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DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

plus a collection of Chassidic insights
& excerpts from the Rebbe's talks

Summer & Three Weeks

17 Tammuz until the 15th of
Menachem-Av 5785

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Under the auspices of Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita
Member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

B"H

DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

plus a collection of Chassidic insights
& excerpts from the Rebbe's talks

Three Weeks & Summer

from 17 Tammuz until the 15th of Menachem-Av 5785

Halachos, Minhagim & Hora'os
for Bein Hametzarim
& Summer Vacation

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

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FOREWORD

Presented here are the laws & customs and selected sichos for the summer months; included are halachos for the 17th of Tammuz and the 9th of Av, as well as the Three Weeks along with the Rebbe's directives and spiritual guidance for this time period, as well as supplementary summer-related guidance.

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*. Please see the footnotes in the Hebrew section for more halachic discussion of the topics mentioned.

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.

Please note: Specific laws are mentioned only the first time that they become relevant, although they may apply to subsequent dates as well.

* * *

TIME TO PREPARE

In a *sichah* on the second day of Rosh Hashanah in 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, [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."

LEARN TO KNOW

"It's time to remind everyone," the Rebbe says in a *sichah* of Rosh Chodesh Av,¹ "to

¹) In 5748; free translation of transcription from audio. See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Masei* (see more from this occasion further on): "There are also laws that apply to our behavior during Bein Hametzarim, but the specifics of these appear in Shulchan Aruch—a sefer that surely every Jew has in their possession or is easily

be judicious in learning the halachos applicable to this period of time. I am greatly surprised that no one has made any brouhaha (*tumul*) about this, in line with the clamor accompanying the campaign to learn *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*. Learning these straight-out halachos in *Shulchan Aruch* is much more timely and relevant (*z'man gerama*) than studying *Hilchos Beis Hebechirah*. Obviously, this includes those pertaining to the Nine Days as well those regarding the (general time period) already transpiring of the Three Weeks as well.”

All this talk concerning our conduct in this time period, the Rebbe says,² must be prefaced and supplemented with the caveat, “if Moshiach’s coming is delayed, *chas veshalom*,” since (as stated in the Rambam’s Principles of Faith), “we anticipate him” that he will come today, actually. So any resolutions (in the realm of our Divine service during *golus*) must be accompanied by the above stipulation. The truth is, though, that even after Moshiach arrives we will continue to grow in Torah and *avodah*, building on the good resolutions of the time of *golus*.

* * *

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.

LAWS OF REDEMPTION

The concept of studying these halachos is based on several *sichos*, some of which are quoted below.

TO REALIZE REDEMPTION

“Hashem **begs** the Jewish people,” the Rebbe passionately states,³ “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.’”

“We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demanded.⁴ “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

accessible to them, and since we make favorable assumptions of every Jew, each of you surely learns the appropriate timely halachos of each season, and has done the same with regard to the halachos of the Three Weeks.”

2) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5751

3) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 341—*Emphasis in the original*

4) *From a sichah addressed to N'shei uB'nos Chabad—Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 485.

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.”

* * *

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).

Editorial Committee

Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 5785

Brooklyn N.Y.

THE THREE WEEKS

BEIN HAMETZARIM

Bein Hametzarim, which means “between the straits”, is the time between the 17th of Tammuz, when the calamities associated with the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* began, and the 9th of Av, when the *Churban* culminated. It is a period of mourning for the Jewish people, one that should affect each of us personally and painfully even today, 1957 years later, as the adage admonishes, “Any generation that doesn’t effectuate the rebuilding of the *Beis Hamikdash*, it is considered as if it was destroyed in their time.”⁵

KER A VELT TODAY!

On the subject of the Three Weeks, the Rebbe says⁶: 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 eininu* for the *geulah* after more than nineteen hundred years in *golus*.

“No!” says the Rogatchover. 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 Rogatchover declares that this is explicitly stated in Talmud Yerushalmi. It is written there: “Anyone who **doesn’t effectuate the rebuilding** of the *Beis Hamikdash* in his time,” it 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*⁷ 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 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

5) Talmud Yerushalmi Yuma 1,1

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

7) the day of this *sichah*

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:] **Ker a velt heint! Turn the world over today!**

DON'T DESPAIR!

“Around the time of the Three Weeks,” it says in *Likkutei Sichos*,⁸ “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 12th and 13th 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 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 Rabbanan*’ 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*’.

“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*.’”

ANTICIPATION

Concerning the time period of the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the Rebbe says⁹: On the one hand, this is a time during which we have the obligation to “mourn over

8) vol. 18, p. 316

9) *Ibid.*, p. 411

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 *golus, chas v’shalom*. For we know (that we will ultimately return), as the *Haftorah* of *Parshas Masei* 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,¹⁰ “we should increase in all areas of Torah and *mitzvos* with a *shturem* (extra 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*¹¹: 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*¹² in the name of the Maggid, all who pursue 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 depressing 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

10) *Roshei Devarim* from *Shabbos Parshas Masei* 5744

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

12) *Parshas Masei*

our Divine service of the Three Weeks (*Bein Hametzarim*), that is “from the *metzar* (strait) I call out”—from the constraints of *golus* we are able to “draw down from above the ‘higher strait’ (which is a place) that no mind can grasp,” as is brought in *Chassidus* concerning this time period.

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 *metzar*, 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 12th and 13th 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 subsequent *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 & MORE

We begin with the start of the Three Weeks, on the **17th** of Tammuz, seventeen being the *gematria*, numerical value, of the word טוב—*tov* (good). This is because the 17th 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 caused an increase of Torah) even to the point of infinity. The same applies to the culmination of the Three Weeks, the 9th of Av. How could it be 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-Masei* 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 *korbanos* (especially the *korbanos* of the festivals, hinting at 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—“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 Hametzarim* commence on the **evening** of the 17th of Tammuz.

HAIRCUTS

Both men and women¹³ 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.¹⁴

When a boy's third birthday falls during the Three Weeks, the *upshernish* is delayed until the 10th of Av after midday. This, however, does not include the

¹³) A woman may cut hair for reasons of modesty, as well as in preparation for *mikveh* (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.

¹⁴) See [#243](http://www.halacha2go.com)

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 & MARRIAGE

It is permissible to get engaged and host a *Lechaim* 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.

SHEHECHIYANU

It is best to avoid making a *Shehechianu* blessing during the Three Weeks. Therefore, we refrain from eating new fruit¹⁵ or wearing new clothing. Our custom is to refrain from blessing *Shehechianu* 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 *Shehechianu* upon seeing her for the first time, even during the Three Weeks. A father also blesses *Shehechianu* at his firstborn son's *pidyon haben* during the Three Weeks.

The *brachah* of *hatov vehametiv* may be recited during the Three Weeks.¹⁶

DANCING & MUSIC

Dancing is prohibited during the Three Weeks.

We may not play¹⁷ or listen to music, including recorded music. Some are lenient

¹⁵ A pregnant woman may eat a new fruit without blessing *Shehechianu*, out of concern that an unsatisfied craving may endanger the child. Similarly, an ill person may eat a new fruit without reciting *Shehechianu*.

¹⁶ This applies to its recital for various occasions such as the birth of a male child, and on wine, when warranted. (For a comprehensive overview on saying *hatov vehametiv* on wine, see the supplement for the Day-to-Day Guide for Purim 5785.)

¹⁷ A professional musician may play for non-Jews until Rosh Chodesh Av excluding the actual day of the

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.

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 17th 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 17th of Tammuz, we refrain from going out alone between the end of the fourth halachic hour until the end of the ninth halachic hour.¹⁸ 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*¹⁹: During the two midsummer months (in Lubavitch) from Shavuos 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 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

¹⁷th of Tammuz.

¹⁸) 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.

¹⁹) (English) vol. 1, p. 241. Published by *Kehos*, 5747

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 17th 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.²⁰

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 *Shehechyanu* wouldn't be recited). It is proper to move in after the 15th of Av, and if possible, in the month of Elul, which is the month of mercy.

Expansion of living quarters is allowed until Rosh Chodesh Av, though many avoid starting a new build during this time.²¹

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 17th of Tammuz should not schedule a *chanukas habayis* feast during the Three Weeks.

20) Regarding hitting in general, see www.asktherav.com #6349 for a comprehensive discussion.

21) See www.asktherav.com #15381

THE REBBE'S HORA'OS

(From the preface to *Chidushim U'bi'urim B'hilchos Beis Habechirah*)

Torah & Tzedakah: In accordance with the verse, “Tzion 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 Hametzarim*, and *tzedakah* during the Three Weeks.

Five Periods: The Three Weeks are subdivided into periods of increasing intensity: (1) From the 17th of Tammuz until Rosh Chodesh Av (2) from Rosh Chodesh until the week of the 9th of Av (3) the week of *Tishah B'Av* itself (4) the day before the fast and (5) the actual fast day.²² 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!²³ Obviously, someone who failed to accomplish any of the above directives on the applicable dates should make it up afterwards.

Mivtzoim: 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 *geulah*, it is certain that the reason for *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).

²²) This year, *Tishah B'Av* falls on Sunday. As such, the level of “the week of *Tishah B'Av*” coincides with the fast day itself.

²³) “According to the halachic ruling in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 571:3”

HILCHOS BEIS HABECHIRAH

Make it a point to study about the *Beis Hamikdash*²⁴ during the Three Weeks. This learning is also applicable to women and children.²⁵

WHAT TO LEARN

“In the days preceding *erev Tishah B’Av* and *Tishah B’Av*,” the Rebbe says,²⁶ “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 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,²⁷ “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 spoke²⁸: “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 17th 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,

24) 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*.

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

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

27) *Sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Balak*, 5751, part 9

28) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei*

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.

"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 Hachechirah*, 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 Hachechirah* 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 Hachechirah* 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 Hachechirah*. 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 Hachechirah* 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 5741²⁹: These days we must endeavor to learn the parts of Torah that are connected to *Hilchos Beis Hachechirah*, and to 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 hashesia*, the foundation stone, from which the entire world exists. As a result, every man and woman who learns *Hilchos Beis Hachechirah* 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

²⁹) *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos*

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*,³⁰ 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 Habeirah*), to begin them even before *Bein Hametzarim*, 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 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."

MAKING FARBRENGENS

"To add even more *simchah*," the Rebbe says on the Shabbos before the Three Weeks began,³¹ "so the addition of joy in itself will break all the limitations of *golus* since 'joy breaks boundaries'—it is very favorable and appropriate to add and increase in happy opportunities in these days, (specifically) in joyous *farbrengens* after the 17th of Tammuz (during the Three Weeks), in a manner that is permitted according to *Shulchan Aruch* (such as holding a *seudas mitzvah* or the like), if, G-d forbid, *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* is still delayed another day. The benefit of this is both with regard to its component of joy, which breaks the limitations of *golus*, and additionally—and primarily—through this occasion heightening in the aspect of 'brothers who sit together' with *Ahavas Yisrael* and Jewish unity, for 'partaking together fosters closeness', and thus nullify the cause for *golus* altogether."

30) vol. 13, p. 279

31) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Balak*, in *Sefer Hasichos* 5747, vol. 2, p. 471

"Add in the realm of joy, literally," the Rebbe further explains the next day,³² "which is accomplished through gatherings of Jews generally, and more specifically when they get together for a *Chassidishe farbrengen*—as elaborated by the (Friediker) Rebbe.³³ Even during the Three Weeks—should the arrival of *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* be delayed *chas veshalom* for some minutes or hours— whenever it is permissible to be joyous within the parameters of *Shluchan Aruch*, whether at a *bris milah*, a *pidyon haben* or another occasion.

"Even within this framework, at the appropriate time and situation, within holy miens, and with proper order, the celebration can be beyond measure and limitation, as we have stated many times that Torah can accomplish this, if led by a lively, dynamic person who lives with *Toras chaim*, the 'living Torah' and within *Toras chaim* itself, with the inner aspect of Torah, which enlivens and breeds ever more life.

"And since this is required of every Jew, it is a sign that each one has the inherent power to balance both these counterpoints—keeping in mind, always, that by accomplishing this within the correct parameters, keeping to the proper setup, in a time and place sanctioned by Torah, that it will certainly be a great *simchah*, beyond all limitations, but not *chas veshalom*, with undue intoxication—and that is meant literally, without room for alternate interpretations, as we have discussed many times (the limits on drinking)." (After reciting the after-brachah, the Rebbe stood up from the table, and distributed bottles of *mashke* to those who were arranging *farbrengens*.)

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, EVE OF 17 TAMMUZ

For a fast that begins in the morning, such as this one, 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*³⁴ of *mezonos*.

NIGHT UN-FAST

On the eve of the 10th of Teves 5752, the Rebbe explains that although *Asarah B'Teves* begins at night (as is the case with all Jewish dates), the actual fast only begins at dawn. The lack of fasting on the eve of the 10th of Teves symbolizes the power that is granted at that time to reverse the negative events that the fast day commemorates. It is an auspicious time for *teshuvah* that will bring the Redemption

32) 15 Tammuz 5747, transcribed from audio.

33) In a story he told, as recorded in the appendix to *Tehillim Ohel Yosef Yitzchak*.

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

and a night of opportunity to forever nullify the fast before it begins. The Rebbe pointed out that the night stretches for a number of hours, which offers ample time for *teshuvah*.

SUNDAY, 17TH OF TAMMUZ

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

There were five events that occurred throughout history on the 17th of Tammuz: (1) The *Luchos* were broken (2) The *Korban 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*.

THE FAST

The main purpose of observing a fast day is to awaken our hearts toward the path of *teshuvah*. *Poskim* write that the fast obligates a person to examine their actions and rectify their negative deeds—refraining from eating and drinking are but a means by which to focus ourselves inward to *teshuvah*.³⁵ Those who utilize the fast day as a break in their normal schedule for trips or other banal activities make the minor aspect all-important while ignoring its essential purpose.

The Rambam writes that to truly experience the spiritual weight of the fast day, we must not occupy our time with frivolous or enjoyable activities, but feel bothered and distressed, as the *possuk* in *Eichah* states: “Of what should a living person complain? Their own sins...” The Sheloh adds that anyone who does not fast with purpose is merely torturing themselves (with gratuitous thirst and hunger). The true intention of fasting is to put mind over matter and focus on spirituality when we are without the physical constraints of feeding and hydrating the body—similar to the experience of *Olam Haba* where we will be fully occupied in enjoying the rays of shining G-dly light without distraction. On this day, we can access this spiritual delight today, with our acts of *teshuvah*, prayer, *tzedakah*—and Torah study, which is equal to them all.

EXEMPTIONS

Pregnant women, or nursing women who have difficulty fasting, and other people feeling ill, are exempt.

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

The custom is that for a *bris* which takes place on the 17th of Tammuz, the father, *mohel* and *sandek* still fast. A minor child is given the wine to drink and the *seudah* takes place that night.

³⁵) though it is not halachically acceptable to disingenuously avoid fasting with a *teshuvah*-focused day.

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

LAW OF REDEMPTION: FAST TO FEAST

All fasts will be nullified when Moshiach comes. More so, they are destined to be *yomim tovim* and days of rejoicing.

The last halachah on fasting in the *Shulchan Aruch* states: “These days will be transformed to joyous occasions in the Future Era.” The Rebbe notes³⁶ that this statement is halachically binding in the here and now as well (for what is *Shulchan Aruch* but a guide for living today?). How? Our acts of *teshuvah* and fasting effect our current circumstances to the point that they have the power to actually transform the fast day into a Yom Tov.

FASTING

The fast begins from dawn (*alos hashachar*) at **3:51 am**.³⁷

Someone who travels to a different time zone during the fast continues to fast until nightfall (*tzeis hakochovim*) in the place that they are at that time.³⁸

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.³⁹

EATING BY MISTAKE

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*,⁴⁰ 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.

Someone who is not fasting should not be given an *aliyah*. However, after the fact, a non-faster⁴¹ who is called up to the Torah and is embarrassed (and concerned of *chillul Hashem*) to decline, may continue with the *aliyah*.

³⁶ In *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 416; see fn 38.

³⁷ There are various methods of calculating sunrise. The time listed here follows the opinion that *alos hashachar* is when the angle of the rising sun is the position of 1.16 degrees from the horizon.

³⁸ If extremely weak, and fasting is causing great difficulty, there is room for leniency to break the fast at the time the fast is over in the location of origin.

³⁹ If there is specific need—such as for a halitosis sufferer, the mouth can be rinsed, but use astringent wash and lean forward so none of it is inadvertently swallowed. See www.asktherav.com #1988

⁴⁰ The halachic span of time that is based on the norm for someone consuming a half-loaf of bread.

⁴¹ This applies to someone who broke their fast by mistake as well. See www.asktherav.com #29087

Bathing and doing laundry on the fast of the 17th of Tammuz are permitted.⁴²

SHACHARIS

Selichos are said during *davening*.

Only the *chazzan* says *Aneinu*, and only 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.

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*. (*Kel Erech Apa'im* is not recited). Then the *sefer Torah* is brought out and three *aliyos* are read from the section *Vayeichal Moshe*.

The *minhag* in 770 is that when there is a *chosson*, a *bris* was 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.

INTRODUCTORY 3

The Rebbe explains⁴³: Before starting *Selichos* on the 17th of Tammuz, we headline the Three Weeks with the recitation of three *pessukim*, which can be considered the most essential aspect of the *Selichos* in general and compared to the role of the *Amidah*. The content of these three verses, and the order as well, are significant.

The first of these is not about personal accounting as would be expected when beginning supplicatory prayers, but with an outcry—one sourced in Torah—of *Al Titnu*: “And give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem praised in the land”,⁴⁴ which is a demand from Hashem to not only rebuild Yerushalayim, but not to be silent and continue to implore and beg until Yerushalayim reaches the stage of receiving accolades.

The reasoning for this is stated in the next verse we recite, *Ki imcha*: “For with You is the Source of life, in Your light we will see light.”⁴⁵ It is the belief that Hashem brings into being and continuously enlivens everything, including this *golus* (which is long and terrible), but because we know it is “with Him” and that He is “the source of life”, that we realize that eventually its inner greatness and purpose will be revealed in the Future Era, when darkness will be transformed

42) 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.halachia2go.com) and [#19897](http://www.asktherav.com)

43) *Sichas Tes-Vav Tammuz* 5742, at the end of the *farbrengen* after saying the *brachah acharonah*.

44) *Yeshayahu* 62:7

45) *Tehillim* 36:10

into light. And how will we “see the light”? Through “His light”, which is the Torah that illuminates the path of Man and which states, “give Him no rest” (and demand the *geulah*).

Only with these prefaces can the mind and heart focus, and be capable of the true, complete *teshuvah* alluded to in the third statement, *Elokeinu*: “Hashem, we are ashamed of our deeds and repentant of our sins”. The core aspect and the most timely insistence remains the first *possuk*, not remaining silent concerning the extant *churban*, which infuses the appropriate meaning into our admittance of wrongdoing that it should have the strength of a true and internally impactful return to Hashem. In fact, the very act implied by the first *possuk*—turning to Hashem and demanding the *geulah*—is the implicit action needed for complete *teshuvah*.

RECITING SELICHOS

It is appropriate to review the *Selichos* liturgy in advance, so as to understand the meaning of its less familiar sections and poetic paragraphs.

If reciting *Selichos* at a measured pace makes it difficult to keep up with the congregation, you should interrupt your own recital whenever the *minyan* reaches the *Yud-Gimmel Middos Harachamim* (i.e., *Hashem, Hashem, Keil Rachum Vechanun*, etc.), even if you are in the middle of a paragraph. Join the congregation in this recital and then resume *Selichos* from the point of interruption.⁴⁶

If reciting *Selichos* without a *minyan*, omit the *Yud-Gimmel Middos Harachamim*.

WHEN TO STAND

Preferably, you should stand when reciting *Selichos*. If this is difficult, rise, at a minimum, to recite *Keil Melech yoshev*, the *Yud-Gimmel Middos Harachamim*, and when saying *Viduy*.

The Open Aron: When the *aron* is open for special prayers, but the *sifrei Torah* remain in place, it is not an essential **requirement** to stand, though this is the common practice in order to give extra respect, and there are opinions that are *machmir*, and state it is necessary for those who can view the Torahs at this time. Practically, someone who feels weak, or the elderly, can be lenient here.⁴⁷

KRIAS HATORAH

At three points in the reading, the congregation chants the verse aloud prior to the reader: (1) “*Shuv mei’charoin...le’amecha*.” (2) “*Hashem Hashem...venakeh*.” (3) “*Vesalachta...unechaltanu*.” The reader, as well as the one getting the *aliyah*, should remain silent while the congregation recites the verses, taking care to only continue (the reader—aloud, the *oleh*—quietly) once they have concluded, so that they may hear the verses being read from the Torah itself. The Rebbe’s custom

⁴⁶ See more details and sources concerning when and how to join the *minyan* in its recital while saying *Selichos* at a different pace at [#23657](http://www.asktherav.com)

⁴⁷ See more details at [#22483](http://www.asktherav.com)

when getting this *aliyah* is to begin reciting the verses with the congregation and complete them with the reader.

TODAY'S PARSHAH

"This is not well publicized and has been applied by very few," the Rebbe says in 5748,⁴⁸ "But on the 17th of Tammuz, there 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 elsewhere⁴⁹ 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

It is preferable to *daven* Minchah earlier, finishing before *shkiah* (8:26 pm) 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*.

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

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* (*Korbanos* for Minchah) 2. *Ashrei* 3. half-*Kaddish* 4. *Vayehi binsoa* and *Krias Hatorah*, then *Maftir* and its blessings 5. *Yehalelu*, 6. half-*Kaddish* 7. *Amidah* (including *Anieinu*) and *Chazaras Hashatz* 8. *Tachanun*, the long *Avinu Malkeinu* 9. *Kaddish tiskabel* 10. *Aleinu* and *Kaddish Yasom*.

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

⁴⁸) *Sefer Hasichos*, p. 247, fn. 63

⁴⁹) in *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 20, pp. 341 ff; vol. 30, p.144 part 6; and others

LAW OF REDEMPTION: MINCHAH WITH MOSHIACH

“Today may be the day Moshiach arrives,” the Rebbe said on a fast day.⁵⁰ “In that case we won’t be saying the fast-day liturgy in Minchah, but adding happy remarks, for in the middle of the brachah of *Shema Koleinu* we are permitted to add any personal *tefillos*.”

During that same *sichah*, the Rebbe added, “When Moshiach comes today, Minchah will be prayed without a Torah reading!”⁵¹

MAARIV & BREAK-FAST

The fast ends after Maariv at **8:59 pm**.

There are various methods of calculating the time of nightfall (called *tzeit hakochavim*, 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, at the time detailed above, and then repeat the *Shema* sometime later.

TUESDAY, 19 TAMMUZ

On this date in 5640 (1880), was the *bris milah* of the Frierdiker 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 Hametzarim*, and its connection to the final *geulah*.⁵²

SEARCHING SIMCHAH

“Those days are recalled and recurring’ spiritually,” the Rebbe says in 5745,⁵³ “but we live in a physical world of action (which includes practices of mourning for *Bein Hametzarim*), so we must try to find some way to give a *heter* to properly celebrate the (Frierdiker 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 Frierdiker 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 (Frierdiker) Rebbe!⁵⁴ And therefore the celebration of the occasion is that many times greater!

50) 18 Tammuz (17 Tammuz *Nidcheh*), 5751

51) And not Shacharis? Perhaps the Rebbe spoke thus because it was Minchah time. Would we still read the Torah at Shacharis if we are no longer fasting? See Hebrew footnotes for a comprehensive discussion on these topics.

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

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

54) This year is the 146th.

“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.⁵⁵

FRIDAY, 22 TAMMUZ, EREV SHABBOS PARSHAS PINCHAS

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

Candle lighting is at **8:05 pm** (eighteen minutes before sunset).

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*.

SHABBOS PARSHAS PINCHAS, 23 TAMMUZ

Shabbos Mevarchim Menachem-Av

The entire Tehillim is recited early in the morning.

SING LIKE YOU MEAN IT!

“There are those who sing *Sheyibaneh Beis Hamikdash*,” the Rebbe remonstrated⁵⁶ at a Shabbos *farbrengen* during the Three Weeks, “and they do so with a feeble voice; after, they wipe the sweat from their brow and conclude that they have done their duty! Even throughout the year, we need to consider whether there is room for such conduct, but certainly during Shabbos of *Bein Hametzarim*, when extra care is demanded of us to avoid acts that show a lack of *simchah*, so that no one will think that we are practicing *aveilus* on Shabbos. (There are a number of stories that prove how careful we must be.)

“Therefore, an extra measure of joy is required of us today than on any other Shabbos of the year—though every Shabbos is referred to as ‘*yom simchaschem*—the day of your rejoicing’. Only once Shabbos is over, if we are, G-d forbid, not yet redeemed from *golus*, is there any place for mourning practices as prescribed by *Shulchan Aruch*. However, even then, it should not in any way interfere with the imperative for *simchah* associated with Torah learning and mitzvah observance, about which it states, ‘Hashem’s edicts are just, they bring joy to the heart.’

⁵⁵) The Rebbe referenced this again the following Shabbos, *Sichas Parshas Balak* 5745, quoted in the Hebrew section footnotes on this topic.

⁵⁶) From the *Roshei Devarim* of *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei*, 5742

"May it be Hashem's Will, that through the mitzvah-joy associated with all aspects of Torah and mitzvos, we should very soon be worthy of the everlasting joy that will betide us when these days are transformed to feasting, joy and festive days, with the true and complete redemption through *Moshiach Tzidkeinu*."

HAFTORAH

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*.⁵⁷

POWER OF 3

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 *Tishah 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 *אתפריעו* (*ispari'u*), gushes forth; all other levels of spiritual light are revealed through this extremely high level of revelation.

THE SHABBOS EFFECT

"The melancholy aspects of the Three Weeks do not apply to Shabbos," the Rebbe says on Shabbos during this time,⁵⁸ "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 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

57) 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*).

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

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.⁵⁹

TRANSFORMATION

From *Maor V'Shemesh*: Concerning what "the Holy Greats" say,⁶⁰ *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 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 HAMETZARIM 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.

⁵⁹) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1091

⁶⁰) 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.

HOW TO FARBRENG

“A unique issue occurs,” says the Rebbe in 5744,⁶¹ “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...

“When we come to the period of the Three Weeks—including Shabbos, as is highlighted by the fact that from *Bereishis* until the 17th 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 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.”

61) *Roshei Devarim* from a *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Masei*

BLESS THE MONTH

After the Torah reading, we bless the month of Av.⁶²

The *molad*⁶³ is on Friday morning at 10:42 and 5/18 of a minute. Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av is on Shabbos.

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

THE LOUDEST AMEN

“What is special about *Shabbos Mevarchim Menachem Av*?” the Rebbe asks in 5747.⁶⁴ “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 says⁶⁵: 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*?”

62) 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).

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

64) *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei*

65) *Roshei Devarim* from a *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei* 5740

WHEN SAYING “AV” BRINGS HAPPINESS

From a *sichah* in the Three Weeks, 5733⁶⁶: Some *kehillos* have a custom to make changes from their normal mode of behavior from other *Shabbosei Mevorchim* 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,⁶⁷ 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* (bitterness), 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 like. This *Shabbos Mevorchim*, 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 Mevorchim*, this *Shabbos Mevorchim* needs to have an extra dose of happiness. As the Friediker Rebbe stated, “*Shabbos Mevorchim* needs to be a joyous Shabbos!” So, in order to circumvent any suspicion, **this *Shabbos Mevorchim*** our happiness needs to be greater.

66) *Roshei Devarim Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei*

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

SHABBOS AFTERNOON

Today is a day of *farbrengen*.

When it comes to *Shabbos Mevarchim Menachem-Av*, some congregations have the custom to differentiate it from every other *Shabbos Mevarchim* of the year due to the negative events that occurred starting at the beginning of the month. Chabad, however, does not follow this custom.

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 at **9:11 pm**.

FRIDAY, 29 TAMMUZ, EREV SHABBOS PARSHAS MATOS-MASEI

Erev Rosh Chodesh Menachem 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* 5735,⁶⁸ “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...

“**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*,⁶⁹ “(which He does in the manner of

⁶⁸) Free translation of transcription from audio

⁶⁹) 5734 (in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 13, p. 278)

Av, we nevertheless find this ‘reduction’ to be limited. We don’t minimize **all** joy. Even the month of Av has joyful elements, because joy needs to be constant, as the Torah tells us: ‘Serve Hashem with joy,’ constantly; even in Av.”

UNHAPPY SECOND

The Rebbe further encourages us: The *possuk* says that Hashem has “strength and joy in His place.” In other words, wherever Hashem is, you’ll find joy. It follows, then, that to make a “dwelling place for Hashem (down below)”, we must have “strength and joy”—because only when there is both, is it “His place”. So, even during times when we are told to “reduce joy”, we must still maintain a certain sense of joy.

Why? Since the task of making a home for Hashem applies at all times, as it is the very purpose of our creation (as the Mishnah states, “I was *only* created to serve my Creator”), therefore, we have the constant obligation to fill every single moment of our lives with joy.

Yes, sometimes we must take a different approach, one that contrasts joy ... This is the *avodah* of the month of Av, to “reduce joy”, so as to remove the negativity which sent us into *golus*. But this “reduction” is secondary in our service of Hashem. So the reduction of joy remains extremely limited, for two reasons: Firstly, because in addition to it—and simultaneously—we must have the aspect of joy, and as mentioned, it must be constant, and also, the opposite of joy is not an essential aspect of our *avodah*.

This is the reason Chassidim aren’t scrupulous in the performance of the adage to reduce joy, because this temporary decrease in joy only comes second to actual *avodah*.

THEN, A PINCH

“Some very stringent people,” the Rebbe tells us,⁷³ “take issue with the fact that I am appealing (during this time of year) for joy, because doesn’t it say ‘When Av arrives we reduce our joy?’ So firstly, there are twenty-four, or even thirty-six hours left until the month of Av begins. Moreover, even during the month of Av, the directive is to **reduce** joy—which means to have less joy than in the month of Adar or less than we will have when Moshiach comes—but still, there must be joy!

“How much ‘reduction’ is necessary? We can derive a formula from here: The (Frieddiker) Rebbe once related that those who struggle to serve Hashem with joy fulfill their obligation to celebrate Simchas Torah by drinking milk (because, halachically, it can be intoxicating) and by pinching their cheek so it appears that they are laughing.

“Now, since the measure of positivity is always greater (than the negative), the requisite ‘reduction’ in joy should be a pinch on the other cheek!”

73) From a *sichah* on *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei*, 5713; in *Sichos Kodesh*, p. 354

TORAH & TZEDAKAH

In a number of *sichos*, the Rebbe quotes the well-known saying which reinterprets “reduction of joy” during Av to mean that we “reduce” the negativity of the Nine Days “with joy”—through an **increase** in *simchah*!

Obviously, this refers to joy that is halachically allowed in the Nine Days. This can be achieved through Torah and mitzvos—as it says in Tehillim,⁷⁴ “Hashem’s Orders are just, they cause the heart to rejoice”—and this includes especially *tzedakah*, the giving of which brings joy to a pauper in the most literal sense. Another avenue of permissible joy can be achieved by making public *siyumim* on every day of the Nine Days in every possible location. This joy is generated down here, to the participant in this world, and consequently, brings joy on High.

NINE DAYS’ RESTRICTIONS

TIMING

The halachic restrictions of the Nine Days begin from the eve of Rosh Chodesh Av. They are in effect starting from *shkiah* (sunset), as is the custom, and last until *chatzos* (midday) of the 10th of Av.

Within the Nine Days, there is a period of stricter mourning that applies within the week of *Tishah B’Av* itself, though it does not apply this year as *Tishah B’Av* is on Sunday.

A Jew who has an upcoming court case with a non-Jew should endeavor to push it off until Rosh Chodesh Elul, or at least until after *Tishah B’Av*, for during this time period our *mazal* is weak.

It is customary to wait until after *Tishah B’Av* to recite *Kiddush Levanah*. Since this is a period of mourning, it is not appropriate to be involved in an act that requires an added element of joy. *Chazal* tell us that *Kiddush Levanah* is akin to greeting the *Shechinah*, and the *Shechinah* resides only in joyful circumstances.⁷⁵

BUSINESS & SHOPPING

Although earlier *poskim* put certain restrictions on business, we are more lenient with regard to conducting business during this period than in previous eras, for usually what is earned nowadays is needed directly to support our families.

It is forbidden to purchase silverware and other expensive household appliances, or nice furniture, during the Nine Days. The same restriction applies to a car, washing machine/dryer or the like, if its purchase is not an immediate, pressing need.⁷⁶

⁷⁴) 199

⁷⁵) In addition, blessing the waxing moon is somewhat antithetical, as the *churban* of the *Beis Hamikdash* commemorated during this time is spiritually related to “the diminishment of the moon”, as stated in *Or Hatorah*, *Parshas Ve’eschanan*, vol. 6, p. 197.

⁷⁶) Purchasing business-related items of this caliber (like a car for commuting), is within the halachic category

Basic flatware, dishes, and other necessities are permitted, though the purchase of non-urgent items should wait until after *Tishah B'Av*. Comparison shopping (without actually purchasing anything) is also permitted. Window shopping for pleasure should be avoided.

If someone purchased a new piece of furniture prior to Rosh Chodesh Av that arrived during the Nine Days, they should not bring it into the house, or at least shouldn't use it until after *chatzos* on the 10th of Av.

New clothing and shoe purchases are not permitted during the Nine Days. This restriction applies also if they aren't significant items, and even if not buying them will be at a financial loss (such as in the case where an item is on sale), and the intention is to wear the new item only after *Tishah B'Av*.

In a case where it's an extraordinary sale that will end before *Tishah B'Av*, this particular piece of apparel will need to be purchased regardless, and it is not yet the actual week of *Tishah B'Av*, the item may be purchased—especially if it will not be available at all at a later time. But it should not be worn until after the Nine Days, and if possible, should be paid for before Rosh Chodesh.⁷⁷

There is an additional leniency to shop for items that require shipping for a relative's wedding taking place soon after *Tishah B'Av*, if there is a possibility that waiting until after the Nine Days might prevent the purchase from arriving in time.⁷⁸

Gifts may be given in the Nine Days, but not on *Tishah B'Av*. Some suggest that a very expensive gift should not be purchased in the Nine Days; its purchase should be delayed until after *Tishah B'Av*.⁷⁹

Mitzvah Articles: It is permitted to purchase new *tefillin* during the Nine Days as they are only used for a mitzvah. It is forbidden, however, to purchase a *tallis* or *tzitzis* since, despite being designated only for a mitzvah, they are considered clothing.⁸⁰

It is permitted to purchase a new yarmulke and *tzitzis* for an *upshernish* boy who turns three during the Nine Days (as mentioned earlier, all traditions associated with turning three apply on his birthday, aside from the haircut itself). However, if possible, it is proper to purchase earlier and get him accustomed to wearing a yarmulke and *tzitzis* before Rosh Chodesh.

Tishah B'Av Shoes: You may purchase non-leather shoes to wear on *Tishah B'Av* if you do not have them yet. You may even wear them for the first time on *Tishah B'Av* itself.

of limitations on general business transactions, for which, as mentioned, we are lenient.

77) There is also room for leniency when purchasing small clothing articles for children under the age of six preceding the week of *Tishah B'Av*. See www.asktherav.com #748.

78) See www.asktherav.com #10147

79) See www.asktherav.com #15828

80) If either garment tears, and you have no replacement and cannot borrow or obtain second-hand (or, if they are at hand but you are too particular to don a used garment), you may purchase and wear new to fulfill a mitzvah.

CONSTRUCTION & GARDENING

From Rosh Chodesh Av on, we limit construction that engenders joy, like those in the category of home redecoration. This includes any renovations that are not needed to make a home livable; restrictions include building extensions, additions, and any home improvements. Likewise, we do not paint our homes, put up new wallpaper, or purchase or install new carpeting. Small changes, such as hanging a painting, are allowed.

Some have the tradition of not washing the floors during the Nine Days, though it is permitted even during the week of *Tishah B'Av* itself from a strict halachic perspective. If grime and dirt have accumulated, there is no custom to be stringent, especially if it is done in honor of Shabbos. However, we do not shine floors as it is only for pleasure and not out of necessity, similar to cosmetic renovations.

Building restrictions apply even when using non-Jewish contractors and workers. However, if you contracted the work prior to Rosh Chodesh with an open date for completion after the Nine Days, the non-Jew may work during this time, even on *Tishah B'Av* itself, for they are working at that time for their own benefit.

If someone made a contract with a non-Jew to paint their home before the Nine Days, and the painter chooses to do the work during this period, it is also permitted (for the reason mentioned above). Nevertheless, it is praiseworthy, though not required, to try to offer a small compensation for the worker to wait to complete the work after *Tishah B'Av*.

A Jew whose livelihood⁸¹ is in construction is permitted to construct and renovate the home of a non-Jew during the Nine Days.

A shul or *beis midrash* may be constructed or renovated during the Nine Days without restriction. Similarly, you may construct a *ma'akeh* (a fence for a roof, which is a biblical mitzvah) during this time, even on *Tishah B'Av* itself.

A crumbling wall that might collapse may be repaired even if it poses no actual danger and fixing it immediately is only to prevent a more costly repair down the line. Even though this is construction that causes gratification, and not strictly out of necessity, it is permitted, because the main intention is to prevent monetary loss.

During the Nine Days, it is forbidden to plant trees for shade and beauty, or any type of flower or fragrant bush. Watering existing plants is permitted.

It is permitted to purchase flowers for Shabbos, especially if this is a weekly habit.

CELEBRATIONS

It is permitted to get engaged and have a *L'chaim* during the Nine Days, but you may not make a celebratory *seudah* (even on Shabbos).⁸² Only refreshments should be served.

⁸¹) What about renovations in the office? See www.askatherav.com #36712.

⁸²) It appears that it is likewise forbidden to make any other social party-*seudah* during the Nine Days.

Someone who has experienced a miracle should host a *seudas hoda'ah* (meal of thanks to Hashem) on the anniversary of the day to contemplate and share their rescue story. If the day of the miracle occurred during the Nine Days, it is still a time to recall it and feel gratitude to Hashem, but the *seudah* and celebration should be postponed until *Shabbos Nachamu* or the 15th of Av.

During the Three Weeks, it is the custom not to host a *chanukas habayis* (housewarming), since it is not an auspicious time. During the Nine Days it is halachically forbidden, even if there is no meat on the menu, as such a gathering is included in the restrictions on joyful occasions.

LAUNDRY

Doing laundry is forbidden during the Nine Days. This also applies to clothing that you don't plan on wearing until after *Tishah B'Av*. Laundering is not permitted even if you are traveling immediately after the fast.

There is room for leniency in laundering items to avert permanent damage to the clothing, like to prevent them from becoming moldy. Washing them, in this instance, isn't detracting from properly mourning the *Beis Hamikdash*.

We also do not bring clothing to the dry cleaners, despite the fact that the cleaning process is chemical and not water-based.

Bed linens, and even handkerchiefs and tablecloths, are included in the prohibition against laundering.

A Jew may not launder the clothing of a non-Jew in the week of *Tishah B'Av* (the stricter period within the Nine Days).⁸³

You may not give your clothing to a non-Jewish launderer from Rosh Chodesh and on. However, if it was handed in before Rosh Chodesh, you are not required to warn against washing them during the Nine Days. If you do not have a clean shirt for Shabbos, a non-Jew may wash it for you during the Nine Days; it is better to be careful not to do this in the home of a Jew, to prevent *maris ayin*.

It is forbidden to wash a wig during the Nine Days. If there is a real need, there is room for leniency before the week on *Tishah B'Av*. It is permitted to style and comb—even with the assistance of hair products—and trim a wig (especially for *tznius* reasons).

Adults are prohibited from laundering children's clothing, though we can follow a lenient opinion that allows this prior to the week of *Tishah B'Av*.⁸⁴ However, you may launder the clothing of young children⁸⁵ who are constantly getting dirty

83) The stricter prohibitions of this time period are not applicable this year, as *Tishah B'Av* falls on Sunday.

84) Up until *Shabbos Chazon* See www.asktherav.com #558.

85) The definition of "young child" in this context: We customarily practice these leniencies up until the age of *chinuch*, which is six years old. If an item is extremely dirty, you can rely on the opinions that are more lenient with children until the age of bar mitzvah. However, if possible, have a minor child (or a non-Jew) wash the

throughout the Nine Days. Do so discreetly and restrain from adding any other clothing to the wash.

This leniency only applies to situations when the clothing is needed for the moment. However, we may not launder clothing that will be put aside for later.

Ironing is likewise forbidden, whether garments are for immediate use or to put away for a later time.

There is a debate among *poskim* whether buffing shoes is included in clothes-washing restrictions; in honor of Shabbos, there is definitely no need to be stringent.

WEARING LAUNDERED CLOTHES

We are prohibited from wearing freshly laundered or ironed clothing during the Nine Days, even if they were laundered before Rosh Chodesh. This also applies to bedding,⁸⁶ handkerchiefs, tablecloths, and the like.

For medical reasons, such as to prevent an infection, or if not changing the sheets would cause skin irritation, and likewise in hospitals, it is permitted to use freshly laundered sheets.

If the clothing was worn even once before Rosh Chodesh, they are permitted to be worn during the Nine Days themselves.

If someone has no unsoiled clothing, they may wash them up to the week of *Tishah B'Av* (this year, until *Tishah B'Av* itself). In cases of extreme hardship, as opposed to mild discomfort, you may launder them. This applies to shirts, pants, dresses, or the like, that are so soiled that they would cause embarrassment when worn in public (especially a sweat-soaked garment). Wash only what you need at the time—even if you might later need to wash more. Scuff the freshly laundered clothes somewhat (by throwing them on a dirty floor) before wear.

UNDERCLOTHES

We are customarily more lenient with laundered underclothes and socks and can exchange them when necessary during the Nine Days. This is especially true nowadays, when everyone is particular about these things, and forgoing them would cause hardship. If you run out of clean underclothes, it is better to purchase new and scuff them somewhat by throwing them on the floor than to launder soiled items. If purchasing new is not possible, you may launder just what is needed and subsequently muss them up.⁸⁷

Children: Young children whose clothing requires washing during the Nine Days (see above) are permitted to wear freshly laundered clothing.

soiled clothing.

⁸⁶ In the case of a guest, it is permitted to make a bed with fresh sheets, as no guest is comfortable using linen that someone else has slept in. Towels at the *mikveh*, likewise.

⁸⁷ See [#10223](http://www.asktherav.com). The leniency on purchasing applies only to underclothes. You cannot shop for new clothing, but should launder as indicated above if left without clean clothes.

Freshly laundered clothing for Shabbos are permitted, like any other Shabbos (but no new clothing). Likewise, a clean tablecloth may be spread. But bed linens may not be changed until after *Tishah B'Av*.

SHABBOS CLOTHING

It is forbidden to wear Shabbos clothing during the Nine Days.⁸⁸

At a *bris*, it is customary that the *mohel*, the *sandek*, the woman who brings in the baby,⁸⁹ the parents, grandparents, and other relatives wear Shabbos clothing (if they would wear them at any other time for this relative). Likewise, at a *pidyon haben*—the parents and the *Kohen* wear Shabbos clothing. At a *seudah* that takes place on the 13th birthday itself, only the bar mitzvah boy and his parents wear Shabbos clothing.

MEAT & WINE

It is customary not to eat meat or drink wine from Rosh Chodesh until the fast, including Rosh Chodesh itself. Even though this is not a halachic prohibition (to the point that, strictly speaking, meat and wine are not proscribed even the day before the fast, except for *seudah hamafsekes*), it is said that someone who eats meat and drinks wine where the prevailing custom is not to opens themselves up to negative ramifications (as the *possuk* says, “one who breaks boundaries, snakes will bite him”⁹⁰).

A sick person (even someone mildly ill—unless it is assured that a dairy diet will do no harm), also someone who is allergic to dairy, pregnant or nursing a weak child (whose health would be compromised if the mother didn't eat meat), is permitted to eat chicken. If there is no chicken, they may eat meat. Today, when there are many meatless but healthy alternatives, it is preferable to avoid chicken or meat, unless doing so would compromise health. Additionally, by listening in to a *siyum*, they are all able to eat meat.

A woman who is within thirty days of giving birth may eat meat and drink wine, if needed. A woman who does so in these circumstances should best to avoid doing so from the 7th to the 9th of Av, but not if there are health concerns.

Someone who made a *brachah* on meat or wine by mistake should eat just a small quantity quickly so that it doesn't become a blessing in vain. This tiny bit does not qualify to add enjoyment during the Nine Days, nor is it considered to have broken the custom of avoiding these foods.

Children under six years old may eat meat during the Nine Days.

⁸⁸) For *shidduch* dating, if you have no other nice clothing available, you can be lenient and wear Shabbos (or even freshly washed) clothing.

⁸⁹) But the man who brings the baby in and out [called a *kvatter*] and other *mechubadim* (honorees) are not included in this category.

⁹⁰) Koheles 10:8

WHAT IS MEAT?

The prohibition to eat meat also includes chicken, cured meats and all dishes cooked with meat.⁹¹ You may cook pareve food in a *fleishig* pot, even if the pot was used for meat within the last twenty-four hours. You may also eat soup that contains onions cut with a *fleishig* knife.

WHAT IS WINE?

The prohibition of drinking wine includes grape juice and foods cooked with wine. Wine vinegar is permitted. Beer is also permitted, as are all other alcoholic beverages (aside from wine).

If needed for medical reasons, you can be lenient and drink wine or grape juice mixed with enough water that the taste of the wine is diluted to the point that, halachically, the *brachah* of *Hagafen* cannot be said on the drink.⁹²

We are customarily stringent not to drink the wine for *bentching* on a weekday. Instead, the wine is given to a young child who is capable of making a *brachah*, but has not yet reached the age of following the laws of mourning during the Nine Days. The child should drink a full mouthful. If there is no child present, do not *bentch* over wine. If someone has already *bentched* over a cup of wine, and there is no child present, he should place the cup aside and not drink from it.

Concerning the wine for *Havdalah*, see further, in the halachos of *motzoei Shabbos*.

SEUDAS MITZVAH

You are allowed to eat meat and drink wine (including the cup of wine from *bentching*) at a *seudas mitzvah*, like a *bris* (even if it's not on time), *pidyon haben*, *seudas bar mitzvah* (that takes place on the actual birthday of the bar mitzvah boy), and at a *siyum* of a *mesechta*.⁹³ This applies only to those who are associated with the event—those who would have attended, as a relative or friend,⁹⁴ had the event taken place at a different time of the year. This includes also the women who participate for these reasons, if it is the norm for women to attend. But someone who wants to partake of the food of the *seudas mitzvah* at home may not have wine or meat.⁹⁵ (It should be noted that there are those who do not serve meat or drink wine even at a *seudas mitzvah* during the Nine Days at all, so that the entire population can partake.)

91) If meat mistakenly falls into a cooked dish, it does not invalidate the rest of the food if it is 1/60 or less of the full volume.

92) *Shehakol* is said when wine is diluted with water that exceeds 85.7% of the mixture. A mixed drink with even less water would suffice if it can no longer be served as wine to guests. When wine is mixed with other liquids, the non-grape-derived drink should be the majority.

93) See below for the details of the laws and customs regarding *siyumei masechtos*.

94) However, those who go just to drink, and wouldn't have necessarily gone to the meal otherwise, should not partake, as this falls under the category of a *mitzvah* that results from an *aveirah*.

95) Within the week of *Tishah B'Av* itself (this year this is not relevant), only a limited *minyan* of men besides the *baalei hasimcha* and close relatives (only those close enough to be invalidated as kosher witnesses) may eat meat and drink wine.

However, the cup of wine used for the *brachos* from the *bris* is given to a child to drink, since this is before the *seudah* commences. If there is no child, the one who made the *brachah* drinks it himself, and it is not given to the baby who has just had the *bris*.

Shechitah: According to the Rema, the slaughtering knife is put away on Rosh Chodesh Av, as *shechting* is only performed during the Nine Days when it is necessary for a mitzvah, such as for a sick person, Shabbos or *milah* (or *pidyon haben*). However, nowadays, when the majority of Jews live in big cities, which always have people of poor health and women who recently gave birth, and we also need meat to be available for Shabbos, it is no longer customary to shelve the *shechitah* knife.

NAIL TRIMMING

It is permitted to cut your nails during the Nine Days, except during the week of *Tishah b'Av* itself.⁹⁶

SHOWERING/BATHING

It is forbidden to wash your entire body for pleasure, even with cold water, during the Nine Days. However, you may wash your hands, feet and face, and may shower with the following restrictions: the water cannot be hot; the showering cannot be for pleasure; and you cannot wash more than half of your body.⁹⁷

If the above protocol is not enough to remove dirt and sweat, it's permissible to wash the entire body, one part at a time. If lukewarm water doesn't do the job, it is permissible to use hot water and even soap to remove profuse sweat and an offensive body odor. Someone who is moderately sweaty but very particular, and not washing would entail great hardship, may also shower to the extent necessary. You should shower discreetly, and not at the public *mikveh*, or the like.

However, a full shower to simply cool off from the hot weather is not warranted during a period when we mourn the tragedy that has befallen the *Beis Hamikdash*. Restrict washing activity to whatever extent possible; even within the above parameters, a *yarei Shomayim* is careful not to take too many leniencies and will change their normal showering habits even to the point of slight discomfort, especially during the week of *Tishah B'Av*.

Similarly, swimming in a pool or in the sea is not permitted.⁹⁸

96) For a woman going to the *mikveh* on *motzoei Tishah B'Av*, or if someone suspects that his nails might be a *chatzitzah* for *netilas yadayim*, nail cutting is permitted even during the week of *Tishah B'Av*.

97) Water sprinklers may also be used to cool off in the Nine Days in this manner.

98) You can be lenient, if necessary, with children under six years old. However, precautions should be taken because this is a time of *sakanah*, as stated earlier in the halachos of the Three Weeks. Someone who is learning to swim for purposes related to earning a living, and began lessons before the Nine Days but has not completed the course, may go swimming in a lake even after Rosh Chodesh, since this is career-oriented and not for pleasure. Nevertheless, in both these circumstances, it is certainly best to be stringent.

It is permitted to wash, even in hot water, if needed for health—such as a sick person, pregnant woman or a woman who has just given birth.

A man who goes to the *mikveh* regularly before *davening* is permitted to go during the Nine Days.

For a mitzvah,⁹⁹ you should wash yourself as normal (with hot water and with soap). See later in the section for *erev Shabbos Chazon* concerning bathing for Shabbos.

SEWING

We may not sew or alter new clothing, or cobble shoes, in the Nine Days, although, by the strict definition of Halachah, working on old clothing is not proscribed. However, since it is customary to avoid laundering clothing, this extends to mending them as well. All this only applies to complete alterations, but it is permitted to mend old clothing with small repairs that are not done in a professional manner.

Sewing wedding clothes for the a groom and bride (or their parents¹⁰⁰) in honor of a wedding for a groom who has no children from a previous marriage¹⁰¹ is permitted during the Nine Days. On *Tishah B'Av* itself it is permitted as well, if the tailor is not Jewish.

A Jewish tailor or cobbler may not create new apparel for others, whether commissioned or free. Even if the work is for a non-Jew, it is forbidden (because of how it appears to the common observer), unless it's public knowledge that the work is for non-Jews. If the Jew needs the work to pay for basic necessities such as food, he is permitted even if it's not public knowledge that it's for a non-Jew. There are leniencies that may be applied in this case, even for a Jew, if the work was commissioned before Rosh Chodesh.

There are leniencies for alterations commissioned via a non-Jewish tailor if the clothing was handed in before Rosh Chodesh and ordered to be ready for after the fast. But it is best to avoid this situation when possible.

Weaving: Traditionally, women avoid warping their looms (tying the foundational threads) on account of mourning at this time when the *even hashesiya* (the foundation stone of the world, which lived in the Holy of Holies

99) This applies to a woman who needs to use the *mikveh*—she prepares herself as normal with hot water and then immerses. Even if she is visiting the *mikveh* on *motzoei Tishah B'Av*, she may still wash herself on *erev Tishah B'Av* (this year, she does so on Friday, 8 Av), and then complete her preparations after the fast is over. (In this case, she should be careful of *chatzitzah* from the time she finishes bathing—like not walking barefoot so that dirt and other substances don't stick to her soles.)

The limitations on bathing are also suspended if she must make a *hefsek taharah* during the Nine Days; she may wash the prescribed areas as normal.

100) But this does not include other relatives.

101) In halachic sources (and at times and in places where polygamy is legal) this dispensation also does not apply to marriages where the groom has children from his other wife.

in the *Beis Hamikdash*) was nullified.¹⁰² Other similar practices in cloth-making are also restricted, such as knitting and crocheting. Spinning thread is permitted as it isn't related to weaving. Weaving with twigs (caning) or lanyard¹⁰³ are also allowed, because they are not related to clothing fabrication at all.

SIYUM SPIKE

The Rebbe says¹⁰⁴: Please publicize everywhere possible and inspire others about the *minhag* of having *siyumim* on each of the Nine Days¹⁰⁵ in order to add in the joy of Torah in a permissible manner. In this way, we will nullify those matters that are contrary to joy.

Since the effects of the 9th of Av last until the 15th of Av it is suggested that, should Moshiach be, G-d forbid, delayed, the *siyumim* should continue during the remaining days until—and including—the 15th of Av.

“Through arranging a ‘completion’ (*siyum*) in Torah,” the Rebbe explains,¹⁰⁶ “we cause a ‘completion’ within all other matters in the world, including and most importantly, the completion of exile. In fact, the appropriate term truly is the **completion** of exile and not its nullification, for we are referring to the (positive) conclusion and completeness of the Exile itself, which is wrought by drawing the א (Alef—i.e., Hashem, the Master [*Aluf*] of the Universe) into exile. We thus transform exile (*golah*—גולה) into redemption (*geulah*—גאולה).”

SIYUM PARTICIPANTS

We should expend effort to ensure that the *siyumim* will draw a great attendance. Both men and women should attend these *siyumim*—seated separately, of course—as well as children.

Customarily, everyone gathers around the person conducting the *siyum* before he has recited the *siyum* of the *mesechta*, and he completes it in their presence. Everyone listens and joins in his *siyum*, and then has a *seudah*.

TZEDAKAH & FARBRENGEN

The *siyum* should be associated with the giving of *tzedakah*. On Shabbos, give spiritual *tzedakah* (forms of lovingkindness that are permitted), and then after Shabbos, give physical *tzedakah* as well.¹⁰⁷

102) Girls learning to sew, weave, knit, or crochet should not continue their lessons during the Nine Days. Summer camps should also restrict these activities. However, for health reasons, i.e., an ill woman who embroiders (or needlepoints, or similar) to calm her nerves, it is allowed even during the Nine Days.

103) also called “scoubidou” or “boondoggle”

104) *Sichas Parshas Devarim*, 5751; in *Hisvaduyos* p. 96

105) “and also regarding the *siyum* of the Rambam that will take place during this time this year (in 5751)”

106) *Sichas 5 Menachem Av*, 5748. In *Hisvaduyos* p. 108

107) A hand-written note from the Rebbe states: “Enjoin Anash who participate in the *siyumim*, that every *siyum* conclude with an announcement that calls to (increase in) giving *tzedakah*—in addition to earlier suggestion that every *siyum* conclude with words on the theme of *Ahavas Yisrael*.”

It is good to combine the *siyum* (where appropriate) with a *seudah* and *farbrengen*. The Rebbe Rashab had the *minhag* to “make *siyumim*” during the Nine Days, despite the fact that he wouldn’t have a *seudah* afterward with meat and wine.

SIYUM MENU

It is permitted to eat meat and drink wine at the *seudah* of a *siyum*, if the attendees would have taken part out of friendship had this *siyum* taken place any other time.¹⁰⁸

There are those who practice, as did the Rebbe Rashab, not to eat meat or drink wine during the Nine Days, even when participating in a *siyum*. This is to preclude the need to decide from among the various and conflicting halachic opinions regarding the particular types of *siyumim*, and whether they qualify for a *seudas mitzvah* with wine and meat that override the mourning practices of the Nine Days. Among these questions are: Does the allowance apply to a *siyum* that is being made especially for the Nine Days, and if not for the desire for a *fleishig*-dining dispensation, would have been held earlier or later? Who can enjoy this meal—anyone who participates, or only those who would show up for this learner’s *siyum* on any other day of the year? What is the normal practice of the *siyum*-maker—does he generally have a meal following completion of a *mesechta* and is it enough if it is usually a light meal, or does he specifically have to have a tradition of serving wine and meat? What if the person has no history to bank on, since he only makes *siyumim* during the Nine Days altogether? While the halachic consensus is that meat and wine are allowed in most circumstances, many choose to serve only fish and beverages other than wine at these events.

IN PERSON

According to the letter of the law, joining a *siyum* via radio, telephone, or other virtual means is considered taking part, even for the intent of being able to eat meat and drinking wine, if this participant would have joined during another time out of friendship to the person making the *siyum*. However, it is preferable to join in person.

If someone walks into a *seudah* that has followed a *siyum*, is he considered a participant regarding eating meat and drinking wine? Or, the opposite situation: if someone listened in on the *siyum* but did not partake in the *seudah*, may they eat meat later at home? In practice, we can be lenient in these matters during the Nine Days¹⁰⁹ and even having partaken of only one aspect suffices.

¹⁰⁸) See above in the section of halachos of eating meat and drinking wine. In the week of *Tishah B'Av* itself, it is permissible to eat meat only with a *minyanyan* of men besides relatives who are related closely enough to be invalidated as kosher witnesses.

¹⁰⁹) Not so on *erev Pesach*. A firstborn must participate in the *siyum* in order to have dispensation to break his fast.

SIYUM CRITERIA

Someone who completed a *mesechta* from beginning to end previously, but hasn't yet conducted a *siyum* (with the associated practices, including recitation of “*Hadran...*”), it is proper to make a celebration—but this is not considered an actual *siyum* and eating meat and drinking wine are not permitted.

A *siyum* on a *mesechta* of Mishnayos (preferably learned with at least one commentary, such as the Bartenura) qualifies as a celebration worthy of serving meat at the accompanying meal. Nevertheless, it is better to conduct the *siyum* on a *mesechta* (and not just a *perek*) of Gemara, so that the *siyum* satisfies all halachic criteria, or on one complete book in the Rambam's *Mishneh Torah*, or the like.¹¹⁰

Someone who took part in a Gemara shiur (even if he listened to a pre-recorded class) and completed an entire *mesechta* may conduct a *siyum*, even though he has not learned the *mesechta* inside. This is because the main point of studying the Oral Torah is comprehension, and not the wording.

Our custom is that following a *siyum* we say *Kaddish D'rabanan* and not the *Kaddish* that is printed at the end of a *mesechta*.

FRIDAY NIGHT, ROSH CHODESH MENACHEM AV, SHABBOS CHAZAK

A DAY FOR MOSHIACH

“Every Rosh Chodesh the spark of Moshiach, also known as the *yechidah* in every Jew's soul (which is a spark of the general *Yechidah*—the soul of Moshiach) is revealed.

The revelation of this spark resonates and causes a rejuvenation in the entire being of every Jew, so that everything they do is permeated with the level of *Yechidah*, and, most importantly, through this we cause the revelation and arrival of Moshiach in the most literal sense—that a king from the house of David (arises, one who is) a soul in body etc.”¹¹¹

Today is the *yahrtzeit* of Aharon Hakohen.¹¹²

GROWING WITH THE MOON

“In some respects, Rosh Chodesh is considered a Yom Tov,” the Rebbe says,¹¹³ “as it is the greatest and most special day of the month. In addition, Rosh Chodesh is the root and source, and therefore contains, all the days of the month.

¹¹⁰) See www.asktherav.com #5039

¹¹¹) *Sichah of Parshas Toldos* 5752

¹¹²) As described in this week's *parshah*, Bamidbar 33:38. Regarding today's significance, see *Sichas Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av* 5735, 5741 and 5751; *Shabbos Mevorchim Menachem Av* 5739, among others.

¹¹³) From a *sichah* on Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5749

“Regarding Rosh Chodesh Av, there is extra special significance to the ‘Yom Tov’ as this fifth month includes the ‘fifth fast day’ (of the ones associated with the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*) that is destined to be transformed into a day of happiness, joy, and a Yom Tov, as will all the fast days. And since this fast represents the greatest descent, it’s self-understood that, after the transformation, it will represent the greatest ascent—it will be the greatest Yom Tov of them all.

“Moreover, the month of Av includes the advantageous day of the 15th of Av, a day that the Gemara calls the greatest of all *yomim tovim*. And because the greatness of the 15th of Av stems from it being the day that the moon shines to its fullest, this advantage already begins from Rosh Chodesh, the day of the *molad* (the birth of this month’s moon). In other words, the start of the moon’s ultimate perfection is from the moment it begins to wax, on Rosh Chodesh. So the advantage of the 15th of Av as the greatest Yom Tov can already be felt on Rosh Chodesh Av.”

ALL ABOUT AV

In various *sichos*, the Rebbe explains different meanings of the name “Menachem Av”.

“Av” represents Hashem’s fundamental relationship with the Jewish people, the essential love of a father (*av*, in Hebrew) to a child, coupled with the descriptor “Menachem” (comforting), so He is the Father who comes and uncovers the essential love, thereby soothing the pain of *golus*.

The idea of comfort (in contrast to other types of emoting) is that it is transformational, exchanging one extreme for another, not a steady rise or a gradual change. The word “Menachem” is also etymologically connected to “regret” (for the past), and also draws a connection to the ultimate change in our state of *golus*—Moshiach, for “His name is Menachem”, as it says in Gemara Sanhedrin. This cathartic comfort begins not only after the terrible events of this month (after *Tishah B’Av*) but already from Rosh Chodesh.

Who offers this comfort? Hashem Himself, the Parent Who is described as both “Merciful Father” and “Father of Mercy”—the very source of *rachmanus*. In the name of the month, “Menachem” precedes “Av”, comfort becoming His primary role, (and canceling out the negative aspects) to the point that in certain places when the name of the month is shortened, it is merely called “Menachem.”

Chassidus explains that “Av” represents such an elevated level of mercy that it is above all of *seder hishtalshelus* (the chain-like contraction and containment of the Divine Light, which is the process of creating the higher and nether worlds). Through the precursor of “Menachem”, this lofty mercy can fulfill its purpose and be experienced.

Another aspect of the order of the words is that it can take on the meaning that it is the “Comforting of the Father (Himself)!” Hashem, too, is affected by *golus* on a deep and essential level, for we, His children, are in a state of being a lowly and downtrodden nation. Where does His comfort come from? Through these very children, despite our being so cast down! But the power to do this also from the

Father—that notwithstanding our current situation, we contain within us His very essence (the *neshamah*).

On the other hand, in terms of the order of the words, we can view “Menachem” as the starting act, and once we’ve reached this considerable accomplishment, we top it off with “Av”, the comfort being bolstered yet more, in tune with the *possuk* from Tehillim,¹¹⁴ “Like a father’s mercy”—experiencing Hashem’s Mercy of the highest levels.

These specific *sichos* expound on this topic:

In 5730¹¹⁵: “A custom of the Jewish people is (also) Torah,” the Rebbe quotes. “So there is much significance in the fact that this month is customarily called ‘Menachem Av’, as we see from the laws of contracts and wedding *kesubos*. There are some instances where people refer to this month by the shortened term ‘Menachem’. And it is acceptable! Even according to those halachic opinions that its official name is plain ‘Av’, if a document is dated with only ‘Menachem’ it is still legitimate, for it is common enough in all Jewish communities that the name ‘Menachem’ is recognizable as referring to the month of ‘Av’.

“Now, since this practice is something that has been publicized among *Yidden*, it is clear that this is a concept that applies to *Yiddishkeit* broadly, since halachic documents and contracts affect *Yidden* specifically. So there is, for each of us, the possibility of relating to this month simply ‘Menachem’, which means comfort (and not by its more negative aspects). And as we say when we officially bless the new month (using both names), we say ‘Menachem’ before ‘Av’, and the comfort achieves a status of being the leader; it is first not only chronologically, but also in its meaning, since this (added name to the month) is connected with Torah (and Halachah), for which value is related to quality over quantity.”

In 5707¹¹⁶: The name of this month is “Av”, as is written on a *gett*, but on a *kesubah* and when we bless the new month we say “Menachem Av”. We can explain this according to what it says in Chassidus: the magnitude of a father’s love for his son is apparent when he is disciplining him (even though the son is not feeling it at the moment), which is the state of *Yidden* in *golus*. We are then likened to a divorced wife, like it says in the *Gemara Yuma*. This is why a *gett* written at this time is dated “Av” (which connotes “Father”, but the great love is hidden). However, our desire and our plea is that this love should be actually revealed. Therefore when we make a blessing on the month, and also when we write a *kesubah* that has the sole purpose to strengthen the marriage (the exact opposite of divorce) —at these times we emphasize the “Menachem” aspect of this month.

FRIDAY NIGHT

Kabbalas Shabbos is recited as usual. *Ya’aleh veyavo* is added during Maariv. If you

¹¹⁴) 103:13

¹¹⁵) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei*

¹¹⁶) *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* on *Shabbos Mevorchim Menachem Av*, recorded by the Rebbe in *Igros Kodesh*, vol 2, p. 213

made a mistake, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

In *Birchas Hamazon*, recite *Retzei* followed by *ya'aleh veyavo* and *Harachaman* for both Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh. If you forgot the above, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

If you did not don clothes to prepare them for wear during the Nine Days, you may do so on Shabbos (when there is no restriction of wearing freshly laundered clothes). On account of the prohibition of preparing for the coming weekday on Shabbos, however, you cannot try them on in a manner that your intention is obvious. For example, you can change into new garments when waking up from a nap.

SHABBOS PARSHAS MATOS-MASEI, ROSH CHODESH MENACHEM AV Shabbos Chazak

SHACHARIS

Add *ya'aleh veyavo* in Shacharis. If you forgot to recite *ya'aleh veyavo*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

During Shacharis, half *Hallel* is recited followed by *V'avraham zaken*, *Kaddish tiskabel*, *Shir shel Yom* (*Mizmor shir l'yom ha-shabbos*), *Hoshi'einu*, *Barchi nafshi*, and *Kaddish Yasom*.

HALLEL, HOW?

On a Rosh Chodesh Av, the Rebbe says¹¹⁷: (Today) Rosh Chodesh Av, we say *Hallel*. *Hallel* is connected with revelation, as the Alter Rebbe explains in *Likkutei Torah*¹¹⁸ that the word *Hallel* is etymologically related to the *possuk* from *Iyov*, “*B’hilo neiro*—(Hashem) lit His candle”, the concept of “light”, revelation. Now, seemingly, this revelation of Hashem’s light and the events of the month of Av contradict each other. Nevertheless, we do say *Hallel* on this Rosh Chodesh, same as on every other one, to bring these two opposing ideas together. We can transform the darkness of the negative aspects of this month themselves to become light and revelation. We know this from the *possuk* in *Koheles*,¹¹⁹ “Wisdom is greater than foolishness, just like light is greater than darkness”—and an alternate reading is: “...the light that emerges from within the darkness is greater.” This transformation is possible on the level, as it says in *Tehillim*,¹²⁰ “Night will be lit up like the day”, and all darkness, *golus*, and negativity will be gone forever.

More in this vein, from 5741: Rosh Chodesh comes with lots of joy, for it is a day on which we recite *Hallel*. *Hallel* is recited only on a day of great happiness, a special

117) From a *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei* 5737

118) *Parshas Tzav* 14:4.

119) 2:13

120) 139:12

time of celebration, as we can see from the Gemara concerning the ill-advised conduct of a person who says it every day—the daily grind is not *Hallel*-worthy.

However, when such an opportunity of joy does arise, and we fail to say *Hallel*, that too is inappropriate—as the Gemara also says regarding King Chizkiyahu, who was punished because he did not properly praise Hashem for the miracles wrought upon him. The same applies to today, Rosh Chodesh Av. Not only is Rosh Chodesh not a regular workday, it is a day we say *Hallel*, a special time of joy!

This is actually a novel idea, surprising, as we find ourselves in the time of *Bein Hametzarim*, and on the first of the (even more difficult) Nine Days. And nevertheless, we say *Hallel*, an act of celebration and joy!

KRIAS HATORAH

Two *sifrei Torah* are used today. *Parshas Matos-Masei* is read from the first Torah (in seven *aliyos*), after which the second *sefer Torah* is placed on the *bimah* alongside the first. We may not remove the first *sefer Torah* until the second *sefer Torah* is placed on the *bimah*, so that the *bimah* should not be vacant from a mitzvah. *Chatzi Kaddish* is recited, then *Hagbah* (lifting the Torah) and *gelilah* (wrapping the Torah) are performed on the first Torah. *Maftir* is read from the second *sefer Torah*. It is the reading for Rosh Chodesh (*Uv'yom hashabbos.. u'verashei chadsheichem*). The second Torah is raised and wrapped.

During today's Torah reading, it is customary to rise for the reading of the final verse in the book of *Bamidbar*, after which the entire congregation (men, women, and children) shouts loudly and joyfully—*Chazak, chazak, venischazeik!* This call symbolizes the strength of the Jewish people in all matters of Torah—with the additional strength of a *chazakah*.

The one who is called to the Torah for the seventh *aliyah* should join the rest of the congregation in proclaiming *Chazak*. This is not considered an interruption in the reading, because it is considered part of the final verse's reading process.

TRIPLE POWER

In a number of *sichos*, the Rebbe explains the connection between *Shabbos Chazak* and *Bein Hametzarim*, especially the (more powerful) *chazak* that results from completing the fourth book of Torah/ (Being that the fifth is called *Mishnah Torah*—a review by Moshe himself of the four Divine books that come before it, and is therefore of a distinct category, concluding *Bamidbar* is akin to completing Torah entirely.) It is a result of the steepest of descents that occur during the Three Weeks that calls forth Torah's greatest possible boost, **a tripled strength**—*chazak, chazak, venischazeik!*—the announcement of which is an implication of the everlasting power of the (imminent) building of the third *Beis Hamikdash* precipitated by our third redemption from exile.

Haftorah: It is the Chabad *minhag* to recite the second *Haftorah* of the Three Weeks of *Shimu* and *Im Tashuv* (Yirmiyahu 2:4-28 & 4:1,2), followed by the first

and last *pessukim* of the Shabbos Rosh Chodesh *Haftorah*.¹²¹

Av harachamim is not recited before Musaf.

MUSAF

During Musaf, the section for Shabbos Rosh Chodesh is read instead. It begins *Ata yatzarta* and ends *mekadeish hasohabbos v'Yisrael veroshei chadashim*.

Someone who inadvertently concluded the blessing with the regular phrase, *mekadeish hashabbos*, has fulfilled their obligation. If you made other mistakes in Musaf, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

CREATION & THE NATION

“We are taught in *sefarim*,” the Rebbe says at a *farbrengen* on Shabbos Rosh Chodesh,¹²² “that on Yom Tov we say *Atah Bechartanu*—‘You chose us...’, because Yom Tov is associated with the giving of the Torah when Hashem chose us as His Nation. This is opposed to Rosh Chodesh that falls on Shabbos, when we say *Atah Yatzarta*—‘You created...’, because Shabbos commemorates Creation. Both of these occasions, Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh, precede the giving of the Torah; Rosh Chodesh was a mitzvah given to the Jewish nation while still in *Mitzrayim*. However, even though the first words of the *Amidah* prayers of Shabbos Rosh Chodesh and Yom Tov differ, they both conclude in the same vein.

“We can apply this connection to the *niggun* as well, by singing the words of *Atah Yatzarta* to the tune of *Atah Bechartanu*—let us do so now!

“And may we actually have effect, through the conflation of these two ideas, we will achieve an actual merging of them; and very soon, we will reach the time when ‘on every Rosh Chodesh and Shabbos, each living being will come and bow before Me, says Hashem.’ As the Yalkut teaches, that when Moshiach comes, traveling to the *Beis Hamikdash* will occur on every Rosh Chodesh and every Shabbos — with the coming of *Moshiach Tzidkeinu*, speedily, in our days, literally.”

The Rebbe concluded: “Everyone should look inside the *Siddur* and see what is written there.” They then sang *Atah Yatzarta* to the tune of *Atah Bechartanu*.

FARBRENGEN & HACHLATAH

It is customary for the *gabbaim* to organize a special *farbrengen* on this Shabbos beyond the ordinary Shabbos *farbrengen*. They should use this opportunity to discuss and encourage strengthening of all aspects of Torah and mitzvos.

On this Shabbos, we increase in *divrei Torah* and rejoice at having completed an

121) There are various customs with regard to the *Haftorah* when Rosh Chodesh Av falls on Shabbos. In one famous instance, the Rebbe Rashab read *Hashamayim Kisi* from Yeshayahu instead—but the Rebbe explains that at the next opportunity, the Rebbe Rashab deviated from this custom and said that he regretted his original practice (see *Yemei Bereishis*, p. 201, fn. 3); this story is mentioned in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 24, p. 337, and detailed at length in *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Masei*, Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av 5741 (*Sichos Kodesh*, pp. 283 ff.) See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 13, p. 278; *Ibid.*, vol. 35, p. 190.

122) *Shabbos Parshas Noach* 5741

entire *sefer*, making resolutions to increase in Torah study and to keep the mitzvos in the best possible way.

NOT ENOUGH!

In *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* 5750, the Rebbe cautioned: “Strong encouragement is particularly needed in this shul (770). It is necessary to clarify that the participants in the present *farbrengen* have not fulfilled their obligation of holding a special *farbrengen*. I am therefore forced to emphasize and encourage, because I do not want them to depend on me, claiming that due to the present *farbrengen* there will not be a special *farbrengen* held by the *gabboim* in honor of *Shabbos Chazak*.”

LAW OF REDEMPTION: IN THE BEIS HAMIKDASH TODAY

We offer the following *korban musaf* in the *Beis Hamikdash* in honor of Rosh Chodesh: two bulls, one ram, seven lambs as burnt-offerings, and one goat for a sin-offering. These are in addition to the *Musaf* of Shabbos and the daily *korban tamid*.

When Rosh Chodesh falls on Shabbos, the Rosh Chodesh songs accompanying the *avodah* supersede those of Shabbos to publicize that it is Rosh Chodesh.

We will all ascend to the *Beis Hamikdash* in Yerushalayim—not just three times a year, for Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkos, but also for each Shabbos and for each *Rosh Chodesh* (as it says in Navi¹²³).

ROSH CHODESH CUSTOMS

It is a mitzvah to enhance the quality of our meals on Rosh Chodesh; today we do so by adding a special dish to our Shabbos meals in its honor.

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

MINCHAH

The *Amidah* includes *ya'aleh veyavo*. (If omitted, see the chart at the end of the booklet.) We do not say *Tzidkascha* today.

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

Shabbos ends at **9:04pm**.

¹²³) Yeshayah 10:23

Even once Shabbos is over, if you haven't yet *davened* Maariv with a *minyan*,¹²⁴ you may continue to eat meat and drink wine. This is because it's still considered Shabbos for you (and you still add *Retzei* to *bentching*).

HAVDALAH

We make *Havdalah* over a cup of wine and give it to a young boy (not a girl) to drink—one who has reached the age of *chinuch* regarding brachos and *Havdalah* and had in mind to fulfill his obligation with this *Havdalah*—but has not yet reached the age of mourning over Yerushalayim. Have in mind to be *motzie* the boy with *borei pri hagafen*. He should drink at least a full mouthful (his own).

If there is no boy of this criteria, the person making *Havdalah* can drink the wine himself. In doing so, there is no need to ensure that he drinks the minimal amount (a *revi's*), but can finish the entire cup.

A woman who makes *Havdalah*, however, should preferably give the cup to a girl to drink.¹²⁵

If you made the brachah on the wine with the intention of giving it to a child to drink, but they refuse it, you must make a brachah of *borei pri hagafen* **again** to drink it yourself.

Melaveh Malkah: For the meal of *Dovid malka moshicha*, even those who customarily eat meat as part of *melaveh malkah* every *motzoei Shabbos*, should not eat meat during the Nine Days.¹²⁶

TUESDAY, 4 MENACHEM AV

On this day, Nechemia and those who went up to Eretz Yisrael with him began to build the walls of Yerushalayim.

WEDNESDAY, 5 MENACHEM AV

Today is the *yahrtzeit-hilula* of the Arizal, referred to in sources as *Arizal Hachai* (the Living). His *hilula* was in the year 5332 (1572).

In the beginning of the *Hayom Yom*, one of the Rebbe's innovations are stated as follows: "In the year 5736 (a spur is on) to add in giving *tzedakah* before *davening* (Shacharis and Minchah) in connection with the auspicious day of the 5th of Av, the passing of the Arizal, along with inspiration to add in learning the the Arizal's Torah."

¹²⁴ If you are *davening* without a *minyan*, and the majority of locals have already said Maariv, you must abstain, even if you didn't yet *daven* yourself.

¹²⁵ This is because there is a difference of halachic opinion whether a female's obligation to make *Havdalah* is equal to the male's. See www.halacha2go.com #299.

¹²⁶ Bypassing their custom during the Nine Days does not require *hataras nedarim*.

In many talks and letters, the Rebbe encourages us to learn from Arizal's conduct. This day (of his *yahrtzeit*) is an opportunity to meditate on his ways. The fact that his actions are known to the public, along with stories that even children can learn from, is proof that it is applicable to us and we are obligated to direct *Yiddishe* children in his manner.

The direction we should take is both in matters of 'justice', which refers to learning Torah, as well as charity (as in the *possuk* from Navi: "Tzion will be redeemed with justice and returned with *tzedakah*"). Especially, we must add, with even more strength, in learning the inner aspect of Torah, which is the Arizal's forte, and with regard to performing mitzvos, also according to the Arizal's teachings. Doing so will effect change not only qualitatively (through comprehending unrealized depth) but also quantitatively (by inspiring us to do more).

The same applies to the second aspect, *tzedakah*. Both these ideas (learning and giving) were especially emphasized by the Arizal. These he performed with no limitations, without a speck of miserliness—for he would place his hand in his pocket and remove a fistful of coins to give away for *tzedakah*, or to pay for a mitzvah-item, without ever counting what he'd retrieved.

These can be much enhanced with other lessons of the Arizal's life.

Simchah shel mitzvah: It is said that he merited Divine inspiration (*ruach hakodesh*) on account of his joy in fulfilling mitzvos.

Ahavas Yisrael: His commitment to love his fellow Jew—indeed, it is his directive that led to the addition of the introductory statement of "*Hareini mekabel...ve'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha*" before *tefillah*.

Hafatzas Hama'ayanos: The revelation of the inner aspect (*pnimius*) of Torah began with the Arizal. In fact this was his entire mission, which will culminate in the coming of Moshiach, as recorded in the Baal Shem Tov's letter to his brother-in-law: "I entered the chamber of Moshiach (on High) and asked, 'Master, when are you coming?'" (and he answered:) "When your wellsprings spread forth to the outside."

According to different directives over the years, it has become the custom for a group effort to learn from the Arizal's Torah, *daven*, and give *tzedakah* at his gravesite—and all over the world in honor of his *hilula*.

Law of the Redemption: Dovid's Progeny

Specific families merited to donate wood annually for use on the altar, as described in *Meseches Ta'anis*.¹²⁷ On the 5th of Menachem Av (and on the 1st of Teves), the family of Parosh, son of Yuda, donated wood. They were descendents of *Dovid Hamelech*.

FRIDAY, EREV SHABBOS PARSHAS DEVARIM, 7 MENACHEM AV

BREACH #2,448

On this date, the Rebbe explains: When the Gemara reminds us that the 7th of Av is the day that “outsiders entered the *Heichal*”, the intention is not, *chas v’shalom*, to bring us pain and anguish. The *Chachamim* would be extra careful to avoid causing such a reaction with regard to small details, so how much more so is this true of a national tragedy, one that, when we take into account that there is a (spiritual) recurrence of the event every anniversary, the outsiders have infiltrated over 1900 times!

What the Gemara does intend is to fire us up in redoubling our efforts, through our service of Hashem, to bring the *geulah* and the rebuilding of the third *Beis Hamikdash* that much quicker. This is, in addition to the special efforts that are engendered by having come through the Three Weeks, and subsequent to that, the more concentrated effort that ensued when we reached the more serious period of the Nine Days, starting from Rosh Chodesh Av, which intensifies even more the closer we get to *Tishah B’Av*... until we reach the 7th of Av, the day that the outsiders breached the *Beis Hamikdash* and entered its holy chamber.

It states in the Midrash concerning the phenomenon of the *Churban*, that “*Ari* (a lion, referring to Nevuchadnezzar, who is compared to a lion in Navi Yirmiyahu) rose up and destroyed (the *Beis Hamikdash*, which is called, in the Navi Yeshayahu) *Ariel*, in order that (one day) the *Ari* (Hashem, Who is compared to a lion in the Navi Amos) will come and rebuild *Ariel*.”

The lesson regarding (the general events) of the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* is applied also to the event of this particular day: At the times when we recall the tragedies “for these days recur and are remembered every year”¹²⁸ and we realize that another year has gone by; another day, and yet an additional day is gone, and still “we have not merited (the *geulah*)”, and this day that has passed is not just a regular day in *golus*, but it is a day on which some particular terrible event occurred—in this case, the 7th of Av, when “outsiders breached the *Heichal*”, we must recognize that this is, to quote the Midrash, “**in order that**” *Yidden* should be given an extra boost of strength and reinforcement to make a deep, personal remonstrance from the depths of the heart that we’ve had enough! It is past time for the actual fulfillment of the promise that the “*Ari* (Hashem) will rebuild *Ariel*”, the construction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, with the true and complete Redemption through the coming (the son of) Dovid, *Melech Hamoshiach*!

In commemoration of the breach, there are a number of restrictions that apply (or intensify) from the 7th of Av until *Tishah B’Av*, some which have already been noted.¹²⁹

¹²⁸) Megillah 9:28

¹²⁹) These include: A woman within thirty days of giving birth, and someone who is not seriously ill, should start to avoid meat and wine if it has no negative health impact. Among the communities who do not have the custom of refraining from meat and wine from Rosh Chodesh Av, some avoid it starting from the 7th of Av.

SHABBOS PREPS

Shnayim mikra is recited for this week's *parshah*, *Parshas Devarim*. Men use the *mikveh*, as is customary every *erev Shabbos*.

Exchange your weekday attire for Shabbos clothes, as is customary on every *Shabbos Chazon*. You may dress for Shabbos at any time past *chatzos* (midday at **1:01 pm**), at the time you would change on any *erev Shabbos*. The same applies to setting the Shabbos table with a clean tablecloth. There is no need to wait until right before Shabbos.

You may shower with hot water and soap in honor of Shabbos and clip your fingernails.

FLEISHIGS

To adjust seasoning, as much is necessary, you may taste *fleishig* Shabbos dishes by swishing the food in your mouth, without swallowing.

You may also feed young children *fleishigs* within an hour or two of Shabbos even if they are above the age of *chinuch* (six years old), if they are accustomed to having a “dinner hour” on a long *erev Shabbos* and not waiting until the post-Maariv meal late at night.

Light candles today at **7:52 pm** (eighteen minutes before sunset).

Note: All halachic times in this guide are for Crown Heights **only**. Remember to check your local times for Shabbos (midday, earliest Minchah, sunset and the conclusion of Shabbos) before Shabbos begins.

SHABBOS PARSHAS DEVARIM, 8 MENACHEM AV, SHABBOS CHAZON

SHABBOS CHAZON

It is from the *Haftorah* that this Shabbos gets its name: *Shabbos Chazon*, and it means “Shabbos of Vision”. The inner meaning of what we behold on this Shabbos is explained with the well-known statement of Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, quoted by Rabbi Hillel of Paritch, that on *Shabbos Chazon*, “each and every Jewish person is shown the future *Beis Hamikdash* from afar.”

Reb Levi Yitzchok explains this with the following parable: A father had a precious

Some have the custom of avoiding balsamic vinegars from this date on, even though it is not included in the general restriction of wine in the Nine Days until now. Those who follow this *minhag* should avoid using them in their *pareve* dishes prepared for *Shabbos Chazon* this year, when the 7th of Av is Sunday, if they intend to eat them later in the week.

Of those who partake of meat and wine at *siyumim* during the Nine Days, many have the custom of refraining from doing so from the 7th of Av onward.

With regard to construction—of the type that is for necessity and therefore permitted during the Nine Days—one should be stringent to stop renovating from the 7th until the 9th of Av.

garment made for his beloved son. The father then gave this garment to his son to wear, but the son was careless and eventually caused the garment to be torn to shreds.

The father then made his son a second such garment, which the son soon brought to the same tattered state.

What did the father do then? He made a third garment but did not give it to his son to wear; he instead concealed the garment, and only at specific intervals he would display it to his son—telling him that should he conduct himself correctly, he will be allowed to wear this wonderful garment...

The reason for this vision is to arouse a stirring for the third *Beis Hamikdash* within each of us. That, in turn, causes a closer and deeper adherence to Torah and mitzvos, and an awareness that doing so causes Hashem to physically grant us the future *Beis Hamikdash* all the sooner.

In many *sichos*, the Rebbe explains deeper meanings of this vision. The Rebbe also encourages us to publicize this teaching of Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev in his name.¹³⁰

The Rebbe also says that someone who claims (or is under the impression) that they do not see these visions should be aware that it is merely due to the concealment caused by their *yetzer hara*, or similar, which does not alter the true reality that they are shown it. This is because the *mazal* of a Jew's *neshamah* (i.e., the root of the soul that remains in the upper realms) sees this vision, and influence from the *mazal* then flows into the part of the soul that resides within the body, affecting the *neshamah* that is inside and even the body itself!

KABBALAS SHABBOS

We sing *Lecha Dodi* in the manner of every other Shabbos during the year—and even with added *simchah*.¹³¹

SHACHARIS

Men who are accustomed to visiting the *mikveh* each Shabbos morning may do so on this Shabbos.

A mnemonic device for the order of the *parshios* at this time is *Tzumu V'Tzulu*:

130) Parshas Devarim 5749: The teaching and parable of Reb Levi Yitzchak is brought in the teachings of Reb Hillel of Paritch, who passed away on the 11th of Menachem Av 5624.

Parshas Devarim 5748: The very act of publicizing a teaching in the name of its original author is itself bound with the Redemption – for “All who state a matter in the name of its author brings redemption to the world.”

This was revealed specifically through Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (see Likkutei Sichos, vol. 9, p. 30) whose theme was to affect the redemption of the Jews from both their individual exiles and also from their general exile. This is even alluded to in his name “Levi Yitzchak”... (Parshas Devarim 5749). Much of his commentary deals with revealing the inner goodness that is to be found within words of rebuke.

131) As usual: See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos* 5714 (*Sichos Kodesh*, pp. 363 ff). With added joy: See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei* 5733. Excerpts of both *sichos* appear under the entry for *Shabbos Mevorchim Menachem Av*.

“Fast and (then) pray”, so *Tishah B’Av* precedes *Parshas V’eschanan* (“And I beseeched Hashem...”) each year. This is apropos for reading *Parshas Devarim*, which is the start of Moshe’s rebuke, before *Tishah B’Av*, and that topic coinciding with the *Haftorah* of *Chazon*, the *navi* Yeshayahu’s rebuke concerning the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

According to *Sefer Haminhagim*, the *Kohen’s aliyah* should stop one *possuk* earlier than indicated, so that the second *aliyah* should not begin with the word “*Eichah*” (the same opening word to the *megillah* of mourning the *Churban* read on *Tishah B’Av*). However, for quite a few years, this has not been the practice in 770.

EICHAH 2.0

The Rebbe explains¹³²: In the future time of Moshiach there will be a transformation of the *Eichah* of the second *aliyah* of *Parshas Devarim*. Moshe *Rabbeinu*’s complaint of “*Eichah*—Oy! How can I alone carry (your burdens)?” will become instead, an appreciation: Moshe (who is our first and last redeemer) will look at the multitudes of his nation, including those from all previous generations who return with the Revival of the Dead, and exclaim, “Wow! Look how I alone carry...”

The *Maftir* (and *Haftorah*) is dignified with the reading by the Rav or another important leader of the community. The tune of the *Haftorah* is the same as the rest of the year.

WHAT SINS?

On a few occasions, the Rebbe quotes Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev in reinterpreting the verses of this *Haftorah* (not as rebuke but) in a favorable light. For example, the *possuk*, *am keved avan*, “a nation whose sins are heavy” would instead read: “a nation for whom (even the concept of) sinning is difficult”—because they do not have the temperament or scope for it, it is a challenge to understand the concept of sin, even concerning one errant thought.

Av Harachamim is recited after reading the Torah.

The Nine-Day *siyum* initiative includes Shabbos as well. The *siyum* should then be celebrated with a festive meal.

SEUDAH

It is a *minhag* on *erev Tishah B’Av*, even when it is a weekday, to wash for an afternoon meal before *Minchah* and to add special dishes to this meal as well (this would certainly apply when it’s the Shabbos *seudah*).¹³³

¹³²) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of Shabbos *Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei*, 5743

¹³³) From the *Rema*—so we fast well. The *Magen Avraham* writes an additional reason: During the time of the second *Beis Hamikdash*, this afternoon was considered a *Yom Tov*, and a time for *karbonos* and feasting. (Others source this *minhag* as a celebration of Moshiach’s birth on *Tishah B’Av*.) Even though the second *Beis Hamikdash* was subsequently destroyed again this custom endured, to remind us that very soon we too will have these days transformed to happiness and joy. (See Hebrew footnotes for an in-depth discussion of why we perpetuate this *minhag* when *erev Tishah B’Av* or *Tishah B’Av* fall on Shabbos.)

SHABBOS AFTERNOON LEARNING

There are differing opinions regarding Torah study on *Shabbos* that is *erev Tishah B'Av*. After *chatzos* (midday) at **1:01 pm**, it is proper to study only those topics that are permitted on *Tishah B'Av*.¹³⁴ Make an effort to complete your regular daily studies such as *Chitas* and *Rambam* before *chatzos*. If you failed to complete them before that time, you may do so anytime before *shkiah* (sunset). Similarly, you may complete *shnayim mikra* until *shkiah*, and hold regularly scheduled public classes and *farbrengens*.

Regarding learning *Mishnayos* before *Kaddish* by those in their year of mourning, the Rebbe once issued a letter supporting their recital as usual on this *Shabbos*.

The Rebbe Rashab would regularly recite a *maamar* on *Shabbos*. One year, on a *Tishah B'Av nidcheh*, he still said a *maamar* on Friday night (as usual). Review of the *maamar* took place after the *seudah hamafsekes* and lasted into the nighttime hours.

We do not take strolls for pleasure on this *Shabbos*.

MINCHAH

Minchah is scheduled earlier than on a regular *Shabbos* in order to leave adequate time for the *seudah hamafsekes*. Earliest Mincha is at **1:38 pm**.

Omit *Tzidkasecha Tzedek* during Minchah.

The Rebbe stated that he is declining to issue a directive in regard to saying *Pirkei Avos*, usually recited after Minchah on *Shabbos* at this time of the year. It seems that *Anash* generally avoids reciting it on this *Shabbos*.¹³⁵

SEUDAH HAMAFASEKES

A *seudah hamafsekes* is eaten in the afternoon, prior to the fast, even though it is *Shabbos*. It is also customary to increase your intake during the first meal (even during the weekday, and certainly at the *Shabbos seudah*).

During the *seudah hamafsekes*, eat whatever you desire, including meat and wine; you may even prepare a “royal feast,” in a way that exceeds the repast of every other *Shabbos*.

Do **not** eat the customary egg and ashes or sit on low chairs. Recite *Birchas Hamazon* with a *zimun*.

It is brought in *sefarim* to avoid eating licorice root (the naturally growing vegetable, not the artificially flavored candy) on *erev Tishah B'Av*. Since it leaves a

¹³⁴) See details about what is permitted or what is not below in the laws of *Tishah B'Av*.

¹³⁵) Someone who followed the opinion to recite *perek* this week (Chapter 3), repeats it next *Shabbos* regardless.

sweet residue in the mouth, a person will continue to ingest it during the fast when they swallow their saliva.

If you take pills designed to help you fast easily, there is room to be lenient to do so on this Shabbos. However, it is best to premix them into food before Shabbos and then eat that dish before the onset of the fast.

Try to avoid explicitly stating that you are eating in order to have the strength to fast the next day.

The general rules of a *seudah hamafsekes* require you stipulate prior to *bentching* your intention to eat or drink after the conclusion of the meal, before the onset of the fast. On Shabbos, however, this requirement does not apply and you may eat or drink until *shkiah* regardless.

Stop eating or drinking **before shkiah** (sunset) at **8:09 pm**. The laws of *Tishah B'Av* that prohibit eating, drinking and washing hands apply from *shkiah*.¹³⁶ You should make people aware of this fact, so that no one will assume they can continue in these activities until the conclusion of Shabbos (at nightfall).

Do not remove your leather footwear until after the conclusion of Shabbos (**8:56 pm**). Likewise, do not sit on a low stool until after the conclusion of Shabbos. Nor should you prepare or arrange the books of *Kinos* or non-leather footwear before the conclusion of Shabbos. Our custom is to continue wearing our Shabbos clothes until getting home after *Eichah*.

If you forgot to *bentch*, you may do so even after nightfall—and you may wash *mayim acharonim* as usual. Say *Retzei*, but not *Nachem* (even if the fast has already begun).

Shabbos ends at **8:56 pm**.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, 9 MENACHEM AV—TISHAH B'AV

May this day be transformed to a day of happiness and joy—"True joy will only come on Tishah B'Av"¹³⁷

Five events of national tragedy occurred on *Tishah B'Av*: (1) The *Bnei Yisrael* were banned from entering Eretz Yisrael, and forty years of wandering the desert commenced. (2) The first *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed by the Babylonian king Nevuchadnezzar. (3) The second *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed by the Roman general Titus. (4) The stronghold of Beitar fell at the hands of the Romans, and the Jewish leader Ben Kuziva (who was presumed Moshiach), and tens of thousands of

¹³⁶) As do *harchakos* for married couples.

¹³⁷) Commentary on Tehillim 137: "Currently, it is a time of mourning, but in the future, Hashem will turn it into a Yom Tov, as it says in *Navi Yirmiyahu*." The *Kedushas Levi* (and others) on the saying of *Chazal*: One who mourns Yerushalayim will merit (*zocheh*) to see it in its joy". The term *zocheh* can also mean to clarify (remove impurities)—with the right attitude we can see the joy even now; some level of the future happiness can be experienced as we anticipate the *geulah*.

the Jews taking refuge there, were massacred. (5) The site of the *Beis Hamikdash* was razed by the *rasha* Tinus-Rufus, in fulfillment of the words of the *navi*,¹³⁸ “*Tzion* will be plowed like a field.”

In numerous sources, starting with the famous *navi*,¹³⁹ “the fast of the fifth month will be transformed to a day of joy,” we learn that not only will *Tishah B’Av* cease to be a fast day, it will become a great Yom Tov—greater than all the festivals established until now, and the greatest among the other fasts that will be converted to *yomim tovim* as well.

JOY, TODAY!

The Rebbe writes: There is a well-known Chassidic *vort* concerning the *possuk*, “Serve Hashem with joy”—that it applies even on *Tishah B’Av* (may it be immediately transformed to happiness and joy with Moshiach’s arrival). This means, that when a person fasts and says *Kinos*, it is also done with a joyful attitude, that of, “How lucky I am that I have the opportunity to fulfill the instructions of the King of all kings, Hashem.” As the Rambam rules at the end of the *Hilchos Lulav*, that we should distance ourselves from a person who eschews joy. And of one who actively pursues it (he says): This is a high level of service of Hashem. (See the details there.¹⁴⁰)

BIRTH OF REDEMPTION

The Talmud Yerushalmi states that on the day of *Tishah B’Av*, when the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, *Melech Hamoshiach* was born. Since on the day of a birthday a person’s *mazal* is predominant, it follows that this is an especially propitious time for salvation and redemption. This idea has halachic ramifications, as we find in the writings of Rabbi Chaim Vital (in the name of the Arizal): “This is the reason we say *Nachem* in the *Amidah* of Minchah...because at the time of Minchah on *Tishah B’Av* Moshiach was born, and he is called Menachem.”

The Rebbe has also suggested that it is on the strength of this event (Moshiach’s birth) that *Tishah B’Av* (even now in *golus*) goes by the term “*Mo’ed*”.

In *sefarim* it is mentioned that the days of *Bein Hametzarim*, between the 17th of Tammuz and *Tishah B’Av*, parallel the days between Rosh Hashanah and Hoshanah Rabba, and *Tishah B’Av* is like Shemini Atzeres (and Simchas Torah). We also find that the first nine days of the month of Av (the Nine Days) are directly aligned with all the days of Sukkos, and *Tishah B’Av* is Simchas Torah itself.

The entire time of *Tishah B’Av* should be focused on our mourning of the *Churban* without distraction. “One who mourns Yerushalayim will merit to see its joy” say

138) Michah 3:12

139) Zechariah 8:19

140) Chapter 8, Halachah 15 (translated by Rabbi E. Touger, published by *Moznaim*): The happiness with which a person should rejoice in the fulfillment of the mitzvos and the love of G-d who commanded them is a great service. Whoever holds himself back from this rejoicing is worthy of retribution, as [Devarim 28:47] states: “...because you did not serve God, your Lord, with happiness and a glad heart.”

Chazal, as it says in the *possuk* in *navi*,¹⁴¹ “Rejoice with her... all who mourned her.” At the same time, however, we are forbidden to become depressed, *chas v’shalom*, for we are enjoined to “serve Hashem with joy”¹⁴² at all times.

A CHOSSID SEES

“We witnessed one of your great *Chassidim* wailing on Simchas Torah and singing on *Tishah B’Av*” a group of Lithuanian Jews complained to the Tzemach Tzedek (also adding a disclaimer about why their report should not be considered *lashon hara*). The Rebbe answered them: “For a *Chossid*, the *niggun* is not just about joy, nor is the crying on account of depression...on *Tishah B’Av*, when a *Chossid* sees the devastation of the *Churban* fulfilled, he also experiences ‘in every difficulty there is gain’¹⁴³ and his firm belief in the fulfillment of the promises of the *geulah* causes him to sing a *niggun* to ‘delight in Hashem’”¹⁴⁴

THE FAST

The main purpose of observing a fast day is to awaken our hearts toward the path of *teshuvah*. *Poskim* write that the fast obligates a person to examine their actions and rectify their negative deeds—refraining from eating and drinking are but a means by which to focus ourselves inward to *teshuvah*.¹⁴⁵ Those who utilize the fast day as a break in their normal schedule for trips or other banal activities make the minor aspect all-important while ignoring its essential purpose.

The Rambam writes that to truly experience the spiritual weight of the fast day, we must not occupy our time with frivolous or enjoyable activities, but feel bothered and distressed, as the *possuk* in *Eichah* states: “Of what should a living person complain? Their own sins...” The Sheloh adds that anyone who does not fast with purpose is merely torturing themselves (with gratuitous thirst and hunger). The true intention of fasting is to put mind over matter and focus on spirituality when we are without the physical constraints of feeding and hydrating the body—similar to the experience of *Olam Haba* where we will be fully occupied in enjoying the rays of shining G-dly light without distraction. On this day, we can access this spiritual delight today, with our acts of *teshuvah*, prayer, *tzedakah*—and Torah study, which is equal to them all.

TISHAH B’AV PROSCRIPTIONS

Note: Since this year, *Tishah B’Av* falls on *motzoei Shabbos*, the restrictions are thus divided: **From *shkiah***—eating, drinking, washing and anointing are forbidden, and the restriction for married couples to keep the *harchakos* is in

141) Yishayahu 66:10

142) Tehillim 100:2

143) Mishlei 14:23

144) *Sefer Hasichos* 5703, p. 41

145) though it is not halachically acceptable to disingenuously avoid fasting with a *teshuvah*-focused day.

force. Only **once Shabbos is over** do we remove leather footwear and sit on low chairs. All these (with the exception of seating rules) are in effect until nightfall at the conclusion of the fast.¹⁴⁶

FASTING

Review the fasting rules for the 17th of Tammuz. Only those restrictions that are stricter on *Tishah B'Av* are itemized here.

We may not eat or drink even the slightest quantity, although food may be handled.

Expectant and nursing mothers fast the entire *Tishah B'Av*, the strictest of the Rabbinical fasts, just as on Yom Kippur. However, if a pregnancy is high-risk or difficult, fasting causes an abnormal weakness, or there is a possibility it may cause the milk to dry up, a woman may eat and drink as much as is necessary.

The exception to the above is a woman within seven days of childbirth, or even after seven days, if she is still weak from the birth—she does not fast. If she feels completely well, and will suffer no ill effects from fasting, she should fast.

An ill person who is weak and must eat to sustain their body is allowed to eat and drink, even if the illness is not life-threatening.

Children do not need to fast.

If a *bris* takes place on *Tishah B'Av*, the father, *mohel* and *sandek* still fast. A minor child is given the wine to drink and the *seudah* takes place that night.

Anyone who is exempt from fasting should eat the basic food needed to sustain them and not indulge.

BEFORE BREAKING FAST

If you are exempt from fasting, you must recite *Havdalah* before eating or drinking.¹⁴⁷ A woman who is not fasting may ask her husband to recite *Havdalah* for her even though he is fasting; in that case, he will have also fulfilled his own obligation for *Havdalah*. Following *Havdalah*, the cup should be given to a child who has reached the age of *chinuch* in reciting *brachos* to drink, as is customary during the Nine Days.

If a man is making *Havdalah* for his non-fasting wife, he must have intent to fulfill his obligation and have a **male** child drink the wine (even one older than

¹⁴⁶) even if Maariv is concluded earlier.

¹⁴⁷) Someone who is only eating less than the *shiur* (a *koseves*, an amount somewhat less than the volume of two matchboxes) for whatever reason, should still make *Havdalah* and have a child drink the wine; if there is no child, they may eat the small amount of food without making *Havdalah*. See more on this topic in the Hebrew footnote.

There are various opinions as to whether a child needs to make *Havdalah* for themselves before eating post-Shabbos.

chinuch who is not fasting, but not his wife). Otherwise, he is not *yotze*. The same applies if he is making *Havdalah* to break his own fast. However, a woman who makes *Havdalah* for herself on wine should have a young **girl** drink it.¹⁴⁸

If there is no child present, *Havdalah* may be recited over *chamar medinah* such as beer, coffee or tea (and a *Shehakol*, not *Hagafen* is said). Otherwise, the text of *Havdalah* is unchanged, except for the omission of the blessing over spices. The blessing over a flame is included only when *Havdalah* is recited on *motzoei Shabbos* and if the blessing had not been recited on its own earlier that night (see the halachos below for the night of *Tishah B'Av*).

If a non-faster eats a meal and recites *Birchas Hamazon*, they should include the *Nachem* prayer (it appears in the Mincha *Amidah*) before the *brachah* of *Uv'nei Yerushalayim*, and should conclude the paragraph with “*Baruch...menachem tzion uvoneh Yerushalayim*.”

Smoking: Although smoking is not expressly forbidden on a fast day for someone who smokes regularly, on *Tishah B'Av*, the strictest of all fasts, it is best to abstain. Even heavy smokers who are suffering from withdrawal should restrict themselves to lighting up only at home, in private. And among those *poskim* who do permit it in private on the basis of need, many say the leniency applies only after midday (*chatzos*). People who are particularly conscionable will not smoke at all on *Tishah B'Av*. However, all the above applies to compulsive smokers; there is no leniency for social smokers, for whom abstaining has little or no physical effect.¹⁴⁹ In this era of awareness of the extreme dangers of smoking, it should be avoided year-round.

WASHING UP

Washing the body is forbidden, in cold or hot water.¹⁵⁰ Rinsing the mouth is also prohibited.

For the morning *netilas yadayim*, wash until the end of your knuckles. Once your fingers are mostly dry, you can wipe your eyes. (If eyes are crusty, and you usually rinse to remove the buildup, you may do so, sparingly, today.)

You may soak a washcloth before *Tishah B'Av* begins (this year, this must be done on Friday), and once it is removed and squeezed or hung out until it is only slightly damp,¹⁵¹ it may be used on *Tishah B'Av* to wipe a face, hands or feet. Disposable wipes, if they are similarly dryish, may also be used.

¹⁴⁸) See the halachah for *Havdalah* on the previous *motzoei Shabbos*, 2 Av.

¹⁴⁹) From the halachic sources: “Someone who cares for their (spiritual) life will avoid smoking on all public fasts, how much more so on *Tishah B'Av*, the strictest of all.” Also, “One who smokes on *Tishah B'Av* should be ostracized from the community!”

¹⁵⁰) A woman who needs to perform a *hefsek taharah* on *Tishah B'Av* afternoon should do it differently from her usual (and more restrictively than during the Nine Days). She should wash only the pelvic area and between her thighs with lukewarm or warm water.

¹⁵¹) If it is moist enough to wet something else, you may **not** use it.

Even those who strictly use the *mikveh* daily may not dip today.

If you touch a part of the body that is normally kept covered, scratch your scalp, or touch your shoes (this applies to non-leather as well¹⁵²) you should wash your fingers until the knuckles. When visiting the bathroom, touch private areas and wash your hands as described.¹⁵³ If you are about to *daven*, wash your hands in this manner even if you did not touch a covered area. If you normally wash each hand three times, you may do so today, but only until the knuckles.

If sullied with dirt or excrement, wash the affected area only.

An ill person washes in their ordinary manner.

A new bride within thirty days of her wedding may wash her face on *Tishah B'Av*. (She is also exempt from the prohibition on anointing and cosmetics outlined below.)

While preparing food, if you need to rinse off meat (or produce or the like), you may run them under the tap as usual, despite the fact that you are simultaneously washing your hands. The same applies to washing dishes.

Someone who must break their fast and is eating a meal, should wash *netilas yadayim* until their wrists. They should also wash *mayim acharonim* when concluding a meal.

ANOINTING

Smearing oils, creams, gels and balms for enjoyment is forbidden. This includes perfume, make-up—even in powder form—and other cosmetic unguents.

Using ointments for the purpose of removing or absorbing grime or sweat is permitted. Wearing scent-free deodorant is therefore allowed. You may also use bug repellent on your body, as well as sunscreen, hand sanitizer and medicinal creams.

FOOTWEAR

It is forbidden to wear leather footwear, even if the inside is synthetic, and only the outside is leather.¹⁵⁴ Chabad *minhag* does not follow the opinion that bans rubber galoshes and the like.

A woman within thirty days of childbirth, an ill person who finds cold floors particularly uncomfortable, or someone with a foot injury, are permitted to wear regular footwear. However, they still should invite some discomfort such as

152) After putting on **new** *Tishah B'Av* shoes for the first time ever, you do not need to wash your hands.

153) If you entered the bathroom and left with clean hands, without actually using the facilities, you should not wash them. You can rub them off on some surface (like a stone or wall), even if you are usually stringent about washing.

154) Even if the upper is only partially leather and the rest manmade. This applies to even a small piece, if it is a strap that supports the foot. However, a man-made shoe with small leather strips used for reinforcement (called tips or foxing) is not considered leather footwear and may be worn.

switching the right shoe for the left, if feasible. Nowadays, non-leather shoes are easily obtainable and comfortable, so a person should not seek to be lenient in this area.

Children should also wear non-leather footwear, even very young children who have not reached the age of *chinuch* (where they understand the concepts behind acts of mourning). Since man-made options are widely available, it is appropriate to make them aware of this prohibition.

In inclement weather, a sensitive person—someone who easily catches cold or whose health may be in danger—who needs to walk outside (such as going to shul or back home from shul) but has no proper footwear, may don their leather shoes until reaching shelter.

HARCHAKOS:

Marital relations are forbidden on *Tishah B'Av*. Married couples observe all *harchakos* throughout *Tishah B'Av*, from *shkiah* on Shabbos until the fast ends.¹⁵⁵

TORAH LEARNING

“Hashem’s Orders are just, they gladden the heart,”¹⁵⁶ and we are therefore restricted from reading *Tanach* and studying Mishnah, Midrash and Gemara—both the halachic and Aggadic parts, even avoiding giving lessons to small children. However, we may read *Iyov*, the rebuke of *Yirmiyahu* and other tragic tracts, skipping over the comforting verses. It is permissible to learn the Midrash on *Eichah*, and the halachos of mourning, as well as other commentary on *Eichah* and *Iyov*. In this category are also stories of the *Churban* and other national tragedies. We may share these stories with children who have reached the age of understanding.

According to some opinions, we should not even **think** about subjects not in the purview of mourning and the *Churban*.

Those subjects that are permissible should be studied in a straightforward manner, and not through *pilpul* (halachic analysis), homiletics or in question/answer format, for all these are enjoyable modes of learning.

You may read all parts of *tefillah*, including *Krias Shema* (from Torah) and *Korbanos* (from Torah and Mishnah) and “*Rabi Yishmael Omer*”. The Torah reader may review the *kriah* for the day, even the portion that he will only have to read

¹⁵⁵) A woman who is meant to visit the *mikveh* on *Tishah B'Av* postpones it to the following night. If possible, she should do a few of her preparations on Friday, the 7th of Av, taking care to remain without *chatzitzah* over *Tishah B'Av* by not walking around barefoot and the like. On *motzoei Tishah B'Av* she prepares again. However, if she was not able to prepare on Friday at all, she may still go to the *mikveh* after the fast, but must spend at least an hour on her preps.

You **may** perform a *hefsek taharah* on *Tishah B'Av* in a restricted manner; see above with regard to washing.

¹⁵⁶) Tehillim 19:9

later at Minchah time or this coming Shabbos.

Siyum: The Nine-Day *siyum* initiative should continue into *Tishah B'Av* in a way that is permissible, by completing subjects that may be learned at this time, like *Maseches Moed Katan* or *Maseches Semachos*.

SIYUM ON GOLUS

Even when Moshiach is here, we will still make a *siyum* on *Tishah B'Av*.¹⁵⁷ We will do so in Moshiach's presence, with great joy, accompanied by a most extravagant feast of meat and wine.¹⁵⁸ Since Moshiach will surely be here before *Tishah B'Av*, this day will also be the greatest of *yomim tovim*, so, of course, the rejoicing and partaking will be tremendous. It will be a *siyum* on our *golus* Torah learning, for that mode will become outdated, trailing in the dust of the "new" (dimensions of) Torah of Moshiach!¹⁵⁹

Every year on *Tishah B'Av*, the Rebbe Rashab would study *Eichah Rabbah* and the sugya of "Rabbi Yochanan" in *Maseches Gittin*.

ELIXIR OF CHASSIDUS

It is appropriate to learn those topics that are **timely**, as *Chazal* tell us. The Rebbe refers specifically to the notes of the Tzemach Tzedek on *Megillas Eichah*. There,¹⁶⁰ the Rebbe also talks all about the great advantage of learning the inner aspect of Torah (*Chassidus*) on *Tishah B'Av*.

The Frieddiker Rebbe relates¹⁶¹ that he saw his father (the Rebbe Rashab) learning *Chassidus* on *Tishah B'Av*, but it seemed like he was only skimming the text.

It is told in the name of Reb Hillel of Paritch,¹⁶² that learning Kabbalah is permitted on *Tishah B'Av*, "for the secrets of Torah are only transmitted to a person with a worrying heart."

SICHAH FOR TODAY

On the fast of *Tishah B'Av*, 5751 (it was Sunday, 10 Av, 5751, a postponed fast), the Rebbe said a *sichah* before Maariv.¹⁶³

"The restrictions on *Tishah B'Av*," the Rebbe clarified at the time,¹⁶⁴ "apply to some very specific aspects of Torah learning. But those subjects that are authorized, it is obvious that (it's not just recommended, but) we are completely obligated in their study and we gain great merit when we do so. So, on the contrary, *Tishah B'Av*

157) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of erev Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5735

158) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei, 5743

159) *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 579. See fn. 190 there.

160) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 250 (From a *sichah* in 5730).

161) *Sefer Hasichos*, 5690 p. 134

162) Quoted in *Nesiv Hachaim*.

163) The *sichah* is recorded in *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, vol. 2, p. 721, and it's noted there: At 8:35 pm the Rebbe Shlita entered shul, and started to speak...

164) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of the second day of Sukkos, 5752.

becomes a day when we seek out solutions on how to remove all restrictions and ultimately transform it “to days of happiness and joy and good times,” as was done last year *Tishah B’Av*.”

The Rebbe explains¹⁶⁵, “Even on *Tishah B’Av* in *golus* (as we were last year, but will, G-d willing no longer be this year) when you are **restricted** in Torah study (and there are so many details on what you may learn) you are still **required to learn Torah every moment!** How? By studying those subjects and aspects of Torah that are appropriate for a day like this.”

In that *sichah*,¹⁶⁶ the Rebbe objects to a the position of a great sage (*gadol b’yisrael*) who “strangely” opined that on *Tishah B’Av* we are exempt from the mitzvah of *Limmud Hatorah* despite the fact that there are subjects that we are permitted to learn. We are not obligated to study them, they argue, it is only that if someone has completed *Kinos* and is unable to fall asleep, a “heter” is provided for some specific studies.... They bring “proof” for this stance by stating that if the obligation of *Limmud Hatorah* applied it would explicitly state that these permitted subjects are obligatory(!). The Rebbe strongly disagreed with this approach and said that this theory is so bizarre, and we find no trace of it in the *sefarim* of *Acharonim* nor in the *Rishonim*.

SOCIALIZING

It is forbidden to greet another on *Tishah B’Av* with “Shalom!” or “Hello!”. This includes other greetings in the same spirit, like “Good morning!” or “*Shavuah tov* (Have a great week!)”, as we normally do on *motzoei Shabbos*. If you are greeted by someone who is unaware of this restriction, you should respond in a subdued voice and inform them that we do not greet people today.

However, non-greeting wishes are permitted, like to bless someone with a long life, or “Get well!” and the like. “*Mazal tov!*” is also not considered a restricted salutation.

We do not bestow gifts on *Tishah B’Av*. However, we may give gifts to a poor person (especially one who is a *talmid chacham*) and, all the more so, when giving them money to provide for their family. In fact, it’s a mitzvah; in every Jewish community it is customary to increase *tzedakah* to the poor on *Tishah B’Av*.

Visiting Mourners: We do not engage in comforting matters before *chatzos*,¹⁶⁷ so any *nichum aveilim* visit should be scheduled for after midday.

Excursions: Do not aimlessly go on walks today, or browse in stores, for these activities are recreational, and invite twaddle and laughter.

Cuddling Babies: Curb spontaneous snuggling with young children, since this often leads to laughter and levity. Obviously, if a child is crying or upset, you may hug and cuddle to calm them.

165) *Sichas Parshas Pinchas, Sefer Hasichos* 5750, pp. 574 ff.

166) The unedited notes on *ibid*.

167) However, the actual line of “*Hamokom yenachem...*” is permitted before *chatzos*. In the case of someone who will no longer be able to comfort the mourner past *chatzos* (they are leaving town, for example), they may state this *nusach*, without additional talk, and thus fulfill the mitzvah.

SEATING

We do not sit on chairs (or benches, sofas or stools) of normal height from the evening of *Tishah B'Av* (once Shabbos is over) until *chatzos* the next day, at **1:02 pm**. Traditionally, mourners would sit on the floor with a cushion or mat.¹⁶⁸ But these also qualify: low stools, overturned chairs or benches, kiddie chairs, couch frames with the cushions removed and other low seating with the seat less than three *tefachim* (about nine to ten inches) off the ground.

When navigating past a group of people who are sitting low to the ground, it is permissible to step between them as necessary, but take care not to actually jump or skip over them as that would be a show of dishonor.

A person who is ill or weak, an expectant or nursing mother (while she nurses) may sit on a chair of regular height. If traveling by car, you may also sit as normal (although some would use a hard seat or plank of wood to sit on). A *sandak* at a *bris* sits on a seat of normal height, as does the person who is raising the Torah by *kriah* (when he sits down to have it tied and dressed).

DOWN LOW

Reb Pinchas of Koritz says,¹⁶⁹ “On *Tishah B'Av*, when we sit on the ground, we can obtain everything we wish for from Hashem. For on this level too He is found.”

MELACHAH

We do not do *melachah* (involved work) until *chatzos* (**1:02 pm**.) Someone with stellar *yiras Shomayim* stringently avoids work throughout the day.

What qualifies as *melachah*, in this context, is creative work that requires some “puttering” (steps and process), even if it is not professional work. Using electricity, lighting a fire, or knotting an item in one step, for example, are permitted. Writing is also allowed.¹⁷⁰ If the project is in danger of being lost or ruined, *melachah* may be performed, but it may not be done in public. Construction, a form of work that cannot be kept quiet, is thus expressly forbidden.

Light housework tasks are permitted as needed, but you should wait at least until *chatzos* to make beds and tidying up—and it is best to refrain from doing so all day. Try to avoid washing dishes until midday, if possible, though rinsing them to avoid encrustment is okay.

A non-Jew may do this work for a Jew, even in a Jewish home—as long as it does not require the participation of the Jewish homeowner in lengthy instructions, or the like.

It is brought in sources that any money earned from work conducted on *Tishah*

¹⁶⁸) According to Kabbalah, we may not sit directly on the floor; an intervening object (not just the clothes on your body) should be used, at the very least.

¹⁶⁹) *Sefer Imrei Pinchas*

¹⁷⁰) Can a professional writer or editor work? *Poskim* are divided on the matter. Practically, it is restricted.

B'Av will not be revenue for *brachah*. This refers specifically to someone who sets themselves up to attend to business and distracts themselves from the true purpose of the day, which is mourning the *Beis Hamikdash* (and praying for its reconstruction).

100 BRACHOS?

To be able to meet this daily quota on *Tishah B'Av* (when, as a faster, you cannot make brachos before and after eating), listen to the brachos of those who are called to the Torah and read the *Haftorah*, as well the *chazzan's* repetition of the *Amidah* with the intention to count them toward this total. In contrast to Yom Kippur, we may not say *borei minei besamim* on spices on *Tishah B'Av*.¹⁷¹

TISHAH B'AV NIGHT

This year, Maariv is delayed past the normal time. Following nightfall, recite *Baruch Hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol*, exchange your leather footwear for non-leather, and bring copies of *Kinos* to shul.

When exchanging shoes, try not to touch your Shabbos shoes or *Tishah B'Av* shoes. If you did touch them, wash your hands only until the knuckles.¹⁷²

It is our custom to wait until after reciting *Kinos* to change out of our Shabbos attire. However, once you have removed them at night, you may not put them back on, since we are forbidden to don Shabbos clothes on *Tishah B'Av*, the laws of which are even stricter than the rest of the Nine Days (when we are restricted from dressing up).

Women who do not say Maariv are reminded not to perform any *melachah* (work forbidden on Shabbos) before reciting *Baruch Hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol*.

MAARIV

The *paroches* is removed from the *aron kodesh*. The lights in the shul are dimmed (with only enough lighting as needed to read the *Kinos*).

Recite the blessing of *borei me'orei ha'eish* over a flame, as usual. It is customarily recited in shul before the reading of *Eichah*, unless a man needs to recite it at home for the sake of his household (especially if the women of the house generally follow the custom not to recite the blessing individually). We do not say the *brachah* on the spices.

An ill person who must eat on *Tishah B'Av* should recite the blessing over the

¹⁷¹ The sum of all of *davening*, including *tallis* and *tefillin* (at Minchah Time) is eighty-nine. See [#16076](http://www.asktherav.com) for a detailed list and sources.

¹⁷² However, if your footwear is completely new, never-been-worn *Tishah B'Av* shoes, you may handle them before putting them on and not wash your hands, as mentioned above.

flame when reciting *Havdalah*. However, they do not recite a blessing over spices.¹⁷³ If you did not recite the blessing over a flame, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

The Rema writes that we should pray slowly and mournfully. Eichah is read this way, as well.

Recite *Atah chonantanu* during Maariv. If you forgot to recite it, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

After the Maariv *Amidah*, the *chazzan* recites *Kaddish tiskabel*, which is followed by *borei me'orei ha'eish*, Eichah, and then *Kinos*. Throughout, those who are sitting should sit low down (as described above). *Kinos* followed by *V'Atah Kadosh*, and then *Kaddish Shalem* without *tiskabel*. Do not recite *Vihi Noam*.

SAFE!

The Ramak writes¹⁷⁴: On the night of *Tishah B'Av*, our sorrowful attitude can attract the attention of the *kelipos*, for a mourner is in a situation of danger, open to the effect of harmful spirits. In order to neutralize them, we mention the *geulah* (in the *tefillah* of *V'Atah Kadosh*), invoking a time when all evil will be nullified permanently.

EICHAH & KINOS

During the reading of Eichah by the *chazzan*—with the congregation reading along quietly—he should pause between each *possuk*, with a longer break between one chapter and the next. The last *possuk* is read in a much louder voice. When the *chazzan* reaches this *possuk*, the congregation should first say it out loud, then the *chazzan*, then the congregation repeats it, as does the *chazzan*, at last.

IMPERMANENT GOLUS

"All my life I wondered," says the Levush, "why the *megillah* that we read in public on Purim is written on a beautiful scroll by expert scribes—should not the same that is done for Esther be required for us to fulfill our obligation of reading Eichah? But perhaps, this is the prevailing custom because the scribes don't want to write such a scroll! We await Moshiach every day, a time when *Tishah B'Av* will turn into a Yom Tov.

"If the *sofrim* would write Megillas Eichah in the same way as Megillas Esther,¹⁷⁵ it would seem that they have relented to *golus*, *chas v'shalom*. So here we are, forced to read Eichah from a Chumash..."

In a number of *sichos*, the Rebbe explains how in the notes of the Tzemach Tzedek on *Megillas Eichah*, he shows how the rebuke can be interpreted in a positive light.

¹⁷³) See above, in the halachos concerning fasting, more details about *Havdalah* for non-fasters.

¹⁷⁴) In his *Sefer Gerushin*.

¹⁷⁵) for, unlike all other celebratory days, Purim will endure forever.

“In the same manner that curses (of the Torah) are transformed to blessings, so can the verses of Eichah become praises.” In fact, *Chassidus* posits that the greatest blessings present as curses in the Torah.

We learn in the name of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev¹⁷⁶: In the future, we will make a *brachah* of *Shehechianu* when we read *Megillas Eichah*. We will read it slowly¹⁷⁷—(not because we are suffering through it but) because we are struck in a good way—it is such a pleasurable reading that we become speechless.

Someone who *davens* Maariv without a *minyán* should read Eichah and *Kinos* on their own.

There is an addition to the *Kinos* for *motzoei Shabbos*, which begins “Eich...”

AFTER MAARIV

Someone who is observing a *yahrtzeit*, or is within the year of mourning, should say only those *Mishnayos* that are from the permissible sections of *Mesechtos Taanis* and *Mo’ed Katan* until *chatzos* tomorrow. The Mishnah of Rabbi Chananya is omitted as well. After *chatzos*, it follows the same schedule as other *shiurim*. On *Tishah B’Av* we honor fixed *shiurim* as we do throughout the year, despite the limitations.¹⁷⁸

We return home, leaving shul as if banished by Hashem. The mood is sorrowful, serious and introspective; as is fitting on *Tishah B’Av*, we do not socialize. It is forbidden to exchange greetings, as mentioned above. Therefore, we do not wish each other, “*a gutte voch*.”

Do not recite *Veyitein lecha* on this *motzoei Shabbos*.

If possible, delay washing the dishes from *Shabbos* until after *chatzos* the next day.

Bedtime Shema is recited as usual, without *Tachanun* (skipping from *Elokeinu.. tova lefanecha* and continuing from *Ana b’koach*).

You should refrain from small pleasures and comforts as much as possible. However, this instruction does not extend to sleeping on the ground or putting a rock under your head instead of a pillow.

SUNDAY, 9 MENACHEM AV—TISHAH B’AV

EARLY MORNING

Morning *negel vasser* is poured only until the knuckles. The *brachah* of *al netilas yadayim* is said.

In morning *Brachos*, we skip the blessing of *she’asah li kol tzorki*.

176) *Kedushas Levi Hashalem*, vol. 2, new *likkutim* for *Tishah B’Av*, p. 526

177) As mentioned above, we do this in *golus* as a show of mourning.

178) See below in the entry for tomorrow afternoon.

No *brachah* is made on *tzitzis* this morning. A (married) man will don his *tallis* for Minchah and make a *brachah* then (see below in the Minchah entry). In the case of an unmarried *bachur* or a child who will not wear a *tallis* at all today, it might be halachically problematic to put on a new pair of *tzitzis* in the morning and not make a *brachah*. So he should wait to change the *tallis katan* until the afternoon, prior to Minchah, and make a *brachah* then.

SHACHARIS

We should arrive a little earlier than usual to shul. However, it is better to arrive a bit later and fill all the time until *chatzos* with *davening* and *Kinos*, than to start and finish earlier and leave too many unfulfilled morning hours.

Tishah B'Av is called “*Mo’ed*”, and therefore we do not say *Tachanun* and skip all sections of *tefillah* that we usually do in these circumstances. This designation is a sign of our firm belief that Hashem will transform this day to one of *Yom Tov* and joy. Indeed, the depth of the mourning and tragedy correlates exactly with the great heights of the eventual joy and festivity, like light that emerges from darkness. This day is also the birthday of Moshiach.¹⁷⁹

These normal Shacharis-related activities are suspended today:

The lighting in the shul remains low, and the two candles that are normally on the *chazzan*’s table remain unlit.

Men do not don a *tallis* or *tefillin* to *daven* Shacharis, and it follows that they do not hold their *tzitzis* as usual during *Baruch she’amar* and *Krias Shema*.

We say the weekday Shacharis as normal, including *Mizmor l’sodah*.¹⁸⁰

However, after the reading of the Torah, the regular conclusion of the *tefillos* are suspended until *chatzos*, as will be detailed further.

Only the *chazzan* says *Aneinu* and only during the repetition of the *Amidah*, between the blessings of *go’al Yisroel* and *Refa’einu*. If a *chazzan* mistakenly omits *Aneinu*, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

The *chazzan* does not say *Birchas Kohanim* as part of his repetition.

KRIAS HATORAH & KINOS

Following the *chazzan*’s repetition is half-*Kaddish*. We do not say *Tachanun* (as mentioned above) or *Selichos*. We take the *sefer Torah* out and read three *aliyos* beginning *Ki solid banim* in *Parshas Va’eschanan*, which speaks about the devastation of *Eretz Yisrael*. After half-*Kaddish*, we read *Asofasifem* (from *Yirmiyahu*) for the *Haftorah*, which concerns the *Churban*. The regular, year-round tune is used. Use a *siddur* to read the *brachos* of *Haftorah*, as the version that appears in the *Kinos* booklets are not according to *nusach Chabad*.

¹⁷⁹) See more above, in the introductory *sichos* relating to the deeper meaning of *Tishah B'Av*.

¹⁸⁰) for in the time of the second *Beis Hamikdash*, a *Korban Todah* was offered on *Tishah B'Av*.

When dressing the Torah during Shacharis, only the basic coverings are used, not the silver crown or vestments.

There is no *Mi shebeirach* for those who receive an *aliyah* during Shacharis, however *Mi shebeirach* for ill people or for a new child may be said. A person who must recite *Hagomel* does so during Shacharis as well.

A bar mitzvah boy should receive his *aliyah* at Minchah time.

Someone who is not fasting should not be given an *aliyah*. However, after the fact, a non-faster¹⁸¹ who is called up to the Torah and is embarrassed (and concerned of *chillul Hashem*) to decline, may continue with the *aliyah*.

The one who lifts the Torah should sit on a regular-height seat while the Torah is wrapped, as mentioned.

After the Torah is read comes *Yehalelu* and the return of the *sefer Torah* to the *aron*. The day *Kinos* are all recited, filling our time until just before *chatzos* (1:02 pm). Throughout the *Kinos*, we sit low down, and say the *Kinos* in a mournful, wailing tone.¹⁸² We may not speak at all, nor leave the room, so as not to disturb our concentration and our emotional reaction to the *Churban*. Halachah speaks specifically about not interrupting to speak to a non-Jew, and also reprimands those who spend this time throwing things around (like *berelach*, see below). Even throughout the year, we may not behave in this flippant manner in shul, and especially on *Tishah B'Av*, specifically while lamenting the greatest of all national tragedies! Much rebuke is written in *sefarim* regarding those who do not say the *Kinos* with the right attitude, or worse, G-d forbid, spend the time kibitzing around instead.

The *kinah* of *Eli Tzion* is traditionally chanted by the *chazzan* and the congregation while standing.

When *Kinos* is completed, we say *Ashrei* and *U'va l'Tziyon*—skipping over the *possuk* of *Va'ani zos brisi...* Full *Kaddish* is said, without *tiskabel*. *Aleinu*, Mourner's *Kaddish* (along with allowable *Mishnayos*, as mentioned regarding last night). Then *Kaddish D'rabbanan*. It is proper to say *Eichah* again by day (though it is not read publicly)

KEEPING KINOS?

"I heard from my father in the name of the Machatzis Hashekel, who did have the bound copy of the *Kinos* with *Eichah*," says the Toras Chaim (R' Yaakov Shalom Sofer), "He would buy a new *Kinos* every year, and on *Tishah B'Av* after reading from it, he would leave it *hefker* in shul. He was concerned that a bound copy that

¹⁸¹) This applies to someone who broke their fast by mistake as well. See www.asktherav.com #29087

¹⁸²) "As if sitting in the presence of the body of the newly deceased."

would be shelved from year to year would indicate that he despairs of the *geulah* arriving (before the next *Tishah B'Av*).”

The Ruzhiner, on the other hand, is of the opinion that we will continue to recite *Kinos* in the future, but the tune will be a happy one and they will be *kinos* (poems) marking joyful events. The Ba’alei Tosfos, similarly, connected the book of Eichah to happy compositions: With its mnemonic alphabetical theme, it reflects the style of songs and hymns (and will actually be so, as well, in the future).

AFTERNOON

You may continue to say *Kinos* after *chatzos* if you did not complete them before then. Then slip out of shul—with a demeanor of one who Hashem has ostracized—do not stay to socialize, and remember the restriction on greeting others.

After *chatzos* (or upon completing *Kinos*, if doing so after midday), we are permitted to sit on regular-height chairs.

Concerning the encouragement in various *sefarim* to visit the cemetery on *Tishah B'Av*, the Rebbe says¹⁸³: Although it is mentioned in halachic sources, I have never seen the (Friediker) Rebbe practice this. Perhaps this is because we cannot go to the *mikveh* today (and he customarily went to the *mikveh* before going to the *tziyon*). I saw it likewise (in other sources). Now, some say to go, but remain outside—I did not see the Rebbe do this either. This may be because even viewing the *tziyon* from afar creates a connection and the Rebbe did not want even this level of contact without purification in a *mikveh* first.

It is customary to refrain from food preparation until after *chatzos* though someone who is not saying *Kinos* beforehand anyway should better be involved in preparing the meal for after the fast than getting involved in inane activities and frivolousness. Similarly, as mentioned earlier, we refrain from strolling or browsing in public.

If preparing for a *seudas mitzvah*, however, there is no restriction to delay preparations until after *chatzos*.

The Rebbe encourages us to utilize this time (of the Nine Days) and especially on *Tishah B'Av* to give as many Jews as possible the opportunity to don *tefillin* (once it is permitted after midday).¹⁸⁴ Take along a *pushka* to encourage the giving of *tzedakah* and prepare words of Torah appropriate for the time to share with those you meet—deliver them in a personal and loving manner to each individual.¹⁸⁵

183) *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 11, p. 307

184) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 251

185) *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, vol. 2, p. 575

MINCHAH

A LITTLE LATER

"On fast days in Lubavitch, we'd *daven* Minchah late," the Friediker Rebbe writes in *Likkutei Dibburim*, "To be precise: 'late' does not mean 'later than the *zman*, once the sun has set,' but 'in the later hours of the day'—like: eight o'clock on the 17th of Tammuz and seven o'clock on *Tishah B'Av*."¹⁸⁶

In 770, Minchah takes place at its regularly scheduled time.

A set of activities precede Minchah to make up for those missed in the morning:

The *paroches* is returned to its rightful place before Minchah, and the candles on the lectern are lit.

Men don their *tallis* and *tefillin*, which were not worn in the morning, with a *brachah*. A *bachur* who is not putting on a *tallis* should change his *tallis katan* at this time and make a *brachah* as well.

The three paragraphs of *Shema* are recited holding your *tzitzis* (for the *tefillin*)—without repeating the last three words (*Ani Hashem Elokechem*) but followed by *Emes*—and the last *tefillos* of Shacharis are recited (from *Shir shel Yom* until the end).

An individual's regular post-Shacharis *shiurim* are completed, including *Lamenatzeach ya'ancha* (because no *Tachanun* is said today, it is skipped in Shacharis and recited with the daily *Tehillim*) and the daily *shiur* of *Tehillim*.

Minchah begins (see details below).

This is the order for Minchah: *Korbanos*. *Ashrei* followed by half-*Kaddish*. The reading of the Torah (*Vayechal*) and the *Haftorah* (*Dirshu*). *Yehalelu* followed by half-*Kaddish*. *Amidah* with the addition of *Aneinu* and *Nachem*. The repetition by the *chazzan*, with *Aneinu*, *Nachem* and *Birchas Kohanim*. *Kaddish tiskabel*. *Aleinu*, followed by the mourner's *Kaddish*. Regular *Mishnayos* and *Kaddish D'rabbanan*.

Toward the end of the middle section of the *Amidah*, in the *brachah* of *boneh Yerushalayim*, we say the paragraph of *Nachem*, which ends with the *brachah* of "menachem Tziyon u'voneh Yerushalayim." Even non-fasters add this paragraph to their *Amidah* (unlike *Aneinu*, see below). If you forgot to say *Nachem*, or mistakenly said the wrong concluding words, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

Then, before concluding the blessing of *Shema Koleinu*, *Aneinu* is recited by all fasting congregants. If it is mistakenly omitted, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

In his repetition of the *Amidah*, the *chazzan* says *Aneinu* after the *brachah* of *go'el Yisroel*, and *Birchas Kohanim* as usual (unlike Shacharis). The *chazzan*

¹⁸⁶) Ed. note: *Shkiah* in Lubavitch at this time of year is after nine o'clock.

says *Nachem* in *boneh Yerushalayim* in the same place as during the individual *Amidah*.

Tzedakah: It is customary to give an abundance of *tzedakah* on public fast days. Calculate the cost of the food that you would have eaten were it not a fast day□ and to give that amount to the poor during the evening of the fast.¹⁸⁷

Those who wear additional pairs of *tefillin* daily (*Rabbeinu Tam*, popularly, or *Ra'avad* and *Shimusha Rabba*), should don them on *Tishah B'Av* as well after *Minchah*. Say the three *parshios* of *Shema*, *Kadesh* and *V'haya ki yivi'acha*, as usual.

LEARNING

Daily Shiurim: The Rebbe instructs¹⁸⁸ not to push off *Chitas* until nighttime, despite other restrictions on learning. Regarding *Rambam*, as it states explicitly in the published schedule (*moreh shiur*): learn it after the fast is over.

You may—and should—continue the study of *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* from those texts that are permitted after *chatzos*, or if from *sefarim* that are not for *Tishah B'Av*, once the fast is over.

There is a well-published practice to say *pessukim* of comfort from the *nevi'im* this late afternoon. In *sefarim* it is written: “Do not forgo this custom, so that it will be established in the hearts of the populace that Hashem will indeed redeem us in His Mercy when all these words of comfort from our prophets will be speedily fulfilled.”

BE HAPPY, NO JOKES!

”The Tzemach Tzedek called the Ruzhiner, ‘the Holy Ruzhiner,’” it says in *Sefer Haminhagim*.¹⁸⁹ “And he told this story about him: The Holy Ruzhiner would urge to stay far away from depressive, and even bitter, thoughts, and his *Chassidim* would play practical jokes. On *Tishah B'Av*, they would throw *berelach* (thistles). Then someone came up with the idea to open the rooftop of the *beis midrash*, and lower a noose. When someone would enter, the *Chassidim* on the roof would throw the noose on him and draw him up. So they did.... Then the Ruzhiner entered, straight into the trap. Those on the roof did not see who it was, so they raised the rope. When they recognized the Rebbe, they quickly lowered him back into the shul. The Ruzhiner said: ‘Look, *Ribbono shel Olam!* If your children cannot respect your holiday, please, just take it away from them!’”

”In Lubavitch, some particular periods during *Tishah B'Av* were joyous,” the Rebbe

¹⁸⁷) Do not use *maaser* money for this purpose.

¹⁸⁸) *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 13, p. 331. Arguably, **Tehillim** can be said as a type of *tefillah*, for **Tanya** we extrapolate from the leniency for (regular) mourners, **Chumash**—there is a specific dispensation for reviewing the weekly *parshah*.

¹⁸⁹) *Laws of Bein Hametzarim*

states,¹⁹⁰ then asks: “How can it be proper to be happy? Halachah is very specific that even learning is limited to laws and tracts on mourning—and this concerns subjects in Torah, which is really higher than any limitations of time and space.... But truly, crying and mourning the *Churban* is not the essence of *Tishah B’Av*, it is how we translate this message into practice in our service of Hashem that is most important. It is specifically (through joy) that we can build a microcosmic *Beis Hamikdash* (a place for Hashem’s Presence in our hearts), and as it says in *Igeres Hakodesh*, that it is through our personal redemptions that we merit the *geulah* for everyone.”

LIGHTENING UP

In *Shaar Hakavanos*: It is customary (to break somewhat from our deep mourning and) say *pessukim* from the words of comfort of the *nevi'im* and also go back to sitting on benches in the afternoon of *Tishah B’Av*. This seems counterintuitive: it is specifically at that time, after Minchah on the 9th day of Av, that “a fire broke out in the *Heichal*....” Shouldn’t we be **more** stringent with mourning practices at that time? But we can understand this reversal from the story in the Gemara, based on Tehillim,¹⁹¹ that when the *Heichal* was invaded and the murder rampage began on the *Yidden* there, it seemed that this was the end of the Jewish nation at the hand of the enemies’ sword, *chas v’shalom*. But then, toward evening, the remnant *Yidden* saw how the *Heichal* went up in flames and they began to say this *mizmor*, a song of praise. Great joy broke out among them for the sight was a great comfort: this was the fulfillment of the *navi*’s promise that Hashem would pour His anger (at the sins of the Jews) on “wood beams and stones” instead, as “a fire has flared up from *Tzion*”. For this, the *Yidden* celebrated at exactly this time of day. An additional reason (as I heard from my teacher, the Arizal) is that at that moment in time, Moshiach was born, and he is called “Menachem”, as is recorded in the Midrash Eichah.

There were ancient traditions in certain communities connected to *Tishah B’Av* afternoon that were passed down from mothers to their daughters with regard to washing their hair or cleaning their homes (these were obviously women who were not well-versed in the pertinent halachos). It appears that their reasoning for these practices was that since this is the time of Moshiach’s birth, it is opportune for his arrival and they wanted to be ready. *Sefarim* of contemporary Halachah¹⁹² discuss whether they need correcting, and answers vary. (1) Many forcefully condemn these practices; (2) others defend it on account of this being the practice of unlettered women who, without access to the actual sources, can strengthen their faith in the *geulah*; (3) yet another opinion validates the desire to commemorate a positive event on *Tishah B’Av* amongst all those that ruminate the *Churban* and, specifically with regard to housecleaning, even supported it as a way for women to show their pure faith in Moshiach’s imminent arrival.

¹⁹⁰) *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* on *Shabbos Parshas Vayigash*, 5725

¹⁹¹) Chapter 79

¹⁹²) See Hebrew guide for sources

SUNDAY NIGHT

The fast is over at **8:39 pm**. In order to break your fast, however, you must hear *Havdalah*—details below.

There are various methods of calculating the time of nightfall (called *tzeis hakochavim*, 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, at the time detailed above, and then repeat the *Shema* sometime later.

Maariv is recited on time. There is no halachic basis for prolonging the fast, which would constitute discomfort for a great part of the community (especially those who do not fast well, including expectant and nursing mothers who are waiting for *Havdalah*).

Do not recite *Atah chonantanu*, even if you omitted it on the previous night. Wash your hands three times each without a *brachah*, past the wrists, put on your leather footwear, and rinse your face and mouth before *Havdalah* and *Kiddush Levanah*, as per the conclusion of the Yom Kippur fast.

Sefer Seder Hayom: "Go home, accept condolences on your sorrow by believing with perfect faith that our Hashem will comfort us from our mourning (permanently) as He promised through His prophets."

HAVDALAH & KIDDUSH LEVANAH

Recite *Havdalah* after Maariv, but omit the blessings on spices and the flame. You may drink the wine.¹⁹³

Kiddush Levanah is recited after *Havdalah*, with a *gartel* and a *siddur*.¹⁹⁴

THE REDEMPTION CONNECTION

From a letter of *motzoei Tishah B'Av* 5744: It is a *minhag* to do *Kiddush Levanah* specifically on *motzoei Tishah B'Av*. The reasons for this are found in many places—(in order to usurp the negative residue of *Tishah B'Av*, we follow with) a practice that bears a positive message: *Yidden* and the *Shechinah*, though currently in *golus* at the nadir of our history, will merit to rise again in the future and wax like the moon. Another connection to *Tishah B'Av* is that Moshiach's birthday is at Minchah time on *Tishah B'Av*. (In *Kiddush Levanah*, we proclaim "Dovid, the king of Yisrael, is alive and enduring")

If you forgot to recite *Havdalah* before eating, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

A man who has previously recited *Havdalah* may not repeat it for the sake of a

¹⁹³) Some are stringent to give the cup to a child, if possible.

¹⁹⁴) To eat or not to eat before *Kiddush Levanah*: In *Sefer Haminhagim*, regarding post-Yom Kippur, it seems clear that breaking the fast should precede *Kiddush Levanah*. So it was done in 770 until 5731. However, more recently, *Kiddush Levanah* was recited first, and that is how it is currently practiced.

woman who has not heard *Havdalah*.¹⁹⁵ If a man plans to return home and recite *Havdalah* for his wife, he should have in mind not to fulfill his obligation with the *Havdalah* that he is presently hearing in shul.

Women who are fasting and find it difficult to wait until their husbands return from shul should recite *Havdalah* for themselves (if not over wine, then over *chamar hamedinah*, like beer, tea or coffee). If they are unable to recite *Havdalah*, they may drink water in the interim (although this is not our custom regarding an ordinary *motzoei Shabbos Havdalah*). If truly necessary, they may drink soda and even tea or plain coffee without sugar or milk. If it is urgent, they may eat and drink before their husbands return to recite *Havdalah*.

BREAK-FAST

If you intend to eat bread or *mezonos* immediately after *Havdalah*, and these items are on the table at which you recite *Havdalah*, you should cover them until you have concluded *Havdalah*.

The blessing you recite over the *Havdalah* wine (*borei pri hagafen*) also covers all other drinks of which you partake immediately afterwards. This is true only if the other drinks were either on the table where you recited *Havdalah* or if you had intended to drink them, even if you didn't consciously include them in the blessing of *borei pri hagafen*. In either case, you can then drink them without reciting a prior or subsequent blessing. However, if the drinks were not present on the table or in your mind, they require their own prior blessing (*Shehakol*), but they do not require a subsequent blessing (*borei nefashos*), because they will be included in the subsequent blessing of *al hagefen*.

If you intend to wash your hands for a meal immediately after reciting *Havdalah* and do not intend to drink additional wine during that meal (as per the custom to refrain from wine on the night following *Tishah B'Av*, even for *zimun*), you must recite *al hagefen* before your meal. If you forgot to recite *al hagefen* before starting your meal, you should interrupt your meal to recite it. If you remember only after reciting *Birchas Hamazon*, do not recite *al hagefen*.

It is proper to refrain from eating meat or drinking wine (except for a *seudas mitzvah*¹⁹⁶) until *chatzos* of the 10th of Av. This is on account of the embers—from the fire that broke out on the afternoon 9th of Av and destroyed the *Beis Hamikdash*—that continued to burn past sunset (when it was already the 10th of Av).

Essentially, all the restrictions of the Nine Days are in force until *chatzos* (1:02 pm) the next day for the above reason.

¹⁹⁵) Because of a differentiated level of obligation, as per the halachic sources.

¹⁹⁶) In this detail, we are less stringent than the Nine Days. Even non-relatives can partake. However, we customarily do not make a *zimun* on wine tonight at a regular meal.

LONGER NIGHT, LEARN MORE

“From *Kumi* (‘Arise’) until *Shichvi* (‘Lie Down’), you should arise (*kumi*)!” is a mnemonic quoted by latter-day *poskim* to encourage us to take advantage of the lengthening nighttime hours. The meaning of the cryptic saying is as follows: From the time we say *Kumi roni balailah* (“Arise and cry out in the night”) in *Megillas Eichah*¹⁹⁷ on *Tishah B’Av* until the following Shavuot, when we read in *Megillas Rus*,¹⁹⁸ *Shichvi ad haboker* (“Lie down until morning”), the shortest nights of the year are past and therefore, “*Kumi*!”—remain awake while it is dark to learn Torah.

There is a reasonable basis for not reciting *Tachanun* in the bedtime Shema, when recited before midnight. Some therefore wait until *chatzos* has passed to recite it, to avoid the issue altogether.¹⁹⁹

MONDAY, 10 MENACHEM AV

MORNING

Many of the halachos of the Nine Days are still in effect until *chatzos* (halachic midday), at **1:02 pm**. See the details of these restrictions in the post-fast entry above.

Upshernish: A boy who turned three during *Bein Hametzarim* delays his hair cutting until the afternoon of the 10th of Av.

MORE SIYUMIM

“These days following *Tishah B’Av*,” the Rebbe says on *Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5751, “From now until the 15th of Av are a continuation of the 9th of Av. If *chas veshalom*, Moshiach’s coming will be delayed in these coming days, we must continue to hold *siyumim* until, and including the 15th of Av.”

ZECHER L’CHURBAN

After *Tishah B’Av* and the morning of the 10th of Av, we are meant to cease our mourning, and concentrate on the aspect of comfort—in Halachah, it is forbidden to act beyond what is required in *aveilus* (mourning practices).

After the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, the *Chachamim* instituted that every joyous occasion should include a *zecher* (act of remembrance) for the *Churban*.²⁰⁰ As it states in *Tehillim*,²⁰¹ “If I forget you, Yerushalayim...if I do not go up to Yerushalayim at the beginning of my joyous occasion!”

197) 2:19

198) 3:13

199) See [#1433](http://www.asktherav.com)

200) See [#21227](http://www.asktherav.com) regarding our (non-)practice of placing ash on the groom’s forehead or mentioning the *possuk* quoted here under the *chuppah*.

201) 137:5,6

Other institutions by the *Chachamim* associated with remembrance: not to build palace-quality homes (in appearance and permanence), to refrain from plastering, painting, or papering the entire house when building or renovating, but to leave an unfinished area that is an *amah* square (about 1.5 feet) across the entry.²⁰² (It is not clear, *poskim* write, why this practice is not popular these days.)²⁰³

After the *Churban*, playing or listening to live music was restricted to occasions associated with a mitzvah. *Poskim* tell us that it is also allowed if the purpose is to heighten our emotional state in order to better serve Hashem, and according to some—to prevent depression. In general, this is a form of *zecher l'churban* that has been waived for many reasons today—but we should still be aware of the parameters of the strict letter of the law on this subject.²⁰⁴

Unrestrained levity and laughter, according to *Chachamim*, must likewise be curbed until the time in the future (the Final Redemption) when “then our mouths will be full of laughter.”²⁰⁵ (It should be noted, however, that it is recorded that the *Chachamim* rejoiced in the study of the prophecies of consolation.)

LAUGH AT LAST

In 5751, the Rebbe urged us²⁰⁶ to publicize everywhere that we are standing at the finish line, the culmination of all our efforts over thousands of years, and at the early stages of reaping the reward for all our collective suffering in *golus*. To acknowledge this reality, we must engage in matters associated with the days of Moshiach, beginning with learning Torah on topics related to Moshiach, *geulah* and the *Beis Hamikdash*, most essentially focusing on doing so with serenity, *simchah* and gladness of heart. We can achieve this level of peace and tranquility through organizing *simchah*-themed *farbrengens*, especially in connection with the joyful occasions of weddings and *sheva brachos*, which are a foretaste and a preparation to the fulfillment of the verse, “then (in the future era) our mouths will be full of laughter.” Now it begins, in our generation, in which its leader, the (Frierdiker) Rebbe embodies this theme—his second name being, “Yitzchak”, which means laughter and joy, and he is the **eighth** *Nasi* from the Baal Shem Tov, which is numerically equivalent to the Hebrew word *az* (אז)—“then...”, the first word of the verse mentioned above, and in a manner that we interpret this opening word not as a future occurrence, but in the present (**So**, our mouths will be filled...).

The Sheloh writes: The words of the Midrash that “in the future (*asidin*), the Jewish people will sing a song in the future to come (*l'asid lavo*),” mean that at that future time when they will be told the good news that the *geulah* is imminent, they will

202) Some maintain that this should be done in every room, though most *poskim* agree that this refers just to the main entrance to the home. The *zecher* must be styled and sized as described—other forms of downgrading the finish do not suffice.

203) See [#344](http://www.halacha2go.com); [#5498](http://www.asktherav.com)

204) For in-depth explanation and sources, see [#16544](http://www.asktherav.com)

205) Tehillim 126:2. See [#2799](http://www.asktherav.com). See Hebrew footnotes for more details and sources in Chassidus for this concept.

206) See the full message in *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, vol. 2, p. 808; this is but a short summary.

immediately begin to sing about the later future and the great miracles to come—in their strong faith it will be as if that which is in the future is already happening!

ANTICIPATION & JOY

In 5752, the Rebbe states²⁰⁷: At the time of the redemption from Egypt, the Midrash tells us that “**the righteous women of the generation were so confident** that Hashem would perform miracles for them that they (prepared and) took along instruments from *Mitzrayim*.”

So, too with regard to the redemption from our final *golus*, that the righteous Jewish women must be confident—and **surely they are confident**—that the complete and true Redemption is imminent, to the point that they are already beginning (in these last moments of *golus*) with **song** [in a footnote: obviously with the utmost *tznius*] **accompanied by tambourines and dancing, until the *geulah* actually arrives!**

Specifically: There is the requisite praying and beseeching Hashem that the *geulah* come right away to nullify the feeling of **pain and bitterness** (like [the leader of the women in Egypt who was herself called] Miriam, on account of the *mirrur* [bitterness]) for the length of our *golus*, which leads to expressing with a cry from deep within our hearts, “**Ad Masai** (How long)? **Ad Masai? Ad Masai?!**”

But together with this, they are also (and most essentially) filled with a feeling of **joy**, the greatest sort of joy that is expressed in song, because they are so firm in their trust that “Right away, he (*Melech Hamoshiach*) is coming” and that he has already come!

In a later *sichah*: With regard to the prayer for the true and complete Redemption (especially since we are at the point where “all end-times have passed” and we’ve completed all aspects of our *golus* work, as the [Friediker] Rebbe has assured us)—in addition to the sense of yearning, pining, and longing for the *geulah* up to this point, **now** we must also, and most importantly awaken a feeling of joy in the fact that the *geulah* is coming, practically, at this very moment!²⁰⁸

VISITING THE RUINS

There are various *pessukim* that are recited when seeing the actual vestiges of the *Churban*, in particular:

When viewing evidence of the cities of Yehudah from the time of the destruction²⁰⁹ say, בְּרוּךְ דֵּין הָאֶמֶת (without Hashem’s Name) and the verse: עָרֵי קְדֻשָּׁה הֵיוּ מְדִבָּר.²¹⁰ Then you make a small tear in your clothing (*kriah*, see below).

207) *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, p. 307

208) *Ibid.*, p. 320, see fn. 142: “for *simchah* breaks all boundaries, not only those associated with *golus* but also those that impose various limits (in the stages) of the coming *geulah*.”

209) “Surely many such places are evident even today between Lod and Yerushalayim,” the Rebbe writes in a letter.

210) *Yeshayahu* 64:9

When seeing the site of destruction in the Old City²¹¹ of Yerushalayim, say, בְּרוּךְ, דֵּין הָאֵמֶת (without Hashem's Name) and the remainder of the verse above: צִיּוֹן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם שְׁמָמָה, and tear an overgarment again.²¹²

Beholding the *makom Hamikdash* (the building site)—whether the *Kosel* or the dome, whichever is viewed first—say, בְּרוּךְ דֵּין הָאֵמֶת (without Hashem's Name) and then the verse following:

בֵּית קְדִישֵׁנוּ וְתַפְאֲרֹתֵנוּ אֲשֶׁר הִלְלוּךָ אֱבֹתֵינוּ הָיָה לְשִׁרְפָת אֵשׁ וְכָל מַחֲמַדֵּינוּ הָיָה לְחָרָבָה, and tear *kriah* again.

How do you tear *kriah*? You may start with a blade or scissors (a seam may be difficult to tear), but then **manually** extend the rip in your overshirt and/or jacket (but do not tear the *tallis katan* or undershirt) at least a *tefach* (more than 3 inches) in length. Do the ripping only while standing. (You may rent the same garment multiple times [see above], but leave a space of at least three finger-breadths [a bit less than a *tefach*] between each tear).

Kriah is performed even on those days when *Tachanun* is not recited. However, we never perform it on Shabbos or Yom Tov.

The rule is that someone who has not seen these sites within the past thirty days performs all the above. However, if they make return visits more often, they only tear *kriah* the first time, or when at least thirty days have elapsed since the last time.

A woman should also tear *kriah* when visiting these sites, but should first tear a garment from beneath her top layer and fasten it (with a pin or the like) and then do the same to the overgarment so as not to expose any skin she normally keeps covered for *tznius* reasons.

These halachos should not be taken lightly in modern-day Yerushalayim. In fact, the Rebbe has stated²¹³ that this has become even more important in recent times, to counter the (erroneous) statement that these practices no longer apply after the U.N. charter of 1948 (that established the state of Israel).

HOW SIMCHAH WORKS

"*Simchah* is directly related to the *Geulah*," the Rebbe says in 5748.²¹⁴ "The most complete joy ever will come with the true and complete redemption through Moshiach, for all negative things will be **nullified** to the point that 'Hashem

211) There is a difference of opinions regarding places in Yerushalayim outside the city walls.

212) If you visit Yerushalayim first, you do not tear again for other cities' rubble. See [#2553](http://www.asktherav.com) for other details and sources.

213) In 5717 (1957). See *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 15, p. 452. Also *Sichas Shabbos Hagadol* 5730. The Frierdiker Rebbe also said: "For the destruction of Yerushalayim (by the Romans), we must tear *kriah*; in the modern-day, 'rebuilt' Yerushalayim of theaters and the like, we may tear twice."

214) *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, vol. 2, p. 627

will erase the tears from every face.²¹⁵ Moreso, the actual negative experiences themselves will **transform into forces for positivity**, which will strengthen the *simchah* manifold in the most perfect way—‘a forever joy on their heads.’²¹⁶

This concept can be derived from the root of the word ‘*simchah*’ itself: שמחה. These three letters are also the root of Moshiach (משיח)...this leads to a unique opportunity and ask: **add in acts of *simchah* to bring Moshiach and the *geulah* in actuality.**

Let’s backtrack. Throughout the generations of *golus*, Jews yearned and prayed every single day for the coming of Moshiach; this longing and pining peaked among the holiest Jews and especially the *nesiim* (leaders). Many of them put their lives on the line to try to make it happen sooner (despite the warnings brought in our tradition about the danger of attempting to ameliorate the *golus* endtime), as is brought in *sefarim* of our history. Notwithstanding all these stories, no one came close to the *shturem*, tumult, the (Friediker) Rebbe made regarding the arrival of Moshiach—beginning with his famous announcement (*kol koreh*) published in *Hakriah Vehakedushah* over forty years ago²¹⁷: **‘Do teshuvah immediately, and be immediately redeemed!’** with an emphasis on the short timeline—right away, actually...

“Now, dozens of years have passed since the initial announcement and *shturem*, and Moshiach is still not here, and the question arises: ‘What must we accomplish that has not yet been done?’. I propose that the thing that has not yet been addressed in relation to bringing Moshiach is this: **Working on ourselves to pursue joy in order to bring Moshiach.** For, in addition to the fact that *simchah* breaks through all boundaries, including the limitations of *golus*, *simchah* has a special, practical relationship to bringing the *geulah*.

“What is this connection? As explained in the *Maamar Samach Tesamach*,²¹⁸ joy with which a mitzvah is performed can reach a higher source in G-dliness than the mitzvah itself, accessing the repository of the essential joy reserved for the Future Era. In previous generations, this joy was an accessory to the mitzvah performance, a result of the manner in which a person fulfilled their service to Hashem.

“In contrast, the type of *simchah* necessary to actually bring Moshiach focuses on the **joy itself** in its purest form; **effort expended on attaining absolute joy** on the level that will make Moshiach’s coming a reality.

“The bottom line in all this, and the practical directive: **Go out and announce that the call of the hour is to add in joy with the express intention of bringing Moshiach.** Surely, through this we will bring Moshiach in actuality, with the greatest alacrity, not lagging even for the momentary blink of an eye—**try it, and see it prove itself!**

215) Yeshayahu 25:8

216) Yeshayahu 35:10

217) Now, eighty!

218) Recited by the Rebbe Rashab in 5657 on the occasion of the Friediker Rebbe’s wedding.

FRIDAY, EREV SHABBOS PARSHAS V'ESCHANAN, 14 MENACHEM AV**PRE-SHABBOS PREPS**

For *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*,²¹⁹ we read *Parshas V'eschanan*.

Candle lighting is at **7:44 pm** (18 minutes before sunset).

SHABBOS PARSHAS V'ESCHANAN, 15 MENACHEM AV**Shabbos Nachamu****THE DAY OF BREAKING THE AX**

“There were no Yomim Tovim for the Jews as the 15th of Av (and Yom Kippur).”

This day celebrates: (1) the day on which the deaths of the Jews in the wilderness was known to have ceased. (2) the day on which the members of different tribes were permitted to intermarry with the other tribes after the land was completely divided (3) the day that the tribe of Benjamin was permitted to enter the congregation of the Jewish people after the tragedy of *Pilegish Begiv'ah* (4) the day on which King Hoshea canceled the guards that Yeravam ben Nevat had placed on the roads to Yerushalayim (to prevent Jews from ascending there) (5) the day that those slain during the fall of Beitar were brought to burial (6) the day “of the breaking of the ax” when they would annually stop chopping down trees for the arrangement of wood that burned on the *mizbei'ach*.

The Gemara (at the end of Taanis) states: “From the 15th of Av the sun’s strength wanes ... from thereon, he who increases, will add.” Rashi explains: From the 15th of Av some of the (hours of the lengthened) nights are added to the (hours of the shortened) days in order to increase in Torah-study—and a person thereby adds life to his lifespan.” It is likewise brought in Halachah that, “One should begin studying by night from the 15th of Av onward,”²²⁰ and “From the 15th of Av a person should add bit by bit.”²²¹

HAPPIEST OF ALL

An ancient custom among Jewish girls from Yerushalayim, (and perhaps even nation-wide) was to go out and dance in the vineyards in order to cultivate *shidduchim*, in celebration of this date. The Rebbe elaborates and explains the significance of this practice and its connection to the 15th of Av in various *sichos*.²²²

In 5751,²²³ the Rebbe quotes the Mishnah, “there were no *yomim tovim* like the 15th

219) See details of this practice above in the entry for Friday, 18 Tammuz—including *Haftorah* information.

220) Rema, *Yoreh Deah* 246:23

221) Alter Rebbe’s *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 8:8

222) See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1336; *ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 261; *ibid.*, vol. 24, p. 57. The description of this practice begs an explanation with regard to the laws of *tznius*. See [#5406](http://www.asktherav.com) and [#6166](http://www.asktherav.com).

223) *Sefer Hasichos*, vol. 2, p. 735

of Av,” and elaborates: This *simchah* was greater than the special “appointed joyful times” of the Three Festivals, greater than the *ad delo yada* high of Purim, and of the jubilation of Simchas Torah in previous years.

Kabbalas Shabbos: In *Lecha Dodi* we say *gam berinah* as on a regular Shabbos.

FULLY SPECIAL

Pri Etz Chaim states, “On the 15th of Av, the moon is full.” It is the moon’s fullness and perfection that is the essence of the date’s specialty, as is discussed in various *maamarim*, and the different events that are celebrated on this day all result from this essential quality.

In the Tzemach Tzedek’s notes on *Megillas Eichah*, it discusses how on every 15th of the month the moon is full, but on the 15th of the month of Av, we can appreciate an even greater level of this perfection. This is because the more extreme the “waning”, the more epic the “waxing”—i.e., the tragedies that make up the beginning of this month that culminate in *Tishah B’Av* cause the consequent leap in growth of the middle of this month to be highest of all. This concept is elaborated in many *maamarim* of the Rebbeim.

FARBRENGEN, WEDDING-STYLE

The Rebbe says²²⁴: It is fitting to arrange a great *farbrengen* for men, women and children, in every location and amidst profound joy—to the extent of holding a festive meal. We should deliver words of Torah during these gatherings, and better yet, hold a *siyum* on a tractate.

During the gathering, each person should encourage the other to increase in Torah-study, both in the revealed and inner aspects of Torah. This addition in Torah is also applicable to women, specifically in the laws that are relevant to them—as well as to children, particularly those spending the summer in camp.

At this *farbrengen*, caution is needed when drinking so it should not cloud the intellect... On the other hand a person **should** take some hard drink, “which gladdens G-d and man.” It is simply that the drink should be of very small quantity and accompanied by all the relevant restrictions.

We should also then give *tzedakah* and make positive resolutions to increase in all aspects of Torah, mitzvos, and in all good matters in the spirit of “the Jews had no festivals like the 15th of Av.” It should be an extremely great joy, like that of a wedding, which is connected to the great rejoicing and Yom Tov of the 15th of Av (“when the daughters of Jerusalem [or daughters of Israel] would go forth ... and dance in the vineyards ...”).

Farbrengens should greatly abound; at the onset of the day, during the day, at the day’s conclusion and the subsequent night – and continue during the following days too! If necessary the *farbrengen* could be made up on the following Shabbos.... Even those who have already held a *farbrengen*, yet are unsure whether it fulfilled the

²²⁴) In various *sichos* from 5749 - 5751. See, for example, *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, pp. 721ff.

requirements or if there was room to accomplish more, should solve their dilemma with this simple solution: Hold another *farbrengen* **immediately** in a far greater manner than the first!

TORAH FIRST

“We should all do our part,” the Rebbe says in 5749, “in ensuring that already at the very beginning of the 15th of Av it will be recognizable that the Jews had no festivals like the 15th of Av”; it is explained in Halachah that from the 15th and onward there should be an increase in Torah-study.

On other occasions²²⁵, the Rebbe adds: The instruction of our Sages that, “from the 15th of Av and onward the nights are lengthened to be used for Torah-study, which increases a person’s life,” should be announced and publicized in every location.

We should begin our “announcing and publicizing” of the above message with ourselves; we should set an example by adding in the quantity and quality of our own Torah-study—and to likewise encourage our household and every Jew we can inspire to follow suit. Together with publicizing the above statement regarding increasing our Torah-study, we should also emphasize the remainder of our Sages’ statement: that “thereby life is added to his lifespan.” The Jewish people will thus be encouraged to devote themselves to Torah-study in the manner of “all my limbs declare” ([the praise of G-d, i.e., to study with our entire being), with depth and delightful enjoyment!

What about one who has reached the age 120? Why, through now adding in Torah-study, he extends the length and goodness of his days until **180** – like the lifespan of Yitzchak! After all, 180 is the fitting lifespan for our forefathers and thereby all Jews.

We all already have a fixed schedule for Torah-study; it is nevertheless certain that Hashem grants us the ability to further **increase** our Torah-study—and our task is simply to reveal and draw this ability into actuality.

We should specifically utilize the instruction to increase in Torah from the 15th of Av by making **public** Torah sessions. New sessions should be established where there were none before, and those that previously existed should be expanded and bolstered.

TORAH AGAIN & AGAIN

There are numerous levels within the directive to add in our study of Torah, the Rebbe explains,²²⁶ each higher than the previous. In general, we should perform our regular Divine service in a manner of continuous ascent, including completely **innovative** ascents; therefore, when the Sages specifically **instruct us** to increase in connection with a particular occasion (such as the 15th of Av), it obviously refers to an increase that is totally irregular, i.e., an **incomparable** increase!

225) in 5749 & 5750

226) in 5748

If you have concerns regarding your livelihood, resolve not to allow these worries to distract you from increasing Torah-study. The very act of making such a resolution will **itself** cause Hashem to bless you so that you should have no concerns from the outset—and that you will be able to study Torah amidst spiritual and physical tranquility! Especially seeing that every Jewish person rightfully ought to receive this according to the law and Halachah, in a manner “like the meal of Shlomo in his time” (who had a vast wealth), and even more than that... with length of days and goodly years amidst a healthy body and soul!

ON THE HIGH-DOWN

“What is the greatness of the 15th of Av?” The Rebbe asks in 5748. “The advantage this Yom Tov holds over any other Yom Tov is that it comes on the heels of an extremely severe decline—the destruction and exile of the 9th of Av. The purpose of the entire *golus*-descent is merely to facilitate a subsequent ascent—the very greatest of ascents—namely, the true and complete redemption through Moshiach.”

REDEMPTION, FINALLY

In 5751, the Rebbe stated²²⁷: From what has been said previously about emphasizing the subject of Redemption (especially) at this time, emerges the absolutely incredible: **how is it possible that notwithstanding all these things - we have not yet accomplished the coming of our righteous Moshiach in actual reality?!... something completely beyond comprehension!**

Equally incredible, is that when ten (and many times ten) Jews gather together, and in a worthy time with regard to Redemption, and nevertheless, they don't create an uproar to cause the coming of Moshiach immediately and instantly, and it's not inconceivable to them, G-d forbid, that Moshiach won't come this night, and also tomorrow our righteous Moshiach won't come and also the day after tomorrow our righteous Moshiach won't come, G-d forbid!

Also, when they cry, “*Ad Mosai*” (Until when will we remain in exile?)—it's because they were told to. If they meant it and desired it and cried **sincerely**, with absolute certainty Moshiach would have already come!

What more can I do so that all the children of Israel should create an uproar and cry sincerely and cause Moshiach to come in reality, since all that was done until now, **has had no effect**, and the proof is, that we find ourselves still in exile, and most essentially, an inner exile in Divine service.

The only thing I am able to do - is to turn the matter [over] to you: **do everything in your ability** - things that are in the nature of lights of *Tohu*, but, in vessels of *Tikun* **to actually bring our righteous Moshiach immediately, instantly, in reality.**

And may it be His will that ultimately ten Jews will be found who are “obstinate” enough to obligate themselves to move G-d, and certainly G-d will be moved - as it is written, “Because it is a stiff-necked people (to their benefit, and therefore) You will pardon our iniquity and our sin and take us for Your inheritance” - to actually

227) *Sefer Hasichos*, p. 474; translation from the book *Besuros Hageulah* compiled by Rabbi H. Greenberg.

bring the true and complete Redemption immediately, instantly, in reality.

And in 5752²²⁸: The concept of “All the days of your life to bring about the days of Moshiach” expresses that immediately when the essence of the soul awakens (thus revealing the essence, and only the essence, of its existence), it feels in the very air it **breathes** the concept of Moshiach, **the air of Moshiach**, or in the words of our Sages of blessed memory, “**the spirit** of King Moshiach.”

It can be suggested that the “air (spirit) of Moshiach” is even higher than “the light of Moshiach,” because **the light** of Moshiach indicates **the revelation** of Moshiach through **his actions** (such as “he will fight the wars of G-d” until “he is victorious,” etc.). However **the air** of Moshiach indicates the essence (the very life) of Moshiach. That is, [this refers to] the revelation of **his existence** (from his earlier status as a leader) as the King Moshiach. And after the revelation of **his existence** (air that is incomparable to the light of Moshiach) begins the revelation that all can see through **his activity** (light of Moshiach).

Accordingly, it can be understood that the main innovation in the coming of Moshiach is the revelation of **his existence** (“**I found** Dovid my servant”), because all the details that follow (his public revelation through his activities to redeem Israel, and everything concerned with the days of Moshiach) come **as a consequence** of the revelation of his existence, **and are included in it**.

KRIAS HATORAH

Aseres Hadibros: In the reading of the Torah, the second rendition of the *Aseres Hadibros* is read as part of the weekly *parshah*. The congregation stands for the reading and each person faces the *sefer Torah*.

Haftorah: In the seven weeks from this Shabbos (directly following *Tishah B'Av*) until Rosh Hashanah, seven portions from the *Navi* are read, each one offering consolation for the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* (*Sheva D'nechemata*) by prophesying and promising its rebuilding (may it be speedily). The first, this week, from Yeshayahu, begins *Nachamu, Nachamu*.

Q & A

Each week of the seven, the consolements increase in intensity as the Jewish people beseech Hashem for more comfort—the previous portion having been insufficient. According to the Avudraham, the seven consecutive prophecies can be read as an ongoing conversation between Hashem and the *Yidden*, answering and requesting, respectively:

“**Nachamu, Nachamu ami**,” Hashem tells the *Neviim* in Week One of the seven. “Go and comfort My people.”

“These assurances of the *Neviim* do not assuage us,” the Jewish people reply. As Week Two begins, **Vatomer Tzion, azavani Hashem**—“Hashem has forsaken me!”

²²⁸) *Sefer Hasichos*, p. 131, and *Ibid*.

The *Neviim* return to Hashem and say, “The Jewish people have not been reconciled by our assurances.” In Week Three we find verse, ***Aniyah so’arah lo nuchamah***, “poor and tempestuous, she is not comforted!”

“Alright,” Hashem finally responds in Week Four, ***Anochi, anochi, Hu menachemchem***—I myself, will go and comfort them!”

The Maharil writes, “This Shabbos immediately following *Tishah B’Av* is *Shabbos Nachamu*, when the entire nation can rejoice in their trust of the true consolation of Moshiach’s coming.”

We do not say *Av Harachamim*.

Bigger Seudah: It is customary to make a special *seudah* on the Shabbos following *Tishah B’Av*; today is comparable to *Yom Tov* and is a day of consolation. Our celebration should therefore exceed the rest of the *Shabbosim* of the year. Someone who does so merits experiencing the ultimate consolation of the rebuilding of the third *Beis Hamikdash*.

WHAT JOY IS TODAY

“Earlier, we spoke about the greatness of the Shabbos, *Shabbos Nachamu*,” the Rebbe says in 5737.²²⁹ “That is represents a double consolation (for in the *possuk* it says, *Nachamu* twice) for we are emerging from the mourning of *Tishah B’Av* and we are also approaching the 15th of *Av*, a day of celebration that comes directly after *Tishah B’Av* (and is therefore a study of contrasts) —a day about which the Mishnah says, ‘The Jewish people did not have any *yomim tovim* comparable to the 15th of *Av*...’

“Now, it is true that we can say, ‘Nothing remains nowadays from the original celebration of the 15th of *Av* other than a *minhag* that we do not say *Tachanun*’... However, understandably, we must not minimize the greatness inherent specifically in a *minhag Yisrael*; this is something on par with *Hakafos*, which is also a *minhag*. We know how great a level *Hakafos* can achieve (it is the apex of an entire month of *Tishrei* holidays!), and our celebration of the 15th of *Av* in our days can have the same advantage.

“So what is it about the 15th of *Av*, that it is associated with such high levels of joy, to the point of actual dancing, as it states, ‘The daughters of Israel would go out and dance...?’ We know that dance represents an outstanding level of joy (affecting the very extremities of those rejoicing). Within dance, we can achieve a more limited range of movement and joy, but there is a type of dancing that is completely without bounds as well. How can a person, who has physical limitations, dance in a manner that is without limits at all? This is where the circle dance comes in (a form which has no beginning or end) —here we can achieve a kind of dancing that is completely boundless.

“One of the innovations of *Chassidim* is that they sing—and even dance—on Shabbos (even in *golus*), so let us sing together a *niggun*, perhaps *Lechatchilah*

229) *Roshei Devarim of Sichas Shabbos Nachamu*, 15th of *Av*

Ariber, or *Ufaratzta*, or another wordless *niggun* in a manner that is out of bounds. And not in a way that ‘their heart is insincere,’ that while singing, the mind is full of business matters, dollar signs and schemes. Put your whole self into the singing for just the few minutes that we are singing and don’t think stray thoughts. Everyone can escape their inner *golus* (limitations) instead of wallowing in the mud, as in the (Friediker) Rebbe’s famous parable.

“And from the state that is iterated in the *maamar* earlier on the verse, “If you do not know (of your own worth)...²³⁰ we should reach the point of *ad d’lo yada*—a joy that cannot differentiate (between Haman and Mordechai), beyond all limitations and bounds.²³¹

ON THE PRECIPICE

“We are, today, experiencing *Shabbos Nachamu*,” the Rebbe says in 5748,²³² “It is in close proximity to the Yom Tov of the 15th of Av, and therefore an extremely opportune time to rectify the whole concept of the *Churban* and subsequent *golus*. In addition (and once adding, let’s add more), let us strengthen ourselves even more in our efforts to hurry up the *geulah*, adding one act and another to hasten Moshiach’s coming, actually, *mamash!*

“Specifically (what should we do?)—Let us add in learning Torah (‘add the nights to the days to be fully occupied in Torah’), in both its hidden and revealed aspects, for ‘learning is the greatest as it leads to action’ and also in a more precise and elevated performance of the mitzvos, including, especially, *tzedakah*, which is equal to all other mitzvos.

“In simple words: First, everyone must do their own personal accounting internally with regard to Torah learning, giving *tzedakah* and the performance of all mitzvos in general, whether or not their Divine service is not lacking, on a level as is required according to the letter of the law. Even after achieving some sort of faultlessness, having filled in all that was missing, do not suffice with this, but add more—in both quality and quantity!

(Here, in a footnote, the Rebbe adds: For example, in learning Torah, add both time and material—covering more ground and delving deeper. In *tzedakah*, add in the amount given and also attitude by giving more graciously, and also [in a more permanent way] by upping the percentage—if before you gave *maaser* [10], now give *chomesh* [20], or even more than *chomesh*.)

“The increase should further proliferate (and then grow and grow even more) throughout this time of *Shiva D’nechemata* (extending until Rosh Hashanah, when the new year will bring a new lifeforce even greater than this). So this is not a one-time addition, but an incremental growth from one day to the next throughout this seven-week period.

“It is very clear that we are the last generation of *golus* and the first of *geulah*—

230) Shir Hashirim 1:8

231) The end of the *sichah* is not on record.

232) *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, vol. 2, pp. 581 ff.

similar to those who were on the brink of entering Eretz Yisrael following when, on the 15th of Av (in the fortieth year in the desert), the punishment of those who perished in the desert ceased²³³ so that those who were present were perfectly ready to enter the Land. It is they who are designated in this week's *parshah* as 'all of you, alive today!'²³⁴

"Therefore, being so very close to the 15th of Av, a day that emphasizes how very imminently *golus* will be over, where we are in the 'desert of the nations' but 'ready to enter the Land' (and this time) for a *geulah* that will be forever without any exile to ever follow again, we must put special attention on those extra acts connected with the *geulah*'s imminence, including, especially, anticipating, requesting and praying for *geulah* (as, in the *parshah*, Moshe entreated Hashem no less than **515 tefillos** to try to enter Eretz Yisrael and effectuate the Final Redemption)!"

"Each one of us must make this personal accounting internally: What have I accomplished thus far in expediting the *geulah*?! Think of this, especially, while envisioning how Moshiach is standing and waiting with bated breath to come redeem *Yidden* after everyone completes the acts dependent on them to hasten his arrival. Since Moshiach himself in all his glory is standing and awaiting your action, it becomes apparent how great the responsibility—and also the tremendous merit—that lies in you!"

DOUBLE & DOUBLE

The Rebbe says in 5749²³⁵: The *Haftorah* of *Nachamu, Nachamu*, a double consolation, is the first—and head—of seven weeks of consolation, therefore containing within it an aspect that is **higher** than all the others. It is then drawn into the weeks that follow, that they too are doubled. Inherent in this is the level of consolation that is higher than any other—the *nechamah* sourced in the very essence of Hashem. How do we create a **kli** (container) to accept this level, that it should be drawn down and revealed, practically contained? We achieve this by a Divine service that incorporates **twice** the effort, both personally and in our acts that affect others—each one doubled.

SHABBOS AFTERNOON

We do not recite *Tzidkascha* during Minchah

Pirkei Avos: Following the custom to repeat the cycle of the Mishnah in Avos throughout the summer, this week we say *Perek Daled* (Chapter 4).²³⁶

Shabbos ends at **8:46pm**

233) This is the first of a series of positive occurrences on the 15th of Av and an aspect of its celebration.

234) Devarim 4:4

235) *Sefer Hasichos* 5749, vol. 2, pp. 629 ff.

236) We do not enunciate Hashem's name in the incomplete *pessukim* found in the Mishnah (see entry for *Shabbos Parshas Pinchas*). This week, the verses that this applies to are as follows. In Mishnah 3: starting with *Vayidaber elai*; Mishnah 7: *Elokim nitzav* and *b'kerev Elokim*, also *Az Nedabru*; Mishnah 14: *Ki b'tzelem and Banim atem*.

Practical Guide for a Safe and Chassidish Summer

INCLUDING HALOCHOS AND MINHAGEI CHABAD
RELEVANT TO TRAVELING, TRIPS, AND IN THE COUNTRY¹

TRAVELING TO THE COUNTRY

WHEN TO TRAVEL

Many laws come into play when going to the country, from the moment one embarks on his journey. Some of these considerations are presented below:

1. Chazal teach us that “one should always set out on a trip at a good hour,” meaning that he should invest considerable effort into leaving during daylight hours. Although there may be justification for leniency in this matter in modern society, the darkened country roads and added difficulty in reading signs make this particularly relevant for those traveling to the country.

2. One who plans to set off early in the morning must first pray if the time for *Shacharis* has arrived. This law appears unique to *Shacharis*, not to *Minchah* or to *Ma’ariv*. There seems to be justification for leaving before praying if the alternative would entail sitting in heavy traffic, provided one has already recited *birchos hashachar*.

If there is no *minyan* at one’s present location but there will be a *minyan* at his destination, he should delay praying if he is certain to arrive in time for *Shacharis*.

If one has already set out on his trip and will arrive at his destination before the

¹) by Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun shlita, member of the Badatz of Crown Heights.

This is in addition to THE SUMMER BUTTERFLY: It’s In Our Hands 5771, From the Desk of Badatz Vol. 3, Summer 5772 and Summer Halachos & Minhagim 5773.

For a more complete compendium, additional information, and extensive references, please see the Hebrew version, and AskTheRav.com.

It is important for those who spend the summer in the country to learn the laws that are especially relevant to their situation. It is also important to contact a Rav should any queries arise. The Badatz can be reached on 718.604.8000, or www.AskTheRav.com.

time for *Shacharis* expires, it is preferable that he delay praying until he arrives rather than praying while seated in a vehicle.

One should not plan to spend his vacation in a location where no *minyan* exists, unless it is required for health reasons or similar significant concerns.

3. When setting out on a Friday one must leave plenty of time to arrive well in advance of Shabbos, bearing in mind the possibility of considerable traffic delays. This is the case only if his Shabbos requirements will be prepared for him by others at his destination. If, however, he will have to make his own preparations upon arrival, he must leave with plenty of time to arrive and to prepare.

HOW TO TRAVEL

1. Out of *ahavas yisrael* and as an act of kindness, one should inform others of his travel plans to and from the country so that others can join him if they share the same destination. (He is not obligated to do so if it will cause him financial loss.)

2. In consideration of the Torah obligation to protect oneself from harm, he should take all standard precautionary measures. For example, the vehicle should be fit for travel and contain sufficient gas for the trip. Both driver and passengers should wear their seatbelts. A map or GPS should be brought along for trips through unfamiliar territory.

A driver has an obligation to drive safely and to ensure that he remains alert on long trips. The Rebbe advised stopping once an hour on long trips to refresh oneself and remain alert. The Rebbe repeatedly advised placing *seforim* such as a *chitas* in the car, as well as a *tzedakah* box, for added protection.

3. One must avoid potential situations of *yichud* while travelling. This is especially important while travelling at night or alongside country roads that do not have pedestrian traffic.

General laws of *yichud*: It is forbidden for a woman or girl over the age of *bas mitzvah* to remain alone in a state of *yichud* with a man or boy over the age of nine. Similarly, it is forbidden for a man or teenager over the age of *bar mitzvah* to remain in a state of *yichud* with a girl over the age of three. *Yichud* applies even there is one man and two or more women. The reverse, when there are two or more men and one woman is not necessarily *yichud*, depending on circumstances. The laws of *yichud* are extensive, and one is advised to consult a *Rav* regarding any situation that may involve *yichud*.

In *Sefer Ha-Sichos* 5751, the Rebbe advised: "A Jewish woman or girl must be careful about traveling in a car or taxi driven by a male where the issue of *yichud* may apply. There is much halachic debate on this topic and in cases such as these one should clarify the relevant details with a *Rav*."

WHILE TRAVELLING

1. When travelling beyond city limits, one must recite *tefillas ha-derech*. If easily achievable he should stand to recite the blessing. The obligation to stand depends on circumstance, as illustrated by the fact that when the Rebbe Rashab would travel in a horse drawn carriage he would pray while seated. In such a setting, the obligation is to stop moving rather than to actually stand. While traveling by train, however, the Rebbe Rashab would pray while standing.

Tefillas ha-derech should be recited during the actual journey, but not before exiting the city limits. People say that on the Rebbe's trip to Camp Gan Israel he recited the blessing after exiting the Tappan Zee Bridge, which crosses the Hudson River. According to some authorities, when headed upstate one should recite the blessing after exiting the George Washington Bridge.

2. If for some reason one is forced to stop and pray (*Shacharis*, *Minchah*, or *Ma'ariv*) along the roadside he should preferably avoid praying in the open. Rather, he should pray among trees, next to a wall, beside his vehicle, and the like. He should also make certain that the location in which he prays is suitable from a standpoint of *tzni'us*. He should dress appropriately for prayer, wearing a hat and jacket and a *gartel*, and so on, as required by *halachah*.

3. If one encounters a fellow Jew whose car is stuck or broken down it is an important *mitzvah* to stop and do everything possible to assist him, and not to leave him alone on the roadside.

VACATION DESTINATIONS

1. One must plan a vacation in a location that is in keeping with the spirit of Judaism and Chassidus. Rather than finding a place that is suitable for his body, he must find a place that is also (and more importantly) suitable for his soul. This includes determining in advance the identities of those with whom he will be vacationing. As the Rambam writes, "By man's very nature his outlook and actions will be influenced by his friends and acquaintances."

IN THE COUNTRY

MATTERS OF TIMING

1. There is usually a difference in the *halachic* times between New York City and Upstate New York. One must be careful to rely on a calendar or device that is accurate for his current location. It is important to know the precise times of sunrise, sunset, nightfall, etc., for the sake of Shabbos and many other laws.

2. One must be vigilant to recite the *Shema* by the proper time each morning. This is especially pertinent while on vacation when many are accustomed to rising later than usual.

One who notices a fellow Jew asleep when the deadline for reciting the *Shema* is coming close, is obligated to wake him up to recite the *Shema*.

PRAYER AND ITS PREPARATIONS

1. One should try to immerse in a *mikveh* before praying *Shacharis*.

A *mikveh* of *mayin she'uvim* (such as a pool) can be used for this purpose as long as its waters are stationary, not flowing, and they are not contained in some form of vessel, but in a pool that is permanently set in the earth. Therefore, one should confirm that the filter is off while immersing.

If neither a *mikveh* nor a pool is available, one may make do with pouring nine *kabim* of water over himself in a continuous stream that reaches every part of his body. The definition of nine *kabim* varies greatly, ranging from 2.8 gallons to 4 gallons. Up to three water containers may be used, as long as the stream is truly continuous. A shower may be used for this purpose (some estimate that at least a three minute shower is necessary). If one has used either of the above methods, but later has access to a proper *mikveh*, he should immerse in the *mikveh*.

2. If there is a *minyan* available within the distance of one *mil* from where one is vacationing he must travel that distance to join the *minyan*. A *mil* is approximately an 18 minute journey. (Some authorities estimate this as a 24 minute journey. There is also some debate over whether this applies to travel by foot or by vehicle. Some say that there is no limit at all if the *minyan* is in his city.)

3. When one is traveling and has his *tallis* and *tefillin* in the car he should keep them out of direct sunlight so that they are not damaged by the heat.

TORAH STUDY

1. Each person is obligated to establish times for studying Torah during the day and in the evening, as required by *Shulchan Aruch*. The precise extent of the obligation varies, as explained in *Hilchos Talmud Torah*. One who maintains a fixed study session throughout the year is required to continue it during vacation. In fact, the vacation is an opportune time to greatly increase his Torah study.

One also has a Torah obligation (*mitzvas asei d'oraisa*) to teach Torah to his children. The Torah study of young children may not be interrupted even for the sake of building the *Beis HaMikdash*. In his *sichos* the Rebbe repeatedly insisted that Torah schools should not close during summer months, using the term "G-d forbid." It is therefore extremely important to maintain a regular schedule of study with one's children. In fact, doing so while on vacation will impress upon the children the true importance of Torah study.

2. In addition, for the sake of *tzni'us* and *kedusha*, one should avoid books (or websites) with mundane or lowly material. Similarly, it is extremely important to avoid places such as theaters.

THINGS TO NOTE

1. One must avoid placing himself in danger by wandering along roads and paths that are not adequately lit where passing drivers may not clearly see the pedestrians. He should take all necessary precautions, such as wearing light colored or reflective clothing.
2. One should not forget the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va-eim* while vacationing. He should make it a point of contacting his parents periodically to inquire about their wellbeing, etc.
3. Serious issues of *yichud* may occur in vacation settings. One should study the appropriate laws in advance and also bear in mind the warning in *Avos* against a man and a woman engaging in excessive chatter with each other.
4. The laws of *tzni'us* apply to men as well. The Rebbe placed great emphasis on this obligation and took the unusual step of including a **bold typed warning** in *Likkutei Sichos* regarding this issue (see vol. 13, page 84).

PURCHASING FOOD

THE VENDOR

1. One should try, wherever possible, to buy food products from a Jewish storeowner. This law applies throughout the year, but has become especially relevant in vacation spots, where although Jewish food stores exist, people prefer to patronize larger, brand name stores.

This requirement applies even if the Jewish store is slightly further away than the non-Jewish store, and even if it is slightly more expensive. However, if the difference is significant there is no obligation to shop in the Jewish store.

KASHRUS

1. One should make certain that the *kashrus* meets the standards which our community adheres to throughout the year. He must check whether each product has an appropriate *hechsher*. Often an unsuitable product will be packaged in a manner similar to a familiar product. Some goods are marketed with a *hechsher* only in particular areas, such as in the religious sections of Brooklyn, while these identical products appear elsewhere without a *hechsher* because they were not produced on the company's *kosher* production lines.
2. One must be especially cautious when patronizing a restaurant. He must check whether the establishment carries a *mehudar'dige hechsher*. This is even more

critical when purchasing milk, meat, or fish products, or wine. Ensure that the restaurant's certificate of *kashrus* has been issued for that particular location and has not expired. In addition, one should ensure that the *mashgiach* is supervising as necessary and is alert to check vegetable leaves for bugs, and so on.

ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS

1. In a kosher hotel, milk-based foods are sometimes served within six hours of having served meat-based dishes. A hotel relies on its customers to keep track of their own *kashrus* obligations. One must keep this in mind and maintain the appropriate time between meat and milk.
2. Bread that was on the table during a meat-based meal may not be eaten during a subsequent milk-based meal, and vice versa.
3. Before choosing a hotel or restaurant one must determine whether the standards of *tzni'us* in those locations are appropriate.

TRIPS

One should prepare everything that is required in advance of a trip or hike to ensure compliance with halachah. This applies to the overall choice of destination as well as the details of the trip. The following should be taken into consideration:

EATING

1. One must prepare in advance a *kosher* utensil for washing the hands, a towel, bread, salt, a text from which to recite *birchas ha-mazon*, and so on.
2. One should not wash his hands from a disposable cup or container unless there is nothing else available. If that is the case one should designate a particular disposable cup for hand washing, giving it a semblance of permanency in this regard.

If there is no water available for washing one's hands he should travel to find water. If this requires him to backtrack, he must travel at least as far as 18 minutes (or 24 minutes according to some authorities). If he is required to advance along his intended route in order to find water he must travel at least 72 minutes until he finds water.

One may immerse his hands in the sea for this purpose. However, he may not remove water from the sea and wash his hands with a basin containing sea water, because its salty water is not considered fit for even a dog to drink. He may use rainwater that has gathered directly in the ground provided that it contains a measure of 40 *sa'ah* and that the water is stationary, not flowing. A spring or river is kosher for immersing one's hands, even though the water isn't stationary. It does not require 40 *sa'ah*, and it is sufficient if there is enough

water in one place to completely cover his hands. He may not immerse his hands in a pond or puddle that was filled with water

It is necessary to immerse one's hands only one time. He must examine his hands first to ensure that there is nothing on his hands that would prevent the water from fully reaching his hands. He does not have to dry his hands, nor raise them. He should recite the blessing for immersion, "*Baruchal shtifas yadayim.*" If he has already recited *al netilas yadayim* or *al tevilas yadayim*, he need not recite another blessing.

One should not use liquids other than water for this purpose (this is particularly important according to Kabbalah). If water cannot be found at all, he may use liquids that are primarily comprised of water, such as tea, coffee, or soft drinks. It would seem that soda may be considered actual water for this purpose. However, he may not use natural fruit juices, milk or wine.

If one does not have a towel, he may not dry his hands on his clothing (an act that is considered to cause forgetfulness). Any material that dries may be used. He may not wait until his hands dry by themselves; he needs to find something with which to wipe them dry.

Some prefer to wash their hands and eat some bread before setting out on a trip, avoiding the difficulty of finding water during the trip. This works only as long as one remembers to keep his hands away from unclean places or objects. The best prevention against this is to wear gloves. He must also remember to recite *birchas ha-mazon* within the time it takes for the bread to be digested, i.e., before he again feels significantly hungry, since after that he may not recite *birchas ha-mazon*.

3. When eating outdoors one should take care not to leave containers or plates uncovered to prevent flies and insects from getting into the food. Before he eats something he should check that nothing has fallen into it.

4. Rambam states that one can discern a wise person from his actions—from his eating and drinking and other activities. One must continue acting thus even while on vacation. This is especially important if the absence of such behavior will cause a *chillul Hashem*.

ANIMAL ATTRACTIONS

1. While visiting an animal attraction such as a petting zoo, and also when encountering animals in their natural habitat in the countryside, one must take care to avoid causing harm or pain to any creature—the Torah prohibition of *tza'ar ba'alei chayim*.

2. One should not go fishing for fun, but only if he intends to eat the fish he catches (as long as they turn out to be kosher). There is some debate as to whether one is permitted to catch fish and kill them immediately. Certainly, he should not choose to do so in the first place.

3. One is permitted to kill creatures that cause him pain, such as mosquitoes. Even so, he should not go out of his way to find them in order to kill them for no reason.

The Alter Rebbe writes that one should personally trouble himself to rescue any living creature that is in distress. Indeed, some *tzaddikim* would not harm a creature even if it caused them pain. The Rebbe records that the Rebbe Rashab would gently wave away mosquitoes but he would never kill them. The Rebbe Rayatz records the now familiar story of a boy named Yitzchak Shaul, which teaches us the great importance of avoiding causing harm to any living creature.

SWIMMING

1. Every pool, well, pit, and other potentially hazardous place must be adequately and securely fenced in from all sides so that no one falls in or is harmed, G-d forbid. This is included in the Torah obligation (*mitzvas asei d'oraisa*) to erect a fence around an accessible roof.

2. A child or adult who cannot swim well should not enter deep water under circumstances that may put him in danger. No child may be left in or beside a pool or any other place of potential danger without a lifeguard or an adequate adult supervisor.

3. Swimming is good for one's health. Nevertheless, one should not indulge excessively in swimming for pleasure's sake. This is reflected in the story in the Gemara about Rabbi Elazar ben Arach who indulged in swimming and other pleasures in excess and lost his vast Torah knowledge. The Rebbe repeatedly refers to this story as a lesson that if something like that could happen to one of the greatest sages, then common people such as ourselves must surely avoid indulging excessively in bodily pleasures, even healthy ones.

4. Needless to say, *halachah* applies even to an indoor swimming pool. It is more than obvious that girls and boys should not swim together at the same time in a pool. It is forbidden in the strictest terms for a boy over the age of nine and a girl over the age of three to swim in a pool at the same time. It is prudent to avoid having girls over the age of three and boys over the age of five swim together. In fact, it is correct to avoid having even younger boys and girls swim together or even to stand and watch while the others swim. It is therefore preferable to maintain separate swimming hours.

5. Men and boys should be supervised by a male lifeguard, and women and girls should be supervised by a female lifeguard. There is no *heter* for a man to serve as a lifeguard for girls. Under **extremely** pressing circumstances and when there is no other option, a *Rav* should be consulted as precisely how to proceed. The same applies for a woman lifeguard overseeing boys—a *Rav* should be consulted for guidance if this is necessary under pressing circumstances.

LAWS FOR SHABBOS

EREV SHABBOS

1. Spider webs such as those found upon entering a vacation bungalow at the start of a summer should be removed before—and not during—Shabbos.

BEGINNING SHABBOS EARLY FOR CHILDREN

1. Many children find it difficult to remain awake until their fathers come home from *shul* on Friday nights during the summer. If they have already reached the age of *chinuch* they should recite their own *kiddush* early, even during daylight hours, then wash for *ha-motzi* and eat their meal. This applies to children in overnight camps as well. The only limitation is not to have them recite *kiddush* before *plag ha-minchah*, according to the times posted on the calendars for their particular location.

If they must go to sleep before *plag ha-minchah*, they should not recite *kiddush* at night at all. They should recite the night-time *kiddush* before eating their meal the following morning (without the “*yom hashishi*” paragraph).

2. If they go to sleep before Shabbos ends, they should recite *havdalah* on Sunday morning.

LOCATION OF SHABBOS MEALS

1. During Shabbos it is preferable to avoid eating in a garden or in a grassy or wooded area, especially if liquids are involved. Due to a number of *halachic* concerns, it is better to eat the Shabbos meals indoors.

If it is necessary to eat outdoors because of oppressive indoor heat, because there is no room for everyone indoors, or similar considerations, care must be taken to avoid actions that are prohibited on Shabbos. For example, one should wash his hands before or after the meal indoors. Although *halachah* differentiates between water and other liquids, care should be taken to avoid spilling any liquid outdoors.

2. If the place for eating happens to be under or near a tree, one must be careful to avoid climbing the tree on Shabbos or using it in any way, or even standing on its roots if they protrude three *tefachim* from the ground. He may not hang his hat or jacket on a tree or bush, nor touch any vegetation with his hands. However, he may sit on the grass on Shabbos.

CARRYING

1. In oppressive heat one may drape his jacket over his shoulders without placing his hands in the sleeves, even while walking.

2. One must not walk beyond the area contained by an *eiruv* while wearing sunglasses. This is permitted, however, for someone who always wears sunglasses outdoors due to the sensitivity or fragility of his eyes.

3. According to the laws of *eiruvei chatzeiros* established by *Chazal*, if a number of homes open into a common yard, one may not carry in that yard unless an *eiruv chatzeiros* has been prepared. Each home must contribute bread towards the joint *eiruv chatzeiros*. Alternatively, one homeowner can donate the *eiruv* on behalf of all the others. It is preferable to use bread that lasts a long time, such as *matzos*, for the *eiruv*.

One must determine that the homeowner in whose house the *eiruv* is placed will in fact spend Shabbos at home. Alternatively, the homeowner may leave the key of his home with one of his neighbors who participates in the *eiruv*. He may also make alternative arrangements to ensure that it is theoretically possible for those who participate in the *eiruv* to enter his home while he is away and access the *eiruv* during Shabbos.

If the owner of the home in which the *eiruv* is placed travels elsewhere for Shabbos and his neighbors cannot access the *eiruv* without performing a *melachah d'oraisa* such as breaking down his front door, they must arrange a new *eiruv* in another home before Shabbos.

If one of the neighbors in such a situation is not Jewish, the *eiruv* cannot be made with his participation. The solution in such a case is to rent the non-Jew's share in the joint yard.

SPREADING OUT A WET GARMENT

1. A wet item of clothing or cloth may not be spread out to dry on Shabbos because it may appear as if one is laundering it on Shabbos. Therefore, he must avoid spreading out the towel he used after the *mikveh* on Shabbos morning on a floor, over a wall, or the like. However, he may place it somewhere without spreading it out entirely. Some permit spreading it fully beside a *mikveh* or a pool, since it is obvious to all that he is not laundering clothing on Shabbos, but has merely used the towel to dry himself after immersion.

AIR CONDITIONING

1. If one forgot to turn on the air conditioner before Shabbos he may not instruct a non-Jew to turn it on for him. However, if the heat is truly oppressive to an unbearable degree and is causing extreme discomfort, he may be lenient and ask a non-Jew to turn on the air conditioner. This certainly applies if there are children present who will suffer greatly from the heat.

If the heat is not extreme, but rather a matter of personal comfort, it is forbidden to even hint to a non-Jew to turn on the air conditioner.

2. If the air conditioner was running from before Shabbos, but during Shabbos the outside temperature plunged and it became unbearably freezing inside the home, one may ask a non-Jew to switch it off. The *halachah* considers everyone as ill in

the face of extreme cold. A non-Jew may be asked to turn off the air conditioner even when the discomfort caused by the cold air has not reached extreme severity.

3. In general, one must avoid asking a non-Jew to perform any activity that is forbidden for a Jew to perform on Shabbos, even *miderabanan*. There are multiple laws involved in such a request, and one must be well versed in them in order to employ the assistance of a non-Jew on Shabbos.

LAWS OF RECITING BLESSINGS

1. The bracha on ice cream is *shehakol*. If one ate a *kezayis* within the timeframe of *k'dei achilas p'ras*, he must recite a *berachah acharonah*.

If the ice cream is served in a plain cone that is made from a species of grain, then it serves primarily to hold the ice cream and to prevent the ice cream from melting over one's fingers. It is secondary to the ice cream and requires no separate blessing. However, if the cone is sweetened and intended as a treat in itself, the ice cream is considered secondary to the cone, and *mezonos* is recited over the entire ice cream cone. Whenever a *mezonos* is necessary one should endeavor to eat a *kezayis* of the cone enabling him to recite *al ha-michiyah* afterwards.

2. For a number of halachic considerations one should avoid eating *mezonos* rolls outside the context of a meal for which he washed for *ha-motzi* and ate a *kezayis* of real bread. Alternatively, he may eat *k'dei sevi'a* of these rolls, meaning the size of four eggs, provided that it is sufficient to make him feel full. (For this purpose, we also consider the feeling of satiation derived from other food eaten with the bread.) In such a case, he must wash for *ha-motzi* beforehand and recite *birchas ha-mazon* afterwards.

3. One may not leave the location of a meal for which he washed for *ha-motzi* without reciting *birchas ha-mazon*.

If he forgot and has already left, he must return and recite the blessing. However, if he has other food prepared for him in a second location and he leaves the first to continue eating in the second—something that he is not supposed to do—he is not obligated to return to the first location. Instead, he may eat some bread in the second location and then recite the *birchas ha-mazon* once he has finished eating.

This does not apply if one had in mind while reciting *ha-motzi* that he intends to go elsewhere for the remainder of his meal. Therefore, those going on a trip are who are accustomed to washing and eating some bread beforehand, with the intention of completing their meal elsewhere, are permitted to recite *birchas ha-mazon* wherever they complete their meal.

Going to the “Country” & Appropriate Summer Conduct

SELECTIONS FROM THE REBBE’S SICHOS AND IGROS THAT DISCUSS THE SUMMER SEASON

A DEEPER PURPOSE IN GOING TO THE COUNTRY

There are those who travel to the country for health purposes, insisting that the country air is unique. In actual fact, it may even be inferior – but it is considered special nonetheless, because it is different from the city air. And so, they insist on traveling to the country for their health, to breathe its special air....

The true purpose for their journey to the country is because their *soul* is hungry for the country. The soul needs to draw the Jews who live there closer to their Father in Heaven. However, were the soul to tell that directly to its body, the body would simply not understand what the soul is talking about! The soul is therefore forced to speak English to its body. It concocts some story about the country and its beneficial air. It tells it that in the country there are unique flying insects. They may even be inferior, but at least they are different. Therefore, one must travel to the country!

The true purpose, however, is that the soul has a mission to accomplish in the country.

Seeing that the primary reason for visiting the country is for the soul to accomplish its mission there, one must not consider the primary purpose as less significant, nor make the less significant reason his primary

focus. When in the country, he must indeed work at drawing the hearts of his fellow Jews closer to their Father in Heaven.

–*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei 5712 – unedited.*

ASHAMED NOT TO GO TO THE COUNTRY

When it comes to giving *tzedakah*, someone might claim that he has insufficient funds. He needs it for his family’s needs and for going to the country, and so on. The fact that back at home, his family is forced to diet on hard bread and water does not bother him that much. After all, no one else knows what goes on in his home. By contrast, were he to forgo travelling to the country – why, everyone would realize that he does not own six hundred and eighty nine thousand dollars! That would truly be unpleasant....

The Rebbe [Rayatz] once spoke with a businessman who dealt in lumber. The Rebbe told him that he should study Torah. He responded that he does not have the head for study. The Rebbe replied, “If I had told you that you do not understand the lumber trade, you would fly into a rage, slam the door, and not wish to speak to me further. But when it comes to Torah, you personally state that you are not up to it – without the slightest shame! The reverse should be the case!”

–*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso 5720 – unedited.*

NEGLECT OF MITZVOS IN THE COUNTRY

A word of caution about the country: People travel to a place where nobody knows them and they convince themselves that if they are accustomed to wearing a full garment back home, then they can make do with a half in the country, or even a third or quarter.... Back home they are scrupulous to eat only *glatt* kosher meat and drink *chalav Yisrael*, but this is not possible in the country.... In this way, everything about the country smacks of *prikas ol*, casting off the yoke of Heaven.

I once asked someone, “Why do you go to the country? You become absolutely worn out there. You lack the coziness of your own home. It is challenging to find appropriate foods. At home, you own a color television whereas only an ordinary television is available in the country – and one cannot begin to compare a colored to a plain.... [Editor’s note: See Likutei Sichos vol. 18 p. 459 (& more) about the severity of having a TV at home, *chas veshalom*.]”

At home, you review the newspapers before morning prayers; you don’t have that luxury in the bungalow.” I asked him if he really felt it was worth spending a thousand dollars for this.

He replied, “Oh, you are truly a *batlan* [inexperienced]!” He explained that the entire point in going to the country was precisely that – *prikas ol*! Back home, he feels ashamed [to act as he wishes because] of the rabbi, the spiritual leader, and his neighbors. When he travels to the country – why, the rabbi remains in the city, his neighbors remain in the city, and he meets his wife only for Shabbos. For him, it is worth spending *two* thousand dollars for that!

–*Sichas Yom Beis D’Chag HaShavuos 5728 – unedited.*

EXILED TO THE COUNTRY

When the summer season arrives and one abandons his home on a self-imposed exile, he must ensure that his destination is a place of Torah [reflecting the *mishnah*’s directive, “Exile yourself to a place of Torah”].

He voluntarily subjects himself to exile. Nor is he exactly happy about it. He is forced to squander considerable finances. All this, for the sake of traveling “*from your land, from your birthplace, and from your father’s house*” and journeying to the country!

What a peculiar phenomenon! It is readily observable that a person can enjoy all the conveniences specifically in his own home. Nevertheless, he travels away to the country. (Back in Russia, it was known simply as *datche*, but here it is given all kinds of fancy names....) And he makes a grand parade out of the whole thing! But what is this parade truly about? It is about *not* having the household help he enjoys at home. It is about *not* having all the conveniences associated with his food, drink, and sleep that he enjoys at home. As long as he can languish in a place of exile!

This is a prime example of the extent to which a person’s will can turn matters on their head. Here we are, discussing an experience of exile (which, as *Sefer HaChinuch* explains, is worse than all other penalties). Nevertheless, he convinces himself that this exile will bring him all wonderful things – physical and spiritual, and both at once! As a result, not only is not distressed from this exile, but he actually derives pleasure from it. He even spends more for the few weeks that he remains in the country than he would spend in the same period on his own home where he has every available convenience.

Whatever the explanation for this phenomenon may be, we readily observe the *ma'aseh rav* (proven experience) that hundreds, thousands, and myriads of Jews are doing precisely this.

I do not wish to employ the language of *Rambam* by stating that “this practice has been adopted by the wider Jewish community,” because that would make it a positive command and a negative command to travel to the country.... In fact, it is not a *mitzvas asei*, it is not a *mitzvas lo sa'asei*, nor is it *mi-divrei sofrim* (introduced by the sages). And I have set the example. I will not elaborate any further...

EXILE YOURSELF TO A PLACE OF TORAH

As mentioned, myriads of Jews spend the summer in the country. They insist that their bodies will grow healthier (an experience that will in turn improve the state of their souls, because whatever a Jew is involved must eventually lead to some benefit for his soul). Out of desire to improve their bodily health, they must force themselves to travel [away from home] and to make their way to a place where all of their affairs, their food, drink, sleep, and exercise will not be as it should (because they are not in their own homes). Most importantly, goes the claim, they must alter their usual habits because after all, they are now in the country....

This can be compared to the *halachah* regarding fasting on Shabbos due to a disturbing dream (*ta'anis chalom*). The law is that because this particular person desperately wishes to fast, it cannot be considered something painful. In fact, for him it is sheer pleasure! (This is the fact; no clever interpretations of the law hold sway in this case, because on Shabbos one must fulfill the command, “*You must call Shabbos a pleasure.*”)

The same applies to our case. A person goes off to the country where he wears himself out in every way. Nevertheless, upon his return we notice that he looks fresher, livelier, he has put on some weight, and so on.

When he is then approached and asked to give a greater donation to *tzedakah* or to increase in his Torah study, he is more readily agreeable – because he is more relaxed, fresh, and happy, in body and soul all at once.

At the same time, we cannot claim that he was at home. He spent his time in exile. That is not his permanent place of residence.

There are those who are so taken by the country experience that they own a home there throughout the year. Nevertheless, that home is considered a temporary residence (although he pays for the home throughout the year), because they spend the majority of the year in the city and they stay in their country home only from time to time (during the summer or more often). We must therefore consider such an arrangement as suiting the words of the *Mishnah* – *hevei golah* “Exile yourself...”

As a result, if one's summer destination is not already considered a place of Torah [“Exile yourself to a place of Torah”], then he must transform it into a place of Torah.

The meaning of “a place of Torah” can be appreciated by comparison to an area regarding which it is said, “This is place of King So-and-so.” We do not mean that the place is significant for another reason and that incidentally the king happens to live there. To the contrary, [the significance of the place is entirely attributed to the king's presence. Similarly, a place of Torah is a place primarily defined by the Torah that exists there].

Practically speaking, whoever exiles themselves to the country must see to it that they fulfill the dictum, “Exile yourself to a place of Torah.” If it is not a place of Torah, G-d forbid, it should be made into one through establishing fixed schedules of Torah study there. If it is already a place of Torah, the study there should now be increased.

We previously discussed the fact that one might have every convenience in the country. He may have all he needs regarding food, drink, sleep, business, and everything else on Rambam’s list [of basic human activities]. These may even be present in great abundance, “As the feast of Shlomo!” and to a greater degree than in his primary home. He is nevertheless in exile which is considered the greatest affliction, as quoted earlier from *Sefer HaChinuch*. And because it is an exile, one must have the will to transform the pain into pleasure.

True, it is not necessary to live in a physically disastrous state while in the country. I am simply repeating what has been the actual common experience up until the most recent summer. Nevertheless, even if one has everything he needs in abundance, it is still a state of exile.

–*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Korach 5738 –
unedited.*

VACATIONING FOR THE SAKE OF HEAVEN

One of the reasons for reading *Pirkei Avos* on Shabbos throughout the summer months, starting from the Shabbos immediately following Pesach (i.e., Shabbos *mevarchim* Iyar), is because around this time of year (the month of Iyar), the trees begin to bud. At this time, a current of renewal and invigoration runs through every aspect of Nature.

Included in this surge of power are the bodily desires. One must therefore fortify himself to a greater extent in matter of ethical conduct and positive character traits. This is the purpose of reading *Pirkei Avos*, which discusses *milei d’chassidusa*, “matters of pious conduct.”

We see the above in actual practice in this country. No sooner has Pesach concluded then people begin thinking and worrying about going on vacation (to their *datche*) for the duration of summer.

Quite a number of weeks remain [after Pesach] in which business must be conducted as usual, as is indeed done each year. Nevertheless, one is aware that the time in which he must relax is approaching. And for some reason, he has decided that he cannot relax unless he travels to a destination that is specifically beyond the city, wasting a huge amount of money to accomplish that. Therefore, [immediately after Pesach] he begins thinking and worrying about finding a place to spend the approaching summer. He begins discussing it with this person and the other, until he finally settles on the location, the price, and so on.

Due to Hashem’s kindness, we find ourselves in a country of abundance and it therefore possible to vacation. One must remember that the abundance is not to be used simply in order to benefit from this physical world. It must be used *le-sheim shamayim*, for the sake of Heaven, bearing in mind the example of Rabbeinu *HaKadosh* (who was given the title *kadosh* because he sanctified himself by removing himself from the affairs of this world), regarding whom our Sages declared, “He did not derive benefit from this world all his life.” The Gemara states that “at the time of his passing ... he raised his ten fingers heavenwards and said, ‘I did not even benefit with one small

finger!” Therefore, despite the fact that “his table never lacked horseradish, *etc.*,” neither in the summer nor in the winter,” nevertheless, he did not do anything for the sake of the physical pleasure it could provide, but rather, so that he would be strong enough to serve his Creator appropriately.

Therefore, the blessing that is imparted during the month of Nissan, on Shabbos *mevarchim chodesh Iyar*, generates a source of empowerment not only for the month of Iyar itself, but also for the summer months in general. For that is the period in which the main spiritual descent begins to effect the world to the point that the physical waxes powerful. Even in such a state, a person is empowered to create for himself a state of *redemption*.

–*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5747 – unedited.*

TZNIUS IN THE COUNTRY

It is now necessary to emphasize the following timely consideration:

Some people permit themselves to be lenient in many aspects of *tznius* during the summer, and especially while they are in temporarily homes outside the city. Some even declare *echta va'ashuv* [“I will sin and then I will repent”], meaning [I will lower my standards while on vacation and then return to my former standards] when *ashuv*, “I will return” to the city.

This applies to the conduct of men as well, and especially to women. For each woman is considered *akeress habayis*, the mainstay of the home. Much more deserves to be said about this issue.

–*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 13, p. 84, fn. 34 – edited and placed by the Rebbe in large font and in bold type.*

TZNIUS FOR MEN

ON VACATION – NOT TO WEAR SHORTS

There are matters that we need to address that relate specifically to the summer months.

True, there is still quite some time until the summer begins, but now is the time to call attention to these issues, particularly as some people tend to begin their summers even before being directed by their calendars.

The main issue we need to address at present is that of *tznius*.

This is not a burning issue in the winter season, because people are garbed appropriately regardless. If any part of the body is uncovered, it is affected by the rain, the cold, the frost, etc. In the summer, by contrast, this definitely becomes an issue.

In truth, *tznius* needs to be reinforced during the winter months as well. For *tznius* applies even within one's home. There is the famous case of Kimchis, the mother of Rabbi Yishmael, who proclaimed, “In all my life, the rafters of my house have not seen my locks of hair!” Wooden rafters are merely derivatives of the vegetable kingdom that have now become inanimate objects. Nevertheless, Kimchis made certain that even the rafters of her home would not see the hair of her head.

In the home, there is no rain, frost, and the like. Therefore, one must be carefully regarding *tznius* regardless of the seasons. Nevertheless, nothing can compare to the summer vacation season, when people are outdoors and there is a strong need to encourage *tznius*.

There is a misconception that *tznius* applies only to women, for “*all the glory of a woman is within*,” and not to men. In truth, it applied to men as well, as

set forth in *Shulchan Aruch*. The need to reinforce men's *tznius* is acute in the summer months.

The summer arrives, and one of the *shpitz* Chabad [those who consider themselves the "Chabad elite"] travels to a bungalow colony and dresses himself exactly the way the Kohanim used to dress.... and this is written in Torah – so he also wants to dress the same way! It seems (and this is a way to judge him positively) that he has no idea that there is a law in *Shulchan Aruch* regarding men's *tznius*. He claims, this is precisely how the Kohanim would dress! However the Kohanim wore other clothing as well, which covered all parts of the body; but he is wearing only pants "*from the hips until the [end of the] thighs*," whereas below the "thighs" [the knees] – nothing at all! And above the "thighs" – also nothing!

Furthermore, the Kohanim did not pride themselves with this. He, however, displays himself with pride!

A photo was even sent to me showing someone who was dressed this way. Alright, you wish to go around like that, but why do you need someone to take a picture of you in such a situation, so that it should remain as an eternal souvenir, and so that your grandchild can see how you are dressed in pants "*from the hips until the [end of the] thighs*"?! He made such a publicity of himself that a picture even made its way to me.

It is not that someone decided to inform on him. Quite the opposite! He wished to show how the *mitzvos* were being kept there *be'hiddur*. *Mezuzos* on each doorway, men and women separately, as is truly appropriate for those who are in fact Chabad "elite." I took a look at the pictures and I noticed that so-and-so the son of so-and-so, from the *shpitz* Chabad,

sits the way I just described. And I have no doubt at all that it is indeed him!

That's how he dressed under the open skies. Naturally, it was not where women were present. He would never dress that way in a place where women are to be found. Certainly, he would not dress that way if his own wife was present, because the *baale bosta* would give to him with a plate over his head!

When he is not at home, however, he dresses this way simply because he is unaware that *tznius* applies to men as well. There are indeed specific *halachos* regarding *tznius* conduct, such as not to expose more than a basic minimum [even in a bathroom] and how to conduct oneself before and afterwards.... In his case, however, much more than that was exposed, because the height of a human is approximately three *amos*, while the distance "*from the hips until the [end of the] thighs*" is barely one *amah*. So two entire *amos* remained exposed!

It is obvious from the picture that the photographer did not catch him by surprise. He knew the picture was being taken and he appeared to derive pleasure from that fact. It was therefore done willingly, as per [the confession prayer, *al cheit*], "For the sin with which we sinned before You willingly..." Not merely willingly, but with pleasure!

All of the above is a parenthetical note regarding men. But my main point of caution due to the approaching summer is regarding women. This coincides with an overarching theme of *tznius* – men and women are to remain separate....

[The Rebbe then devoted the remainder of the *sichah* to *tznius*. See original.]

–*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Terumah 5741 – unedited.*

VACATION – NOT FROM TORAH AND MITZVOS

Viewed in a positive and sacred light, vacation is not a respite from matters of goodness and holiness, G-d forbid, but a vacation from bodily work. Its purpose is to relax the body from work so that it can rejuvenate. This will facilitate greater positive and sacred accomplishments with the body, with Judaism, and with G-dliness.

In *Hilchos Dei'os*, Rambam states as law that Torah study and the performance of *mitzvos* can be accomplished with greater gusto and with greater success when the body does not interfere because it is not hungry, thirsty, or tired. Certainly, then, the health of the body must be maintained.

In fact, Rambam states that “maintaining a whole and healthy body is one of the ways of Hashem” – to quote the precise language that appears in current editions. Apparently, this phrase is meant to read “one of the ways of *serving* Hashem.”

This consideration comes in addition to the general command, “*You must guard yourselves*,” which means that one must protect his body. As is known, the Radbaz stated that the body is Hashem’s property. We have no permission to cause it harm, G-d forbid.

Moreover, each individual must ensure that his body does not distract him from Torah study and the performance of *mitzvos*.

This then is the intent of vacation viewed from a sacred viewpoint. It is a time for the body to relax.

However, the need to relax the body for spiritual purposes [opened the door for eventual misuse of this relaxation]... Some people began looking for loopholes.

Although one may be scrupulous in all *mitzvos* while at home, nevertheless, when he goes on vacation and is no longer in his own home, then he considers himself no longer obligation in all of the same *hiddurim*. At home it is easy, but he finds it difficult in unfamiliar territory. His solution therefore is to permit himself a bit of freedom – so that when he returns home he can be even more meticulous than during the previous year....

Wait – there’s a nagging question. Can he consider *mitzvos* and *aveiros* a business? Can he purchase a small *aveirah* in order to earn a great *mitzvah*? Hashem told us to observe *mitzvos* and to avoid *aveiros*, and He gave no man permission to calculate what is a greater loss and what is a greater gain in order to make his own calculations and business deals!

Nevertheless, as described earlier, from the concept of vacation to relax the body from its strenuous work load, things have deteriorated to the point that people vacation to relax their standards of *mitzvos*.

At home he is scrupulous to eat *glatt* kosher meat and to drink *chalav Yisrael*, *pas Yisrael*, and so on. Then comes vacation time and he is forced to travel around in a trailer. Who knows where he will end up? He will forgo insisting on *chalav Yisrael*, all for the ideal of “*You must guard yourselves very well*.”

One would assume that he has the option of remaining in his own home. He would fulfill the precept “*You must guard yourselves very well*” to a far greater degree. He will even be spared the rigors of travel.

However, he invokes [the Talmudic proverb] “Go to a city, follow its ways.” In this country, it is common practice to leave home when the fourth of July

arrives. He must therefore leave his home as well. He has no strength to travel, no money to vacation, he has no destination, but he must not remain at home. It will damage his credit with the bank. They will notice that everyone else travels while he remains at home.

Since he is already *anus al pi ha-dibbur* [“compelled by divine decree” – as our Sages describe Yaakov’s reluctant departure to Egypt], leaving him with no choice by to leave home, he cannot take along a second set of dishes and he is forced to eat in places where nobody knows him – as a result, he cannot observe all of his *hiddurim*.

In His abundant mercy, Hashem orchestrated matters so that he can accomplish his duty of fleeing home and wearing himself down, but at least he can do it together with other Jews.

Many *minyanim* of Jews set out together, taking the cow with them so that they will have *chalav Yisrael*, and they will have their own *minyan* [for prayers].

[At this point, the Rebbe smiled and continued:] But here the *yetzer hara* comes up with an alternative approach, [telling a person]: When you are at home, you must dress yourself in a tie with a hard collar two pairs of shoes, green socks.... But now that you are already in a bungalow, you do not need a tie, nor a hat – certainly not two head coverings, nor a pair of shoes, and you can remove the yarmulke as well, and why do you need a pair of wool *tzitzis* – an ordinary pair is fine, in fact what difference whether you wear *tzitzis* altogether, the main thing is to walk around in the manner of the Kohanim, wearing shorts “*from the hips until [the end of] the thighs*” – it does not matter if everything else is exposed...

He is asked, “But there is a law in

Shulchan Aruch that prevents you from going around like this!” He replied, “But I’m on vacation!” What is vacation? He claims it means *prikas ol*, casting off the yoke of Heaven! Since this country now casts off its yoke of work, it makes no difference if he simultaneously casts off the yoke of Heaven...

DO NOT DEVOLVE

IN MATTERS OF TZNIYUS – MEN INCLUDED

The above described conditions devolve further. The *yetzer hara* hits on another strategy. He tells a person that the laws of *tznius* apply only to women and girls, whereas men and boys have absolutely no restrictions whatsoever.

This reasoning contradicts *Shulchan Aruch*. In fact the laws of *tznius* begin with arising in the morning, and they make no distinction between men and women.

He further claims that he has conducted himself this way for years already, and that his brother, his friend, and so on, conduct themselves this way; he cannot “separate himself from the community”!

This is the appropriate time and place to remind everybody that there is a *Shulchan Aruch*. It was published many years ago. It begins by describing how a Jew is supposed to awaken from sleep. It then begins immediately, in its initial paragraphs, in the Rema, and quoted in the Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, to state that a Jew must contemplate the fact that wherever he finds himself he is in the presence of the King of Kings. Even a person with limited intellect appreciates that one cannot compare the way a person conducts himself while he is all alone at home behind closed doors to his conduct in a place when is visible to others. Who in this case can see him? The *Ani Havayah*

["I am Hashem"], the *Eibishter*, the *Melech malchei ha-melachim ha-Kodesh baruch Hu!*

Therefore the laws of *tznius* are exactly the same in the dead of winter and in the heat of summer. By the same token, all the *hiddurim* one observes during the winter apply even more so during the summer. The reasoning is simple. During the winter season, he may be able to claim that he needs to earn a livelihood and according to *halachah* he must support his wife and children. He is exhausted and needs to look after his health. By contrast, during the summer he is on vacation and does nothing at all. And why would he even think of studying...

[In reply to this attitude, I ask:] why is it so critical to eat specifically five times a day and to drink a specific number of glasses of milk a day, and on and on.... While it is true that "*You must guard yourselves*" is also a *mitzvah*, it does not imply that one must be *mehader* in it! And certainly not *mehadrin min ha-mehadrin*.

Where is there truly a need for a *hiddur*? When his performance of *mitzvos* and his daily study sessions are weakened, when his going to Shul three times a day is weakened...

Here he come with an excuse that he is in the country, where there is not always a *minyan*. Then, he does not enjoy the *chazzan*, then he does not appreciate the *gabbai*, then he is not happy with the *aliyah* he received the previous Shabbos. So he lets all that go, along with *kedushah* and *barchu*. He can pray alone without *kedushah* and *barchu*.

So, he finds no reason to be *mehader* in food, drink, and the like. Certainly there is no need to follow the laws of *tznius*. So he leaves that behind him at home together with the *Shulchan Aruch*. He secures it at

home with two locks, and sets off for the country without the *Shulchan Aruch*.

INFLUENCE OTHERS TO CONDUCT THEMSELVES APPROPRIATELY

It has been proven from actual experience that one who truly desires can travel on vacation while ensuring that it a vacation only from activities that wear down the body in a literal sense, and that the vacation brings greater power to matters that are necessary for strengthening the soul.

This is not mere talk. Do not think that we needed to share a joke and therefore began with a discussion on *tznius*. Rather, this is a matter of timely concern. Just as we observed that from the same discussion we held at this time last year, one or two people were in fact positively influenced, it could well be that our present discussion will cause more than just two or perhaps even three people to be positively influenced. Especially if those present now will give this message over to others. They should first review the law in *Shulchan Aruch* and then explain to others that the Rema states such-and-such in *Shulchan Aruch*. They should emphasize that these laws carry the same weight nowadays as they did in the times of the Rema, and they apply equally to a large city as to a small city and even when one is alone in a field.

"Words that come from the heart enter the heart [of the audience] and achieve their desired effect." May the summer therefore be spiritually clean, and as a result, physically kosher and pure as well. May it serve to increase bodily healthy and the health of the soul, bringing new strengths. May the vacation be used to increase Torah study and *mitzvos* due to fewer pressures of earning a livelihood. The return from vacation should be met

with an increase in *shiurim* of *nigleh* and *chassidus*, observance of *mitzvos* *be'hiddur*, and with joy and gladness of heart. *L'chaim!*

–Sichas Yud Beis Tammuz 5724 – *unedited*

“LET NON-JEWS

RAVE ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

AND LET JEWS ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!”

The month of Tammuz is one of the summer months. In summer, people tend to relax. In America, people tend to go to the country – and “when you go to a city, follow its ways.”

People come to me, inquiring about travelling to the county. They tell me that their wives wish to travel. It is inappropriate to say that they themselves wish to leave, so instead they tell me that their wives wish to go....

Going to the country by no means guarantees that one will be able to relax. It is highly likely that life is more tedious there than in New York. There is no *chalav Yisrael*, homes are expensive there and he therefore languishes in some run-down place. All this for the sake of fulfilling the maxim, “When you go to a city, follow its ways,” that when the fourth of July rolls around, one goes to the country.

There was once a *melamed* whose doctors advised him to visit the forest. Since he needed to earn a livelihood, he slaved away with young children all day. Once his work was done, he still lacked the funds for a ride to the forest, so he set off on foot. This took him a few hours. By then, night fell and he wished to join a *minyan* for *maariv*. He immediately turned and made his way back to the city where he prayed with a *minyan*. So each day, he schlepped himself back and forth in this manner, completely wearing himself down – all for the sake of

following the doctor’s recommendation to spend some time in the forest.

In the country there are expensive and cheaper areas. He cannot go to a cheaper area; he finds it necessary to specifically choose an expensive area. But he has no money, he will therefore settle for a dilapidated apartment and wear himself out. But that does not matter to him, as long as he is among people who pay hefty income taxes.

When he later returns home from the country, he will still be worn out because while he was there he lacked the strength to stroll through the hillsides. He spent the whole day in bed and put on weight. But he has his doctor, and his doctor recommends that he fast every Monday and Thursday in order to lose weight.

The end result from all this is that he wears himself out while he is there and continues to do so upon his return. All for the sake of being among people who are mentioned in “Who’s Who” and to fulfill the aphorism, “When you go to a city, follow its ways,” that when the fourth of July arrives, one travels away from home to relax.

After all that, he is truly caught up in the whole thing and he raves about the wonder of his experience. He thanks Hashem for the fact that in..., they allow a Jew with a beard and a child wearing *tzitzis*.

Certainly, it is indeed a great marvel. It is truly a wonder that a Jew finds himself in such a place, when a Jew’s true place is not there but in a *beis midrash*! On the other hand, there are no grounds for describing as a marvel Hashem’s kindness in allowing him to end up in a place like that....

The Gemara relates that Rabbi Elazar ben

Arach visited a place that had good wine and hot springs. He was drawn after these amenities, and as a result he forgot all his learning. It was not the water or the wine themselves that caused him such a loss. Rather, it was the fact that he was “drawn after them.”

So the fact that a person goes to the country is one thing. But why must he get overly excited about the experience? Let non-Jews rave about the experience and let Jews merely benefit from the experience!

If one is already going, let him not be taken by the experience. While he is there, he must continue to carry out his mission. And since he is going only for the sake of fulfilling his mission, his “wife” will no longer be interested in going to the country, because he himself will not be interested!

–*Sichas Yud Beis Tammuz 5714 – unedited.*

HASHEM DIRECTS THE STEPS OF MAN

Those who travels to the county must recite *tefilas ha’derech* along the way. Therefore, the concept of “Hashem directs the steps of man” applied to them as well – despite the fact that they think they are simply travelling to get some fresh air. They should know that the Alter Rebbe’s teaching on the verse “Hashem directs the steps of man” applies to them.

–*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5723 – unedited.*

“THOSE WHO GO, NEED NOT GO; THOSE WHO NEED, CANNOT AFFORD TO GO.”

There are those who travel to the country. In this regard, reality has become confused. The majority of those who travel do not actually need to go. And those who need to go cannot afford to go. May they have a healthy summer, as the

Rebbe would wish people – *ah gezuntzen zummer!*

They should use their time there to increase in strengthening Judaism among the people they meet there. It is stated that one of the ways of the Baal Shem Tov is that when a Jew passes through a particular place he refines the place by his very presence, even if he does nothing there. And he certainly refines the place if he adds something in Torah and *mitzvos* while in that location.

He must act. Whether his actions lead to a desired accomplishment or not is not his concern. He simply has to act. This can be compared to *bedikas chametz*. All he must do is to search for *chametz*. As long as he looks, even if he finds nothing, he has fulfilled the *mitzvah*. The same is true in this case. He must act. As long as he acts, he has made himself fit for Moshiach to bring him close to himself ... and to truly see his accomplishments.

Now that so many people travel away to the country, New York has itself become a country! Those who remain behind in this local “country” must do what is needed right here.

Ah gezunter zummer! May we meet for *chassidishe farbrengens!*

Sichas Yud Gimmel Tammuz 5715 – unedited.

A GREAT MITZVAH TO PUBLICIZE

There is an explicit law in *Shulchan Aruch* that is also recorded in numerous *sefarim*. It is of timely concern, especially among this large gathering of Jews, who will undoubtedly publicize it further:

Since it is now the summer and people travel to the country, it is a great *mitzvah* to publicize in the vacation spots that the *Shulchan Aruch*’s laws of *tznius* are not only for the winter season. They apply during the summer as well. Nor

are they only for the city. They apply in the country as well. They are not only for children, but also for adults – and not just adults but also for the advanced of age.

May Hashem help that it be a healthy summer, a kosher summer, and a healthy and joyful summer!

–*Sichas Yud Beis Tammuz 5717 – unedited.*

VACATION IS A BIZARRE PLOY

To our pain and grief, the bizarre ploy of the *yetzer hara* that is known as vacation is now a common practice even among those who carefully heed the words of Hashem the rest of the year. They claim that vacation time is different, and that there is no need for effort or toil [in spiritual matters while on vacation].

They do not sense that this runs in contradiction to the Torah, which states, “*Man is born to toil*,” and, “*One who claims to have invested no effort but nevertheless achieved is not to be believed*,” and, “*Days have been formed and one of them is His*.”

The latter verse means that not a single day or hour is superfluous because they were issued according to exact measure, not a moment longer than necessary for a person to complete his inner mission, the theme of which is expressed in the Mishnah, “I was created to serve my Creator.” There is not a moment extra, because every moment to which the above theme does not apply is an irretrievable loss – “days without any clothing [meaningful activities]”, to quote the Zohar. There is no need to elaborate on what is understood by every normal person.

–*Michtav Chaf Hei Tammuz 4716.*

SPIRITUAL SURGE TO MATCH PHYSICAL PROGRESS

In reply to your letter dated Iyar 24,

in which you mention establishing schedules of study Torah – *nigleh* and *chassidus*. You mention that after Shavuot, many members of Anash travel to the countryside.

You will undoubtedly begin – well ahead of time – discussing and encouraging those who go on vacation to establish times for Torah study in the country as well, and in fact, to increase their study.

“*For Hashem created one versus the other.*”

When the body busies itself in self-invigoration via physical matters in the literal sense, increasing its food intake, exercise, and so on (and not always with the intention to serve Hashem, at least not overtly), a corresponding increase of the soul is needed.

[Spiritual increase is necessary] to a greater extent that the bodily invigoration. For the vacation environment naturally pulls a person to these basic things that I have mentioned to a greater extent than while he is in the city. At the very least, the increase in the spiritual must match the increase in the physical.

It is stated that the above consideration is one of the purposes of reading *Pirkei Avos* as soon as the summer season begins. For then nature is invigorated, the trees bud, and so on.

Certainly, this in no way contradicts the Baal Shem Tov’s teaching on the verse, “*You shall surely assist him*” [meaning that one should assist his body in drawing closer to Hashem’s service via positive methods] and not via fasting, afflicting oneself, and the like.

For the body’s natural power of craving is to be redirected towards spiritual matters and so on, until the fulfillment of the longed for prophecy [regarding the final redemption], that not only will the

body cease distracting a person from the service of Hashem, and not only will it assist a person in his service, but to the contrary – “*The female will envelope the male*” [meaning that the body will enliven the soul!]

With blessings, as per the words of the Rebbe [Rayatz], “A healthy and happy summer!” May it be so physically and spiritual at once!

–*Michtav Chaf Vav Iyar 5715.*

FREEDOM CANNOT BE TAKEN

It seems that is customary for a person to change location at this time of year. Or, as per common parlance, one “takes a *chofeish* (vacation).”

Obviously, this phrase is self-contradictory. *Chofeish* [literally meaning “freedom”] cannot be taken. It can only be granted. One who is able to take a *chofeish* on his own is already free! More importantly, such a notion contradicts the concept of “*They are My servants*” [in which sense, a Jew is never free].

Anyhow, the intent of this expression is clear, and since [vacation] is undertaken for healthy purposes, it is fine according to the Torah.

May Hashem grant success, so that the *chofeish* is utilized to increase in the truest freedom, [as our Sages state,] “There is none as free as he who toils in Torah.”

–*Michtav Yud Gimmel Menachem Av 5719.*

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF VACATION

May Hashem grant that while you and your family are in the country, the intended benefit should materialize in the literal sense, in the health and invigoration of the body. To quote a saying of that the Rebbe [Rayatz] repeated in the name of his father the Rebbe [Rashab], “How precious is [the body] that

so much Torah has been poured on its behalf!”

See Rambam (*Hilchos Dei’os*, beg. ch. 4), “Maintaining bodily health is one of the ways in which we serve Hashem.”

From this we can appreciate to an infinitely greater degree just how very important it is to maintain the health of the soul. This is a goal we work on around the year. How much more so must we strengthen this effort with increased energy during the time of year in which we are occupied and interested specifically in invigorating the body. [Heightened focus on the soul’s health during vacation is critical] to avoid arriving at the state, G-d forbid, of “the strength of the body is the weakness of the soul” (*Zohar*, vol. 1, 180b). Also see *Shabbos* (147b – “the waters of Diomsus,” etc.).

I am not here to give a lecture but to inspire a revolution in approach: Utilize the time and focus that is being given to bodily health for strengthening the soul!

Accomplish this through adding a regular Torah study session specifically for the summer months, and through seeking opportunities to encourage others who have arrived for vacation in your location and its environs to increase in Torah study, in prayer, and in acts of kindness – each according to his ability.

It is sometimes worth explaining to them that one cannot begin to fathom the workings of Divine Providence. Perhaps the very reason why all of you were brought together to this specific location is to use the opportunity to add precious gems to the crown of the King of kings, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

Michtav Chaf Alef Tammuz 5710. This letter was sent to quite a few members of Anash between Tammuz 21 and Menachem Av 4.

“Oops! I made a mistake...”
Fast of 17 Tammuz 5785

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
Amidah Shacharis & Minchah • 17 Tammuz		
Chazzan forgot עננו	before saying Hashem’s name at the end of the brachah of רפאנו	interrupt & say עננו, then start רפאנו from the beginning
	after saying Hashem’s name at the end of the brachah of רפאנו	say שמע קולנו in עננו (like in the silent Amidah of Minchah) & conclude with: העונה לעמו ישראל בעת צרה ושומע תפלה ¹
	after saying Hashem’s name at the end of the brachah of שומע תפלה	recite it as an independent tefillah after שלום
	after concluding the chazzan’s repetition	not say it now nor repeat the Amidah
I forgot עננו	after saying Hashem’s name for שומע תפלה	say it after אלקי נצור (before the second לרצון) but without the concluding brachah
	after the second יהיו לרצון ²	not say it now nor repeat the Amidah
I did not continue after כי אתה שומע בכל עת צרה וצוקה	after saying Hashem’s name	say שומע תפלה now, & I’m yotzeh
I concluded with ברוך אתה ה' העונה לעמו ישראל	within k'dei dibbur ³	say שומע תפלה
	after k'dei dibbur ³	say שמע קולנו again
I said in a separate גואל ישראל after ברכה (like a chazzan)	-	not repeat it again in שמע קולנו
forgot to daven Minchah	-	daven Maariv twice, first for Maariv then again to make up for Minchah ⁴
Krias Hatorah - Minchah • 17 Tammuz		
recited Kaddish post-reading or post-Haftarah	-	skip the Kaddish before the Amidah
returned the Torah to the aron before saying the Haftarah	-	say the Haftarah now (with the Torah remaining inside)

1. If you concluded with שומע תפלה, you are yotzeh.
2. and you also made the decision not to lengthen your tefillah with extra requests and supplications.
3. The amount of time it takes to say “Shalom alecha Mori V’Rabbi”.
4. Don’t say עננו in either one.

“Oops! I made a mistake...”

Rosh Chodesh Av & Tishah B'av 5785

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
Rosh Chodesh Amidah • Maariv, Shacharis & Minchah		
forgot יעלה ויבוא ¹	before saying Hashem's name at the end of המחזיר	interrupt and start יעלה ויבוא
	after המחזיר שכינתו לציון but before מודים	say יעלה ויבוא now and then continue with מודים In Maariv: do not say it now or start over
	before the conclusion ² of the second יהיו לרצון ³	start ⁴ from רצה ⁵ now In Maariv: continue without saying it
	after the second יהיו לרצון ⁴	start ⁷ the <i>Amidah</i> ⁸ again In Maariv: continue without saying it
	for Shacharis: after davening Musaf	do not say the Shacharis <i>Amidah</i> again
ובנה ירושלים יעלה ויבוא after יעלה ויבוא	before saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	interrupt and start ותחזינה
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	conclude the brachah with the ending: המחזיר שכינתו לציון
	after concluding בונה ברחמיו	return to רצה ⁵

1. or if you are unsure what you said.

2. Even if you already said Hashem's Name, stop and go back to רצה.

3. If you started אלקי נצור and the Chazzan Reached *Kedusha* you should answer and you can then go back to רצה.

4. If you mistakenly said *ya'aleh veyavo* and then concluded the brachah of *Vesechazenenah*, you are *yotze*.

5. If you remembered after reciting Hashem's name at the end of the brachah of הטוב שמך or ישראל בשלום עמו המברך את עמו ישראל בשלום, say למדני, say המברך את עמו ישראל בשלום or הטוב שמך and go back to רצה.

6. and you have also made the decision not to lengthen the *tefillah* with extra requests and supplications

7. You must first wait *k'dei hiluch daled amos* (the time it takes to walk six feet) after you say שיבנה וכו' before restarting the *Amidah*.

8. Before davening again you may make an interruption.

If you remembered after the time has arrived for the next *tefillah*, say the *Amidah*, and then repeat it to make up for the earlier one (even on *motzoei Rosh Chodesh*, but *ata chonantanu* is only said in the first one). The earlier *tefillah* can only be compensated as long as you are occupied with the following one; once you have finished davening, you are no longer able to make it up. See details (in Hebrew) on www.asktherav.com #2575

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
Musaf Amidah • Shabbos Rosh Chodesh		
said תקנת שבת ⁹	before saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	return to אתה יצרת
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	conclude מקדש השבת וישראל וראשי ונעשה לפניך בתמידי" חדשים "היום וקרבן מוסף ראש החודש הזה
	during רצה	say והשב העבודה לדביר ביתך" ונעשה לפניך בתמידי היום וקרבן "מוסף ראש החודש הזה
	after saying Hashem's name in המחזיר שכינתו לציון	before starting לפניך, say מודים "היום וקרבן מוסף ראש החודש הזה
	before the conclusion ¹⁰ of the second יהיו לרצון ¹¹	return to אתה יצרת ¹²
	after the second יהיו לרצון ¹¹	repeat ⁷ the Amidah
recited the Yom Tov Musaf	before saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	return to אתה יצרת
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	say אתה יצרת then start למדני חקיך
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of the middle brachah, but before the conclusion ¹⁰ of the second יהיו לרצון ¹¹	return to אתה יצרת ¹²
	after the second יהיו לרצון ¹¹	repeat the Amidah ⁷
completed the brachah with מקדש השבת	within k-dei dibbur ¹²	continue with וישראל וראשי חדשים
	after k-dei dibbur ¹² , or after starting רצה	do nothing; I am yotze ¹³
completed the brachah with מקדש ישראל וראשי חדשים	within k-dei dibbur ¹²	say מקדש השבת וישראל וראשי חדשים
	after k-dei dibbur ¹² , or after starting רצה	do nothing; I am yotze ¹³

9. or if you are unsure if you said אתה יצרת

10. Even if you already said Hashem's Name, stop and go back to אתה יצרת.

11. If you started אלקי נצור and the Chazzan Reached Kedusha you should answer and you can then go back to אתה יצרת.

12*. If you remembered after reciting Hashem's name at the end of the brachah of הטוב שמך or ישראל בשלום say למדני, המברך את עמי ישראל בשלום and go back to אתה יצרת.

12. The amount of time it would take to say the words, "Shalom alecha, Mori v'Rabbi".

13. It is best to listen to the chazzan's repetition with the intent to be yotze through him.

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
completed the brachah with מקדש השבת וישראל והזמנים	within <i>k-dei dibbur</i> ¹²	say מקדש השבת וישראל וראשי חדשים
	after <i>k'dei dibbur</i> ¹² , or after starting רצה	do nothing; I am <i>yotze</i> ¹³
Birchas Hamazon • Rosh Chodesh		
רצה forgot	before saying Hashem's name at the end of בונה ברחמי ירושלים	interrupt and go back to רצה
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of בונה ברחמי ירושלים	<p>Before <i>shki'ah</i>: conclude the brachah and then say the brachah of שנתן שבתות¹⁴</p> <p>After <i>shki'ah</i>: conclude the brachah and do not say the brachah of שנתן שבתות¹⁵ ¹⁶</p>
	after saying ברוך in the brachah of הטוב והמטיב	<p>start <i>bentching over</i>¹⁷</p> <p>During <i>se'udah shlishis</i>: do nothing¹⁶</p>
רצה before יעלה ויבוא said	before saying ביום ראש החודש הזה ¹⁸	stop and say רצה, and then say יעלה ויבוא
	saying Hashem's name at the end of בונה ברחמי ירושלים	do nothing; I am <i>yotze</i>
יעלה ויבוא forgot	before saying Hashem's name at the end of בונה ברחמי ירושלים	say יעלה ויבוא now
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of בונה ברחמי ירושלים	<p>conclude the brachah and then say the brachah of שנתן ראשי חדשים¹⁹</p> <p>After <i>shki'ah</i>: conclude the brachah and don't say the brachah of שנתן ראשי חדשים¹⁶</p>
	after saying ברוך in the brachah of הטוב והמטיב	not repeat anything ¹⁶

14. As stated in the siddur: "ברוך אתה השם אלוקינו מלך העולם שנתן שבתות למנוחה לעמו ישראל באהבה לאות ולברית ברוך אתה השם מקדש השבת".

If you also forgot יעלה ויבוא, say: "ברוך אתה השם אלוקינו מלך העולם שנתן שבתות למנוחה לעמו ישראל באהבה לאות ולברית וראשי חדשים לזכרון אתה".

15. unless you also forgot יעלה ויבוא, in which case you include them both in one brachah: "ברוך אתה השם אלוקינו מלך העולם שנתן שבתות למנוחה לעמו ישראל באהבה לאות ולברית וראשי חדשים לזכרון", without the conclusion.

16. If you did not realize that you are not meant to repeat benching and you started saying it again, stop wherever you are currently holding—even in middle of a brachah.

17. יעלה ויבוא is also repeated.

18. even after saying ביום ראש החודש הזה, and even after completing יעלה ויבוא, there is room (as a *hiddur*) to say רצה and then say יעלה ויבוא again.

19. As stated in the siddur: "ברוך אתה השם אלוקינו מלך העולם שנתן ראשי חדשים לעמו ישראל לזכרון", without the conclusion.

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
mentioned another Yom Tov by mistake	before saying Hashem's name at the end of בונה ברחמינו ירושלים	return to רחם
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of בונה ברחמינו ירושלים	conclude the brachah and then say שנתן ראשי חדשים ¹⁹ After shki-ah: conclude the brachah and don't say the brachah of ראשי חדשים ¹⁶
	after saying ברוך in the brachah of הטוב והמטיב	not repeat anything ¹⁶
said ותחזינה עינינו after יעלה ויבא (as in davening)	before saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	start ובנה ירושלים now and continue as usual
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	say ובנה ירושלים ²⁰ then start למדני חקיק
	after concluding המחזיר שכינתו לציון	return to רחם
Me'ein Shalosh • Rosh Chodesh		
forgot to say ורצה זכרנו לטובה or	before saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	return to say ורצה זכרנו לטובה or ורצה and conclude as usual
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah	do nothing; I am yotze ²¹

20. If you concluded the brachah with בונה ברחמינו ירושלים, you are yotze.

21. even when saying *Al Hamichya on mezonos*; except if the *mezonos* is eaten as the Shabbos meal (instead of bread), in which

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
Tishah B'av		
Amidah • Maariv & Shacharis		
said נחם	-	not repeat anything ²²
Amidah • Shacharis & Minchah		
Chazzan forgot עננו	before saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah of רפאנו	interrupt and say עננו, then start רפאנו from the beginning
	after saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah of רפאנו	say שמע קולנו in עננו (like in the silent <i>Amidah</i> of Minchah) and conclude with: העונה לעמו ישראל בעת צרה ושומע תפלה ²³
	after saying Hashem's name for שומע תפלה	recite it as an independent brachah after שים שלום
	after concluding the chazzan's repetition	not say it now nor repeat the <i>Amidah</i>
I forgot עננו	after saying Hashem's name for שומע תפלה	say it after אלקי נצור (before the second לרצון) but without the concluding brachah
	after concluding the second יהיו לרצון ²⁴	not say it now nor repeat the <i>Amidah</i>
I did not continue after כי אתה שומע בכל עת צרה וצוקה	after saying Hashem's name	say שומע תפלה now, and I'm <i>yotze</i>
I concluded with ברוך אתה ה' העונה לעמו ישראל	within <i>k-dei dibbur</i> ¹²	say שומע תפלה
	after <i>k-dei dibbur</i> ¹²	say שמע קולנו again
I said in a separate גואל ישראל after ברכה (like a <i>chazzan</i>)	-	not repeat it again in שמע קולנו
did not daven Shacharis	-	daven Minchah twice, first for Minchah and then as <i>tashlumin</i> ²⁴

case you repeat *Al Hamichya*.

22. and also during the rest of the year

23. if you concluded with שומע תפלה, you're *yotze*.

24. and say עננו and נחם in both

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
Amidah of Minchah on Tishah B'av		
started to say נחם before ולירושלים עירך	before saying Hashem's name for the brachah of מנחם ציון ובונה ירושלים	go back to ולירושלים עירך
	after saying Hashem's name for מנחם ציון ובונה ירושלים	do nothing; I am <i>yotze</i>
forgot to say נחם	after saying Hashem's name for the brachah of בונה ירושלים	say it before ותחזינה without the concluding brachah ²⁵
	after saying Hashem's name for המחזיר שכינתו לציון	say it before ועל כולם without the concluding brachah
	after saying Hashem's name for הטוב שמך ולך נאה להודות	say it right before the second יהיו לרצון without the concluding brachah
	after concluding the second יהיו לרצון	not say it now nor repeat the <i>Amidah</i>
completed the brachah with בונה ירושלים by mistake	within <i>k-dei dibbur</i> ¹²	Immediately say מנחם ציון ובונה ירושלים
	after <i>k-dei dibbur</i> ¹²	not repeat it; I am <i>yotzei</i>
did not daven Minchah	-	daven Maariv twice, first for Maariv and then as <i>tashlumin</i> ²⁶
Maariv on Tishah B'av		
did not recite <i>Kaddish</i> (with <i>Tiskabel</i>) after the <i>Amidah</i>	before reading Eichah	Say a chapter of Tehilim and then recite <i>Kaddish</i> (with <i>Tiskabel</i>)
	after reading Eichah	don't recite <i>Kaddish</i> (with <i>Tiskabel</i>)
Krias Hatorah		
Shacharis on Tishah B'av		
did not recite <i>Kaddish</i> post-Reading	-	recite <i>Kaddish</i> after the <i>Haftorah</i> 's concluding blessings
Minchah on Tishah B'av		
recited <i>Kaddish</i> post-Reading or <i>Haftorah</i>	-	Skip the <i>Kaddish</i> before the <i>Amidah</i>
returned the Torah to the <i>aron</i> before saying the <i>Haftorah</i> by mistake	-	say the <i>Haftorah</i> now (with the Torah remaining inside)

25. If you said נחם before the paragraph of את צמח as its own brachah, it does not constitute a *hefsek* or a *brachah levatalah*.

26. don't say נחם or עננו in either

What did I do?	When did I remember?	Now I should...
Havdalah		
forgot to make Havdalah	after washing for bread	make Havdalah immediately
	after making Hamotzi ²⁷	take a bite and then make Havdalah immediately
	after eating	make Havdalah immediately
	the next day	make Havdalah any time till Tuesday

27. or any brachah on food

ב"ה

KEREN

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