

a **CALL** *to*
ACTION

ACHARON SHEL PESACH

The Last Day of Pesach

**PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION
FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE REBBE
5748-5752**

**A PROJECT OF
HaMaaseh Hu HaIkar**



a CALL to ACTION

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המעשה הוא העיקר

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5768 • 2008

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Foreword

We are pleased to bring you this newly revised edition of *a Call to Action* in anticipation of the final day of Pesach. This selection is a preview of a book that we are in the process of bringing to publication. Translated from its Hebrew counterpart, *HaMaaseh Hu Halkar*, this presentation is a collection of practical instruction from the Rebbe's *sichos* pertaining to our bolstered ability and paralleled obligations surrounding Acharon Shel Pesach.

HaMaaseh Hu Halkar is a compilation of *hora'os* culled from the Rebbe's talks in the years 5748 to 5752 (1988-1992), from both edited and unedited sources (*muga* and *bilti muga*). Great effort has been extended to remain faithful to the Rebbe's calculated and instructive nuance. This English translation is rendered by **Rabbi Yaakov Paley**.

At this time, when Moshiach's arrival is imminent, the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, has emphasized the primacy of action. We are now beginning to experience the era when we will fully appreciate "the superiority of deed" above scholarship. May this take place completely and immediately!

Editorial Office of
HaMaaseh Hu Halkar
Nissan, 5768

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Acharon Shel Pesach

The Last Day of Pesach

REDEMPTION

Pesach is the Festival of Freedom. With our liberation from Egypt – our nation’s first redemption – we embarked on a journey of freedom that is leading to the Final and Complete Redemption with Moshiach. Regarding this, G-d promised, “I will show you wonders as in the days of your Exodus from Egypt.”¹

Both the first and final redemptions are celebrated on Pesach. During its *first* days, however, we place greater emphasis on the Egyptian Exodus; on the *last* days of Pesach, the focus shifts to the coming Redemption.

The “radiance of Moshiach” shines specifically on the final day of Pesach (*Acharon Shel Pesach*). This is reflected in the Haftarah reading which describes Moshiach’s personality and the redemption he will effect: the ingathering of the Jews and his influence on the nations.

MOSHIACH’S FESTIVE MEAL

Now, more than ever before, the last day of Pesach calls for action. With each passing year, the Redemption grows ever closer; and correspondingly, its approaching light becomes increasingly intense and substantial. Now that we are finally on the threshold of the promised era, practices have been brought to light that are designed to draw this potential revelation into physical reality.

As the Rebbe records in *HaYom Yom* for this day, “It was the custom of the Baal Shem Tov to eat three festive meals on *Acharon Shel Pesach*. He called the third meal,

1. *Michah* 7:15.

which took place late in the afternoon, *Moshiach's Seudah*, the 'Festive Meal of Moshiach' – for on this day, the radiance of Moshiach shines openly."

Beginning in the year 5666 (1906), it became customary in the town of Lubavitch for the students of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim to eat their Pesach meals together in the study hall. That year, the Rebbe Rashab joined the students for the [third] festive meal of *Acharon Shel Pesach*, and instructed that each student receive four cups of wine, and then declared, 'This is *Moshiach's Seudah!*'"

The Rebbe explained that *all* Jews should eat this meal as it associates the radiance of Redemption with physical food and drink brings it even further into reality. This subsequently empowers us to renew our efforts to bring Moshiach, and to live with the atmosphere of Redemption throughout the coming year.

GEBRAKTS

During the first seven days of Pesach, we are extremely careful to prevent matzah from becoming wet, [Yiddish: *gebrakts*], in order to avert even the remotest chance of it rising (leavening). We do everything we can to avoid leaven during these days since it represents an inflated ego and unrefined character, and its absence gives us the strength to temper our egos and become more refined.

However, now that a week of counting the *Sefirah*, and its associated spiritual refinement, has passed,² we are

2. The spiritual journey of the *Sefirah* period

[Each day of the *Sefirah* counting (from the second day of Pesach until Shavuos) represents another aspect of our seven emotional attributes that needs rectifying or improving.

Leavened bread ("bread that has risen") represents the ego – the antithesis of spirituality and G-dliness. Therefore, leaven is strictly prohibited during Pesach.

Conversely, during Shavuos – after we have successfully completed the entire process of self-refinement – an offering specifically made with leaven is offered in

able to forgo our vigilance against allowing matzah to come in contact with liquid.³ Indeed, we *specifically* wet the matzah: for the “revelation of Moshiach” on this day transforms an activity that is initially shunned due to our concern of committing a transgression into a celebratory activity with which to fulfill the *mitzvah* of rejoicing on Yom Tov.

UTILIZE EVERY MOMENT

- The final day of Pesach is the culmination and “sum total” of its first seven days; needless to say, it is an extremely important and precious time.⁴
- We should utilize every moment of the day to correct, complete and perfect all aspects of Divine service relating to Pesach.⁵

the *Beis HaMikdash*. For once we have reached refinement through the elevation of all forty-nine aspects of our personalities, we can, and should, engage our physicality and egos to advance our Divine service.]

3. [The Alter Rebbe states (*Responsa* 6), “He who acts stringently in this matter is worthy of blessing ... for there is ample reason to refrain [from eating *matzah sheruyah*, matzah that has gotten wet,] because of the possibility of committing a Biblical transgression; [i.e., if the matzah were not fully baked, some raw flour could come in contact with water, which could possibly result in leavening].”

“Nevertheless,” concludes the Alter Rebbe, “on the last day of the festival, he who acts leniently for the sake of the joy of the festival – *simchas Yom Tov* – does not incur any [spiritual] loss.”

4. **The ending sums it up**

The final day of Pesach serves as the “gatherer of all the camps” [an allusion to the tribe of Dan, who traveled at the back of the Israelite formation as the Jews traversed the desert. They would collect items lost by the tribes that were ahead of them and return them]. On this day, we can collect any “lost” moments or benefits from all of the days of Pesach.

5. **Pesach in a day**

... As the *mishnah* (*Avos* 1:14) states: “If not now – when?!” We should now pay particular attention both to our Divine service during each moment of this day [of *Acharon Shel Pesach*], and completing or perfecting our Pesach service from the previous days.

Action

... The main thing is to draw the themes of the festival of Pesach into our Divine service for the entire coming year, and then express them in action. For *HaMaaseh*

GEBRAKTS AT EVERY MEAL

- We observed the Previous Rebbe's scrupulousness to eat matzah that had gotten wet (*gebrakts*) at each meal⁶ – starting with the first meal of *Acharon Shel Pesach* the previous night.⁷

WITH EACH TYPE OF FOOD

- The Previous Rebbe would eat *gebrakts* on the last day of Pesach – not only once, twice, or three times per meal, but with every dish: the fish, the meat, etc., and certainly the soup; [directly inserting the matzah into liquid]. He would even mix *gebrakts* into foods that are not normally eaten with bread during the rest of the year.⁸

Hu Halkar, “The main thing is the deed” (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5750; *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 64).

6. At every meal - to every limb

The reason behind eating *Gebrakts* on the final day of Pesach (and in every dish served) can further be understood by the contrast of food (Matzo) and water. Food contains all the vitamins and nutrients that are needed by the body. In contrast, while water is necessary for life, water does not intrinsically provide any nourishment or sustenance. The important role of water can be seen only when it is combined with food. Then, the water acts as a conduit that distributes the food and all of its nutrients all over the body.

On the first days of Pesach we are careful not to even allow a single drop of water to come in contact with matzo (because water is the essence of *Gebrakts*). The focus in these days is on the matzo itself and the spiritual service that accompanies it. Not so on the eighth day of Pesach when we not only allow the combination of water and matzo, but *Gebrakts* are present in every dish that is served so that the matzo and all of its spiritual significance can permeate and be distributed through our bodies. (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5748; *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 173).

7. Our leaders showed the way

We are not only lenient in *tolerating gebrakts* on *Acharon Shel Pesach*, we are scrupulous to *eat gebrakts*!

The Previous Rebbe related that his father, the Rebbe Rashab, would display both extreme caution in avoiding *gebrakts* throughout the first seven days of Pesach, and extreme scrupulousness in eating *gebrakts* on *Acharon Shel Pesach*.

As we have seen for ourselves, this is how the Previous Rebbe would conduct himself as well (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5748; *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 171).

8. It's worth repeating

From the Previous Rebbe's personal example, we can readily appreciate that there is great significance in eating *gebrakts* on *Acharon Shel Pesach*. And the more, the better! (*ibid.*)

DIRECTIVE FOR THE PUBLIC

- This conduct was not limited to the Previous Rebbe. Rather, he instructed all those present at his table to follow his example. In turn, they not only acquiesced while in his presence, but continued to eat *gebrakts* at the other meals on *Acharon Shel Pesach*. It thus became a directive for the general public⁹ – men, women, and children – [to eat *gebrakts* repeatedly on *Acharon Shel Pesach*].¹⁰

MOSHIACH'S SEUDAH

- The Previous Rebbe related that the Baal Shem Tov would refer to the third meal on the last day of Pesach as “*Moshiach’s Seudah*,” since “the radiance of Moshiach shines openly on this day.”
- Since the Previous Rebbe revealed this fact to the public, and even instructed that it be published, it is clearly applicable to *all* Jews.¹¹

9. **You don’t have to be a Rebbe**

This is not a practice reserved for select individuals [of high spiritual caliber], and certainly not just for the Rebbeim. Rather, it is a directive for the public at large. (*ibid.*)

10. *Ibid.*

Your previous caution is incomplete without today’s *gebrakts*

[Note that the necessary *tikkun* (“spiritual correction”) and *shleimus* (completion) of our custom to act with extreme caution to avoid *gebrakts* during the first seven days of Pesach is accomplished on *Acharon Shel Pesach* by being scrupulous to eat *gebrakts*. See “Nights of Pesach” 5748, fn. 259; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 111.]

11. **HaNasi Hu Hakol**

The custom to eat *Moshiach’s Seudah* is for *all* Jews: men, women and children. [This is clear from the fact that the Previous Rebbe,] who publicized this custom to the public, is the Leader of our Generation – and, [as Rashi tell us (*Bamidbar* 21:21),] “the Leader [of the generation] is *all* [of the generation]” (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5748; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 142).

Draw Moshiach into all you do

The purpose of this custom is ... that from *Moshiach’s Seudah* on the last day of Pesach, the radiance of Moshiach be drawn into all the (spiritual and) *physical* affairs and minutiae of a Jew’s daily life, throughout the entire year.

Live Geulah

SPREAD THE CUSTOM

- We should introduce this practice to those who did not have the custom of holding a *Moshiach's Seudah* in the past.¹² When we explain the great importance of eating this meal – and there are undoubtedly plenty of people who well understand its importance – then they, too, will observe it from now on.¹³

In simple terms, this means that whatever a Jew does throughout the year, even in his physical affairs, the activity will be permeated with G-dliness and holiness – akin to how things will be after the coming of Moshiach. His every action will be accomplished with a feeling of self-sacrifice (*mesiras nefesh*) for G-d that stems from the *Yechidah*, the uppermost level of the soul – the soul-level that corresponds to Moshiach. This way, all activities will be done in a complete manner, as they truly ought to be done (*ibid.*, p. 143).

12. Explain its importance

... They did not have the custom of holding a *Moshiach's Seudah* in the past, but not due to any opposition to the practice, Heaven forbid. Rather, they either lacked full awareness and true comprehension of its great value, or they were simply entrenched in their previous conduct, for, as the saying goes, “we cling to the customs of our ancestors.”... Undoubtedly, when we explain its great importance to them ... they, too, will observe *Moshiach's Seudah* from now on.

13. Part of Toras HaChassidus

They will undoubtedly begin to observe this custom despite not doing so until now, for this practice of the Baal Shem Tov is no different from all of his teachings which came as an innovation, and his entire innovative approach to Torah has now been recognized by all Jews (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5749; *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 57).

Do not segregate yourself from the community

... Further, and of utmost significance, since the custom to eat *Moshiach's Seudah* has become widespread, [not participating in this custom] would now contradict the instruction, “Do not separate yourself from the community,” and the command, “You shall love your fellow Jew as yourself”; i.e., an expression of Jewish unity, which applies throughout the year, and certainly on *Yom Tov* ... when there is particular emphasis on participating with the entire community.

An eye that sees

In addition, the obligation to hold *Moshiach's Seudah* (due to the prohibition against segregating oneself from the community and in light of the command to love our fellow Jews and express Jewish unity) applies in full force even to an individual in his private home and his own little corner. For, even if the *congregation* may be unaware that this individual has separated himself from them by not holding a *Moshiach's Seudah*, *Heaven* is most certainly fully aware...[that he would not be observing the custom.]

Unacceptable

Moreover, segregating oneself from the community in a particular manner can

FOUR CUPS FOR ALL JEWS

- It was the Rebbe Rashab who first revealed the practice of drinking four cups of wine at *Moshiach's Seudah*. At that time, however, the custom was restricted to the students of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim [and not the general public]. Later, the Previous Rebbe specifically publicized this practice so that *all* Jewish men, women and children would carry it out; indeed, the custom continues to spread throughout Jewry.¹⁴

cause undesirable repercussions in other matters as well. How much more so when a person's distancing himself in this matter becomes public knowledge: Everyone gathers in *shul* on *Yom Tov* to pray with the congregation and to hear the reading of the Torah and Haftorah; it is then announced that everyone will again be gathering at a specific time for *Moshiach's Seudah*.

Now that people have noticed that this particular individual has joined the congregation throughout the day (during services and the like), his subsequent *lack* of participation at *Moshiach's Seudah* will be noticed. His absence constitutes a public display of isolation, and is absolutely unacceptable conduct (*ibid.*, pp. 55-56).

You must come – *al pi Nigleh veChassidus*

... After all that we have explained, we can readily appreciate just how important and vital it is to observe the custom of eating *Moshiach's Seudah* on the last day of Pesach – [not only in keeping with the mystical teachings] but also according to the revealed [legal] dimension of Torah (*ibid.*, p. 57).

14. *Acharon shel Pesach* 5748; *Hisvaadyos* p. 173.

Tomim or not

This custom is pertinent to each and every Jew. True, at the outset, this practice was only introduced to the students of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim. However, over the last few years, and particularly in America, *many* Jews have joined in the observance of *Moshiach's Seudah* – and indeed, *all* Jews can join (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5750; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 79).

For “non-Lubavitchers” as well

Over recent years, this custom has continued to spread and is now common practice among all Lubavitch communities and those who are connected with them. Indeed, the practice continues to spread further and further, for as we can see for ourselves, the influence that Lubavitchers are having on others constantly increases.

Don't worry – it won't “make you a Lubavitcher”

Lubavitch influence is becoming more readily accepted, [and especially so regarding this particular practice], so that even those who bear no connection with the many other practices of Lubavitch (especially in customs pertaining to food and drink) have nevertheless accepted the custom of drinking four cups of wine on the last day of Pesach (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5749; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 59).

It will become universal

- [On numerous occasions, the Rebbe instructed the administration of the Central Tomchei Temimim 770 Yeshivah, or their representatives, to distribute four cups of wine to all present in 770.]¹⁵
- We should publicize and promote the practice of drinking these four cups by all the Jewish people.¹⁶

DRINK, NOT DRUNK

- We should be careful not to become intoxicated, Heaven forefend.¹⁷ For example, each person can use a cup whose volume he can handle, or make do with drinking just a majority of the cup [and not pushing him or herself to finish its entire contents].¹⁸

HAVE MOSHIACH IN MIND

- [While drinking the four cups, we should bear in mind their

With each passing year, the custom spreads further and further; eventually, it will reach and become accepted in *every* Jewish household (*ibid.*, p. 60).

“Religious” or not

In our generation, this has become the common custom and it continues to spread among much of Jewry – even including those who are “Jewish in identity alone.” (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5751; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 86).

15. *Ibid.*, 5748; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 173.

To all present

The administration of the Yeshivah [770] should distribute four cups of wine – not only to the Yeshivah’s students, but rather, to *everyone* gathered here in [770,] the *shul* and study hall of the Rebbe, Leader of our Generation (*Ibid.*, 5750; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 79).

16. **Bring others with you**

“The main thing is the deed”: In this case, it is not hearing about, talking about, or thinking about the practice of drinking four cups of wine at *Moshiach’s Seudah* that counts – rather, the main thing is the actual observance of *Moshiach’s Seudah*.

... The same is true regarding publicizing and influencing others: There is still time on this final day of Pesach to influence yet more Jews to fulfill the custom of drinking the four cups.

17. **Not the place for intoxication**

Drunkenness, Heaven forefend, runs contrary to the [Rebbe’s] directive [not to drink an excess of alcohol at any time], and is contrary to what is desirable, etc.

18. *Acharon Shel Pesach* 5748; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 173.

association with the *Geulah*.] One who drank four cups of wine but is uncertain whether or not he or she had their relevance to the future Redemption in mind – should make certain to drink again, with this intention.

- It is absolutely crucial that what is being done at *Moshiach's Seuda* (drinking of the four cups) must be done with a clear awareness in all aspects (without room for any doubt).¹⁹

THE REBBEIM'S NIGGUNIM

- During *Moshiach's Seudah* in the year 5750, the Rebbe made the following announcement: Although this has not been the

19. Practical directive in a mystical *maamor*

[The Rebbe interjected this directive into his delivery of the Chassidic discourse entitled “*Vehecharim 5749*,” printed in *Melukat*, vol. 3 (see there, p. 129, fn. 20). He concluded the directive by declaring, “Through drinking the four cups in this manner, [i.e., with the correct intention], we hasten the arrival of the future Redemption”].

As clear as the light of *Geulah*

Whoever is in doubt as to whether they completed the four cups ... in number, [i.e., they cannot recall whether they had all four cups,] or in the intention behind these cups, [i.e., they are not sure that they had the Redemption in mind while drinking], should “complete” them in a manner that leaves no room for further doubt. For it is plainly obvious that a lofty matter such as this; i.e., drinking the four cups that are connected to the future Redemption, ought to be carried out in a manner that is absolutely certain and clear, leaving no room at all for doubt (*Acharon Shel Pesach 5749; Hisvaadyos* p. 62).

Why four?

What is the connection between the future Redemption and the number *four*?

Four represents the state of perfection that the world will attain during the future Redemption, as a result of our having completed and perfected our [current] Divine service. Then, the world will be “enveloped from *all four sides*,” resembling the shape of a final-Mem, “מ”, which [as explained in Chassidus,] represents the ultimate Redemption.

A further allusion [to the number four] is found in today’s Haftorah, which describes the future Redemption: “And He will assemble the exiled of Israel and gather the dispersed of Yehudah from the *four* corners of the earth.”

... [Due to the deep significance of drinking four cups, it is only correct that] whoever drank the four cups without the correct intention – i.e., associating it with the future Redemption – should drink them again.

... May it be His will, that each and every person fulfill this custom with the proper intention, and amid true joy (*ibid.*, p. 59-60).

regular practice, and it therefore comes as an innovation, we should now sing all of the seven melodies of the Chabad Rebbeim.²⁰

MENTION THEIR NAMES

- We should mention the names of the Rebbeim before singing each of their respective melodies: the names of the Baal Shem Tov; the Maggid; the Alter Rebbe; the Mittlerer Rebbe; the Tzemach Tzedek; the Rebbe Maharash; the Rebbe Rashab; and the Rebbe, the Leader of our Generation.²¹

IN ERETZ YISRAEL

- In Eretz Yisrael, [there is no eighth day of Pesach. Instead,] *Moshiach's Seudah* should be eaten – along with the drinking of the four cups – on the seventh day of Pesach.²²
- When the seventh day of Pesach coincides with *erev* Shabbos, they should hold *Moshiach's Seudah* on that day, [i.e., on *erev* Shabbos], and (with increased fervor) on Shabbos.²³

SUMMER PREPARATIONS FOR ONESELF AND OTHERS

- As the festival of Pesach concludes, it is fitting to begin

20. *Ibid.*, 5748; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 173.

21. *Ibid.*, 5750; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 83.

22. **Moshiach in the Haftarah**

Today's Haftarah, the Song of King David, is connected with the revelation of Moshiach (a descendant of King David), and was composed in his (Moshiach's) honor.

Geulah in the Torah reading

Similarly, today's Torah reading is *Shiras HaYam*, the Song at the Sea, [*"Az Yashir,"*] which concludes with a reference to the future Redemption: "You will bring [the Jewish people] and plant them on the mountain of Your inheritance ... the Sanctuary which Your Hands, G-d, have established." [The fulfillment of this verse will occur] when, [as the verse there concludes,] "G-d will reign forever and ever." [When is that? As our Sages explain, it will occur] "In the future [Redemption], when all sovereignty will be His [alone]" (*Acharon Shel Pesach* 5751, fn. 77; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 86)

23. Erev Chag HaPesach 5748; *Hisvaadyos*, p. 76.

discussing issues pertaining to the approaching summer:

1) Concerning education-based activities: We should put great effort into providing Jewish children with an education on the highest levels of sanctity – *even during the summer*. This is accomplished by enrolling them in summer camps that are permeated with a holy atmosphere. Or at least, “kosher” summer camps.

We should have all children enrolled in such camps with enough time [to ensure that they will be registered].²⁴

2) Regarding the spiritual service of refining our character, the Alter Rebbe states in his *Siddur* that “it is customary to recite one chapter of *Pirkei Avos* on each Shabbos between Pesach and Shavuos.”

The reason for this custom, as stated in the commentaries to *Pirkei Avos*, is due to the awakening and flourishing of nature that happens during the summer months. [The warm weather often compels people to go on vacation and to exercise, this naturally results in a greater focus on the body and its physical well-being at the expense of the soul.] As we add to our enjoyment of nature, so too there is a need to add in the service of refining one’s character.²⁵

24. *Acharon Shel Pesach* 5748; *Hisvaaduyos*, p. 174. [See also p. 151.]

25. **Start now**

We should begin complying with these directives immediately, [in the manner that we are able; i.e.], by accepting resolutions concerning these matters on this very day (*ibid.*).

מוקדש
לכ"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח



לזכות

הרה"ח אברהם דוד וזוגתו שארה טובה שיחיו
ובניהם ובנותיהם:

מנחם מענדל, חי' מושקא, ישראל שיחיו

צוקערמאן



לזכות

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה
וזוגתו שלומית בת שושנה

בניהם ובנותיהם:

יוסף יצחק, משה, מנחם מענדל, חנה וחי'

מושקא

שיחיו גודמאן



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד