

a CALL to ACTION

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Rosh Hashanah

PRAYER

• It is known that the Rebbes of Chabad expended an amazing amount of energy in their prayers the first night of Rosh Hashanah. It is thus understood that the Chasidim, too, should emulate this at least to a minute degree.¹

SOUNDING THE SHOFAR

• It is the custom that everyone assembles — men, women and children — to hear the sounding of the shofar. Even exceedingly small children who cannot understand the blessing recited by the one sounding the shofar should still answer aloud, "Amen", along with everyone else.²

• The halachic ruling is that the one who sounds the shofar must lengthen his notes until red in the face. This, quite simply, is an indication that he has applied sufficient strength

to the shofar blast, thereby causing the blood to rush to his head.³

• This is not meant to be in any way that is contrary to good health. Rather, the fact that the blood rushes to his head should only serve to increase his strength and health.

• The ruling is also that we must gaze at the face of the one who sounds the shofar, just as he too must gaze at the faces of the congregants. For gazing indicates a deep, internal looking that exceeds normal sight.⁴

YIZKOR

• On Rosh Hashanah, the Rebbes of Chabad would say "Yizkor" discretely to themselves, a secret that has now been revealed. Indeed, when this secret was passed on to me, I knew that someday, sooner or later, I would reveal it and publicize it to everyone.⁵

BLESSING EACH OTHER ON THE SECOND DAY

• According to what my father wrote⁶, that "the final inscription and seal for a good year occurs during the sounding of the shofar," there may be grounds to continue blessing one another, "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year," right until the shofar is sounded on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, since the final inscription and seal takes place then. The matter, however, requires further investigation.

ACCEPTING A "HIDUR"

• The Previous Rebbe related about his own father, the Rebbe Rashab, that he was accustomed to accept a new *hidur* — an extra,

1. *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Nitzovim, 2nd Day of Rosh Hashana, Shabbos Parashas Vayeilich 5752 (Hisva'aduyos, p. 11 note 19).*
2. *Sichas 28 Tishrei, Yichidus 5750 (Hisva'aduyos, p. 257).*

3. *Sichas Yom 2nd Day of Rosh Hashanah 5752 (Sichas Kodesh pg. 18).*
4. *Sichas Yom 2nd Day of Rosh Hashanah 5752 (Sichas Kodesh pg. 18-19).*
5. *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Yisro, 22 Sh'vat 5749 (Hisva'aduyos, p. 295).*
6. *Sichas 7 Tishrei 5751 To Machne Yisroel (Hisva'aduyos, p. 66 note 76).*

more beautiful way of performing a mitzvah — each and every year before Rosh Hashanah. Thus, every Jew should do this also, for a story about a Rebbe, and especially the action of a Rebbe, are an instruction and an empowerment for every Jew to do likewise.⁷

MENTIONING THE REBBES

- It is known and has been publicized that on Rosh Hashanah, the Previous Rebbe would mention all of our Rebbes by name, state a concept from each of their teachings, and sing one of the melodies that each of them composed,⁸ together with mentioning each one's name before singing his melody.⁹

- Perhaps we should also be accustomed to mention the names of the Rebbes at a gathering on, or following, Rosh Hashanah. We should not mention them by their personal names, but by their specific titles by which they were known and which emphasize their work as "Shepherds of the Jewish People".¹⁰

- These are: Yisrael Ba'al Shem Tov, The Maggid, The Alter Rebbe, The Mittler Rebbe, The Tzemach Tzedek, The Rebbe Maharash—we might also add the description, "*Lchatchilah ariber*" —The Rebbe Rashab, and the Rebbe, my father-in-law, The Leader of our Generation.¹¹

- One should, at the same time, have in mind their private names and the meanings of these names.¹²

Yom Kippur

RECEIVING "LEKACH"

- It is a Jewish custom to ask for "*lekach*" — honey cake — on the day before Yom Kippur. The Previous Rebbe himself would hand out this

cake blessing everyone with "a good, sweet year."¹³

BLESSING THE CHILDREN

- The custom is widely known that when blessing the children on Erev Yom Kippur we use the wording of the priestly blessing.¹⁴

THE CONCLUSION OF YOM KIPPUR

- It is the custom in many places to sing "Napoleon's March" at the end of the holy day of Yom Kippur.¹⁵

- We should attempt to bring ourselves to a higher level where we will not think about food and drink at the end of Yom Kippur.¹⁶

- It is written in the Code of Jewish Law that one should begin work on the *sukkah* immediately after the conclusion of Yom Kippur. Now, although we see that many Jews — myself included — do not do this by way of action, however, we actually do fulfill our obligation by speaking about and learning the laws governing the construction of the *sukkah*.^{17,18}

7. *Sichas Yomim HaRishonim D'Shnas* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 17).

8. *Ibid.* Footnote 2.

9. *Sichas 2nd Day of Rosh Hashana* 5749 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 9).

10. *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Ha'azinu* 5751 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 20).

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Ha'azinu* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 83).

14. *Sichas Erev Yom HaKippur and Yom HaKippur* 5751 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 83).

15. *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Chukas-Balak* 5749 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 11 note 83).

16. *Sichas Day of Simchas Torah* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 230-1).

17. *Sichas Simchas Torah* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 231).

18. *Reshimas Divrei Admur Shlita, Motzoei Yom Kippur* 5750 (*Hisva'aduyos*, p. 105).