent *amidah*. This announcement is considered equal to hearing the phrase recited by the *chazzan*. As a result, we may include the phrase in our silent *amidah*. The *gabbai* must therefore take care to announce the entire phrase, as above.

Recite the *amidah* for *shalosh regalim*.

It is forbidden to recite *Musaf* on *Shemini Atzeres* before the congregation has begun *Musaf*, because we may only request *geshem*, rain, after the announcement is made in *shul*. If you pray alone at home, you must nevertheless wait until the time at which the congregation will recite this prayer before beginning *Musaf*.

Mashiv haru'ach is introduced into the second blessing of the *amidah* today because the world's water needs are determined during the festival of *Sukkos*. We do not pray for rain during the festival itself, however, because rain on *Sukkos* prevents us from remaining in the *sukkah* and is therefore considered an unfavorable sign from Above. As soon as the seven days of obligatory *sukkah*-dwelling have passed, we pray for rain. However, we do not begin on the eve of *Shemini Atzeres*, but only on the following morning. This is because the entire community does not always gather at night for *Ma'ariv*, whereas they are all present in the morning for *Shacharis*. We do not wish to introduce a change in our prayers that some will observe at one time and others at another. Nor do we begin during the *Shacharis amidah*, but rather, we wait until *Musaf*. This is to allow the *chazzan* or *gabbai* to announce the change before the congregation begins their individual recitations of the *amidah*. The *gabbai* cannot possibly announce the change immediately

prior to the Shacharis *amidah* because he may not interrupt at that point in the prayers. Before Musaf, by contrast, he may make any announcement he wishes.

The association between Shemini Atzeres and the prayer for rain is explained in numerous *ma'amarim* of *Chassidus*, based on *Kisvei HaArizal*: the word *atzeres* means to take in and absorb one matter within another. The exalted spiritual revelations that were elicited during the festival of Sukkos are taken in and absorbed during Shemini Atzeres. At this point, the revelations are integrated within a person's innermost being. The same theme is evoked by the prayer for rain – *morid hageshem*, “Let the rain descend” – which represents the elicitation of the drop of seed that is taken in and absorbed.

We mention rain at this point by way of appeasement, meaning that instead of waiting until we are forced by circumstance to pray for rain, we mention it in advance while praising Hashem's mighty acts. This request is placed in the second blessing of the *amidah* – the blessing of *mechayeh meisim*, “He who brings the dead to life,” because rainfall is considered equal to resurrection in that it brings life to the world.

If you forgot to introduce this change, and you recited *morid hatal* instead of *mashiv haru'ach*, you do not need to repeat anything – even if you have not yet completed that blessing.

This is the law despite the fact that there is no urgent need to pray for dew, seeing that Hashem grants it on an uninterrupted basis. Nevertheless, it is fitting to praise Hashem for the dew just as we do for the rain, for both are forms of sustaining life and providing produce. In fact, *Chazal* often refer to dew as “the dew of resurrection.” (Unlike rain and dew, the wind is not considered life-giving to the same extent, despite the fact that it is critical for the functioning of nature.) The practice of praying for dew throughout the summer months was instituted so that if during the winter season one forgot to request rain and wind, he will at least have requested dew as he was accustomed to doing throughout the summer. In other words, *morid hatal* serves as a backup request if one forgot *mashiv haru'ach*, and there is no need to repeat the prayer.

During Musaf, recite the sacrificial verses of the day: *u'vayom hashemini* and *uminchasam*. If you omitted them, but realized your error before concluding the following blessing (*mekadesh yisrael vehazemanim*), return to the sacrificial verses and continue from there. If, however, you have already pronounced Hashem's name at the conclusion of that blessing, do not return to recite the verses.

If you recited the wrong day's sacrificial verses and realized your error before pronouncing Hashem's name in the above-mentioned blessing, return to recite the correct verses and continue from there. If you only realized after pronouncing Hashem's name, there are diverse halachic opinions as to the correct course of action. The majority of authorities concur that you do not return.

If you accidentally began the Shabbos or weekday sections of the *amidah* prayers, simply interrupt and immediately recite the Yom Tov sections.

During the *chazzan's* repetition, he recites a special section devoted to praying for rain. It begins *af b'ri*.

The *kohanim* recite *birkas kohanim*. While they do so, the congregation should move their heads in the following sequence: *Yevarechaha* – head erect; *Hashem* – lean head to the right; *Veyishmerecha* – 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 *veyaseim*, recite from *Ribono* until *hatzaddik*; while they sing before *lecha*, recite from *ve'im* until *Elisha*; and while they sing before *shalom*, recite from *u'kesheim* until *letovah*. Then, as they pronounce *shalom*, recite the three final words *vesishmereini*, etc. Once the *kohanim* conclude *shalom*, say *amein* followed by *adir ba-marom*, while still covered by the *tallis*.

For *kiddush*, recite: (1) *askinu se'udasa* (the Yom Tov version); (2) *eileh mo'adei*; (3) *borei peri ha-gafen*. We do not recite *leisheiv basukkah*.

If you forgot to recite *shehechyanu* on the first night (eve of Shemini Atzeres) and only realized your omission during the following day, recite it during the daytime.

Men must drink a *revi'is* of wine each day of Yom Tov in order to fulfill their obligation of rejoicing during the festival. This obligation can be fulfilled with the cup of wine used for *kiddush*. Children fulfill this obligation by receiving treats. The Rebbe Rayatz would drink a *revi'is* of wine with each meal during Sukkos.

The *mitzvah* of *oneg yom tov* calls for drinking wine with each meal, if you can afford it, and also increasing in meat and delicious foods, as much as your means allow.

On the last day of the festival, i.e. Shmini Atzeres, it is the Jewish custom to eat a large meal and increase in simcha by eating meat, (“for on this day one cannot do without meat, and everyone purchases it in honor of yom tov because it is an independent Yom Tov of Succos which is dear to them); 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).

Recite *birkas hamazon* as on last night.

Shnayim Mikra for *Parshas Vezos Haberachah* is read today, *erev* Simchas Torah. It is usually read on an *erev* Shabbos because that is the day before the *parshah* is read from the Torah. *Vezos Haberachah* is not read from the Torah on a particular Shabbos, but rather on Simchas Torah, and therefore its *shnayim mikra* preview must be read on the preceding day of Shemini Atzeres. (*Sichas Yom Simchas Torah* 5746.)

It is forbidden to prepare anything today for the second day of Yom Tov, i.e. Simchas Torah, even through a non-Jew (see at length in Hebrew section).

It is best to avoid sitting down to a meal after the tenth hour of the day (**3:20 pm** in New York), so that one will be able to eat the meal tonight—the second night of Yom Tov—with an appetite. However, if one has forgotten and did not eat the *seudas* Yom Tov before this time, they should do so even after this time.

This law will become relevant with the imminent Redemption: In the *beis hamikdash*, the following offerings are brought today – a single cow, a single ram, and seven lambs. All of these are *olos*, burnt-offerings. A single goat is offered as a *chatas*, sin-offering. (The significance of these Shemini Atzeres offerings are explained in numerous teachings of *Chassidus*.)

Recite the *amidah* of *shalosh regalim* during Minchah.

Some are accustomed to recite a *yehi ratzon* prayer upon leaving the *sukkah* for the final time this year – *May it be Your will that we merit to dwell in the sukkah made of the leviyan!* It is not the Chabad custom to recite this prayer. (The reasons behind this custom are discussed in *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5751.)

The Chabad custom is to take leave of the *sukkah* by entering it and eating or drinking something there towards the end of the day on Shemini Atzeres. In the above *sichah*, the Rebbe states

that this is done in the “final moments” of the day. The blessing of *leisheiv basukkah* is not recited.”

Tahaluchah: “It has been customary for many years now to visit *shuls* in many different neighborhoods, on each festival, in order to increase the joy of the festival through uniting with the many Jews of other neighborhoods, and especially by sharing words of Torah (“*Hashem’s laws are just; they gladden the heart*”) – teachings culled from both *nigleh* and *penimi’us ha-Torah*.” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5751.)

“It has become customary in recent years for *bachurim* and young married men to visit [other] Shuls and celebrate the Simchas Torah *hakafos* there, in order to (introduce the novelty of fresh guests to the celebration and thereby) amplify the joy of those congregations.” (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 578.)

“The *yasher ko’ach* (many thanks) that the *bachurim* who went on *tahaluchah* deserve is even more than you could imagine! Their visit to other Shuls demanded tremendous sacrifice on their part, because they were forced to abandon the *farbrengen* here and leave their fellow Chabad *chassidim* and members of Anash, in order to go for several hours to other Shuls! Not only that, but they did so with joy and cheerfulness!” (*Igros Kodesh*.)

One who has finished eating in their *sukkah* today, and has no intention of eating there at all before the end of the day, may remove their possessions from the *sukkah* from the time of *minchah ketanah* (**3:50 pm** in New York). One may not do so earlier because it is not apparent that the removal is conducted in honor of Yom Tov. However, one may not organize them in his house today, as per below:

It is forbidden to prepare or arrange anything today for the next day of Yom Tov before **6:44pm**. Even wine cannot be brought today in preparation for tonight’s *kiddush*. Similarly, it is forbidden to set up the tables and benches that were brought in from the *sukkah*; these may be removed from the *sukkah* and placed within the house (after *minchah ketanah*), but may only be set up tonight. This is on condition that removing them from the *sukkah* does not involve carrying on Yom Tov, i.e. The carrying is done in an enclosed area. (Carrying on Yom tov is only permissible if necessary for that day.) However, if the benches are needed in the home on Shmini Atzeres, or even if one simply wishes to avoid leaving his house looking disorganized, that is sufficient justification to set up the tables and benches.

Monday Night, the Night of Simchas Torah

“The gates are open on Simchas Torah!” the Rebbe Rayatz declared on Simchas Torah in the year 5705. “The gates of light, the gates of blessing, the gates of success! All the gates are open! And we receive these things through the Torah!” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5705, p. 59.) The Rebbe explains this at length in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 380. See also *Sichas Leil Simchas Torah* 5712.

“I once entered [the office of] my father-in-law the Rebbe [Rayatz],” the Rebbe related during Shabbos *Bereishis* in the year 5746. “I suggested that we publish a *kuntras* [booklet] of *ma’amarim* in honor of the approaching festival of Simchas Torah. The Rebbe [Rayatz] replied with a smile on his lips, ‘Do you expect people to sit down to study a *ma’amor* of *Chassidus* on Simchas Torah?!’ Nevertheless, in actual practice, I “got my way” and the Rebbe [Rayatz] issued a *ma’amor* in order that it be studied during Simchas Torah. They were indeed quite a number of people who studied the *ma’amor* that Simchas Torah! Do not wonder at the fact that the Rebbe [Rayatz] had initially thought otherwise of the plan. For there are matters – even those that involve a *nassi* [leader] of the Jewish people – that must be accomplished through the people’s initiative, despite [the *nassi*] initially thinking to the contrary.” (*Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5746. See there for the rest of the discussion.)

During Simchas Torah 5730, the Rebbe added a detail regarding the above episode: He had suggested reprinting the *ma’amor* entitled *Heichaltzu* because that year was the fiftieth anniversary of the *ma’amor*’s delivery by the Rebbe Rashab. Indeed, the *ma’amor* was published in honor of Simchas Torah 5709.

On Simchas Torah, our Divine service involves pounding with the feet and clapping with the hands. This is in contrast to the rest of the year, when our Divine service involves pounding (working) with the head – not merely opening a *ma’amor*, but pounding its contents into the head. (*Sefer HaSichos* 5709, p. 286.)

Candle lighting is **after 6:44 pm** (in New York). Candles are lit at home, not in the *sukkah*. The flame is drawn from a pre-existing flame that was lit before the start of Yom Tov.

Two blessings are recited over the candles: 1) *lehadlik ner shel yom tov* and 2) *shehechianu*.

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 for the sake of food preparation.”).

The solution, if you are using wax candles, is to take the holder over to the garbage can (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 normally used 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 it.

According to some opinions, one who failed to read *shnayim*

mikra before any particular Shabbos of the outgoing year may, as a matter of recourse, read the missed portions any time before Simchas Torah. (On Simchas Torah, the Jewish people conclude that particular round of reading from the Torah and begin the cycle again.) It is best to follow this view and to catch up on missed portions before Simchas Torah.

One should object to those who burn oils known as *pulver* on Simchas Torah. Although they intend to increase the joy of the festival, nevertheless, not everyone finds it pleasurable and it is therefore forbidden to light a flame for this purpose on Yom Tov. (See *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken*, 5514:21, where the Alter Rebbe permits indirect extinguishing for the sake of a *mitzvah*. See also *Sichas Yom De'Simchas Torah* 5726.)

Tonight's Maariv and Kiddush are identical to yesterday's. Food is eaten in the house, not in the *sukkah*.

One who wishes to eat in the *sukkah* on Simchas Torah must make it obvious that he is not doing so for the sake of the *mitzvah* of *sukkah*. Otherwise, he would appear to be adding to the Torah's laws. How does he make his intention obvious? He can, for example, bring pots and pans into the *sukkah*, making it clear that he does not consider it a *sukkah* for the purpose of the *mitzvah* any longer. (See *Sichas Leil Simchas Torah* 5712, where the Rebbe mentions that he instructed that the *sechach* be removed on *erev* Yom Tov for this purpose.)

One of those positioned at the [Rebbe Rayatz's] table [at the start of the Rebbe's Yom Tov meal on the night of Simchas Torah 5704] suggested that *kiddush* be recited by one of those present, and that everyone else could fulfill their obligation through that person's recital. The Rebbe [Rayatz] responded, "The *shehechyanu* that we recite during *kiddush* on Simchas Torah pertains to the Torah! Regarding the Torah, there is no such thing as one person fulfilling someone else's obligation. If only each person would satisfy his own obligation...!" (*Sefer HaSichos* 5704, p. 32.) The Rebbe explains this episode at length in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, *sichah* for *VeZos Habrachah—Simchas Torah*.

"On Simchas Torah, we recite the blessing of *shehechyanu*. This blessing is not a blessing over the Torah, but rather, it is a blessing on our rejoicing over the Torah. Today, on Simchas Torah, we must treat time preciously – all twenty-four hours and every minute! We must accept the yoke upon ourselves, so that for the duration of all 365 days of the coming year, *lo yeira'eh ve-lo yimatze*, there shall be neither seen nor found a day without Torah!" (*Sefer HaSichos* 5697, p. 196. See there

for further details, and also see *Sichas Yom Simchas Torah* 5726.)

“We once heard it said that the *kiddush* recited on Simchas Torah is *le'eila*, exalted beyond all explanations! Indeed, the *u'leila* recited during the *ne'ilah* service [at the close and climax of Yom Kippur] (for *Chassidim* do not recite *le'eila u'le'eilah* in any prayer except for *ne'ilah*) makes itself heard in the *kiddush* recited on Simchas Torah!

“Now, [an ordinary] *kiddush* involves a *motzi* and a *yotzei* [he who affords others the opportunity to discharge their obligation with his recital of *kiddush*, and those who thereby fulfill their obligation]. The *motzi* must consciously bear his audience in mind, while the *yotzei* must likewise intend to fulfill his obligation with the other person's recital. In other words, they must all have mindfulness. But the *kiddush* of Simchas Torah is far greater than that! Each individual must take a *siddur*, recite the words of *kiddush*, and pronounce the *shehechyanu* over the Torah!” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5709, p. 281.)

In **many** *sichos*, the Rebbe explains that according to *halachah*, there is no issue with hearing *kiddush* from someone else. Nevertheless, out of deep affection for this special *shehechyanu* each person should attempt to recite his own *kiddush*. However, if it is necessary to do otherwise, one should not hesitate to recite *kiddush* on behalf of others. As the Rebbe put it:

“We must nevertheless consider the reality. There are those who do not know about this *sichah*. For one reason or another, they might end up drinking or saying *l'chaim* without *kiddush* altogether! Therefore, notwithstanding the fact *az der sichah iz takkeh ah sichah* [that the Previous Rebbe's statement retains its full weight] and we are required to implement it, nevertheless, due to the reality being what it is, someone here should now recite *kiddush* and bear in mind all who have not yet recited *kiddush*.” (*Leil Simchas Torah* 5731. See also *Leil Simchas Torah* 5732.) In later years, the Rebbe would not recite *kiddush* at the *farbrengen*. The reason for this is explained in *Leil Simchas Torah* 5741.

Farbrengen: “Immediately following Maariv, before the *hakafos*, we recite *kiddush* and *farbreng* together in the joyous spirit of the festival. Only then do we proceed to *hakafos*.”

This particular *farbrengen* period – between Maariv and *hakafos* – is a custom established by the Rebbeim. (*Leil Simchas Torah* 5736.) Throughout the years, the Rebbe

would always *farbreng* at this point. In the above *sichah*, the Rebbe explains the distinction between the joy of the *farbrengen* and the joy of *hakafos*.

On the night of Simchas Torah 5733, the Rebbe mentioned utilizing the break between the end of the *farbrengen* and the start of *hakafos* to read *shnayim mikra* for *Parshas Vezos Habrachah*.

“The schedule in Lubavitch,” the Rebbe Rayatz related, “was that following the delivery of a *ma’amor* of *Chassidus* that we would hear on Shemini Atzeres [that would conclude after nightfall on Simchas Torah], we would pray the Maariv service, recite *kiddush*, taste something of the Yom Tov meal, and then go to the *hakafos-farbrengen*.” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5702, p. 135.)

Ushpizin: “Throughout the seven days of Sukkos,” the Rebbe declared on the night of Simchas Torah 5748, “we are visited by the *ushpizin*, [holy] ‘guests,’ [so-called because their spiritual influence on us remains external to who we are]. During Shemini Atzeres, this is taken a step higher. The *ushpizin* become *ba’alim*, ‘hosts’ [i.e., their influence is integrated to the point that it becomes part of who we are]. Now, on Simchas Torah, this all becomes [to quote the Torah’s concluding words that we read on Simchas Torah], *le’inei kol Yisrael*, ‘Before the eyes of the entire Jewish people’ ... so that we openly witness the association between the *ushpizin* and all Jews.” (*Sichas Leil Simchas Torah* 5748.)

“In these countries, it is customary to remove all *Sifrei Torah* from their ark on both the night and day of Simchas Torah, and to recite songs and praises according to local custom. It is further customary to walk around the *bimah* in the *beis hakneses* while holding the *Sifrei Torah* in the manner that the *bimah* is circled with the *lulav* [during *hosha’anos*]. This is all done for the sake of the joy [of Simchas Torah].”

The order of tonight’s *hakafos* is identical to yesterday’s.

“It is customary to rejoice to a far greater extent during the second *hakafos* that are performed on the night of Simchas Torah than during the first *hakafos* that are performed on the night of Shemini Atzeres. If the degree of joy were to remain the same as during the previous night’s *hakafos*, without an increase, it could not be considered true joy, since it has already been experienced the night before.”

“It was readily observable in the conduct of our Rebbeim that their joy was restricted on the first night of *hakafos* (Shemini Atzeres). It was restricted in duration as well as

in the *niggunim* and dancing. However, on the second night (Simchas Torah), their joy knew no limits.” (*Yom Simchas Torah* 5726.) The Rebbe made statements to the same effect in countless other *sichos*.

In 770, it is customary to sell the honor of reading the verses of *atah ho'reisa*. The Rebbe is honored with reading the first and final verses – and occasionally additional verses as well (as occurred in later years on the night of Shemini Atzeres; on the night and day of Simchas Torah, the Rebbe would receive the entire set of verses for their initial reading [they are read three times in total]). The funds generated by selling the verses on the night of Simchas Torah are used to benefit Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim. The funds from the verses on the day of Simchas Torah are used to benefit Merkos L'Inyanei Chinuch and Machane Yisrael (Kupas Rabbeinu). (*Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad*.)

During Simchas Torah, it is permissible to dance while reciting passages that praise the Torah because this is considered giving honor to the Torah. *Chassidim* are accustomed to sing, clap, and dance on every Yom Tov as well, even if it coincides with Shabbos.

“The Zohar (3:256b) strongly associates the concept of *Kesser Torah*, the Crown of Torah, with Simchas Torah – ‘The Jewish people are accustomed to rejoice with [the Torah] and to call [the celebration] “Simchas Torah,” and they crown the *Sefer Torah* with its crown.’ This serves as a rebuttal for those who think they are being clever by removing the crowns from the *sifrei torah* before the dancing out of concern that, G-d forbid, the crowns may fall from the *Sifrei Torah*. The Zohar explicitly states that the main concept of *Kesser Torah* is relevant specifically to Simchas Torah. And from Simchas Torah, this concept is drawn into the entire following year.” (*Yom Simchas Torah* 5743.) See *Siddur Yavetz*, and elsewhere.

Hakafos are followed by *aleinu* and *kaddish shaleim*.

It is not the Chabad custom to read from the Torah on the night of Simchas Torah. (Certain communities outside Chabad are accustomed to reading sections from the Torah and usually elicit donations from those called to the Torah. Others read *Parshas Vezos Habrachah*.)

Birkas hamazon is identical to yesterday's.

“Everyone knows,” the Previous Rebbe stated, “that during the reading of *kri'as shema sheal hamitah* [before retiring] on

the night of Simchas Torah, when one recites *shema yisrael*, he must accept upon himself to be dedicated and devoted to disseminating Torah with the self-sacrifice of his body, spirit (*ru'ach*), and soul (*neshamah*), to the point that it becomes his very being (*mehus*)!" (*Sefer HaSichos* 5704, p. 39.)

From the year 5716 until 5724, after the Yom Tov meal that followed *hakafos* on the night of Simchas Torah, the Rebbe taught *niggunim* and distributed *mashke* to whoever accepted upon himself to increase (or to begin) the study of *Chassidus*.

Tuesday, the Day of Simchas Torah

Shema must be read before 9:56 am (in New York).

Shacharis is the same as yesterday's, except for *birkas kohanim* that is recited during Shacharis instead of Musaf (out of concern that because Musaf is preceded by *hakafos*, a *kohen* may be intoxicated by the time Musaf arrives). The Shacharis *amidah* is followed by complete *hallel*, *shir shel yom*, and *kaddish tiskabeil*.

Hakafos: *Atah horeisa* is read three times. Three and a half *hakafos* circuits are made. (This is explained in *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, p. 57.) Nevertheless, all seven stanzas of *hakafos* are recited. This is accomplished by reciting one stanza per each half circuit. The announcement that usually marks the end of each *hakafah* (*ad kan hakafah...*) is not recited.

Some are accustomed to reciting *kiddush* before *hakafos*, despite not having recited Musaf. (As mentioned earlier, *birkas kohanim* is recited during Shacharis for this very reason. However, see *Sichas Yom Simchas Torah* 5726, and take note of *Igros Kodesh Admor Moharayaz*, vol. 6, p. 270.) Those reciting *kiddush* may eat fruits or similar light refreshments, even in quantities that fill one's appetite. Similarly, they may eat bread – and according to many opinions, also *mezonos* – up to the quantity of *kebeitzah*, but not more than that. This is on condition that recite *kiddush* first, and drink a *revi'is* of wine or eat a *kezayis* of any of the five grains immediately after *kiddush*. If there is a designated person who will remind the one who eats to daven Musaf, or if there are many people eating together (in which case they will remind each other), then there is room to be lenient and permit them to eat more than this amount.

The laws regarding praying while intoxicated and additional laws pertaining to an intoxicated person as they were published by the Badatz in last Purim's issue.

Laws Regarding Intoxication

Halachah differentiates between one who is slightly intoxicated (*shasuy*), one who is very intoxicated (*shikur*), and one who is completely drunk to the extent that he lost control of what he is doing (*shikruso shel lot*). The following laws refer to the slightly intoxicated, unless otherwise specified.

1) Prayer

One who has drunk a *revi'is* of wine is not permitted to pray. He must not pray until the effect of the wine has dissipated, even if he can speak perfectly lucidly before a king while under the effect of his wine. Wine drunk in the course of a meal is, generally, not considered intoxicating. However, it all depends on each individual's nature. All authorities agree that at least as far as prayer is concerned, all other intoxicating drinks share the same law as wine. In order to pray, it is sufficient for one who is intoxicated to wait until he feels the effect has worn off.

If he drank more than a *revi'is*, but would still be able to speak lucidly before a king, then if he went ahead and prayed, his prayer is valid and he need not repeat his prayer once he is completely sobered.

Nowadays, we do not manufacture the same kind of wines that were commonplace in earlier periods of history. We are therefore no longer concerned with one who has drunk wine – he can pray even if he drank **more** than a *revi'is* – for we know and sense that our wines do not carry that same strength. Certainly, if he holds a *siddur* and prays from it, he need not worry about being slightly intoxicated. If his only option is to recite the prayers from memory, then if waiting for the effect of the wine to dissipate will result in his missing the proper time for the prayer, he should pray in his present state. After all, we do not concentrate that perfectly in our prayer nowadays regardless of the wine.

However, one who is intoxicated to the point that he is unable to speak lucidly before a king, is called a *shikur* – drunkard. If he prays in such a state, his prayer is an abomination and it is comparable to idol worship. He must repeat his prayer once his intoxication has worn off. This is something we must be careful to avoid nowadays as well, despite the comparative weakness of our wines.

If a *shikur* remains in his state as the deadline for prayer approaches, he should let the time pass rather than pray, and then make up for the missed prayer at the time of the subsequent prayer – by which time his intoxication will have subsided. Although this delay was avoidable, he is nevertheless considered

one who was forced by circumstances beyond his control (*ones*) because when he began drinking, he believed that he would have time to sober somewhat before the deadline arrived; he subsequently got carried away with the feasting and drinking, losing proper awareness of time, until there was insufficient time to sober.

One who has become completely drunk cannot subsequently judge himself coherent enough to lucidly address a king until his sober friends inform him of this fact.

2) The Shema and Its Blessings

Some authorities maintain that the laws of reciting the *Shema* are identical to the laws of prayer, as above, for one who is slightly intoxicated. Similarly, the blessings surrounding the recital of the *Shema* are treated identically to the actual paragraphs of the *Shema*. According to the final *halachah*, however, even one who drank strong wine should nevertheless recite the *Shema*. This is because reciting the *Shema* is a biblical obligation (*d'Oraisa*), and we must err on the side of fulfilling the obligation in the face of an uncertain cause for invalidation.

One who recites the *Shema* to fulfill his obligation, even if not entirely certain that he truly fulfills his obligation because of his circumstances, must nevertheless recite it along with its appropriate blessings.

A *shikur*, by contrast, must treat the *Shema* like prayer. He is forbidden to recite either of them.

3) Birchas Hamazon

One who is able to address a king, even if he cannot speak as properly as usual because his speech gives away the fact that he is slightly intoxicated, nevertheless, as long as he does not fumble over his words and make errors, he should recite *Birchas Hamazon* in his present state.

There is a disagreement among the authorities regarding a *shikur* who cannot speak lucidly before a king without making errors. Some are of the opinion that he must not recite *Birchas Hamazon* and that doing so is considered an abomination. Others maintain that a *shikur* who is entirely incapable of addressing a king should nevertheless recite *Birchas Hamazon*.

Practically speaking, one should attempt to end his meal and recite *Birchas Hamazon* before reaching such a state. If he has already reached a state of *shikrus*, he should nevertheless recite *Birchas Hamazon* because it is a biblical obligation and we are stringent to fulfill it in the face of an uncertain disqualification.

In the above case, once the *shikur* has recited *Birchas Hamazon*, if he then sobers before his meal has been fully digested, he should not repeat *Birchas Hamazon*. This is because when faced with an uncertain obligation to recite blessings (it is not certain that his previous recitation was invalid), we err on the side of not reciting blessings in vain.

4) Other Blessings

Even a *shikur* may recite all other blessings. Even a blurry intention is sufficient for these blessings, and even with mistakes, his blessings remain valid.

5) An Extreme *Shikur*

A drunkard who arrives at the state achieved by Lot, at which point he is utterly unaware of what he is doing, is no longer obligated in any *mitzvah*. He may not recite a blessing of any kind. He may not be included in the ten men required for a *minyan*, or in the *zimun* for *Birchas Hamazon*. (Some authorities are stringent and do not permit even a lesser *shikur*, as described earlier, to participate in the required number for a *minyan*.)

6) Responsibility and Liability

A *shikur* of any level, even that achieved by Lot, is considered a rational person for all matters, and the Torah's penalties for transgressing its laws will apply in his case. In this regard, he is treated as if he had willfully intended to perform whichever actions he takes.

Even on Purim, one who inflicts damage or injury while intoxicated is fully liable.

The additional prayers recited at the opening of the ark for the Torah reading are as yesterday's prayers.

On Simchas Torah, three *Sifrei Torah* are removed for the Torah reading: for 1) *Parshas Vezos Haberachah*; 2) *Parshas Bereishis*; and 3) today's Musaf offerings.

It is customary to call many people to the Torah in order to honor the entire congregation with an *aliyah* on the day that the entire Torah is concluded. To this end, the same portion is read repeatedly until all have had an *aliyah*. The portion that is repeated begins at the start of *Parshas Vezos Haberachah* and ends with the words *u'vega'avaso shechakim* – “He who rides the heavens is at your assistance, and with His majesty, the skies” (*Devarim* 33:26). It is not forbidden to repeat the reading in this case, since some authorities are of the opinion that it is always permissible to call many people to a single Torah portion

when the portion is repeated. Therefore, blessings are recited each time, without fear of reciting a blessing in vain. Although this opinion is not practiced throughout the year, it is relied upon during Simchas Torah for the reason mentioned above.

In actual practice, the current custom in 770 is to read the portion just once, but to give many people an *aliyah* together.

“Today is Simchas Torah!” the Previous Rebbe exclaimed in 5703. “On Simchas Torah, Heaven removes the power of *ayin hara* (evil eye). Throughout the year, the *kelipah* and *sitra achra* are able, G-d forbid, to provoke an *ayin hara*, but on Simchas Torah, Hashem’s blessing to the Jewish people shines forth openly. Therefore, a father and his sons may receive an *aliyah* to the Torah together. And with the Simchas Torah dancing, we can elicit a vast amount – abundant influence for all Jews and especially for those who are occupied with Torah and divine service.” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5703, p. 12.)

It is customary to call all boys to the Torah in order to train them in the *mitzvah* of reading the Torah. This practice is referred to as *kol ha ne’arim* (“All the Boys”). Even small infants may be called to the Torah out of a sense of endearment for the Torah and to educate them about the Torah. Generally, the youngsters are given the fifth *aliyah* (that begins *u’leDan amar* – “And of Dan he said: Dan is a young lion...” [33:22]). An adult should receive an *aliyah* with the children; he should stand over them, recite the blessing together with them, pronouncing the blessing word by word so that they can repeat after him.

The Rema states that for the children’s *aliyah*, the passages of *hamalach hago’el* are read (“May the angel who redeemed me from all harm bless the youths...” – *Bereishis* 48). Similarly, *Lu’ach Colel Chabad* cites the (non-Chabad) practice of spreading a *tallis* over the heads of the children and whoever else is standing around the *bimah* after the reading, and to recite *hamalach hago’el*. In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe explains that this is not the Chabad custom. However, the Rebbe points out that the theme of this practice is good and that the spiritual accomplishment sought by those who practice this custom is achieved regardless of its physical implementation. Notably, in the earlier years, the Rebbe often instructed that *hamalach hago’el* be recited or sung together with all the children during the *farbrengen* of either Simchas Torah or Shabbos *Bereishis*.

Chassan Torah: The one who receives the sixth *aliyah* of *me’onah* (“The abode for Hashem who precedes all” [33:27]) is referred to as the *Chassan Torah*. It is customary to sell

for significant sums the honor to this *aliyah*, as well as the subsequent *aliyah*, known as *Chassan Bereishis* (when the beginning of *Parshas Bereishis* is read). It is appropriate that these two *aliyos* be given to those who are outstanding in Torah knowledge or at least are among the most esteemed members of the community. *Kohanim* may be called as *Chassan Torah* and *Chassan Bereishis*, as well as for *maftir*. One who receives one of these honors should not receive the other as well in the same *shul*. (Some are lenient about this, but it is not customary to do so.) However, one who received an *aliyah* in the earlier part of the reading (i.e., he received any of the first five *aliyos*) may in addition receive *Chassan Torah* or *Chassan Bereishis*.

After the fifth *aliyah* (from *u'leDan* until *shechakim*), the Gabbai recites *maireshus*, the elaborate introduction to the *Chassan Torah*. It is not the Chabad custom to spread a *tallis* over the heads of the *Chassan Torah* or *Chassan Bereishis*.

For the conclusion of the entire Torah, the congregation rises to its feet and proclaims, “*Chazak chazak venis'chazeik!*” (Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!). The one receiving the *aliyah* recites *chazak* along with the congregation.

The first *sefer torah* should not be removed from the *bimah* until the second *sefer torah* (rolled to *Parshas Bereishis*) has been placed beside it. The first *sefer torah* is then raised and wrapped, and the Gabbai recites *meireshus* for the *Chassan Bereishis*.

Chassan Bereishis: On Shabbos *Bereishis* 5744, the Rebbe mentioned that over the course of time, it became an established practice for the Rebbeim to receive *Chassan Bereishis*. In earlier times, this was not always the case. See the *sichah* for an explanation.

During the reading of *Parshas Bereishis*, it is customary for the community to recite out loud the concluding verse of each day of creation (*vayehi erev vayehi vokeir yom....*), as well as the entire passage of *vayechulu*. The one reading the Torah reads each of these verses only after they have been recited by the community.

After the readings from the first two *Sifrei Torah* have been completed, the third *Sefer Torah* is placed alongside the second. *Chatzi kaddish* is recited in order to distinguish between the obligatory readings of the first two *Sifrei Torah* and the *maftir* that is read only to honor the Torah. (*Kaddish* is not recited between the readings from the first and second *Sefer Torah*.)

Maftir is read from *Parshas Pinchas* (*u'va-yom ha-shemini...*). The *haftorah* begins, “*vayehi acharei mos Moshe...*”

If there are only two *Sifrei Torah* available in a *shul*, then after reading *VeZos Haberachah* from the first and *Bereishis* from the second, the first *Sefer Torah* is returned to the *bimah* and used for *maftir*. The first *Sefer Torah* should be rolled to the appropriate place for *maftir* while the Gabbai recites the *meireshus* for the *Chassan Bereishis*. If there is only one *Sefer Torah* available in *shul*, then after they have finished *VeZos Haberachah*, while the Gabbai is still reading the *meireshus* for the *Chassan Bereishis*, the *Sefer Torah* should be rolled to *Parshas Bereishis*. After the reading from *Bereishis* is completed, *kaddish* should be recited immediately, and the *Sefer Torah* should then be rolled to the correct place for *maftir*.

After the Torah readings and the *haftorah*, the *sisu vesimchu* liturgy (printed in the *Siddur*) is recited with song and dance. That is followed by *Ashrei*, *yehallelu*, *chatzi kaddish*, and then Musaf for *shalosh regalim* (the same as yesterday's, but without the actual *birkas kohanim* by the *kohanim*).

On principle, Musaf should not be delayed beyond the seventh halachic hour of the day, which is one hour after *chatzos*. It is considered sinful to delay it beyond that time. One who nevertheless recited Musaf later in the day has fulfilled his obligation because the service remains valid until the end of the day. It is customary to be lenient about delaying Musaf if it is not due to laziness or the like, G-d forbid, but due to the length of the morning prayers on an occasion such as Simchas Torah, or lengthy prayers in general, for that matter.

One who forgot to recite Musaf may still recite it any time before nightfall (*tzeis hakochavim*). After that, it is too late and there is no way to compensate.

Kiddush and *birkas hamazon* are as yesterday's. The Rema states that "the final day of Yom Tov is called Simchas Torah because we rejoice and hold a festive meal in honor of having completed the entire Torah."

Chitas: In numerous *sichos*, the Rebbe (and Previous Rebbe – see *Sefer HaSichos* 5696, p. 14; 5705, p. 61) reminded those present to study the Chumash of *Parshas Bereishis* during Simchas Torah. Accordingly, the first three *aliyos* of *Bereishis* must be studied on Simchas Torah this year because the festival occurs on a Tuesday. These portions are therefore most relevant to Simchas Torah.

The above directive stands in contrast to the *moreh shi'ur* (Chitas calendar) and *HaYom Yom*, both of which state that *Bereishis* is studied on the day after Simchas Torah: "*Parshas*

VeZos Haberachah is studied on Simchas Torah, from the *aliyah* corresponding to the day in the week on which Simchas Torah occurs, until the end of that *Parshah* ... On Isru Chag Sukkos, *Parshas Bereishis* is studied from its beginning until the end of the *aliyah* that corresponds to the current day of the week.”

Numerous other *sichos* state that *Bereishis* should be studied on Isru Chag. See for example, *Sefer HaSichos* 5751 (vol. 1, p. 66, fn. 38). See *Sefer HaSichos* 5704 (p. 44) – “During the eve of Isru Chag and during the following day of Isru Chag – the entire day.”

On Simchas Torah and Shabbos *Bereishis* 5746 (an identical calendar sequence to the current year), the Rebbe explained his reason for instructing to study *Parshas Bereishis* on Simchas Torah, in contradiction to the *moreh shi’ur*: “There is no reason to delay this study simply due to the fact that the *mitzvah* of the day is to celebrate, for time is squandered in any case! Needless to say, the study of *Parshas Bereishis* must not come at the expense of the rejoicing and dancing. G-d forbid to detract from the joy of the day! However, there are moments within the day when one is not occupied in rejoicing and dancing regardless. Instead of using those moments for other matters, one should use them to study the relevant sections of *Parshas Bereishis*.”

According to *Sefer HaSichos* 5705 and *Yom Simchas Torah* 5725, the chief concern is with **studying that particular day’s portion** of *Bereishis*. Accordingly, because this year’s Simchas Torah is on a Tuesday, it would require studying **shlishi** of *VeZos Haberachah* and **shlishi** of *Bereishis*. See also *Yom Simchas Torah* 5746.

The lessons to be derived from today’s portions of Chumash (i.e., *shlishi* of *VeZos Haberachah* and *shlishi* of *Bereishis*) are explained in *Sichas Yom Simchas Torah* 5746.

Farbrengen: Following Minchah, a *farbrengen* is conducted. It is customary to wash one’s hands for bread before sunset and to eat at least the quantity of bread equal to a *kebeitzah*. The *niggunim* of the Rebbeim are sung. Before beginning each *niggun*, the name of the Rebbe associated with that *niggun* is announced.

“Before nightfall, it is the custom of the Rebbe *shlita* to wash his hands for a meal, in the course of which he delivers a *ma’amar*. This is followed by *birkas hamazon*, Maariv, *havdalah*, and the distribution of wine to all those present from *kos shel berachah*, the cup over which the blessings of *birkas hamazon* were recited.”

(*Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad*, regarding Rosh Hashanah.)

“During Simchas Torah *farbrengens*, the Rebbe was accustomed to remind everyone to contribute to the Keren Hashanah Fund. He would also remind everyone to study Chitas and to participate in the Kinus Torah.” (*Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad*.) This is explained in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 2, p. 654 *ff.* This year, contributions should be given in multiples of 353 which is the number of days in the year 5777.

“It is customary,” the Previous Rebbe directed, “to sing the Shpolier Zeide’s *niggun*, ‘Hop Cossack!’ on Simchas Torah and on Acharon Shel Pesach. We should therefore sing it now....” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5704 [during the meal on Acharon Shel Pesach], p. 116.) See also the Rebbe Rashab’s *sichah* on Simchas Torah 5680 (*Toras Shalom*, p. 236). The reason for this custom is explained in *Roshei Devarim* of the *se’udos* of *Leil Acharon Shel Pesach* 5727. See also *Acharon Shel Pesach* 5730. This *niggun* was frequently sung during the Rebbe’s *farbrengens* on Simchas Torah or Shabbos Bereishis. See *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5726 for the association between this *niggun* and the theme of *Yaakov halach ledarko*.

If one’s *yom tov* meal (or *farbrengen* if he washed for bread) extends past nightfall – even if it extends many hours into the night – he must recite *ya’aleh veyavo* during *birkas hamazon*. As long as his meal began at a time when *ya’aleh veyavo* was required, that obligation continues for the duration of his meal.

The Badatz has in the past issued an advisory that one should not photograph or digitally record in any way at all until after the congregation has prayed the Maariv service. May those who conduct themselves accordingly be blessed!

Yom Tov ends at 6:41 pm (in New York).

The regular Maariv for *motza’ei Yom Tov* is recited. The phrase *mashiv haru’ach u’morid hageshem* is inserted. (The switch to *mashiv haru’ach* was introduced during Musaf on Shemini Atzeres.) *Ata chonantanu* must be included. (*Ve’sein tal u’matar* is not recited until the 4th or 5th of December. This year, the change will be introduced on Sunday night, the eve of the 5th of Kislev.)

The Rebbe repeatedly discussed the announcement that was made in Lubavitch of old at the conclusion of Simchas Torah. From this moment, our mode of divine service switches track. We now enter a state of *veYaakov halach ledarko* (“*Yaakov went on his way*” – *Bereishis* 32:2). There are multiple levels of applying this message, as discussed in many *sichos*. At the

conclusion of Shabbos *Bereishis*, this announcement is repeated. See for example, *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 20, p. 269.

“There is a famous adage of the Rebbe [Rashab]: “After Simchas Torah, the order of *veYaakov halach le-darko* begins. It is the way of Hashem, the way of Torah and *mitzvos*.” The Rebbe [Rayatz] explained the theme of Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah as follows: One purchases merchandise at a fair. He then arrives home and unpacks the merchandise – throughout the following year – and he begins to put the merchandise to its intended use. The same is true of each Jew. During [Tishrei,] the seventh month (*shevi'i*) that is satiated (*musbah* [from the same root letters as *shvi'i*]) with all good matters, each Jew is given spiritual merchandise with which to provide a livelihood for himself for the duration of the coming year. What is required, however, is that we actually open the packages, unpack the merchandise, and put it to its intended use.” (Introduction to *Kuntras Shemini Atzeres–Simchas Torah* 5711.)

“As the auspicious and festive days of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkos, Shemini Atzeres, and Simchas Torah draw to a close, a Jew must enter mundane, weekday life. Furthermore, these weekdays belong to the winter season, the half of the year that is sorely lacking in festivals. He must therefore take provisions for the journey along with him. These provisions are the powers and influences that will give him the ability to fulfill the instruction of *veYaakov halach le'darko* – to go on his way with confidence, despite the fact that all journeys involve danger. For this very purpose, he experienced Shemini Atzeres, a time when all the comprehensive influences of the month of Tishrei are gathered and absorbed internally. He also experienced Simchas Torah that marks the start of the revelation and elicitation. This makes it far easier to bring about actual positive results – throughout the entire coming year – from all the positive resolutions made during Tishrei.” (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 393.)

“One who has not yet read *shnayim mikra* for *Parshas Vezos Haberachah* should read it no later than the night following Simchas Torah. The night follows the day, so the night after Simchas Torah is still associated with *Parshas Vezos Haberachah* that was read on Simchas Torah.” (*Yom Simchas Torah* 5746.) In that *sichah*, the Rebbe explains that the same is true of the portions of *chitas* that were meant to have been studied on Simchas Torah.

Wednesday, *Isru Chag*, 24 Tishrei

“Today marks the *yahrtzeit* of my grandmother Rachel, may G-d avenge her blood [she perished in the Holocaust], the wife of *HaRav HaGaon*, etc., Rabbi Meir Shlomo Yanovsky of Nikolayev. For a number of years, I would spend a number of weeks at the end of each summer in Nikolayev, and she would care for me...” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 63, in fn.)

A law for the Era of Redemption: Once the festival has concluded, the utensils and equipment of the *Beis Hamikdash* are removed from their places and immersed. This is done to purify the Courtyard from the ritual impurity of those ignorant of the laws of ritual purity who came in contact with the equipment during the festival.

During Shacharis, do not recite tachanun, Lamnatze’ach ya’ancha, and Tefilah leDovid. This applies until the end of Tishrei. Lamnatze’ach ya’ancha is recited after davening before Tehillim.

Once Sukkos has passed, the *sechach* may be used for any purpose, although it is appropriate to avoid stepping on the *sechach* or using it for a disrespectful purpose.

Regarding *sukkah* decorations, the Rebbe commented: “Seemingly, it is appropriate to add a warning regarding the need to preserve their sanctity, and especially – to completely avoid the fate that commonly meets *sukkah* decorations, particularly after Sukkos has ended.”

Shulchan Admor HaZaken states that because it is appropriate to use an object that was used for one *mitzvah* for the sake of an additional *mitzvah*, some are accustomed to using the *aravos* that were struck against the ground on Hoshana Rabbah to burn the *chametz* on *erev* Pesach. Others use the *aravos* to fuel the oven used to bake *matzos*. (This custom is explained in *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak*, vol. 2, p. 296.) The Rebbe Rayatz relates that in practice, the *sechach* was burned in the bath house, soon after Sukkos. The *lulav* and *hosha’anos* were burned on an ordinary weekday and was not kept to burn with the *chametz*. (Reshimos, Tishrei 5693.). See *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken*, 297:6, and *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 569, regarding the use of the *hadasim* for *besamim* (the blessing over spices) on *motza’ei* Shabbos.

The day following a festival is referred to as *Isru Chag*. This name is derived from the verse, *Isru chag ba’avosim ad karnos hamizbe’ach* (“Bind the festival [offering] with cords until

[you bring it to] the horns of the altar” – Tehillim 118). Taken literally, the phrase “*isru chag*” means to bind the festival itself, which Chazal explain as connecting (binding) the day following the festival with the actual festival, i.e., to celebrate in honor of the festival that has just ended. This celebration, Chazal explain, takes the form of feasting, as alluded in the alternative meaning of *ba'avosim* – with fattened cattle. The verse’s final phrase, “To the horns of the altar,” allude to the fact that whoever celebrates by eating and drinking a little more than usual on the day after the festival, and treats it as a mini-festival in honor of the departed festival, is considered as having built an altar and offered an actual sacrifice to Hashem.

It is customary to eat and drink a little more than usual on *Isru Chag* and to avoid fasting altogether. Even a bride and groom on the day of their wedding, and even one who marks the anniversary of his parent’s passing, is prohibited from fasting. This is only a custom, because according to the strict law, fasting is indeed permitted on *Isru Chag*. Nevertheless, one who withholds oneself from fasting in honor of *Isru Chag* is praiseworthy.

In a *Farbrengen* on the 2nd Day of Shavuos (2nd *Farbrengen*) 5749 - Hisvaduyos p. 294) the Rebbe said:

The custom has been established over a number of years and in numerous locations to arrange a *Kinus Torah* following and in close proximity to all of the three major festivals [Pesach, Shavuos, and Sukkos]... We should strive to publicize this custom wherever it has not yet been implemented, so that the people of those locations will likewise arrange a *Kinus Torah* in continuation of, and in proximity to, the festivals - i.e., on the day of *Isru Chag*. They should consider the local conditions and hold the *Kinus* during subsequent days instead, if doing so will allow for a larger attendance.

“If a *Kinus Torah* is held on the day following each of the festivals, how much more so a *Kinus Torah* should be held on *Isru Chag* Simchas Torah! For the entire concept of Torah, and even *kesser* (the crown of) Torah is emphasized to a unique degree on Simchas Torah.” (*Yom Simchas Torah* 5747.) “This is to remind everyone about the custom in recent years to hold a *Kinus Torah* on *Isru Chag*.” (*Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5751. See there for an association with the Redemption.)

Rabbi Yeshayahu Hertzfel relates: In the year 5726, I stood outside the entrance to 770 together with my father-in-law *HaRav* Yaakov Freidman while a *Kinus Torah* was underway on *Isru Chag* Shavuos. The Rebbe approached us and

asked, “Why are you standing outside the *Kinus Torah*?!” We attempted to respond that we were dealing with a very important matter – details that were needed for the imminent wedding. But he paid no attention to our response, and again demanded, “Is it not in the middle of Torah?! For wedding-related matters, you can steal some of your sleep time!” From that moment and on, I felt deeply taken by the importance of participating in these *Kinusim*, even if it involves some difficulty. When I related this episode during the *Kinus Torah* following Shavuos, *HaRav HaGaon* Mendlik was extremely pleased. He exclaimed, “Why did you leave such an important matter like this until the end of the *Kinus*?!”

“The festival has an entire set of seven days [following the festival] in which to achieve whatever needed to be accomplished during the festival. In the original town of Lubavitch, they would *farbrenge* on every night following Simchas Torah until Rosh Chodesh!” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5709, p. 286.)

Thursday, Tishrei 25

Chitas: Today’s portion of Chumash concludes with the words *ve’achos tuval kayin na’amah*, “The sister of Tuval Kayin was Na’amah” (verse 22).

Friday, Tishrei 26, Erev Shabbos Bereishis

Today is the anniversary of the victory (*didan natzach*), whereby in 5750, the federal courts ruled in accordance with the *halachah* that “a king does not serve as a witness [in court]” – the Rebbe was not required to testify in the case of the *sefarim*. A diary entry recorded by one of the students in 770 at the time reads as follows:

“The news reached 770 around 12 o’clock. Rabbi Y.L. Groner immediately informed the Rebbe *shlita*, and the Rebbe asked if the congregation were saying *lechaim*. He answered, ‘Certainly!’ The Rebbe asked, ‘With restriction or without restriction?’ Rabbi Groner replied that each individual was doing as he felt appropriate. The Rebbe told him, ‘True, it is a year of miracles – but it should [nevertheless] be with restriction!’ The Rebbe came downstairs for the Minchah service wearing his silk *gartel* as he has done throughout this particular year, and wearing a new hat, at 3:15. The congregation sang *didan natzach* enthusiastically. As the Rebbe reached his prayer spot, he turned to face the congregation and encouraged the singing with his hand. During the *chazzan*’s repetition, they sang *sim shalom*,

and he encouraged the *niggun* with his holy hand. At the end of the service, the congregation sang *al tirah* and *ach tzadikim*, and he continued to pound the lectern for considerable time as a signal to continue singing *ki Elokim*. That very same night, following the Maariv service and the *sichah* that followed, a grand *farbrengen* was held. The signs posted in 770 announcing the *farbrengen* noted the [Rebbe's] directive that the familiar restrictions [on excessive alcohol] be upheld.”

Chitas: Today's portion of Chumash starts with the words *vayomeir lemech lenashav*, “Lemech said to his wives” (verse 23).

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. The best way to fulfill this *mitzvah* is to ensure that the reading has been completed before starting the Shabbos morning meal, and preferably even before the start of Shacharis.

Today, we recite *shnayim mikra* of *Bereishis*.

“The Rebbe [Rayatz] related that the Tzemach Tzedek would review *Parshas Bereishis* [for *shnayim mikra*] at length. He would say: The way we establish ourselves [today], that is how things will go [the rest of the year]!” The Rebbe [Rayatz] further related that the Tzemach Tzedek would read *shnayim mikra ve'echad targum* together with the commentaries of Rashi and Ramban, verse by verse. However, he did not explain whether the Tzemach Tzedek continued this practice throughout the year or whether it was restricted to Shabbos *Bereishis*. Regardless, the careful reading of *shnayim mikra* is especially relevant to Shabbos *Bereishis* because, as stated earlier, it determines our ability to act throughout the year in a broad and expansive manner.” (*Reshimah MeiChoreif* 5695. See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5712.) See there for more details. See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5725.

Candle lighting is **at 5:38pm** (in New York), which is 18 minutes before sunset.

Shabbos Bereishis, Tishrei 27

“Listen, Jews!” the Previous Rebbe announced in 5691, “We can still grab an opportunity to do *teshuvah*! On Rosh Hashanah it is inscribed, on Yom Kippur it is undersigned, on Hoshana Rabba the bills of life are issued, but until Shabbos

Bereishis the messengers have yet to leave the palace!” (*Likkutei Dibburim*, vol. 4, p. 711.)

On this, the Rebbe commented, “Although such a quality is to be found on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Hoshana Rabba, and even on Shemini Atzeres, but not on Shabbos *Bereishis*.... Well, this is one of the questions that Eliyahu *HaNavi* will have to answer!” (*Shabbos Bereishis* 5711.) See *Roshei Devarim* of *Se’udas Leil Shemini Atzeres* 5731.

For more on the theme of Shabbos *Bereishis*, see *Sefer HaSichos* 5705, pp. 64-64; *Sefer HaMa’amarim* 5711, p. 59; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 1, p. 1; *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 449; *ibid.*, vol. 18, p. 190; *ibid.*, vol. 20, p. 556 – “There is no point in overly scrutinizing the wording that appears in *Likkutei Sichos*, *ibid.*, because only the content of the saying is presented, whereas the precise wording is not known.” See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5752 (*Sefer HaSichos* 5752, vol. 1, p. 43), and elsewhere.

During the meal on the night of Shabbos *Bereishis* 5705, the Previous Rebbe stated, “*Chassidim* used to conduct especially powerful *farbrengens* on Shabbos *Bereishis*.” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5705, p. 64.) The Rebbe explored the significance of the Rebbe Rayatz’s phraseology on Shabbos *Bereishis* 5727.

“On Shabbos *Bereishis*, we must be joyful the entire Shabbos!” the Previous Rebbe insisted, “We must *farbreng* a lot and be joyful!” (*Sichas Yom Simchas Torah* 5707.) An alternative version: “On Shabbos *Bereishis*, we don’t go by foot. We must *farbreng* the entire twenty-four hours in joy!” (*ibid.*) See the continuation of the *sichah* regarding the negativity of *mashke*, which the Rebbe Rayatz refers to as *eish zarah*, an alien fire.

“Shabbos *Bereishis* is a joyful *sidrah*!” said the Previous Rebbe. “The overall *sidra* is joyous, and it is Shabbos *Bereishis*. There is joy and gladness in all Jewish congregations because we have started the Torah afresh!” (*Sefer HaSichos* 5702, p. 30, partially quoted in *HaYom Yom*, entry for Cheshvan 3.)

In 770, it is customary for the *chazzan* to use tunes from the prayers of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Shemini Atzeres, and Simchas Torah during prayers on Shabbos *Bereishis*.

At home, one recites *shalom aleichem*, *eishes chayil*, *mizmor ledovid*, *da hi se’udasa*, and *kiddush* for Shabbos.

Early on Shabbos morning, the entire book of Tehillim is read. Today is a day to *farbreng*.

Shema must be recited before 9:59 am (in New York).

Parshas Bereishis is read. The fifth *aliyah* should conclude with the words *ve'achos tuval kayin na'amah* (4:22). The *haftorah* begins with *ko amar* and ends with *veya'adir*.

Yekum purkan is recited.

Some are accustomed to observing a series of post-festival fasts known as *BaHaB*. In many communities, the *chazzan* recites a special prayer for those who will engage in *BaHaB*. This prayer is recited on the Shabbos before Rosh Chodesh, while blessing the coming month. The actual fasts begin after Rosh Chodesh. *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* states that it is customary to avoid blessing those who will observe *BeHaB* while it is still Tishrei. Rather, they should wait until the following Shabbos.

The blessing over the coming month of Cheshvan is recited. This month, the *molad* will occur on Monday morning, at **3:24 am, plus 5 chalakim**. Rosh Chodesh Marcheshvan will be on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Av harachamim is not recited on this Shabbos.

During the Shabbos *Bereishis farbrengen* in 770, it is customary – as is customary among many communities – to sell the *mitzvos* that are associated with the *shul*.

“It is customary in many Jewish communities on Shabbos *Bereishis* to sell the *mitzvos* associated with the *shul*: *aliyos*, *hagbah*, *gelilah*, opening the *aron*, the cost of the *shul*'s lighting needs, wine for *kiddush* and *havdalah*, and so on.” (*Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5750 – *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 1, 83.) See there at length for the reason behind this custom. See also *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5712 and 5725, and elsewhere.

For the permissibility of such a sale on Shabbos or Yom Tov, See *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 306:16; *Maharik*, *Shoresh* 9; *Maharil*, *Hilchos Sukkos*, and elsewhere. The Rebbe explains this in *Shabbos Bereishis* 5718. For a lesson in Divine service derived from this sale, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 1, p. 2.

In 770, the Gabbai customarily conducts the sale while wearing a *shtreimel*. This reason for this is explained in *Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5750. For an alternative approach, see *Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5748.

“May it be Hashem’s will that the sale of *mitzvos* meet with outstanding and resounding success; success that translates into a lot of money for the *shul*. The main thing is that we very soon merit the era in which it will no longer be necessary to sell *mitzvos* because gold and silver will be available in abundance...in a manner of ‘*I will pour out.*’ Then, the

congregation will also be in a complete state, *kahal gadol*, all as one – both those who wear a physical *shtreimel* along with those who wear a spiritual *shtreimel*. ‘A great congregation shall return here’ – to our Holy Land, to the holy city of Yerushalayim, to the *Beis Hamikdash*, and in a manner of “Hashem will not delay them even as the blink of an eye.” (*Ibid.*)

Chitas: “Even after having spoken about studying the day’s portion of *Parshas Bereishis* on the day of Simchas Torah [and not on *Isru Chag*, as explained at length above], there nevertheless remain one or two Jews who have not studied this portion – neither on Simchas Torah, nor on *Isru Chag*! In fact, they have not done so until this very day! Anyhow, they should make good on this immediately after the *farbrengen* – or even in the middle of the *farbrengen*, instead of falling asleep... From now on, they will certainly be careful to study each day’s portion in its proper time. I strongly hope that these words will have their desired effect. If there is even a chance that it might work, it is worth my lengthy discussion, just in case that it might perhaps have an effect... Why, if I only discussed matters that I was **absolutely certain** would be fully implemented, the *farbrengen* would be a lot shorter!” (*Shabbos Parshas Bereishis* 5746.)

The Torah reading for Minchah is from *Parshas Noach*, followed by the regular Shabbos Minchah *amidah*. *Tzidkasecha* is not recited.

There is a widespread (non-Chabad) custom to begin reciting *barchi nafshi* and the fifteen chapters of Tehillim that begin *shir ha-ma’alos* from this Shabbos. This custom is also mentioned in *Shulchan Aruch Admor HaZaken* 292:6 and 430:2. However, the Alter Rebbe does not mention it at all in his *Siddur*. The reason for this practice is explained in *Levush, Orach Chayim*, 669. The Rebbe explains it according to *chassidus* in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 37, p. 12 (see further reference in footnotes there).

Shabbos ends at **6:38 pm** (in New York).

“[Following Simchas Torah,] the Rebbe [Rayatz] would wish people “*ah gezunter vinter*,” “A healthy winter!” Using the Rebbe [Rayatz]’s choice of words, I wish you, your husbands, and children, a healthy, joyful, and fortunate winter, and goodness always!” (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 2, p. 580 – *Sichas Motza’ei Shabbos Bereishis* 5714, *LeN’shei U’venos Chabad*.) Elsewhere, the Rebbe wishes, “A healthy winter and a joyful year!”