

SPECIAL DAYS IN ELUL

Volume 36, Issue 6

CONGREGATION LEVI YITZCHOK CHABAD OF HANCOCK PARK

Chabad Chodesh Elul 5785

Menachem Av 30/August 24/Sunday First Day Rosh Chodesh Elul

We begin to say "**L'Dovid HaShem Ori**" at Shacharis and Minchah.

Plague of Lice in Mitzrayim.

Moshe Rabbeinu went up to Har Sinai to receive the **second Luchos**. (Shemos 33:11, Rashi)

Wedding of **R. Boruch**, son of the Mittler Rebbe and **Rebbetzin Beila Reiza**, daughter of R. Chayim Avraham, son of the Alter Rebbe, 5582 [1822].

Elul 1/August 25/Monday Second Day Rosh Chodesh Elul

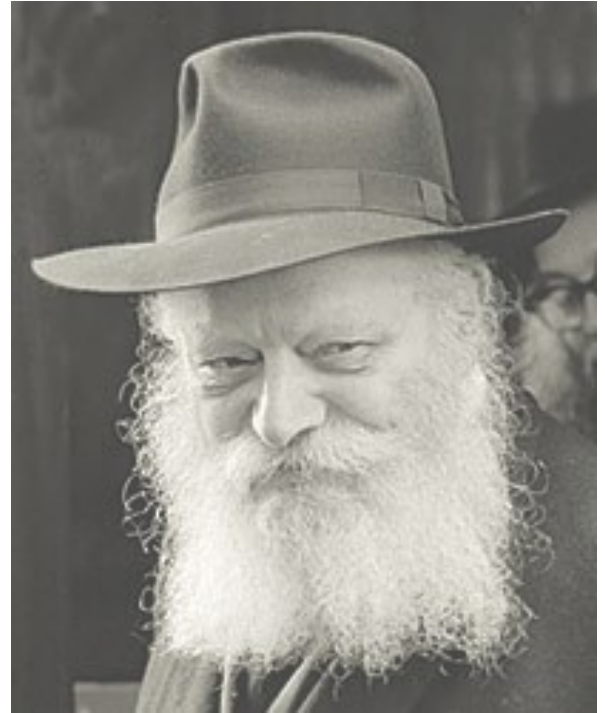
We begin to say **three extra chapters of Tehillim daily**, completing Sefer Tehillim by Yom Kippur, a custom received from the Ba'al Shem Tov.

We begin to blow the **Shofar** every day (except Shabbos,) after Shacharis.

"In Elul we blow ten blasts daily, except on Shabbos, paralleling the ten powers of the Nefesh; on Rosh HaShanah we blow one hundred blasts to awaken the ten powers, and the ten powers that each of THEM contain..." [Likutei Sichos Vol. II, p. 446]

In the days of the later Amoraim, beginning of **Chodesh Kalah**, month of study ("...and a pillar of fire came down for them from heaven"). [Tosafos, B'rachos 17a]

First day (Rosh HaShanah) of the year for determining annual **Ma'aser of animals** (Rosh HaShanah 2a)



Chagai prophesied about the building of the Second Beis HaMikdash, 3408 [353 BCE]. (Chagai 1:1)

Elul 5/August 29/Friday

Yahrtzeit of **R. Yom Tov Lipman Heller**, author of Tosfos Yom Tov on Mishnayos, 5414 [1654].

The first group of **Chassidim**, led by R. Mendel of Vitebsk, R. Avraham of Kalisk, and R. Yisroel of Polotzk, reached **Eretz Yisroel**, 5537 [1777].

Elul 7/August 31/Sunday

Amram remarried **Yocheved** (Moshe Rabbeinu was born seven months later), 2367 [1394 BCE]. (Sotah 12a)

Yahrtzeit of the **Meraglim** who spoke against Eretz Yisrael, 2448 [1313 BCE]. (Sotah 35a, Beis Yosef to Tur Orach Chaim 580)

Agrippa I dedicated the new gate of the wall of **Yerushalayim**, [42], once a holiday. (Megilas Ta'anis 6)

Elul 9/September 2/Tuesday

Birthdays (2015) and Yahrtzeit (2199) of **Dan** son of Ya'akov Avinu. (Midrash Tadshe)

The **Ramban** renewed the Jewish settlement in Yerushalayim, and founded a Beis HaKnesses, 5027 [1267]. The Beis HaKnesses was used for 700 years until 1948, and was reestablished in 1967.

Yahrtzeit of **R. Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin**, Chasidic leader and thinker, author of Pri Tzadik, 5660 [1900].

Elul 10/September 3/Wednesday

Noach sent out the raven. (Rashi, Bereishis, 8:5)

Yahrtzeit of **R. Pinchas Shapira of Koretz**, student of the Ba'al Shem Tov, author of Midrash Pinchas, 5550 [1790].

Wedding of **Rebbetzin Chayah Mushka**, daughter of the Rebbe MaHaRaSh , with **R. Moshe HaKohen Hornstein**, 5652 [1892].

Elul 11/September 4/Thursday

R. Yosef Karo finished his Beis Yosef on the Tur, 4302 [1542] in Tzfas, having begun in Adrianapole, Turkey in 4282 [1522].

Yahrtzeit of **R. Simchah Bunim of Pyschyscha**, Chassidic Rebbe and thinker, author of Kol Simchah, 5587 [1827].

Wedding of the **Rebbe RaShaB** and the **Rebbetzin Sterna Sarah**, 5635 [1875]. The wedding took place in the city of Ursht, where the Kallah lived. The Rebbe MaHaRaSh did not travel to the wedding, and during that week he said 32 ma'amarim. When the Rebbe RaShaB came back, his father told him that he has a wedding present for him, and that was the 32 ma'amarim.

Elul 12/September 5/Friday

Birthdays of the **Ramban**, **R. Moshe b. Nachman**, 4954 [1194], Gerona, Spain.

The **Frierdiker Rebbe** visited America, for the first time, 5689 [1929]. He visited several cities to

strengthen Yiddishkeit, and was received by President Hoover at the White House. He stayed for almost an entire year, until the 21st of Tammuz 5690, 1930. (See Letters of the Frierdiker Rebbe, Vol. 2, which speaks about the work that the Rebbe did in America.)

Elul 13/September 6/Shabbos

Yahrtzeit of **R. Ya'akov Yisroel of Czerkass**, son of R. Mordechai of Czernobyl, son-in-law of the Mittler Rebbe, 5636 [1876].

Wedding of the **Frierdiker Rebbe** and **Rebbetzin Nechamah Dinah**, 5657 [1897].

Yahrtzeit of **R. Yosef Chayim of Baghdad, the "Ben Ish Chai"**, Sephardic Posek and Kabbalist, author of Ben Ish Chai, Od Yosef Chai, Rav Pealim, Ben Yehoyada and Mekabtziel, (one of the first Sephardic Poskim to cite the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch), 5669 [1909].

Elul 14/September 7/Sunday

The Frierdiker Rebbe moved from Riga, Latvia, to Warsaw, Poland, 5693 (1933). He stayed there for two years. In the summer of 1935 he moved to the suburb, Otwosk. (Letters of the Frierdiker Rebbe Vol. 13, pg. 282)

Yahrtzeit of **Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Hornstein**, youngest daughter of the Rebbe MaHaRaSh , who was killed in Treblinka, 5702 (1942). (Sefer Ma'amorim 5711, pg. 106, letter of the Rebbe) The Rebbe would recite Kaddish.

Yahrtzeit of **R. Boruch Mordechai Ettinger of Bobroisk**, great Chassid of the Alter Rebbe, Mittler Rebbe, and Tzemach Tzedek, 5612 [1852]. He had been a student of the Gaon of Vilna and was the son-in-law of R. Shmuel, the Av Beis Din of Vilna. He settled in Yerushalayim a year before his passing. (He is buried next to the Or HaChayim HaKadosh; the Mittler Rebbe had written of his desire to move to Eretz Yisrael, "...and if he desires to be lit in the light of life...") [Beis Rebbe]

Elul 15/September 8/Monday

Yahrtzeit of **R. Ya'akov Kopel Chosid of Kolomay**, student of the Ba'al Shem Tov, and the Chazan in his Beis Midrash, founder of Kosov-Vizhnitz Chassidus, 5529 [1769].

The Russian government decreed the drafting of Jewish boys at the age of twelve to be sent to military school until eighteen, and then to serve in the Czar's army for twenty-five years, 5587 [1827]. Some 100,000 Jewish boys became **cantonists**. (The Mittlerer Rebbe spoke about this decree the week before his passing and said a Ma'amar, "To Understand The Drafting of Soldiers From Israel". (Printed in Migdal Oz, Pg. 399)

The **Tzemach Tzedek** organized a group to **fight the conscription law**: they helped communities negotiate for lower quotas, paid ransoms to free them, sent people to comfort the children at assembly points and encouraged them to be loyal to Judaism. (Some in this group were imprisoned.) The Tzemach Tzedek himself met with the cantonists, spoke with them and said two Ma'amarim for them.

The **Rebbe RaShaB** founded Yeshivahs Tomchei T'mimim, 5657 [1897] during the Seudah of the wedding, Sheva Brochos for the Frierdiker Rebbe. The Rebbe RaShaB said, "For years I was worried, and full of pain from the spiritual level, and the dryness of Chassidim. My heart was bleeding, every time I visited the Ohel of my fathers, our holy Rebbe'im, I poured out my bitter heart for the standard of Chassidim, and Chassidus. Summer 5656 (1896) I was in the holy Ohelim of the Holy Ba'al Shem Tov, the Magid of Mezritch, the Alter Rebbe and the Mittlerer Rebbe, and coming back to Lubavitch to the Ohel of my grandfather the Tzemach Tzedek and my father the Rebbe MaHaRaSh . With their blessing I started to plan a Yeshivahh which will raise Chassidishe bochurim, with good middos, who will give over their lives to the way of Chassidus with Mesiras Nefesh. I am sure with the Brochos from all those mentioned above, the Yeshivahh will be successful, and the light of Torah and Avodah will shine on Jews generally and by Chassidim specifically. (Sefer HaSichos 5701, 1941, pg. 106) In another sicha (Sefer HaSichos 5686, 1925, Simchas Torah) the Frierdiker Rebbe says, "My father,

when he had to make the Yeshivah, he told me, ...Ten years I was thinking about making the Yeshivah, and I visited the Ohelim of my father and grandfather many times regarding it.

The name **Tomchei Temimim** was given by the Rebbe RaShaB, two years later during Hakofos, 5659, 1896.

Elul 17/September 10/Wednesday

Noach sent out the **dove** the first time. (Bereishis 8:8)

Roman garrison in Yerushalayim destroyed by Jewish insurgents, once a holiday. (Megilas Ta'anis 6)

Wedding of **R. Boruch and Rebbetzin Rivkah**, parents of the Alter Rebbe, 5503 [1743].

The **Rebbe** personally laid the cornerstone for the expansion of 770, 5748 [1988].

Elul 18/September 11/Thursday

Birthday of our Holy Master and Teacher, **Rabbi Yisrael b. Eliezer, the Ba'al Shem Tov**, founder of Chassidus, 5458, [1698].

In 5484 [1724], (The Ba'al Shem Tov's twenty-sixth birthday) **Achiyah Ha-Shiloni** first appeared to him. On this day in 5494 [1734] (his thirty-sixth birthday) he was revealed as a Tzadik. On this day in 5504 [1744] the Ba'al Shem Tov told R. Boruch, the Alter Rebbe's father, he would have a son in a year.

Birthday of our Holy Master and Teacher, **R. Shneur Zalman b. R. Baruch, the Alter Rebbe**, founder of Chassidus Chabad, 5505 [1745].

Opsherenish of the **Alter Rebbe** by the Ba'al Shem Tov, 5508 [1748].

"...Chai Elul is the day that brings Chayus [life] into Elul." "From Chai Elul until Chai Kislev, said the Rebbe MaHaRaSh , is for us [the Rebbeim] the three months of preparation for the Avodah of the Rosh HaShanah of Chassidus, the holy day of Yud-Tes Kislev." [Sichah, Chai Elul, 5705]

"...From Chai Elul there are twelve days until Rosh HaShanah. The preparation must be an introspection about the twelve months of the year, a day for every month." [Sefer HaSichos 5703, p. 177]

"...From the time it became known that Chai Elul is the birthday of the Ba'al Shem Tov and of the Alter Rebbe, there's been the custom in many places, and especially in Chabad Shuls, to make it a day of Farbrengen, and telling stories of Tzadikim, strengthening the ways of Chassidim in general and Ahavas Yisroel in particular, and accepting commitments in setting times for Torah study, in Nigleh and Chassidus . . . The birthday is celebrated with a special inspiration in the house of the Rebbe, and the Rebbe speaks words of inspiration in Torah and Avodah and sometimes says a Ma'amar." [Letter of the Rebbe, 5704, Likutei Sichos, Vol. 24, p. 518]

"...It was privately observed by the Rebbeim as a spiritual festival, when they would say a Ma'amar to their sons alone...moreover this being a tradition from my revered father [the Rebbe RaShaB] one thing is certain, on this day the Ba'al Shem Tov speaks his words of Torah for his disciples and for their disciples and for all those whose souls are bound to them." [Sefer HaMa'amarim, 5708. p. 292].

"The greeting used by the Rebbe RaShaB and the Frierdiker Rebbe on Chai Elul was 'Gut Yom Tov.' [Sichah, Chai Elul, 5703]

The **Mittler Rebbe** settled in **Lubavitch**, 5573 [1813]. It became the center of Chabad Chassidus until Cheshvan 17, 5676 [1915] when the Rebbe RaShaB left for Rostov-on-Don.

Beginning of studies in the Yeshivah

The first official day of learning in Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim 5657 [1897]. The Rebbe RaShaB said, "I am kindling the Ner Tamid of the Illuminators, that the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Rebbeim gave us, and the promise of "Yafutzu Mayonosecha Chutzah" should be fulfilled with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu." (Sefer HaSichos 5702, 1942 pg. 133)

Yahrtzeit of **R. Yehudah Loew b. Betzalel, the MaHaRaL of Prague**, (the Alter Rebbe's great-grandfather), 5369 [1609].

"...The MaHaRaL of Prague was the greatest genius of his time, a Gaon in Nigleh and Nister, and philosophy, blessed with a gift in music, with a fine character, and above all a wonderful teacher who sanctified and established the Jewish customs in Klal Yisrael . . . the guidance and education, said the Tzemach Tzedek, and Jewish customs that the MaHaRaL sanctified and established in Klal Yisrael stand above all the books he wrote. ." [Sefer HaSichos 5702, p. 73]

"...In Lubavitch we were very meticulous about customs and especially the customs received from the MaHaRaL of Prague." [Sefer HaSichos 5704, p. 7]

Elul 19/September 12/Friday

Anti-Jewish riot in London at the coronation of Richard I; Yahrtzeit of **R. Ya'akov of Orleans** a Tosafist, student of Rabbeinu Tam, who was killed there, 4949 [1189].

The **Frierdiker Rebbe** moved into **770 Eastern Parkway**, 5700 [1940].

Yahrtzeit of **R. Ya'akov HaLevi Segal Moellin, the "MaHaRiL" of Mayence**, author of Minhagei MaHaRiL, the primary source of Minhagei Ashkenaz, 5187 [1427].

Yahrtzeit of **R. Yonasan Eybeschutz**, author of Kereisi uFleisi, Urim VeTumim, Ya'aros Devash, and others, 5524 [1764].

Elul 20/September 13/Shabbos Shabbos Selichos

We begin saying **Selichos Motzei Shabbos** after midnight.

Elul 21/September 14/Sunday

The **Frierdiker Rebbe** left Otvosk for Warsaw, at the outbreak of World War II, 5699 [1939].

The **Chanukas Habayis of 770**, 5700 [1940]. The Frierdiker Rebbe said a Ma'amar printed in the Sefer HaMa'morim 5700, pg. 160.

Elul 22/September 15/Monday

Yahrtzeit of **R. Mordechai Dov Ber of Hornesteipel**, grandson of the Mittlerer Rebbe, author of Haemek She'elah, 5663 [1903]. He was named for his great-grandfather, R. Mordechai of Czernobyl and the Mittlerer Rebbe.

Elul 23/September 16/Tuesday

Noach sent out the dove the second time. (Rashi, Bereishis, 8:5)

Yahrtzeit of **R. Uri of Strelisk "the Saraf (Burning Angel)"**, Chassidic leader, author of Imrei Kodesh, 5686 [1826].

Yahrtzeit of **R. Meir Shlomo HaLevi Yanovsky**, grandfather of the Rebbe, Chasid of the Rebbe MaHaRaSh and Rebbe RaShaB, Rav of Nikolayev.

The third day of Selichos was set aside by the Alter Rebbe to say Chasidus privately to the Mittlerer Rebbe and later, to the Tzemach Tzedek. It was secret, and no one knew of it. On the third day of Selichos the Tzemach Tzedek would say a Ma'amar of the Alter Rebbe privately for the Rebbe MaHaRaSh, as did the Rebbe MaHaRaSh for the Rebbe RaShaB. In 5655 (1895), the Rebbe RaShaB said Chasidus for the Frierdiker Rebbe, and told him to keep it a secret until the time he would be told to reveal it. (Sefer Ma'amorim 5705, p. 226; Letter of the Rebbe, 5710)

In 5705 (1945), the **Frierdiker Rebbe** said a Ma'amar on this day and asked that it be printed and publicized. (See Sefer HaMa'amorim)

Elul 24/September 17/Wednesday

Marriage of **Dovid HaMelech and Bas Sheva**. (Shalshelas HaKabalah)

Yahrtzeit of **R. Yisroel Meir Kagan of Radin**, author of the Chafetz Chayim, Mishnah Berurah, Shmiras HaLashon, amongst others 5693 [1933].

Zerubavel and the people of Yerushalayim begin clearing the Beis HaMikdash site to build the **Second Bayis** [520 BCE]. (Chagai 1:15)

Elul 25/ September 18/Thursday

First day of Creation, 5785 years ago.

Nechemiah completed rebuilding the walls of Yerushalayim, 3426 [335 BCE]. (Nechemiah 6:15)

Yahrtzeit of **R. Elazar son of R. Shimon bar Yochai**, 3862 [102].

Yahrtzeit of **R. Yechiel Michel of Zlotczov**, student of the Ba'al Shem Tov, 5546 [1786]. It is known that on the day of the Histalkus of the

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Ba'al Shem Tov, Shavuot 5520 [1760], the Ba'al Shem Tov called R. Yechiel Michel and told him to sing his famous Nigun.

The Ba'al Shem Tov said: "I promise that anyone who'll sing this Nigun, of great awakening of mercy, with an awakening of Teshuvah, I will hear it in any place I may be (in Gan Eden) and I will join him in the singing and awaken great mercy on the ba'al teshuvah who sings it." This is accepted as the Nigun of Hisorerus Rachamim Rabim.

Bris of the Alter Rebbe, 5505 [1745]. On that occasion the Ba'al Shem Tov said to make a Seudah, and said Chassidus.

Elul 27/September 20/Shabbos

We don't say Birkas HaChodesh; we do say Sefer Tehillim.

"...The Alter Rebbe said: "I heard from the Mezritcher Magid, in the name of his teacher; that the first month of the year HaShem Himself blesses on the last Shabbos of Elul. With this strength Israel blesses the other eleven months." (HaYom Yom)

"...The blessing is that expressed in the Parshah, which begins, "You are all standing today". "Today", refers to Rosh HaShanah, the day of judgment; Jews are all "standing" - victorious in judgment." (Sichah, Shabbos Nitzavim-Vayelech, 5750)

Elul 28/September 21/Sunday

Yahrtzeit of **R. Nosson Adler**, Kabbalist and Rosh Yeshivah, teacher of the Chasam Sofer, author of Mishnah D'Rabi Nosson, 5560 [1800], in Frankfort-on-Main. His practice of davening Nusach Sefarad, even as Chazan, is cited as an authoritative precedent, in Sefer HaMinhagim, p. 2.

Yahrtzeit of **R. Shalom Roke'ach of Belz**, founder of Belz Chassidus, 5615 [1855]. R' Chitrik writes, in Volume 3 of Reshimos Devarim, of the time the Rebbe MaHaRaSh went to Belz, dressed as a businessman. He wanted to see the Tzaddik R' Shalom of Belz. He sat in the far corner of the shul, where he could observe. When R' Shalom came in, it was very hard for him to see; his attendant was taking him to the head table when he pulled away and said he smells a very fine odor. He went to the Rebbe MaHaRaSh, and said to him, from me you can not hide. He asked him how his father, the Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek, is doing. Later he gave him Sherayim and whispered to him the secret of giving Sherayim. (See Letters of the Rebbe, volume 2, pg. 324 and footnotes.)

Elul 29/September 22/Monday

Erev Rosh HaShanah

* We do not blow Shofar today * Hatoras Nedarim

Birthday of our Holy Master and Teacher, **R. Menachem Mendel b. R. Sholom Shachne, third Lubavitcher Rebbe, "The Tzemach Tzedek"**, author of Tzemach Tzedek, 5549 [1789], in Liozna. (He was named for R. Menachem Mendel of

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CHAI ELUL

BIRTHDAY OF THE BA'AL SHEM TOV AND THE ALTER REBBE THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 11

In connection with Chai Elul, the anniversary of the Yom Huledes of the Ba'al Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe, we bring you what the Rabbeim said about this day and some stories:

In the year 5585 (1825), on Shabbos Parshas Ki Teitzei, thirteen of Elul, the Mittler Rebbe spoke about the day on which a tzaddik is born, and specifically about the day on which an individual with a comprehensive soul is born. He spoke of the festive meal which celebrates the occasion in the Lower Garden of Eden and in the Higher Garden of Eden. This spiritual repast consists of the Divine Presence, where they behold and apprehend the essence of G-dliness. All the souls present take leave of the soul of the tzaddik which is about to descend to the world, and offer it their blessings for success - in realizing the ultimate purpose of its descent into a body.

“The nature of the festive Seudas Mitzvah which is held in the Lower and Higher Gan Eden in honor of a comprehensive soul, is quite different from that which is held in honor of the soul of an ordinary righteous person. Once the Heavenly Court has decreed that a particular comprehensive soul must descend to the world at a certain time and be born to specific parents, then, some time before the body of the prospective infant is formed, the Court assigns this soul a particular chamber, and there it heads a heavenly academy.

There, as it awaits its downward mission, this soul expounds the Torah to the souls of the righteous.

With the approach of the time appointed for the soul to set out on its descent, the soul of Moshe

Rabbeinu leads all the comprehensive souls who now foregather for the festive occasion. They give the embarking soul their mission for the public welfare, and promise to aid it in its endeavors.

“The day destined for the birth of a tzaddik (and even more so, for the birth of a tzaddik with a comprehensive soul), is thus a Yom Tov that is celebrated in all the supernal worlds. It is an auspicious time, a time at which the Holy One, Blessed is He, rejoices exceedingly, so to speak. And all those who participate in the farewell celebration derive spiritual nourishment from the celestial table, from the festive banquet which is held in the higher spheres, in the Higher and in the Lower Garden of Eden.” (Sefer HaSichos 5703, pg. 89)

Continuing in the words of the Rebbe RaShaB: One who is knowledgeable and well versed in the paths of life of the Neshamos in the Lower Gan Eden and in the Higher Gan Eden (as explained in Zohar and Sifrei Kabalah, and with lengthy explanations in Reishis Chochmah and Maver Yabok), and is sensitive to the soul, will be able to appraise the great joy in the heavenly chamber of the Ba'al Shem Tov during the twenty-four hours of Chai Elul, when there are gathered together the outstanding heads of the Jewish People, the Holy Society of his students and the students of his students, who are the Nesi'im of Israel, together with the thousands and tens of thousands of those who are attached to them.

It is clear at this moment, as the Tefillah of Ma'ariv approaches, there is an announcement in heaven on the occasion of the birthday of the Ba'al Shem Tov,

“Arise, tzaddikim, and prepare yourselves for the holy celebration,” because all Neshamos, - it goes without saying the souls of the tzaddikim who have already received the punishment which is due them - but also the souls who are still undergoing purification after the revelation of the Ba’al Shem Tov in the lower world -- merit to participate in this celebration, each soul according to its essential being -- because all of the souls are equal in their root in Atzilus, and in the root of their root in the Essence of Ein Sof Boruch Hu, and the division is only in the level at which they are revealed here below and in the particular path of their service -- and according to this level is the manner in which they merit to participate in the holy celebration. "At midnight the Holy One, Blessed is He, comes to have enjoyment with the tzaddikim in Gan Eden, as explained in the Zohar, from the comparison and interpretation of many verses, and the enjoyment is in the secrets of Torah. Even though the lives of the tzaddikim in the Lower and Higher Gan Eden is completely good and completely holy and has nothing of the workaday, for in every world the level of Gan Eden in that world is the Atzilus within that world, which is all good, nevertheless, there exist distinctions between weekday and Shabbos and Yom Tov, and it is certain that the enjoyment that the Holy One, Blessed Is He has with the tzaddikim on this night, the night of Chai Elul, will be like the joy of Yom Tov.

“When I set my heart and mind -- continued my holy father the Rebbe RaShaB -- to meditate upon the life history of our Master the Ba’al Shem Tov, and the life history of the Alter Rebbe, and the paths of their lives in hard labor with self sacrifice on behalf of the holy Name of the Almighty, in their war with the supernal opposition and with those here below who opposed their approach and their Torah, in which, with the help of the Almighty, they were victorious, I come to the conclusion that their holy day must be celebrated in heaven in the same way as the celebration of field marshals who return from the fields of battle with the emblems of victory in hand.

The heavenly kingdom is analogous to the earthly

kingdom. In the earthly kingdom, when the field marshal returns from the fields of battle after having defeated the hated enemy, the king himself goes out to meet him, and all the officers and nobles of the kingdom follow in his train. All as one praise and exalt the marshal, and his name is recorded everlastingly in the chronicles of his nation. And if, in the earthly kingdom, his reward is doubled and redoubled, it must be impossible to assess the surpassing joy and glory and honor, the radiance and brilliance which shines forth in the chamber of the Ba’al Shem Tov.

As the universal practice at the celebration of the field marshal, his battalions and their officers are honored with medals and with presents, each officer according to his rank in the battalion of the field marshal, and each soldier according to his service and according to his devoted self-sacrifice in carrying out this service. So too in this holy celebration; assuredly, the entire Holy Society, the students of the Ba’al Shem Tov and the students of their students, together with all who have attached themselves to them, are all, each according to his function, honored with numerous presents, the promotion of their holy Neshamos to higher and higher levels.

We, too, who dwell in the material tenement of the body in this physical world, are remembered for good and for blessing in the prayers of the Ba’al HaSimchah (the Holy Ba’al Shem Tov), who arouses the mercies of Heaven upon those who connect themselves to those who are attached to him (his disciples and those who are bound to them), to go in their footsteps in constant toil in the Torah of our holy fathers, the Rebbei'im, and to tread the broad highway of the service of the Creator in the service of the heart, refinement of character, and the love of one's fellow Jew. The Ba’al Shem Tov was the Rosh HaMechanchim (foremost educator) and the Alter Rebbe was the Rosh HaMadrichim (foremost counselor and guide).

(Sefer HaSichos 5703/1943, pg. 186)

The Ba'al Shem Tov as a Schochet

Before his revelation as a Chassidic master, the Ba'al Shem Tov was employed as a shochet (a ritual slaughterer). Once one of the local Jewish landholders sent his non-Jewish servant with a chicken to the shochet to be slaughtered. Some time passed and the servant returned with the live bird. The landowner inquired as to why the servant had not had the bird slaughtered. The servant replied there was a new shochet in town, as the old one, the Ba'al Shem Tov, had left. "Well," asked the landowner, "why did you not have the chicken slaughtered?" The servant replied, "This shochet wets his sharpening stone with water. Reb Yisroel would wet his stone with tears."

(Tales of the Ba'al Shem Tov)

How the Maggid Became a Student of the Ba'al Shem Tov

The Ba'al Shem Tov wanted Reb DovBer, the Maggid of Mezritch, who was a great Torah scholar, to become a Chossid and his disciple. The first time the Maggid saw the Ba'al Shem Tov, the Ba'al Shem Tov was learning Sefer Eitz Chaim and he asked the Maggid if he had ever learned this Sefer. The Maggid responded to the affirmative. "Could you read the following section for me?" asked the Ba'al Shem Tov. The Maggid began to read and explained the topic at great length. The Ba'al Shem Tov commented that this is not the meaning, "If you know a better explanation then tell it to me!" responded the Maggid. The Ba'al Shem Tov began reading the text and the entire room filled with Malochim and the house shone with a great light. The Ba'al Shem Tov explained to the Maggid that he knew the meaning but it was without warmth and light. When one learns with all his might and power then this is called learning Torah as it is supposed to be.

(Shivchei HaBeShT, Sichah 15 Tammuz 5720 [1960] Camp Gan Israel)

Using the Light of Creation

It was wartime and two brothers, R. Yonah and R. Boruch both had oxen to sell so they shipped them to the marketplace. Then R. Boruch heard that R. Yonah's oxen were stolen. R. Boruch worried that his oxen were also stolen. R. Boruch sent R. Yosef Kaminka to the Ba'al Shem Tov.

When R. Yosef arrived, the Ba'al Shem Tov was washing before a meal. He told R. Yosef to wash as well.

After Hamotzi the Ba'al Shem Tov asked R. Yosef why R. Boruch and R. Yonah had not told him about the sale of their oxen earlier, for he would have watched out for them. Then the Ba'al Shem Tov opened the Sefer HaZohar and looked inside for a moment. I see, he said, the oxen of R. Boruch are okay; they have not been stolen. R. Yosef asked does the Zohar say this about the oxen of R. Boruch?

The Ba'al Shem Tov answered. On the first day of creation Hashem created the light and saw that it was very good. This light was later hidden by Hashem. Chazal ask what was so significant about this light that it was hidden. The answer is that the light of the days of creation could cause someone to see from one end of the world to the other, but this world was not a fit place for this special light, for it may have been used for negative things. Where did Hashem hide the light? He hid it in the Torah and for the Tzaddikim for the time to come. Therefore, one who merits through Torah receives that light and can see from one end of the world to the other.

The Rebbe mentioned this story in Shivchei HaBeShT on Chof Hey Elul 5734 [1974]. A similar story was told by the Alter Rebbe in a Ma'amar Chassidus on Kesuvim, p. 204 which, in brief, is as follows.

Mesiras Nefesh of the Ba'al Shem Tov

The son of the Ruzhiner Rebbe, Rebbe Abraham Ya'acov of Sadigora, told the following story:

The Ba'al Shem Tov appeared in a town unexpectedly one Erev Shabbos but he declined invitations from all the locals. There was a Chossid of the Ba'al Shem Tov in that city and he didn't even want to eat by his Chossid. After davening the Ba'al Shem Tov told everyone to remain in the shul and say Tehillim. This continued until close to midnight. Then the Ba'al Shem Tov instructed them to go home, eat Seudas Shabbos and return to shul and continue to say Tehillim. The Ba'al Shem Tov ate his seudah in the shul. Then the community members continued to say Tehillim until morning.

In the morning after davening the Ba'al Shem Tov was relaxed and joyful, and he accepted the invitation of one of the townsmen to the morning Shabbos meal. Many of the townspeople followed the Ba'al Shem Tov to the house. As they were sitting at the table, a peasant came around looking for a drink of vodka. The Ba'al Shem Tov called out that he should be brought in, and provided with a generous glass of vodka.

The Ba'al Shem Tov asked the peasant to tell what happened in the mansion of the Poritz on the previous night. The peasant related that the Poritz, believing that he had been cheated in a business deal by a Jewish merchant, assembled his peasants and armed them with knives and hatchets, telling them to be on the ready to avenge themselves on the Jews when he gave the command. They would then all be able to liberate their "stolen riches" from the Jews.

The whole night we waited for the command, the peasant continued, but the Poritz had closeted himself in his office with an unexpected visitor, an old friend who he hadn't seen for forty years. Finally he emerged and told all of us to go home, the Jews were upright and honest people and nobody should dare lay a hand on them. We all went home and that's all, concluded the peasant.

The Ba'al Shem Tov explained what happened. This Poritz, a very rich man, had a large number of silos of grain and he always charged high prices for his grain. No one wanted to purchase the grain at such a price so the grain stayed in the silos until it began to rot. For whatever reason the Poritz blamed the Jews for not buying the grain and thus "causing" it to spoil. When the Ba'al Shem Tov saw this danger he gathered everyone to say Tehillim so that Hashem should have mercy.

Now, this Poritz had a very good friend from his youth. Both were very rich but they lived far apart and the connection between them had broken. They no longer kept in touch with each other. The friend lived at such a distance that when he passed away the local Poritz never heard about it. So the Ba'al Shem Tov requested that the deceased friend return briefly to this world to speak to his old friend. He arrived before midnight and asked the local Poritz why all the armed peasants were here.

The local Poritz explained that the Jews were to blame for his great financial loss. The friend said you don't know what you are talking about! I deal extensively with Jews and have always found them to be good to me. You can see that after their Shabbos you can sell your grain to them and they will buy it from you. At that moment the local Poritz decided to follow the advice of his friend and went outside and dismissed the peasants, telling them to go home peacefully.

But I always wondered, added the Sadigora Rebbe, why did the Ba'al Shem Tov have to travel all the way to that town for Shabbos to avert the decree. Couldn't he have remained in his hometown of Medzibuz just as well? But I understand now. The Ba'al Shem Tov said to himself, if I can succeed in saving the town fine...but if not, then I will perish together with them.

(Sipurei Mofes)

The Burning Tree

One time the Ba'al Shem Tov traveled from Kaminka to his home together with several of his talmidim including R. Boruch of Kaminka. It was winter and the weather was bitterly cold. At one point the Ba'al Shem Tov announced that at a certain place, many miles ahead they would daven minchah. The travelers were freezing and fearful. They said to the Ba'al Shem Tov that it is impossible to reach that place without endangering their lives in the cold and the coachman agreed. As they traveled through the forest, the Ba'al Shem Tov had the coachman stop the wagon. He then climbed down into the snow and touched a tree. This tree ignited and began to burn. Everyone warmed himself by this fire. The coachman even took off his felt boots and dried off his socks. When they left, R. Boruch looked back and the Ba'al Shem Tov shouted at him not to look back.

(Shivchei HaBeShT)

Someone came to ask the Ba'al Shem Tov about his son whom he had not heard from (the son was hundreds of miles away). The Ba'al Shem Tov opened up a Zohar and said your son is in Breslov, and he is okay.

The Alter Rebbe and the Yishuvnik

The following episode is based on Sh'muous V'Sipurim, by R' Refoel Nachman HaKohen.

One of the Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe was engaged as a Melamed in a village. He stayed in the house of a Yishuvnik (a Jewish villager) whose children he taught in exchange for board and lodgings with a little extra cash. The tuition fees he collected for teaching the Yishuvnik's children and several other nearby children he sent back home for the support of his wife and family.

Yishuvniks living far from town had little opportunity for learning. Most of them were, therefore, quite

ignorant and simple minded, though not lacking in faith and in observance of the daily Mitzvos as best they knew. Our Yishuvnik was no exception. However, he was very happy when the Melamed came and offered his services to teach his children and others in the village, or surrounding country. Little did he know that it was the Alter Rebbe who often sent out such melamdim to teach Jewish children in rural areas where there was no cheder.

All went well until Rosh HaShanah was approaching, when the Melamed informed the Yishuvnik that he would be going away for the coming festivals. The Yishuvnik was disappointed.

"I had hoped that you would be our Chazzan and Ba'al Toke'ah on Rosh Hashanah, for we are going to have a Minyan here. You see, we are far from town, and Jews from nearby hamlets and villages come here to make a Minyan on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur," the Yishuvnik said.

"I am sorry that I cannot stay, for I go to the Rebbe for Rosh HaShanah every year," the Melamed replied.

"What Rebbe? You are a Rebbe yourself, aren't you? Why do you have to go to another Rebbe?" the Yishuvnik asked in surprise.

The Melamed tried to explain to the Yishuvnik as best he could, in simple terms, who this other Rebbe was.

"There are Rebbes and there is a Rebbe of Rebbes, to whom other Rebbes, like myself, and many other Jews come to, for Rosh HaShanah, to listen to his teachings. This helps us to be better Jews all year round.

"But can't you go to your Rebbe some other time? Why for Rosh Hashanah?"

“You see, Rosh HaShanah is the ‘head’ of the year; this is what Rosh means, ‘head.’ It is the head of all the days of the year, including all the festivals. You know how important it is to have a good head on your shoulders. In the head is a brain to think, the eyes to see, the mouth to eat, to speak and to breathe—the whole body depends on the head. Similarly, the Head Rebbe, who is a great Tzaddik, is the ‘head’ of all the Jewish souls who are attached to him. So it is only right to go to the head Rebbe and spend with him those holy days of the year—Rosh HaShanah—which are the ‘head’ of the year.”

The Yishuvnik thought for a while then said, “If it is true what you say, then I also want to go to this head Rebbe for Rosh HaShanah.”

The Melamed was very pleased to hear this. He was also pleased with the thought that instead of walking all the way, or hitchhiking part of it if lucky, he would now be able to make the journey in comfort, since the Yishuvnik had his own horse and buggy.

When the time came to take to the road, the Yishuvnik harnessed his horse, and took a good supply of food for both of them, and off they went in high spirits.

Arriving at the city of the Alter Rebbe, they went into the Beis Medrash. Immediately the Melamed was surrounded by many Chassidim, who shook his hand warmly and told him how delighted they were to see him, for the Melamed was well known among the Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe, and they were all like one big family.

Few people took any notice of the Yishuvnik after a brief, though friendly, handshake.

The time came for Yechidus—private audience with the Rebbe—and the Chassidim gathered to take their turn. The Yishuvnik knew nothing about Yechidus,

but seeing that people were going in and out of the Rebbe’s room in great excitement, he decided to take his turn, too.

Entering the Rebbe’s room, the Yishuvnik was a little awestruck seeing the saintly Rebbe sitting behind a table, on which candles were burning. Not knowing what to say, the Yishuvnik stood there and kept quiet.

“Nu?” the Rebbe said, as if to say, “What can I do for you, my good friend?”

The Yishuvnik kept quiet.

“Nu?” the Rebbe said again, encouragingly.

“Nu—what?” the Yishuvnik retorted, baffled and somewhat impatient.

Whereupon the Rebbe began to intone in a sing-song voice, in the manner of a Maggid, as he often did when he preached a sermon: “It sometimes happens that a Jew cannot resist the temptation of the Yetzer Hara, and neglects to do what he should, or does what he should not...” and by way of example he began to enumerate several failings which “hit the nail on the head,” as the saying goes. For the Rebbe mentioned precisely the very things which the Yishuvnik would have liked to forget.

Hearing the recital of his misdeeds from the Rebbe, whom he had just met for the first time in his life, the Yishuvnik immediately concluded that the Melamed was behind all this. Clearly, it was the Melamed who had gone in to see the Rebbe before him, who must have reported to the Rebbe all that he had observed while enjoying bed and board in his house! How else would the Rebbe know about all his misdeeds?!

Coming out of the Rebbe’s room, the Yishuvnik was seething with rage against the Melamed. He went up to him and asked why he told the Rebbe about him. “You ought to be ashamed of yourself, you

snake, playing such a dirty trick on me! You will never set foot in my house again. I will find another Rebbe for my children, a decent Rebbe I can trust in my house!” the Yishuvnik raged.

The poor Melamed protested his innocence. He tried to assure the Yishuvnik that he had not breathed a word about him to the Rebbe or anyone else. G-d forbid that I should do such a thing!”

But the Yishuvnik did not believe him. “You are not only a tale-bearer, but also a liar.” he thundered “I don’t want to know you any more!”

There was nothing left for the Melamed to do but to see the Alter Rebbe again and ask him to straighten out the Yishuvnik on the matter.

The Alter Rebbe sent for the Yishuvnik and assured him that the Melamed had not spoken a word about him, and that he had no reason whatever to be angry with his rebbe.

“Then how did you know about all my failings?” the Yishuvnik queried.

“Did I say that you did those things?” I only said that it could happen to any Jew. How should I know that you actually did those things?” the Alter Rebbe explained.

“So nobody really told you about me?” the Yishuvnik said, and he began to lament, “woe unto me, saintly Rebbe, for I did in fact do all those things you mentioned. I am very, very sorry...”

Tears appeared in the Yishuvnik’s eyes as he begged the Alter Rebbe to tell him what to do to wipe away those sins and make a fresh start.

The Alter Rebbe told him that one of the first things would be to obtain the Melamed’s forgiveness for the anguish that he had caused him. Next he told him what other things he had to do to obtain G-d’s forgiveness.

The Yishuvnik eagerly carried out all that the Alter Rebbe had told him and became one of his close followers.

The Tzemach Tzedek

We are presenting some stories about the Tzemach Tzedek, who’s birthday is on Erev Rosh HaShanah. The Tzemach Tzedek was born in the year 5549 [1789].

In 5603 [1843] the Tzemach Tzedek went to Petersburg for the Rabbinical Commission, a meeting with government officials, rabbis, and maskilim from Vilna and Riga. This meeting was orchestrated by the Government to bring change in Yiddishkeit, according to the wishes of the maskilim. (The Tzemach Tzedek was arrested 22 times between May 6 and August 27.)

Before he left, he told his wife and children to say three chapters of Tehillim every day in his room. He visited the grave of his mother Rebbetzin Devorah Leah. She told him that because of her Mesiras Nefesh for Chassidus she merited to be in the chamber of the Ba’al Shem Tov: She asked him for a Segulah so that, with G-d’s help, he’d be able to stand strong. The Ba’al Shem Tov said, “Your son knows Chumash, Tehillim, and Tanya by

heart. It's written, "Vayehi Chitas Elokim," "And Hashem's fear was upon them." (Bereishis 35:5) Chitas stands for Chumash, Tehillim, and Tanya; one who is expert in all their letters can break the darkness.

The Minister of the Interior once told the Tzemach Tzedek, "You are rebelling against the Czar." The Tzemach Tzedek answered that if a person rebels against the king he deserves the death penalty of the body, but if he rebels against Hashem, he deserves the death penalty of his soul.

R. Yitzchok of Volozhin, who was at the meeting, commented to the Tzemach Tzedek that he would lose his Olam Haba for defying the government, that, G-d forbid, he could be sentenced to death for disagreeing with the wishes of Czar Nikolai. The Tzemach Tzedek said if there is no physical world for Jews, of what is the use of Hashem's Olam Haba.

(Sefer HaToldos, p. 118)

At that time the cantonists (Jewish boys who were drafted into the army) asked that the Tzemach Tzedek come and speak to them. In the beginning of Av, the infantry men, soldiers and sailors gathered and the Tzemach Tzedek said a Ma'amar for them. He met with a second group of three battalions (about 600 men) and said the Ma'amar "Shema Yisroel."

At the end he said, "When a question arises of changing our religion, G-d forbid, a Jew is obligated in self sacrifice, even if the king commanded him." Years later Czar Nikolai was inspecting military maneuvers and asked the general who the soldiers were. The general replied "Yankel, Berel...." naming Jewish names. The Czar became angry and decreed that they convert immediately. The Jewish soldiers answered, "Your Excellen-

cy, five years ago the Rebbe of Lubavitch visited us and told us it's forbidden to change our religion, and even if the Czar himself demands it, it's still forbidden, and we must be Moser Nefesh." They all jumped into the water and drowned.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe told this story he said there are two wonders here: One, that the Jewish soldiers remembered what the Tzemach Tzedek had told them five years earlier, and second, the power the Tzemach Tzedek instilled in them to be Moser Nefesh.

(Sefer HaToldos, pp. 132-140)

The Tzemach Tzedek returned to Lubavitch in Elul. That Erev Rosh HaShanah he told how he had gone to Krunstadt to address the cantonists (who had made a big parade in his honor).

He told how the soldiers had told him, "Rebbe, we worked hard to polish the buttons of our uniforms for you; now, please polish our Neshamos, which have become besmirched." And they burst into tears.

Many of the soldiers knew Tehillim by heart; while polishing their buttons they would say Tehillim. The Tzemach Tzedek said a Ma'amar for them, and said, "You polish buttons with sand and water. Sand is Tehillim and tears wash away the spots." The soldiers said, "To capture a city you don't use tears, you sing a march."

"Today is Erev Rosh HaShanah," the Tzemach Tzedek told his Chassidim. "We must polish ourselves by saying Tehillim with tears from the depths of our hearts but with a joyful soul." And he concluded with Brochos for a sweet year.

(Sefer HaSichos 5705, p. 3)

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Directives of the Rebbe for Elul - המעשה הוא העיקר

1. On Rosh Chodesh Elul, Moshe Rabbeinu went up to Har Sinai to receive the second Luchos, and descended forty days later on Tishrei 10, Yom Kippur, when the forgiveness was complete.
2. These days are set aside as days of mercy.
3. It's an appropriate time for self-improvement, to review the past year, to resolve to increase the positive and correct the negative for the coming year.
4. We blow the Shofar every day (except Shabbos and Erev Rosh HaShanah).
5. From the first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul, until Hoshana Raba we say “L'Dovid Hashem Ori” at Shachris, after the Shir Shel Yom, and Minchah before Aleinu.
6. We say three extra chapters of Tehillim daily, completing Sefer Tehillim on Yom Kippur.
7. During Elul we have our Tefillin and Mezuzos checked, and correct any defects in any other Mitzvah.
8. From Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur when we write a letter or meet someone, we wish them to be written and sealed for a good and sweet year.
9. Before Rosh HaShanah we write a Pidyon Nefesh and send it to be read at the Ohel of the Rebbe.
10. We must assist families for Tishrei to ensure they have what they need to celebrate Yom Tov.



323-313-0636

Elul 5785 Calendar

Rosh Chodesh Day One

Av 30/August 24/Sunday

Begin reciting L'Dovid Hashem Ori
Shofar blowing is practiced

Rosh Chodesh Day Two

Elul 1/August 25/Monday

Begin Blowing Shofar
Add 3 Chapters of Tehillim Daily

Shoftim

Elul 6/August 30

Light Candles Friday August 29: **7:05**
Shabbos Ends: **8:08**
Last Time To Read Shema: **9:37**
Pirkei Avos Chapter 6

Ki Teitzei

Elul 13/September 6

Light Candles Friday September 5: **6:55**
Shabbos Ends: **7:58**
Last Time To Read Shema: **9:39**
Pirkei Avos Chapters 1 & 2

Chai Elu

Thursday, September 11

Farbrenge for Men after Maarivl

Ki Tavo

Shabbos Selichos

Elul 20/September 13

Light Candles Friday September 12: **6:46**
Shabbos Ends: **7:49**
Last Time To Read Shema: **9:40**
Pirkei Avos Chapters 3 & 4
Selichos Motzei Shabbos

Selichos followed by Shachris

Selichos Minyan times will be sent in
the Shul weekly email

Nitzavim

Elul 27/September 20

Light Candles Friday September 19: **6:36**
Tehillim: **8:15**
Shachris: **10:00**
Shabbos Ends: **7:39**
Last Time To Read Shema: **9:41**
Pirkei Avos Chapters 5 & 6

Erev Rosh HaShanah

Elul 29/September 21/Monday



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CALENDAR TIMES ARE FOR LOS ANGELES ONLY

Please be aware that during this time of the year Candle Lighting time changes drastically earlier - as much as between 7 - 10 minutes each week.