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# DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

Laws & Customs for the  
Three Weeks 5782 - Part 1  
12 - 29 Tammuz

includes Chassidic insights  
& excerpts from the Rebbe's talks

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under the auspices of Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita  
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

B"H

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**Laws & Customs for the  
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By  
**Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita**  
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

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On the Fast of the 17 Tammuz

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## FOREWORD

We present a comprehensive guide for the first part of the Three Weeks. The details are derived from multiple sources, revised by Rabbi **M. M. Rotenberg**.

Due to a dearth of space only some references and halachic notes have been added. Primary sources include: *Shulchan Aruch* and commentaries, *Sefer Haminhagim Chabad*, *Luach Colel Chabad*, *Sichos*, 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.

### TIME TO PREPARE

In a *sichah* on the second day of Rosh Hashanah 5752, the Rebbe states:

"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 (if unfamiliar with the relevant laws beforehand), it can happen that one does not even realize that there is a problem to begin with."**

## TO REALIZE REDEMPTION

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 states, “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 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.’”<sup>1</sup>

“We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demands. “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.”<sup>2</sup>

**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., at the close of Shabbos).

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1) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 341—emphasis in the original

2) From a sichah addressed to *N’shei Ub’nos Chabad—Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 485.

## MONDAY, 12 TAMMUZ

### Chag Hageulah

Today we celebrate the birthday of the Frierdiker Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak in 5640 (1880). Also, on this day, in 5687 (1927), he received the good tidings that he was freed from the exile imposed upon him after his arrest and imprisonment for his efforts in strengthening Torah and Judaism.

We do not say *Tachanun* today.

### BLESSING, FARBRENGING, LEARNING

In 5748 (1988), the Rebbe announced: “The twelfth and thirteenth of Tammuz need to be in tune with the principle of ‘we open with blessing’, so ‘*Gut Yom Tov!*’ It is a mitzvah to wish a good yom tov to every Jewish person, even to a one who ‘merely bears the title ‘Jew’—to him and to his family!”

“During the forthcoming two days of liberation,” the Frierdiker Rebbe states in a letter, “(which are) the twelfth and thirteenth of Tammuz, Chassidim are to *farbreng* for material and spiritual good and blessing in the spirit of the custom instituted by our first father, the Alter Rebbe (to *farbeng* on special occasions). During this farbrengen Chassidim should talk to one another in a spirit of brotherhood about strengthening fixed times for Torah study. I send them my blessing that G-d favor them in body and spirit.”

On a number of occasions, the Rebbe directed us to learn the Frierdiker Rebbe’s *maamar* entitled *Asarah Sheyoshvim Ve’oskim Batorah*—“Ten who sit and engage in Torah”. Its publication for the first celebration of the twelfth of Tammuz, constituted an everlasting instruction to study it on each subsequent *Chag Hageulah*; men, women and children should study it.

It is clear from the content of the Previous Rebbe’s discourse and letter that his desire is for the discourse to be studied publicly—in a manner of “**Ten** who sit ...” When lacking an alternative, the discourse should be studied even if there are less than ten at the session—and even by an individual. It is clear, however, that all effort should initially be extended to facilitate the study with a session of (at least) ten people.<sup>3</sup>

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3) See *Sichas Yud-Beis-Yud-Gimmel Tammuz* 5748, *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 13. Also, *Shabbos Parshas Chukas* 5750, *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 409. This *maamar* was reprinted and personally



## TUESDAY, 13 TAMMUZ

### Chag Haegulah

On this day in 5687 (1927) the Frierdiker Rebbe was actually released to return home.

We do not say *Tachanun* today.

From a letter of the Frierdiker Rebbe to mark the festival of his liberation: “I send you a *maamar* ...which is my participation—for their success—with my beloved friends the Chassidim wherever they reside, (which is my way of) being united with you in your *farbrengen* for the purpose of strengthening the practices of Chassidus, in fixing and observing periods for studying Chassidus and to be stimulated to pragmatically implement those studies...

“May our G-d and G-d of our Fathers bless the whole community of Chassidim—their, their households, their children and grandchildren among all our brothers the people of Israel (G-d grant them eternal life) with all good things from the soul to those of the flesh.”

## THURSDAY, 15 TAMMUZ

The Frierdiker Rebbe's imprisonment began at 2:45 a.m. on Wednesday, 15 Sivan, 5687 (June 15, 1927) for his “crimes” of spreading Torah Judaism under the Communist regime. On 3 Tammuz, the first breakthrough occurred, when his death sentence was commuted to three years of exile. On 12 Tammuz, in exile in the town of Kostroma, he was informed that he would be released to return home. He remained until one half-hour past mid-day, Wednesday, 13 Tammuz. Two days later, on 15 Tammuz, he arrived back home in Leningrad, the last leg in his journey to redemption.

### TODAY'S SPECIALTY

“Today (the fifteenth of Tammuz),” the Rebbe says<sup>4</sup>, “is connected with the joyfulness of the (Frierdiker) Rebbe's release (upon arriving home after his final arrest)—and its power shows itself in the full moon of this ‘month of geulah’. This day has the greatest ability, from any other day this month, to affect the “fullness”

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distributed by the Rebbe in honor of 12 Tammuz, 5750.

4) *Roshei Devarim of Sichas Tes-Vov Tammuz*, 5736

and perfection of all the rest of its days, that they too should be transformed to “days of happiness and joy”.

Today also commemorates the *yahrtzeit* of the *Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh*.<sup>5</sup>

## FRIDAY, 16 TAMMUZ

### Erev Shabbos Parshas Balak

#### SHNAYIM MIKRA

Although we hear the Torah being read in shul each Shabbos, an individual is nevertheless obligated to read each week’s *parshah* for himself on a weekly basis, in the format of *shnayim mikra v’echad targum*—reading each *posuk* twice and then its Aramaic translation in *Targum Onkelos* once. It is best practice to complete this reading on *erev Shabbos* after *chatzos* (halachic midday); to fulfill this obligation, however, it is still good to read it anytime during Shabbos morning before eating the day meal, though it is better if completed before Shacharis. Today, we read *shnayim mikra* for *Parshas Balak*.

#### ANTIDOTAL JOY

“Today,” the Rebbe said in 5745,<sup>6</sup> “before the Three Weeks begin, we need to preempt the negative aspects related to this time period with the appropriate antidote. This demands that in the upcoming days—all twenty-one of them—special efforts should be made to increase Torah learning and giving *tzedakah* (the latter on weekdays, of course). Since the achievement of every spiritual act (in learning and mitzvah performance) is improved when it involves ten Jews or more, we should try, in every way possible, that these resolutions should be of a communal nature—learning in groups of ten or more, giving *tzedakah* in collaboration, and also throughout these days putting greater effort in strengthening the aspect of *tefillah* (especially with a *minyan*). And in all these three mainstays should carry an infusion of *simchah* (even *tefillah*, together with the aspect of introspection needed as a preparation for davening), for ‘you should serve Hashem with joy.’”

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5) The Ohr Hachayim’s relationship with the Baal Shem Tov (and their connection to Moshiach) is discussed in various sources. See Hebrew section for these, and also for references for the addition of “*Hakadosh*” to his title.

6) See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 13, pp. 280ff

It is a mitzvah to check your pockets before Shabbos to make sure they contain no *muktzah* and to avoid carrying items in public in areas with no *eiruv*. This *erev Shabbos* will require extra caution for Shabbos-wear donned in honor of the *Chag Hageulah* this week.

Candle lighting is at **8:07 pm** (eighteen minutes before sunset).

## SHABBOS KODESH PARSHAS BALAK, 17 TAMMUZ

Today's date (17) is numerically equivalent to the word *Tov* (good).

Since the seventeenth of Tammuz, traditionally a fast day mourning the events leading up to the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, falls on Shabbos this year, it is postponed to the next day (Sunday, 18 Tammuz).

In 5640 (1880), the Rebbe Maharash exclaimed, "Once we are postponing it, it may as well be suspended for good!" In fact, the manner in which we conduct ourselves on this Shabbos is akin to its commemoration in Moshiach's times: "For these days will be transformed from mourning to joy!"<sup>7</sup>

### SHABBOS & BEIN HAMEITZARIM

We should not allow any trace of sadness and the like to mar the joy of Shabbos. We do not cut corners in any of our meals; to the contrary, our experience should contain a far greater joy and pleasure—even *more* than that of a regular Shabbos—in order to dispel any interpretation of sadness. (See the entry for next Shabbos for more about the transformative power of Shabbos in the Three Weeks.)

Halachic authorities dispute whether the brachah of *Shehecheyanu* should be avoided on this Shabbos (essentially, if the fast is postponed, do any of the Three Weeks' restrictions apply?). *Sefer Haminhagim Chabad* states: "(Regarding *Shehecheyanu*) I have not heard what the prevailing custom is on Shabbos, 17 Tammuz."

Does the custom of learning about the *Beis Hamikdash* in connection with this time period begin today, or on the actual, postponed fast

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<sup>7</sup> See *Sichah* of 12 Tammuz 5724, *Shabbos Parshas Balak* 5725; 5730, 5748 and 5751. Also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, pp. 388ff.

day, when all other practices associated with *Bein Hameitzarim* begin? This aspect too does not have a clear-cut directive.

**Pirkei Avos:** In the tradition of extending the recital of the *perek* every Shabbos throughout the summer months, this week the sixth chapter of Avos is recited.<sup>8</sup>

Shabbos ends at **9:14pm**

## THE THREE WEEKS

*Bein Hameitzarim*: the time between the 17th of Tammuz and the 9th of Av.

### KER A VELT TODAY!

On the subject of the Three Weeks, the Rebbe says:<sup>9</sup> According to the Rogachover, the *churban* of the Beis Hamikdash is **continuous**. This doesn't simply mean that the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed about two thousand years ago and from then on we are righteously mourning, and when it comes to *Tishah B'Av* and the Three Weeks we pray for its rebuilding, similar to how we when *daven* every day and say *V'sechezena eineinu* for the *geulah* after more than nineteen hundred years in *golus*.

"No!" says the Rogachover. The continual destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* is **every single day**. When we recognize this we also realize how we need to cry out every single day, "*Ad Mosai!*" The Rogachover declares that this is explicitly stated in Talmud Yerushalmi. It is written there: "Anyone who **didn't build** the *Beis Hamikdash* in his time" is "as if the *Beis Hamikdash* **was destroyed** in his time!"

More than nineteen hundred years have passed. Being as it is Thursday, *Parshas Pinchas*<sup>10</sup> and it is already after Maariv, and the *Beis Hamikdash* still hasn't been built, we need to know that we must cry out for the *geulah* **as if it was destroyed on Thursday of Parshas Pinchas!** ...And being as *Yidden* have already cried out

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8) The Shavuos Day-to-Day Guide of Badatz discusses avoiding the mention of Hashem's name in the incomplete Torah verses mentioned in *Pirkei Avos*. This week, it applies in two places, both in Mishnah 10. We read, "*Ad ya'avor amcha Hashem...*" and "*machon leshivticha Hashem, mikdash Hashem...*"

9) From a *sichah* of 12 Tammuz, 5744

10) The day of this *sichah*

yesterday, “*Ad Mosai*”, and the previous day cried out, “*Ad Mosai*”, and **all the days before that** cried out, “*Ad Mosai*”—then, *rachmana litzlan*, the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, this afternoon or tonight! **And from this we understand how we have to cry out “*Ad Mosai*” right now!**

This is not some canny interpretation, but a halachah in Torah, as it says in Torah (itself), “Anyone who didn’t build the *Beis Hamikdash* in his time” it is as if “such and such”.

Imagine! The *Beis Hamikdash* is being burned, and nearby stands a *Yid* who is **hardened**, a *Yid* of stone, with a “heart of stone”, and he sees how the *Beis Hamikdash* is being destroyed in his days— (even) this *Yid* would most certainly turn over the world (to prevent the destruction)! The Torah of truth and the Torah of life teaches us a lesson in life: [Here the Rebbe cried out, loudly] Turn the world over today!

### DON'T DESPAIR!

“Around the time of the Three Weeks,” it says in Likkutei Sichos,<sup>11</sup> “A *Yid* can begin to think about the strength of the darkness of *golus* in general and, more specifically, how dark it is (right now) during the birthpangs of Moshiach. This can lead him, *rachmana litzlan*, to fall into a state of despair, not knowing how he can get through all the hardships. He does know that it is the torment and tribulations during *golus* that will **then** result in the *geulah* being even more elevated; but **now** he finds himself in such a dark and bitter *golus*—how can he now overcome all the difficulties?

“The lesson to educate and uplift us is that, on the contrary, particularly in **this** generation, in the generation of the birthpangs of Moshiach, the inner (hidden) aspect of Torah has been revealed to us. It uncovers and extols the inner meaning of these days: that these days have in them the full strength of the love of Hashem to the *Yidden*.

“To preface these days, we have the *Chag Hageulah* of twelfth and thirteenth of Tammuz, which shows how we can bring out this inner, higher level into revelation **during** the time of *golus* itself (in a way that the concealment will be annulled even on a surface level). This encourages and strengthens *Yidden* to focus their energy during these days on the inner aspect of *golus*, and then, ever more

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11) vol. 18, p. 316

so, will we avoid being affected by the bitterness and lowliness of it.

“Though we must keep all of the laws of mourning of the Three Weeks, as is required by the *Shulchan Aruch* in all of their detail, we find ways **in the spirit of Torah** to act with happiness even during these days. For example, make a *siyum* on a *mesechta* that will transform the day into a ‘*yom tov of Rabanan*’ also during **these** days of the Nine Days! (We can do this to the point that we can even eat a *seudah* of meat when we make a *siyum* on a *mesechta* during the Nine Days.) Or, more generally, we can focus our energy on learning Torah (which gladdens the heart), with an emphasis on the learning of the *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* (about building the *Beis Hamikdash* and the like). Through learning Torah on the subjects of how the *Beis Hamikdash* looked, ‘I consider it as if they were involved in the building of the *Beis Hamikdash*’.

## ANTICIPATION

“Conducting ourselves in this manner of revealing the inner meaning of the Three Weeks in the same way that it will be when Moshiach comes, then, these days will be transformed ‘into rejoicing and happiness, and *yomim tovim*.”

Concerning the time period of the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the Rebbe says:<sup>12</sup> On the one hand, this is a time during which we have the obligation to “mourn over Yerushalayim.” On the other hand, it is specifically this time that demands of us to have a special strength to avoid falling into a state of despair from *gulus*, *chas v’shalom*. For we know (that we will ultimately return), as the *Haftorah* of *Parshas Maasei* ends, “Will you not from this time call me, “My Father, You, the Master of my youth?” Even better: encourage yourself, and other *Yidden*, during the multiplied darkness of the birthpangs of Moshiach, and all the more during the Three Weeks, through strengthening the aspect of “I await for him that he will come every day.” (How will he come?) Learn and occupy yourself with studying the “formation of the *Beis Hamikdash* and all of its *halachos*.”

## HAPPY?

During the time of the Three Weeks, the Rebbe encourages,<sup>13</sup> “we should increase in all areas of Torah and *mitzvos* with a *shturem* (extra

12) *Ibid.*, p. 411

13) *Rohei Devarim* from *Shabbos Parshas Maasei* 5744

enthusiasm), especially in the area of *simchah*. Certainly, the intention isn't an artificial joy, where one pinches his cheek so that people should think he's happy or, even more heartily, does some movement like clapping his hands. The intention is to reach a true happiness that permeates the emotions of the heart. For this reason, we should exert effort to utilize every opportunity to organize *farbrengens* during the Three Weeks. This will lead to happiness not only amongst the participants, but also to happiness Above, since through increasing in joy, we minimize and nullify all of the undesirable aspects of the Three Weeks, to the point that it leads to effect *nechamah* (comfort), a double *nechamah* in our physical reality."

### ADVANTAGEOUS

In Or HaTorah<sup>14</sup>: There is a parable of a king who, when traveling, is more easily reachable to converse with than when he is at home. This accessibility is not limited to those who are worthy. In the same way, as is explained by the *Avodas Yisroel*<sup>15</sup> in the name of the Maggid, all who pursue to reach a revelation of G-dliness, will reach it *davka* during the Three Weeks, as in the above parable.

In several *sichos* (too many to enumerate here), the advantage of the days of the Three Weeks is explained. Despite the fact that on a surface level these days appear to be of sieges and calamities and a time of decreased happiness to the point that we even have laws of mourning, it is clear that we should not spend this time focused on bitterness and depressive subjects, *chas v'shalom*.

On the contrary, the whole point of this descent is in order for there to be an ascent, and when we experience an incomparable descent, the ascent will be so as well. Even more than that, the inner essence and truth of these days themselves is an elevated goodness; being hidden good it is rooted in a higher level than revealed good.

Additionally, when you look at reality through the lens of the Torah, and not the way reality is perceived in this world below, you see only pure goodness. Through our Divine service of the Three Weeks (*Bein Hameitzarim*), that is "from the *meitzar* (constraint) I call out"—from the constraints of *golus* we are able to "draw down from above the 'higher constraint' (which is a place) that no mind can grasp," as is brought in *Chassidus* concerning this time period.

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14) *Parshas Vayeshev*, vol. 5, p. 900. See also *Ma'anos Kodesh* 5745, bottom of pp. 110ff.

15) *Parshas Maasei*

## STRAIT TO FREEDOM

When Moshiach comes the good will be revealed below in a tangible way, within the reality of this world. This revelation will be like the advantage of light that comes after darkness. And after the *meitzar*, as the *passuk* continues, “Hashem answers me with *merchav* (latitude)”, an essential latitude and extravagance, resulting in these days being transformed into days of joy and happiness, to the point that the happiness is incomparable to the rest of the days of happiness.

We already have a spark and taste of this positive, inner aspect of the Three Weeks during *golus*, especially in more recent generations nearest to the time of Moshiach, which is when the idea of happiness and *geulah* in the month of Tammuz was revealed. This idea was manifested in the *Chag Hageulah* of the twelfth and thirteenth of Tammuz to the point that the whole month becomes a month of *geulah*. This is already visibly apparent before the days of the Three Weeks even begin so that, from the start, we should know the inner theme of these days.

The closer that we are to Moshiach, the less we feel the *churban* and *golus* during the Three Weeks. The feeling of preparing for the *geulah*, which is the good within these days, continually increases. Since we now find ourselves right before the *geulah*, the positive aspect of the Three Weeks is continuing to be increasingly felt and emphasized, and through this we will come to the complete *geulah*. Standing on the threshold of the *geulah*, **only** the positive of the Three Weeks is emphasized.

## NUMBERS

We begin with the start of the Three Weeks, on the seventeenth of Tammuz. *Yud-zayin* (seventeen) has the same *gematria*, numerical value, as the word *tov* (good). This is because the seventeenth of Tammuz is “an auspicious day for Hashem”. Concerning the events that took place on this day, the primary of them (both chronologically and qualitatively) was the smashing of the *Luchos*. Despite this event being something undesirable, it has within it a positive element and, indeed, the highest type of good. How so? As a result of the smashing of the first set of *Luchos*, the second set of *Luchos* were given, which were “of a double strength”, (and thereby affected an increase of Torah) even to the point of infinity. The same applies to the culmination of the Three Weeks, the ninth of Av.



How so? Because this is the day that Moshiach was born, the *mazel* of our righteous Moshiach was strongest during the moments of the *churban*.

The three **weekly parshios** of this time also carry themes closely associated with the *geulah*: In *Matos-Maasei* and *Devarim*, the Torah speaks of conquering and dividing the Holy Land (that includes the three areas of *Keini*, *Kenizi* and *Kadmoni*, which will only become ours in the future); previously, in *Pinchas*, there is the connection both in name: “Pinchas is Eliyahu” who will come and announce the future *geulah*, and the parshah’s content, which is about counting the *Yidden*, alluding to our tenth (and final) census in the future. It also speaks of dividing the Land, and mentions many *karbanos* (especially the *karbanos* of the **festivals**, hinting to the transformative nature of the Three Weeks to days of festival and rejoicing). Even earlier, preceding this time period, *Parshas Balak* explicitly prophesies Moshiach’s coming.

This also applies to the **number of the weeks**—Three Weeks—“because three is a *chazakah*, the strength of something ‘fixed.’” The Three Weeks are a *chazakah* in matters of holiness. As well, there is the idea of a descent of three gradations, which makes it as if the descent has an established *chazakah* and power, and thus an incomparable ascent is accomplished. The essential theme of the Three Weeks is the building of the third *Beis Hamikdash*, which will be for all of eternity being the work of Hashem Himself, and totally incomparable to the first two *Batei Mikdash*.

The same applies to the **number of days** of this time period. There are twenty-one days in the Three Weeks, which is the amount of time it takes for an almond to grow. This is the fastest gestation period of any fruit, representing an alacrity and speediness with great overpowering strength to annul the obstacles and impediments of *golus*. This is apparent in a detail of the process as well: Almonds are bitter when they are small, and when they finish ripening (at twenty-one days) they become sweet. The point of the Three Weeks is to transform these days into days of rejoicing and happiness, happy and sweet days.

### THREE WEEKS’ RESTRICTIONS

The laws and restrictions of *Bein Hameitzarim* commence on *motzoei Shabbos*, the **evening** of the eighteenth of Tammuz.

## HAIRCUTS

Both men and women<sup>16</sup> refrain from cutting their hair during this period. This includes all facial hair as well as hair anywhere else on the body. Adults may not cut children's hair.

We are also restricted from trimming or waxing eyebrows, mustaches and the like, even hair around the private parts. If the mustache interferes with eating, it may be trimmed.

However, it is permissible—indeed it is a *mitzvah*—to cut a forelock (*tshup*, in Yiddish) during the Three Weeks.<sup>17</sup>

When a boy's third birthday falls during the Three Weeks, the *upshernish* is delayed until the tenth of Av after midday (and in this year, when the fast is pushed off, until after the fast). This however does not include the other customs associated with the *upshernish*, such as wearing *tzitzis*, saying the morning *brochos*, *Birchas Hamazon* and the bedtime *Shema*; these should begin on the day of the birthday.

Until Rosh Chodesh Av, it is permissible to cut and style a *sheitel* and it is not considered cutting hair. (Concerning the time after Rosh Chodesh, see further in the laws of the Nine Days.)

## ENGAGEMENT AND MARRIAGE

It is permissible to get engaged and host a *L'chaim* during the Three Weeks. However, during the Nine Days (starting from Rosh Chodesh Av), we do not hold a festive meal for the occasion; rather, light refreshments may be served.

Weddings may not be held, even without a festive meal, and even for someone who has not yet fulfilled his obligation of bearing children. This includes the remarriage of a divorced couple.

We may conduct a *sheva brochos* meal during this time without music or dancing.

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<sup>16</sup>) A woman may cut hair for reasons of modesty, as well as in preparation for *mikvah* (even if it is during the Nine Days for an immersion following *Tishah B'av*, as we refrain from trimming three days before immersing). She may also remove any body hair that could render her unattractive to her husband, even during the Nine Days.

<sup>17</sup>) See [www.halacha2go.com](http://www.halacha2go.com), Halacha #243

## SHEHECHIYANU

It is best to avoid making a *Shehechyanu* blessing during the Three Weeks. Therefore, we refrain from eating new fruit<sup>18</sup> or wearing new clothing. Our custom is to refrain from blessing *Shehechyanu* at any time during the Three Weeks, even on Shabbos or Rosh Chodesh.

The restriction on new clothing during the Three Weeks applies to garments of substantial worth. Clothing of lesser significance may be purchased and worn until Rosh Chodesh Av—this includes underwear, socks and shoes. Someone may also purchase and wear a new pair of *tzitzis*. New glasses are also permitted, provided they are for improved vision, not pleasure.

Someone whose wife gives birth to a daughter should make the blessing of *Shehechyanu* upon seeing her for the first time, even during the Three Weeks. A father also blesses *Shehechyanu* at his firstborn son's *pidyon haben* during the Three Weeks.

The *brochah* of *hatov vehameitiv* may be recited during the Three Weeks.

## DANCING & MUSIC

Dancing is prohibited during the Three Weeks.

We may not play<sup>19</sup> or listen to music, including recorded music. Some are lenient to listen to music which is only vocals (without instruments). However, many contemporary *poskim* say this is the same as music. Certainly, some of these recordings sound very professional and essentially negate the original purpose of the custom. However, there is room to be lenient when listening to slow *niggunim* that are recorded primarily with vocals and only some background musical accompaniment.

Listening to music in order to stay alert while driving for extended periods is permissible—even obligatory—especially when driving through the night.

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18) A pregnant woman may eat a new fruit without blessing *Shehechyanu*, out of concern that an unsatisfied craving may endanger the child. Similarly, an ill person may eat a new fruit without reciting *Shehechyanu*.

19) A professional musician may play for non-Jews until Rosh Chodesh Av.

The prohibition on music applies at camps too, especially since the camp's objective is to educate children toward *yiras Shamayim*. In a day camp or daycare setting, where it is necessary to calm younger children who have not reached the age of *chinuch*, and the music is not intended for joy, the Morah may be lenient.

Music lessons or practice for students are permitted from the seventeenth of Tammuz until Rosh Chodesh Av when they are for the purpose of developing skills to earn a livelihood. However, learning for pleasure is prohibited.

We refrain from dancing and playing music even at a *seudas mitzvah*, such as a bar mitzvah, *siyum*, *sheva brochos* and similar occasions.

The Rebbe answers someone regarding a *Siyum Sefer Torah* during the Three Weeks: "It needs further study; a more suitable date would be appropriate." The Rebbe negates holding such an event after Rosh Chodesh Av.

### TRAVEL, TRIPS & GENERAL SAFETY

The Three Weeks is a time of heightened risk and we must take care to avoid any element of danger.

From the seventeenth of Tammuz (after Shabbos this year), we refrain from going out alone between the end of the fourth halachic hour until the end of the ninth halachic hour.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, we take care not to walk in a place that is in between the sun and the shade. This all only applies in a desolate place. However, where there are passersby, the concern doesn't apply.

Trips should be less frequent during the Three Weeks. But if the excursions are for health reasons or as an incentive for Torah learning, they are certainly permitted.

From *Likkutei Dibburim*<sup>21</sup>: During the two midsummer months (in Lubavitch) from Shavuot until *Shabbos Nachamu*—except for a certain break during the Three Weeks, which were days of real mourning, the laws of the period being punctiliously observed in

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<sup>20</sup>) Calculated by dividing the time between sunrise and sunset into twelve parts. Thus 1/12 of the day is a halachic hour. For example, if the sun rises at 5 am and sets at 7:30 pm, a halachic hour is 72.5 minutes.

<sup>21</sup>) (English) vol. 1, p. 241. Published by *Kehos*, 5747

all their details—people would sometimes take a little stroll across the marketplace between Mincha and Maariv. No one ever went out for a walk between Pesach and Shavuot, but from then on people took the opportunity of enjoying the pleasant summer weather.

Swimming—in a pool or the ocean—is allowed until Rosh Chodesh Av. However, extra caution must be exercised. Many refrain from swimming in rivers due to the danger they present.

When an extended trip is necessary, it is proper to make significant preparations before the seventeenth of Tammuz, to emphasize that the trip began before the Three Weeks.

### MEDICAL CARE

When possible, it is proper to delay complex medical procedures until after *Tishah B'av*—as the popular saying goes: “Any delay is good.” If the doctor insists, it should definitely be scheduled before *Shabbos Chazon*.

Of course, in a life-threatening situation, any procedure should be done immediately without any delay.

Routine procedures that pose no risk may be performed, including dental care and the like.

Children and students should be rebuked gently; no parent or teacher should use corporal punishment at all during the Three Weeks.<sup>22</sup>

### HOUSE-BUYING, MOVING, RENOVATING

Though some are stringent and refrain from buying homes during the Three Weeks because it is an “inauspicious time”, according to the letter of the law someone may buy a **residential** home, especially if they will incur a loss by forfeiting the deal. (It is permitted even during the Nine Days.) When the closing is after *Tishah B'av*, there is no concern at all.

It is customary not to move into a new home during the Three Weeks (even when *Shehechianu* wouldn't be recited). It is proper to move in after the fifteenth of Av, and if possible, in the month of Elul, which is the month of mercy.

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<sup>22</sup>) Regarding hitting in general, see [#6349](http://www.asktherav.com) for a comprehensive discussion.

Expansion of living quarters is allowed until Rosh Chodesh Av, though many avoid starting a new build during this time.<sup>23</sup>

As well, small home improvements may be done until Rosh Chodesh, but decorating the house, such as painting, should be avoided. If someone already contracted a non-Jew and they began the job, it may be completed until Rosh Chodesh Av.

Someone who has moved into a new home before the seventeenth of Tammuz should not schedule a *Chanukas Habayis* feast during the Three Weeks.

### THE REBBE'S HORA'OS\*

**Torah & Tzedakah:** In accordance with the verse, “*Tziyon* will be redeemed with justice (*mishpat*) and those who return to her—with *tzedakah*”, we should increase in both Torah study (*mishpat*), specifically in the halachos of *Bein Hameitzarim*, and *tzedakah* during the Three Weeks.

**Five Periods:** The Three Weeks are subdivided into periods of increasing intensity: 1. From the seventeenth of Tammuz until Rosh Chodesh Av 2. from Rosh Chodesh until the week of the Ninth of Av 3. the week of *Tishah B'Av* itself<sup>24</sup> 4. the day before the fast and 5. the actual fast day. We should intensify our Torah and Tzedakah at each ensuing phase of the Three Weeks.

**Erev Rosh Chodesh:** On the day before Rosh Chodesh Av, we should especially amplify our Torah study, prayer and *tzedakah*. We should at least distribute the monetary equivalent of two meals to *tzedakah* – and ideally, the equivalent of **three** meals.

**Preempt with Positive:** We should resolve to fulfill the above directive **before** the Three Weeks commence. Those who have not yet made such a resolution should do so *at their very first opportunity*—and the sooner (even by a moment) the better!<sup>25</sup> Obviously, someone who failed to accomplish any of the above directives on the applicable dates should make it up afterwards.

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23) See [www.asktherav.com](http://www.asktherav.com) #15381

\*) from the preface to *Chidushim U'bi'urim B'hilchos Beis Habechirah*

24) See the laws of the Nine Days as to how this applies this year, when the fast of Tisha B'Av is postponed to Sunday.

25) “According to the halachic ruling in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 571:3”

**Mivtzaim:** During the Three Weeks, we should put special effort into the mitzvah campaigns: Ahavas Yisrael, Kosher Education, Torah-Study, Torah Books, Tefillin, Mezuzah, Shabbos Candles, Kosher Diet and Family Purity.

## MORE LOVE

In several *sichos kodesh*, the Rebbe explains how the reason for the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* was baseless hatred, and that in order to undo the cause we need to increase in *Ahavas Yisrael*, love for a fellow Jew, and *Achdus Yisrael*, unity of the Jewish people in a manner of baseless love. This includes the areas of Torah, *tefillah*, and *tzedakah* as a community—with special emphasis on these acts during the Three Weeks. Now, standing on the threshold of the *geulah*, it is certain that the reason for the *golus* has already been rectified, and so the emphasis on *Ahavas Yisrael* is in the way of a taste (of the future), to the point that this love is the beginning of the *geulah*. The *geulah* is tied with a point of Jewish unity that is higher than any division. This is emphasized in the togetherness of *Yidden* when on the level of *yechidah* (the very essence of the soul), which is a spark of the *neshamah* of Moshiach, who is the *yechidah klolis* (general *yechidah* of all Jews).

## HILCHOS BEIS HABECHIRAH

Make it a point to study about the *Beis Hamikdash*<sup>26</sup> during the Three Weeks. This learning is also applicable to women and children.<sup>27</sup>

## WHAT TO LEARN

“In the days preceding *erev Tishah B’Av* and *Tishah B’Av*,” the Rebbe says<sup>28</sup>, “we must study the necessary halachos and the established *shiurim* that we have. Increase in learning the *perakim* of the *navi* Yechezkel that discusses all about the *Beis Hamikdash*, its exits and entrances, and the commentaries on those chapters. Then go

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26) Primary sources include: From *Tanach*, from the *Navi* Yechezkel from chapter 40 & on; in the Mishnah and Gemara, *Mesechtos Tamid* and *Midos*; In the Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*, adding in all these the explanations and commentary that are expanded upon in Chassidus.

27) See the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5736. In *Sichos Kodesh*, pp. 496ff. Also, *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5740. In *Sichas Kodesh*, pp. 658ff.

28) From the *sichah* of *erev Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei*, 24 Tammuz, 5736. In *Sichos Kodesh*, p. 485

on to *Meseches Middos* with commentaries, and finally, *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*, the laws of the *Beis Hamikdash* of the Rambam's *Mishnah Torah* with its *mefarshim*. It is certain that Hashem will then keep His promise that "I consider it as if they are involved in its construction." And this is the preparation that will result most speedily in the building of the third *Beis Hamikdash* in its designated palace, with the coming of Moshiach, now.

## HOW TO LEARN

"Standing on the threshold of Moshiach, who is coming immediately," says the Rebbe<sup>29</sup>, "it is understood that the study of *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* needs to be **in an entirely different way**: At the very least, the learning shouldn't be because one is overcome with emotions of mourning and due to his efforts to rectify the lack that resulted from the *churban Beis Hamikdash*, but because of the yearning and desire for Hashem and the completion of the third *Beis Hamikdash*... Additionally, and more essentially, the study should be an outcome of the completely certain knowledge and recognition that these aren't 'the (farfetched) halachos of Moshiach', but they are **actual, pertinent halachos for the coming moment**, since the 'future *mikdash* that we anticipate is built and perfected (already now above, and immediately) will be revealed and will come from the Heaven' **this very moment!**"

## WHEN TO LEARN

At this time, in 5740, the Rebbe spoke<sup>30</sup>: "We are now starting the Three Weeks and I was waiting to see if anyone would talk about (studying *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*) this year, and I see that no one has. So now that it's ten days from the seventeenth of Tammuz, a few days before the Nine Days, someone thought to put a notice about this in the newspaper! And only then did people find the courage to write to me all perturbed, asking if it's appropriate to learn the *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* also this year because I haven't mentioned it yet! But, we have already mentioned this the last four years, and we have mentioned that we should publicize this all over, and that's what we have actually done, and it was accepted in several places. And I have not said this in a way of 'a decree I have decreed' (without explanation), but I have also given a reason for this, and the reason is relevant every year this time, this year included.

29) Sichah of Shabbos Parshas Balak, 5751, part 9

30) Roshei Devarim of the sichah of Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei



“And since we have already done it for three years, we must continue, because the halachah is that if someone does something three times, and he didn’t say *bli neder*, he must continue to do it, and it is certain that in the past years we didn’t say *bli neder* when we have studied *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*, because I didn’t mention that we have to. It is therefore certain that we need to do it this year as well! And despite all that, someone asks me a question if we have to learn *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* also this year—does every single thing need to be repeated over and over?! And may it be His will that since we have at least now caught on and placed a notice in the newspaper, we should follow from now on what it says in the notice, that we should learn *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* in the coming days, and specifically in the Nine Days, and more specifically in the week which *Tishah B’Av* falls, and most especially on *erev Tishah B’Av* and *Tishah B’Av* itself. And certainly we need to study today, since Moshiach is coming today; and so too, if, G-d forbid, Moshiach has not come by tomorrow, we will also have to learn tomorrow...

“Even once Moshiach arrives we must learn *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*. Even though Moshiach will build the *Beis Hamikdash*, every *Yid* can potentially contribute. Say, Moshiach will be building the *Beis Hamikdash*, and one detail there won’t be according to *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* of the Rambam. Any *Yid* should be able to go over to our righteous Moshiach and ask him—of course, with this introduction, ‘With all due respect to *Moshiach Tzidkeinu*, who is one of the “eight princes of Man” and of the “seven Shepherds... perhaps, *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* has constructed a detail of the *Beis Hamikdash* not as it is in Rambam? And if it is so, where is the source to change how the Rambam rules?’ Being that ‘Torah is not in the Heavens’ and ‘a shy person doesn’t learn’, if a *Yid* will doubt the way Moshiach is building the *Beis Hamikdash*, he may, and he **must**, ask him about it. And certainly Moshiach will bear no grudge and not become vexed, since he knows that the path of Torah learning is ‘the shy person doesn’t learn’, and he will therefore certainly respond to his question.”

## WHO SHOULD LEARN

And in 5741<sup>31</sup>: These days we must endeavor to learn the parts of Torah that are connected to *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*, and to

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31) *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos*

influence other *Yidden* in the same way, because through this every *Yid* builds the *Beis Hamikdash*, which is the foundation of the entire world. As is explained in the words of *Chazal*, that in the Holy of Holies in the *Beis Hamikdash* on the Temple Mount is the *even hashesiya*, the foundation stone, from which the entire world exists. As a result, every man and woman who learns *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* builds the *Beis Hamikdash* for the entire world! During this time, we need to go out into the street and find a *Yid* and say to him, “Listen up! You need to build the *Beis Hamikdash* for the entire world!” This will be accomplished through learning the parts of Torah connected to the building of the *Beis Hamikdash*. He may claim in return that he doesn’t know any of the *Alef-Beis*, not even know the *Alef-Beis* (the very basics) of *Yiddishkeit*. Tell him: “All this deliberation has no place when you need to build a *Beis Hamikdash* for the entire world! Ay, you don’t understand the parts of Torah connected to the *Beis Hamikdash* in *Lashon Hakodesh*, so learn the material in another language—but you must build a *Beis Hamikdash* for the entire world!”

When we know that every single person is building a *Beis Hamikdash* for the entire world through learning the part of Torah connected with the building of the *Beis Hamikdash*, all deliberations that result from a lack of emotional or spiritual serenity fall away, because what are they worth compared to building a *Beis Hamikdash* for the entire world, (that place) “from which the entire world exists”?. “And through this,” we declare to every Jew, “you accomplish that these days [of the Three Weeks] will be transformed to days of rejoicing and happiness and *yomim tovim*, with the true and final *geulah*, immediately!”

### THE BOTTOM LINE

In reference to all this, the Rebbe’s words, brought in *Likkutei Sichos*<sup>32</sup>, implore us: “This is the main thing here: **now** is the time to be involved in these efforts (to learn and publicize the learning of *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*), to begin them even before *Bein Hameitzarim*, before the Nine Days. This opportunity must be, as in the vernacular, ‘a priority, with extra attentiveness and alacrity, more intense and stronger, the effort doubled and quadrupled, exponentially greater than at any other time’. However, if for any reason, a day or two passes without action, we must simply apply

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32) vol. 13, p. 279

ourselves even more assiduously, and make up for what we missed with an augmented learning schedule. And since, in this case, there is an aspect of guilt of having missed a peak juncture in time, do as *Chazal* advises: If you are accustomed to reading one page, now read two etc.—and thereby ‘double down’ in this undertaking.”

## MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 18 TAMMUZ

### SEUDASA D'DOVID MALKA MESHICHA

“A *melave malka*,” the Rebbe says,<sup>33</sup> “conveys the idea of honoring Shabbos. Just as one escorts Shabbos in to honor the holy day, we escort Shabbos out. *Motzoei Shabbos* of the seventeenth of Tammuz is no exception, and we should actually be even more careful with this mitzvah than usual. A *melave malka* is known as the *seudah* of *Dovid Melech Hamoshiach*. Its connection to Moshiach is all the more emphasized at this time, when we pray that all fast days should be transformed into *yomim tovim* and a reason to rejoice.”

For a fast such as this one that begins in the morning, you may eat until dawn (see time below) if you did not go to sleep for the night. (Temporarily dozing off does not constitute going to sleep.) If you did sleep properly before the fast, you can only eat if you stipulated before going to sleep that you would eat or drink when you awake. Someone who usually rises to drink during the night can drink without making a stipulation.

Even if you have satisfied the requirements of being able to eat before the fast, do not begin a proper meal within a halachic half-hour of dawn. You may snack on fruit, vegetables and non-alcoholic beverages, and eat up to a *kebeitzah* of *mezonos*.<sup>34</sup>

## SUNDAY, 18 TAMMUZ

### Postponed Fast Day

This day is a communal fast day during which eating and drinking is forbidden, as it commemorates the day that the walls of Yerushalayim were breached.

There were five events that occurred throughout history on the seventeenth of tammuz: 1. The *Luchos* were broken 2. The *Korban*

33) From a *sichah* of Shabbos *Parshas Balak* 5751, 17 Tammuz:

34) Generally, the volume of food that would fit into two small matchboxes.

*Tamid* ceased in the *Beis Hamikdash* 3. During the time of the second *Beis Hamikdash*, the walls of Yerushalayim were breached (4) The wicked Apostomus burned the Torah (5) A graven image was put in the *heichal*.

## EXEMPTIONS

Pregnant women, or nursing women who have difficulty fasting, or people feeling ill, are exempt. This year, since the fast is postponed from the actual date of observance, some leniencies may apply to override the usual level of stringency for the seventeenth of Tammuz.<sup>35</sup> Consult a Rav if necessary.

A *Chosson* and *Kallah* during their *sheva yemei mishteh*, the week following their wedding, fast today.

The custom is that a *bris* which takes place on the seventeenth of Tammuz, the father, *mohel* and *sandek* still fast (even this year, when the fast is postponed). A minor child is given the wine to drink and the *seudah* takes place that night.

Someone who is exempt from fasting should refrain from eating delicacies and should suffice with only as much food as is necessary.

## FASTING

**Law of Redemption:** All fasts will be nullified when Moshiach comes. Moreso, they are destined to be *yomim tovim* and days of rejoicing.

The fast begins from dawn (*alos hashachar*), at **3:56 am**.<sup>36</sup>

Someone who travels to a different time zone during the fast continues to fast until nightfall (*tzeis hakochovim*) of the place that they are in at that time.

It is a *minhag Yisrael* to increase *tzedakah* on fast days. We estimate the value of what we would have eaten that day and give it to a poor person on the eve of the fast.

We do not rinse our mouths on a fast day.

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35) See Hebrew section for sources. Also discussed there in the footnote: a child who turns bar/bas mitzvah on the 18th of Tammuz this year.

36) There are various methods of calculating sunrise. This time is according to the opinion that *alos hashachar* is when the angle of the rising sun is the position of 16.1 degrees from the horizon.

Someone who mistakenly breaks their fast must still complete it. They are not required to compensate by fasting on a different day (unless they choose to as an atonement for breaking the fast). If someone eats less than a *koseves* (the size of a large date) within the timeframe of *k'dei achilas pras*,<sup>37</sup> or drinks less than a *reviis*, they are still considered to be fasting and pray *Aneinu* as normal. If they consumed more than that, they should replace the words "*Aneinu b'yom tzom ta'aniseinu*" with "*Aneinu b'yom tzom hata'anis hazeh*" during Minchah.

Bathing and doing laundry on the fast of the seventeenth of Tammuz are permitted.<sup>38</sup>

### SHACHARIS

Only the *chazzan* says *Aneinu* during the repetition of the *Amidah*. In both Shacharis and Minchah, *Aneinu* is recited by the *chazzan* between the blessings of *go'al Yisrael* and *Refa'einu*. If a *chazzan* mistakenly omits *Aneinu*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

*Selichos* are said during davening. The order for Shacharis is as follows: *Chazaras Hashatz* followed by *Tachanun* and *Nefilas Apayim*; *Selichos* (starting with "*Al titnu*"; omit *Ashamnu*); the long *Avinu Malkeinu* and then *Va'anachnu lo nedah*; half *Kaddish*. Then the *sefer Torah* is brought out and three *aliyos* are read from the section *Vayechal Moshe*.

The *minhag* in 770 is that when there is a *chosson*, a *bris* held that day, or the like, the congregation (aside from the *chosson* and the *ba'al habris*) says *Selichos*, but omit *Tachanun*, *Nefilas Apayim* and *Avinu Malkeinu*. When this is done, start with *Selach lanu* and continue without omitting anything; *viduy* of *Ashamnu* is said.

### TODAY'S PARSHAH

"This is not well publicized and has been applied by very few," the Rebbe says in 5748,<sup>39</sup> "But on the seventeenth of Tammuz, there

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37) Though there are some who maintain that *ba'alei nefesh* (very pious individuals) should avoid bathing with hot water, and even institute all the constraints of *Tishah B'av* on other fasts as well. See the discussion on [#346](http://www.halacha2go.com) and [#19897](http://www.asktherav.com).

38) The halachic span of time that is based on the norm for someone consuming a half-loaf of bread.

39) *Sefer Hasichos*, p. 247, fn. 63

are those who study the chapters regarding fasts from the *Neviim*, similar to the custom of saying a chapter of Tehillim specific to each day (*Shir shel Yom*) and similar; these texts are the '*parshah*' of today. Now, the Torah is eternal, so even when Moshiach comes, we will include these parts of *Neviim* that discuss fast days. Because this is the '**Torah** of (Eternal) **Truth**' and the '**Torah** of **Light**', the good in every aspect shines through (even within these negative passages about fast days). This is explained elsewhere<sup>40</sup> concerning the words 'Yaakov and Eisav who are spoken about in the *parshah*.' This means that we can access the good that is in these fasts as they will be transformed into days of rejoicing and *yomim tovim* (literally, '**good** days') in the future. So on the contrary (learning about the fast days from the *Neviim* is not a focus on negativity, but) through learning about the temporary descent, this magnifies the happiness and *yom tov* aspect."

### MINCHAH

The Torah reading of Shacharis is repeated for Minchah with the addition of *Maftir* for a fast day: *Dirshu Hashem*.

It is preferable to daven Minchah earlier, finishing before *shkiah* so that it does not run into twilight (*bein hashmoshos*). In addition to the fact that it is appropriate to daven Minchah before *shkiah* every day, on a fast day specifically this is the correct thing to do. In the event that someone does daven late, he may still conduct *Krias Hatorah* and *Maftir* even once it has reached *bein hashmoshos*.

During the *Amidah*, *Aneinu* is recited by all (fasting) congregants during the blessing of *Shema Koleinu*. If it is mistakenly omitted, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

During *Chazaras Hashatz*, the *chazzan* recites *Aneinu* between the blessings of *go'al Yisrael* and *Refa'einu*. The *chazzan's* priestly blessing is recited before *Sim shalom*.

The order for Minchah is as follows: 1. *Vayedaber* (*Karbanos* for Minchah) 2. *Ashrei* 3. half *Kaddish* 4. *Vayehi binsoa* and *Krias Hatorah*, then *Maftir* and its blessings 5. *Yehalelu*, *Amidah* (including *Anieinu*) and *Chazaras Hashatz* 6. *Tachanun*, the long *Avinu Malkeinu* 7. *Kaddish tiskabel*, then 8. *Aleinu* and *Kaddish Yasom*.

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40) in *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 20, pp. 341ff; vol. 30, p.144 part 6; and others

*Divrei Kevushin*, an address that motivates its audience toward self-improvement, are said after Minchah.

The fast ends after Maariv at 8:57 pm.<sup>41</sup>

## MONDAY, 19 TAMMUZ

On this date in 5640 (1880), also a Monday as this year, was the *bris milah* of the Friediker Rebbe (and the seventh day from his bar mitzvah thirteen years later, in 5653-1893). In various *sichos*, the Rebbe speaks about the spiritual strength of the great *simchah* to commemorate this day and its redemptive effect on the time we are currently experiencing—*Bein Hameitzarim*, and its connection to the Final Geulah.<sup>42</sup>

“Those days are recalled and recurring’ spiritually,” the Rebbe says in 5745<sup>43</sup>, “but we live in a physical world of action (which includes practices of mourning for *Bein Hameitzarim*), so we must try to find some way to give a *heter* to properly celebrate the (Friediker Rebbe’s) *bris milah*. Perhaps there will be a current *simchah* like a *bris, pidyan haben*, or the like—since these are celebrations that are in accord with the halachos of *Shulchan Aruch* pertaining to the Three Weeks—and we will extend that *simchah* (to include the one of the Friediker Rebbe).

“And we will emphasize that even though the focus of this *simchah* is the halachic and *gashmiyus* one, still, for Yidden and Chassidim who live with the Rebbe, our Nasi, consistently it is as if today, actually, we are celebrating the *bris* of a dynamic person, one who grows each year, advancing higher ‘from strength to strength’ in a cumulative manner—so that this year (5745), is the 106th *bris* of the (Friediker) Rebbe!<sup>44</sup> And therefore the celebration of the occasion is that many times greater!

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41) There are various methods of calculating the time of nightfall (called *tzeis hakochovim*, when three stars are observable). Following the Alter Rebbe’s opinion to account for “smaller stars” we generally wait some minutes after this time to say the nighttime *Shema*. But for the purpose of the fast, you may daven earlier, and then repeat the *Shema* sometime later.

42) See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Pinchas* 5749 (in *Sefer Hasichos*, pp. 581ff) and others.

43) *Sichah* of 15 Tammuz; free translation transcribed from audio.

44) This year is the 143rd.

“In rebuttal to those who may claim (‘those who seek allegations’) and take issue with such a non-required celebration—and in truth, this is a halachically-justified argument, not a pretext at all—which is why we should find an actual, halachah-sanctioned *simchah* of a *bris*, *pidyan haben*, or the like, and in the course of such, discuss a point of Chassidus originating from the *ba’al hasimchah* himself, the (Friediker) Rebbe, (mentioning that) he lives on and that each year reaches a higher level. And then we should continue the *farbrengen*—all this done in a way that is within the purview of the *Shulchan Aruch*. And regarding that it can be said, as is brought in Chassidus, that the one that places the limits on itself is not truly limited—and such can be said of the restrictions of the *Shulchan Aruch* in this case.”<sup>45</sup>

## FRIDAY, 23 TAMMUZ

### Erev Shabbos Parshas Pinchas

Today, we read *shnayim mikra* for *Parshas Pinchas*. (See more details regarding this practice in last Friday’s entry.)<sup>46</sup>

Candle lighting is at **8:02 pm** (eighteen minutes before sunset).

## SHABBOS PARSHAS PINCHAS, 24 TAMMUZ

### Shabbos Mevarchim Menachem-Av

#### THE SHABBOS EFFECT

“The melancholy aspects of the Three Weeks do not apply to Shabbos,” the Rebbe says<sup>47</sup> on Shabbos during this time, “because on Shabbos we must be happy. Moreover, this particular Shabbos needs to be even more joyous than others so that there shouldn’t be a suspicion that any lack of happiness is due to the Three Weeks.”

This is the inner meaning of the concept: Shabbos is a taste of the future *geulah*, which is known as “*yom shekulo Shabbos*” (a time

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45) The Rebbe referenced this again the following Shabbos, *Sichas Parshas Balak* 5745, quoted in the Hebrew section footnotes on this topic.

46) The *Haftorah* this week is the one for the first Shabbos of the Three Weeks, *Divrei Yirmiyahu*. It would seem appropriate to say both this *Haftorah* and the one normally associated with *Parshas Pinchas* as is the usual practice while reciting *Shnayim Mikrah* when a timely *Haftorah* overrides the regularly scheduled one. (See the discussion in the Hebrew footnotes.)

47) *Sichah of Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5715. In *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 2, pp. 358ff.



that is always [like] Shabbos). Since the *geulah* is defined as a time when no vestige of *golus* remains, so too no Shabbos may have any impression of the Three Weeks at all.

However, the above is no more than an explanation for why there cannot be any aspect that is the opposite of happiness. The reason why this Shabbos has to have even more *simchah* than others is based on the well-known adage that the redemption that follows the exile raises us to an even higher place than before the exile began...So Shabbos during the Three Weeks is a taste of Moshiach, “*yom shekulo Shabbos*”, and thus mandates an extra dose of *simchah*. This is because the idea of **this** Shabbos is that we are given extra strength (thanks to a revelation of light of the future) to transform the Three Weeks into joy and happiness. This is in line with the *psak* in Shulchan Aruch that it is permitted to have our meals as “the meals of Shlomo’s times” (i.e., in their full splendor), as in his days “the moon was in its fullness (and glory).” This Shabbos we are given the strength to transform these days (as they were then, and even better) into joy and happiness (of the *geulah*).

On Shabbos during the Three Weeks, we have to be even more joyous than any other Shabbos of the year, to remove any suspicion that anyone is practicing *aveilus* (acts of mourning, which are forbidden on Shabbos). There is a story of someone who wore non-leather clogs all the time. Unfortunately, he became an *avel* (mourner who lost a close relative). The Shabbos of the *shivah*, he asked a *sha’alah* whether he may keep wearing his clogs. The Rebbe’s father (Harav Levi Yitzchak) *paskened* that he may not—so that no one should suspect that he is adhering to mourning practices on Shabbos.<sup>48</sup>

## TRANSFORMATION

From *Maor V’Shemesh*: Concerning what “the holy greats” say<sup>49</sup>, *Shabbosos* during the Three Weeks are exceedingly elevated. It appears to me that this is because the six days of the week (preceding the *Shabbosos*) are exceedingly low and minimized.

It is known that on Shabbos, all worlds are elevated and this (in turn) elevates the six days of the week. Hence (now, during the Three

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48) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1091

49) Brought in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 25. There it says: (The author) was a student of the Mezritcher Maggid’s students; certainly he’s referring to them.

Weeks), because everything that was so minimized is brought up so high, it is understood that the *Shabbosos* during the Three Weeks are extremely elevated. This is unlike the rest of the *Shabbosos* during the year, when, being as the days of the week aren't as exceedingly low, the elevation isn't as high as the *Shabbosos* of the Three Weeks, when all the things that were in the lowest of the low, in the valleys of the abyss, have been elevated to holiness.

### BEIN HAMEITZARIM MATH

The Tzemach Tzedek explains how the three *Shabbosos* of the Three Weeks have the ability to transform the negativity into positivity, according to Kabbalah:

Temporally, the Three Weeks are what the *midbar* (desert) is spatially, and representative of *golus* in general. The three *Shabbosos* during the Three Weeks are the “cure that preempts the illness”. To understand this we make a calculation that accounts the following:

Every Shabbos can be considered as two *Shabbosos* (because each Shabbos comprises two aspects) and there are three Shabbasos in the Three Weeks.

$$2 \times 3 = 6$$

The seven days of the week during the Three Weeks are illuminated by the double *Shabbosos*.

$$6 \times 7 = 42$$

It is through the Shabbos aspect of every day of the Three Weeks that we remediate the forty-two journeys of the *midbar-golus* to finally reach *Eretz Yisrael*. What does this mean? Through the *Shabbosos*, we cure the negative side of the Three Weeks.

### HOW TO FARBRENG

“A unique issue occurs,” says the Rebbe<sup>50</sup> in 5744, “concerning *Yidden* who have become so involved in worldly matters, that during those special times when it is incumbent upon them to release themselves from worldly affairs and become steeped in spiritual matters, they have great difficulty doing so. This is especially with regard to feeling the pain of the descent of *golus* to the point of thirsting for the comfort of Redemption...”

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50) *Roshei Devarim* from a *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Maasei*

“When we come to the period of the Three Weeks, (including Shabbos, as is highlighted by the fact that from Bereishis until the seventeenth of Tammuz, the *Haftorah* is connected to the weekly *parshah*, but starting from the first Shabbos of the Three Weeks, the theme relates to the events of the current time period), it is difficult to have influence upon the above-mentioned *Yid*, that he should be aroused with feelings of pain from being in the Three Weeks, and that he should thirst to be comforted by the *geulah*. Since he is steeped in the world of business, and he sees that Hashem is making him successful and is blessing him with children, health and sustenance, he doesn’t feel like he’s lacking in anything at all...

“However, since Hashem doesn’t demand of us more than our abilities, it’s understood that, despite how difficult this is, it is still within the ability of every Jew... Since he is imbued with the knowledge and feeling that his truest existence is his *neshamah*, even when his physical matters of children, health and sustenance are not lacking, he knows and feels the extent of the pain of *golus*, especially when we are in the time period of the Three Weeks. Therefore, he will be in this state of thirsting for the comfort of Redemption.

“It would seem that there’s room to question the point of discussing all this during the *farbrengen*, that there is a need for us to remember that we are in the Three Weeks, which causes pain and sadness. Is this the purpose of the *farbrengen*? Certainly, there are unique laws for how to conduct oneself during the Three Weeks. But these laws have already been written in *Shulchan Aruch*, a *sefer* that every Jew certainly owns, or at least can get a hold of easily, and we should assume that every Jew acts correctly and studies the details of the laws relevant to each time period, and the *halachos* of every festival, and in the same way the laws unique to the Three Weeks.

“So, what is the purpose of discussing this topic? And even if there is a need to awaken the observance of these things, Hashem should have mercy and spare us from a *shlichus* like this, to remind Jews of an idea that is the opposite of happiness, *chas v’shalom*... Yet, on the contrary, the (Frierdiker) Rebbe instituted that we should *farbreng* on *Shabbos Mevarchim*, including *Shabbos Mevarchim Chodesh Av*, and it’s understood that, at the very least, we need to discuss *inyonei d’yoma* (time-relevant matters)!

“The guidance and saving grace for this is the concept of “Menachem-Av” (“Av of Comfort), meaning we must bring up topics that bring succor, and (ultimately) the concept of the annulment of

the undesirable matters of the Three Weeks, by increasing in all matters of *Yiddishkeit*, in Torah and *mitzvos*, with happiness and good-heartedness.”

## SHABBOS MEVARCHIM

The entire Tehillim is recited early in the morning.

During the Three Weeks, the *Haftorah* of every Shabbos is one of the *Tilasa D'piranusa* (three selections from the Navi concerning *golus* and the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*). This Shabbos, the *Maftir* is *Divrei Yirmiyahu*.<sup>51</sup>

## POWER OF THREE

In Chassidus it is explained that *Tilasa D'piranusa* (the three *Haftoros* of disaster) correspond to the three intellectual faculties (Chochmah, Binah and Daas) and by contrast, the *Shiva D'nechemta* (seven *Haftoros* of comfort) that follow Tisha B'av until Rosh Hashanah, correspond to the seven emotional attributes (Chessed, Gevurah, Tiferes, Netzach, Hod, Yesod and Malchus).

The concept of *תלתא דפורענותא* (*Tilasa D'Piranusa*) is, in its truest sense, positive. It is connected with the level of *פרעה דקדושה* (*Paroh D'kedushah*), a very great, holy light that *אתפרעו* (*ispari'u*), gushes forth; all other levels of spiritual light are revealed through this extremely high level of revelation.

We bless the month of Av.<sup>52</sup>

The *molad*<sup>53</sup> is on Thursday evening at 7:32 plus 4/18 of a minute. Rosh Chodesh Av is next Friday.

We do not recite “*Av Harachamim*” before Musaf, as on every *Shabbos Mevarchim*.

51) If the regular *Haftorah* of Parshas Pinchas is read by mistake (in some other years, it is not yet in the Three Weeks), the *Haftorah* of *Divrei Yirmiyahu* should be read next week, together with the second of the Three *Haftoros*, *Shim'u* (the two segments are consecutive in the source in Navi).

52) Some authorities hold that we do not bless the month on this Shabbos. The *Darchei Moshe*, in the name of *Haga'os Mordechai*, discredits this notion, saying that on the contrary, there is no time that the Jewish nation is more needful of blessings! See also *Sichas Shabbos Mevarchim Parshas Matos* 5741 (in *Sichos Kodesh*, pp. 205 ff).

53) first appearance of the New Moon. The Alter Rebbe writes, “It is proper to know the *molad* before blessing the new month.”

## THE LOUDEST AMEN

“What is special about *Shabbos Mevarchim Menachem Av*?” the Rebbe asks in 5747<sup>54</sup>. “Today, we draw down a blessing that is so powerful, it can transform all the negative aspects of the coming month—to the point that (even) Tishah B’av will be ‘for joy and happiness and good times’. This is apparent in the language of the blessing for the new month, when we announce: ‘Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the week’. The tradition (and a ‘*minhag* is Torah’) is to call the month not merely Av but Menachem Av, preceding and superseding the name ‘Av’ with ‘Menachem’ and branding the time with the idea of comfort.

“Then, further on, in the blessing itself, we say, ‘Renew it for us... as a salvation and comfort’, referring to the Redemption and (the subsequent) succor it will bring to the Jewish people and to Yerushalayim (as we say, ‘comfort *Tziyon* and build Yerushalayim’) and then we immediately add ‘and we all say “Amen”’. This affirmation of ‘Amen’ is in close proximity to the salvation/comfort phrase, both when the congregation states it privately and the *chazzan* out loud. Even in the latter case, when each phrase of the blessing is followed by an ‘Amen’, none are so boisterous as that final one, giving it a stamp of truth and staying power. And in this prayer, we can come to understand the lofty quality of this *Shabbos Mevarchim* over all others.”

## YOU DIDN'T SING?

Concerning the *niggun* of *Hu Elokeinu* (that we sing during Kesser of Musaf), the Rebbe says<sup>55</sup>: It has already been several years since singing *Hu Elokeinu* on *Shabbos Mevarchim Chodesh Av* was introduced, at a time most pertinent to the *geulah*. And yet this year, it didn't occur to anyone to start the *niggun*! Everyone was waiting for me to indicate with the finger that it is time to sing, but I was waiting to see if someone would have the *sechel* themselves and sing the *niggun*... What actually happened is that no one sang it! How many times do we have to do it until it will be self-understood that this is how it must be done?! In a few days, we will likely receive a letter from someone overseas demanding: “How can it be that you didn't sing *Hu Elokeinu* on *Shabbos Mevarchim Chodesh Av*?”

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54) *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei*

55) *Roshei Devarim* from a *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5740

## WHEN SAYING “AV” BRINGS HAPPINESS

From a *sichah* in the Three Weeks, 5733<sup>56</sup>: Some *kehillos* have a custom to make changes from their normal mode of behavior from other Shabbos Mevorchims throughout the year on account of the negative aspects associated with the beginning of this new month. Chabad does not follow this *minhag*—no such changes are made. (To the contrary), our practice is to **add in simchah**, reproaching the idea that one should act in a spirit of mourning on Shabbos.

Concerning Shabbos it says, “there is no sadness to it”, without qualification about which time of year a particular Shabbos falls. To the point that when it came to *Shabbos Chazon* (the Shabbos that immediately precedes Tishah B’Av), we find that the Alter Rebbe was careful not to make any alteration in his manner of dress, unlike the practice of other Torah greats of his time on that particular Shabbos. If it is the *minhag* to make no restrictive changes on Shabbos within the Nine Days, how much more so must we refrain from doing so to *Shabbos Mevorchim Av*, which occurs before the Nine Days begin.

To this point, we have spoken of our conduct as an outcome of the rule to refrain from sadness on Shabbos. However, since Torah is called “the Torah of Truth” and truth permeates all perspectives and details, we must conclude that the positive outlook on “the Shabbos that we bless the month of Av” is not only a result of its Shabbos-ness elevating its negative time-designation so that we override its need for change. No, it is the advent of the month of Av that also indicates that we do not change our normal practice. On the contrary, Torah’s truth about today permeates all facets and we increase in *simchah* because we celebrate **both** today’s “Shabbos” and “new month of Av” as positive aspects.

## A DAY OF FARBRENGEN

At a farbrengen this Shabbos,<sup>57</sup> the Rebbe told a well-known story of his father Rav Levi Yitzchok about wearing (non-leather) slippers on a Shabbos that falls out during days of mourning, and then continued: There are those who go around every *Shabbos Mevorchim* wondering whether they should be in *merirus* (bitter), or, perhaps, just *atzvut* (melancholy). Every other *Shabbos Mevorchim*, you can give them the benefit of the doubt that they are lacking sleep, are weary, lazy, or the

56) *Roshei Devarim Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei*

57) From the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos*, 5714. In *Sichos Kodesh*, pp. 363ff.

like. This *Shabbos Mevarchim*, the possibility of the benefit of the doubt rises because of the Three Weeks. However, this theme of the Three Weeks cannot be applied to Shabbos. As is known, certain provinces had the custom of singing *Lecha Dodi* to the “Tishah B’Av *niggun*” in this time period and later, there were terrible decrees in those areas.

So even if there is something lacking in the strength (of your *simchah*) every other *Shabbos Mevarchim*, this *Shabbos Mevarchim* needs to have an extra dose of happiness. As the Frierdiker Rebbe stated, “*Shabbos Mevarchim* needs to be a joyous Shabbos!” So, in order to circumvent any suspicion, **this** *Shabbos Mevarchim* our happiness needs to be greater.

### SHABBOS AFTERNOON

Today is a day of farbrengen.

After Minchah, *Pirkei Avos* is said (with the addition of one Mishnah learned in depth with Chassidic interpretation). This week the first chapter is recited (for the third time).

Shabbos ends **9:08pm**.

## THURSDAY, 29 TAMMUZ

### Erev Rosh Chodesh Av

*Erev Rosh Chodesh* is called a “mini Yom Kippur” with spiritual practices associated with it. The Rebbe’s directive concerning today is that we should add (even more than any other *erev Rosh Chodesh* throughout the year) in Torah, *tefillah* and *tzedakah*. The amount for *tzedakah* (in lieu of fasting) should be the total to replace two meals for the day, or even better, all three.

### WHY NOW?

“This farbrengen taking place now in the Three Weeks,” the Rebbe says on *erev Rosh Chodesh Av* 5735<sup>58</sup>, “is seemingly a new-fangled idea, one that required me to work hard searching for some sort of halachic loophole to allow it. So the best *heter* I found is with regards to the Three-Weeks’ performances of a professional musician whose *parnassah* depends on their playing music even during this time. But it must be, as *poskim* determine, with some qualifications, such as that the musical event must exclude dancing...

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58) Free translation of transcription from audio

“**This** is my livelihood, so I have no choice to *farbreng*, despite the Three Weeks. And when it comes to the parameters of the joy associated with singing, as we stated earlier with regard to musicians, when it comes to *niggunim*, there is a clear halachic leniency, brought even by latter-day *poskim*...

“Since the subject (of the *farbrengen*) is connected with the Nine Days, it is not an appropriate topic for much earlier (before the Three Weeks); even talking today, only one day before, may cause a person to lose heart, and take it as a sign that Moshiach will not be here by tomorrow, *chas v’shalom*. So we wait until the last moments of the day preceding the Nine Days, a time when (as Yirmiyahu states), the summer has passed, the harvest ended and yet we have not been saved...”

“The spirit in which Hashem sends us the cure (to the events of the Nine Days),” says the Rebbe in a *sichah* of *erev Rosh Chodesh Av*,<sup>59</sup> “(which He does in the manner of ‘I am Hashem your Healer’) is in the form of preventative measures, ‘I will not put it on you’—(‘He sends the cure’) **before** the malady’. Therefore: all our efforts in acts [of adding in Torah learning, *tzedakah*, etc.] need to start even before the ‘the onset of the month of Av (when joy decreases)’. Let us advise how today...*erev Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av*, each and every one of you will accept upon yourself (resolutions) in all of these—personal acceptance and also publicizing these directives within your sphere of influence.

“And may it be Hashem’s Will, that all this will hasten the promise that ‘these days will be transformed to joy and happiness’ in a way of ‘I will not place on you’, meaning that they will start off as days of joy and happiness.”

### NINE DAYS PREP

It is recommended that all laundered clothing you intend to wear throughout the Nine Days should be worn for a short amount of time today (as long as it takes for the freshly-laundered feeling to recede). We are restricted from wearing newly-washed clothes during the Nine Days because of the pleasure derived from the experience. This restriction does not apply to under-clothing.<sup>60</sup>

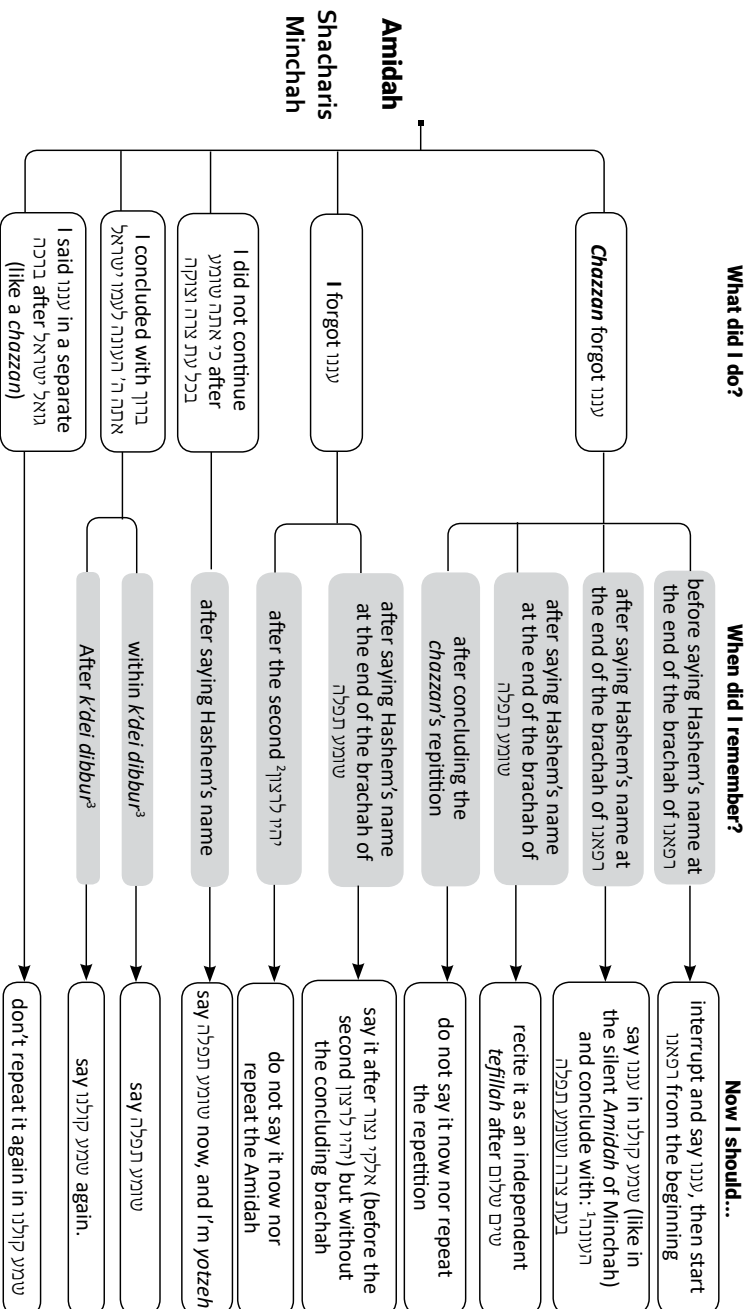
59) 5734 (in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 13, p. 278)

60) If you neglected to do so on Thursday, it is possible to give them to a Sefardic compatriot to try them on on Friday, as their tradition is to avoid laundered clothing only during the week of Tishah B'av itself.



# "Oops! I made a mistake..."

on the Fast of the 17 Tammuz



1. if you concluded with שומע תפלה you are yotzeh.
2. and you have also made the decision not to lengthen your tefillah with extra requests and supplications.
3. the (short) amount of time that it would take to say the words: *Shalom alecha Mori V'Rabbi*