



HAKEHEL *in* PRACTICE



KINUSEI HAKHEL

WHO SHOULD ARRANGE THESE KINUSIM?

Hakhel is clearly no regular *mitvza*. Unlike other *mitvzoim*, like *mitvza tefillin*, which entail encouraging a single person to do a mitzvah, the focus of *hakhel* is to arrange communal gatherings and influence many people at a time. It can feel intimidating to get involved in these activities. ‘I’m not a leader, I’m not an activist, I’m not a rabbi, I’m not a *mashpia*.’ It’s so easy to feel like *mitvza hakhel* is out of your league.

The Rebbe acknowledged this feeling, and then strongly negated the notion.

Every person is a leader on some level, the Rebbe said, and can influence people. Some people have more and some have less, but everyone has some influence and can gather at least a few people.²⁸

Kinusim should therefore be arranged by everyone, men, women and children. The king was the one who would gather the Jewish people, and every person is a “king” and a leader in his own way.²⁹

“This is within the capability of every single man and woman,” the Rebbe said. “[There are] those that think they are only “small people” and can’t really do much. [However, this mindset is wrong,] only the world’s concealment of holiness can bring someone to think this way! The truth of the matter is that every person was given the highest and most amazing *kochos*!”

Reach out to everyone you know: family, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, business associates, classmates, and on and on—and bring them together for a *kinus hakhel*.

Children should make *kinusim* for their friends.

This is especially incumbent on the “kings,” a person with status in his circle—a rov in his community, an educator in his classroom, and a father in his family.³⁰

WHEN SHOULD THEY BE HELD?

You should find *every opportunity* possible to make a *kinus hakhel*, and even more so on special days like Shabbos and Yom Tov. [On Vov Tishrei, the Rebbe listed special times to make *kinusei hakhel*, and he mentioned almost every day from the day he was speaking until the end of Tishrei: *Asseres Yemei Teshuva*; Yom Kippur; the four days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos; Sukkos; Chol Hamoed; and Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah. The Rebbe wanted *kinusei hakhel* at every opportunity.]³¹

WHERE SHOULD THEY BE HELD?

In a “*Beis Hamikdash*”—in an atmosphere of holiness.³² Even better if it is done in a physically holy place, like a shul, *beis midrash*, etc.³³ The main point is to arrange it in the right time and setting so that the influence and inspiration will be at its fullest.³⁴

The *kinusei hakhel* should also be done virtually—over the telephone and the like—in order to reach all Jews no matter how far they are.³⁵

WHAT SHOULD I SPEAK ABOUT?

Quite simply, speak from the heart and inspire the participants to do Torah and mitzvos. No audience is the same, so find the appropriate words that will have an effect on your particular crowd.³⁶

Certain things are particularly effective:

Focus on the message of the *pesukim* that were read during *hakhel*.³⁷

Describe *hakhel* in the *Beis Hamikdash*, how the entire Jewish nation—men, women, and children—would listen closely as the king would read the *pesukim* of *hakhel*; and how they would listen with powerful *kavana*, knowing that it’s as if they are hearing it from Hashem himself! [We see clearly, the Rebbe says, that when a person describes *hakhel* in the *Beis Hamikdash* in all its details, it makes a powerful impression on the listeners, and brings them *yiras Hashem*.]³⁸

Speak about the fact that after the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, Hashem’s *Beis Hamikdash* is in the heart of every Yid.³⁹

The *kinusei hakhel* should be tailored according to the time of the



year: During Sukkos, gather Yidden for a *hakhel* gathering and dance for *simchas beis hashoevah*,⁴⁰ before Chof Cheshvan, arrange *hakhel* farbrengens in every place, etc.⁴¹

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE KINUSEI HAKHEL?

The ultimate goal is for the participants to be motivated to observe Torah and mitzvos, and that this inspiration carries them “all the days,” for the years following *hakhel*. Yidden are ready for inspiration, you just have to do your part and you *will* have an impact on them. Toiling in this—*yagaata*—will bring to *umaztasa*, success totally beyond the work you put in. The men, women, and children whom you gathered will be inspired in ways completely beyond your estimation.⁴²

In fact, Yidden have the potential to be inspired to *yiras Hashem* that will carry “all the days” in a single moment, because Yidden are above the limitations of time. In this year of *hakhel*, Yidden have the opportunity to put themselves in a position of *yiras Hashem* in a single instant.⁴³

In one *sicha* the Rebbe emphasized, “It’s plainly obvious that even influencing *one single Jew* is a great accomplishment...As *Chazal* explain, “Adam was created alone in order to teach you that every single Jew is an entire world. He was created differently from the rest of creation, all because of *this Yid* [the Rebbe pointed at someone] who is sitting among the rest of the crowd, in Brooklyn, in 5748!”⁴⁴



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— HAKHEL the momentous gathering

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MIVTZA HAKHEL

The Rebbe gave general instructions on how the mivtza should work; some of the main points are included below.

ORGANIZATIONS

The *mivtza* of *hakhel* is specifically geared towards organizations and societies that bring Yidden together. When Yidden unite, even in a secular organization, e.g. clubs for workers, professionals, etc. a central focus of their organization must be to increase in Yiddishkeit. This goes without saying for an organization whose entire focus is spreading Yiddishkeit, like Tzeirei Agudas Chabad, N'shei Ubnos Chabad (although it is in no way limited to only Lubavitch organizations).

Therefore every community, organization, society, and club, and especially organizations whose focus is spreading Yiddishkeit, should



get involved and take the initiative of *mivtza hakhel*. Every person in the organization should sign up to the *mivtza*, and from time to time, they should be gathered for a *kinus hakhel*. This should be done at least once a month.⁴⁵

YESHIVOS/TALMUD TORAHS/HIGH SCHOOLS

In all organizations of *chinuch*, both for boys and girls, whether it's a *yeshiva gedola*, *yeshiva ketana*, *talmud Torah*, high school or kindergarten, the person in charge (e.g. the *rosh yeshiva* or *mashgiach*) should appoint someone to galvanize and remind people about making *kinusei hakhel*. These appointees should do their job *bidarkei noam*, in a nice way, but in a way that will bring to *tapuru da plachu* ("ax on the wood"), that will get things done.⁴⁶

Bochurim The primary role of *talmidei hayeshivos* is to learn, and they must be extremely careful not to stop their learning for anything else. Nevertheless, during the year of *hakhel*, they, too, have the responsibility to be involved in *hakhel*.⁴⁷

In his *bracha* to the *bochurim* on Erev Yom Kippur 5748,⁴⁸ the Rebbe urged them to unite all the characteristics of men, women, and children in their *limud haTorah*: The firmness and leadership of men; utilizing the *midos* and emotion to make a *seder* in all aspects of life, the characteristics of women; and to receive and learn from every person—and specifically from the Torah and *sichos kodesh* of the Rabbeim, the trait of children.

Influence your teachers! Generally, the teachers and parents influence the

children. Sometimes, though, *bas komo b'ima*, the daughter influences the mother about Torah and mitzvos. In regards to *hakhel*, both are necessary: The teachers should motivate the students about *hakhel*, and the *talmidim* in the yeshivos and high schools should demand from their teachers to inspire them about *hakhel*. Of course, this must be with the greatest respect.⁴⁹

WRITTEN COMMITMENT

In order to ensure that people will get involved in *hakhel* in the fullest measure possible, the Rebbe said that every person who is ready to get involved should write down their commitment on a card. A central office should be set up in every community and organization, and everyone will submit their cards to them. They will coordinate the activities and remind everyone about their commitment, and ensure that everything is carried out.

There are several advantages to doing this: 1) When a person commits in writing, they are more bound to it. 2) The office will remind, encourage, and push people to be active. 3) The simple knowledge that one is part of a larger organization will serve as an impetus to work. 4) If a person needs help in his *hakhel* activities, he will know where to turn to for advice and guidance.

The cards should only include a person's name and mother's name, and a phone number where, with his permission, the office will call him once a month to check up on his activities and motivate him to do more.⁵⁰

NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA

In order to involve as many people as possible, *mitvza hakhel* should be publicized wherever possible, including advertisements in newspapers with large Jewish readerships. These advertisements should have a few lines about the *mitvza*, and a tear-out card for people to sign up and send to the central organization.

These cards should be printed in the newspapers in order to reach as many Jews as possible.⁵¹

GUARANTEED SUCCESS!

The Rebbe has assured us that all hesitation is only theoretical, because we see clearly, that those who get involved in *hakhel* are successful completely beyond their expectations.⁵² We have special *kochos* from the *nosi hador*: The *nosi hador* unites the entire Jewish nation, and he gives us the *koach* to unite the Yidden for *hakhel*.⁵³ Every person who works in *hakhel* is guaranteed to be successful.⁵⁴ It only depends on your willpower. If you get involved, and work according to your abilities guided by the *hora'os* of *nosi doreinu*⁵⁵, you will surely succeed.⁵⁶

1. See Likutei Sichos vol. 19 p. 325 note 29.

2. Or the King's personal *Sefer Torah*, see *ibid* p. 327 note 46.

3. Sichos Kodesh 5734 p. 118.

4. Likutei Sichos vol. 34, pg. 211.

5. Toras Menachem 5748 p. 53.

6. *Michtav K'loli Chof-Hei Elul* 5747

7. For an explanation, see Toras Menachem 5748 p. 366.

8. Likutei Sichos vol. 34, pg. 211 and on.

9. *ibid* pg. 215. Toras Menachem 5747 part 4 p. 391-393.

10. *Reshimos* vol. alef p. 171 and on.

11. Likutei Levi Yitzchak Igros Kodesh, p. רל"ט and on, p. רנ"ח and on.

12. See Toras Menachem 5748 part 1 p. 300.

13. See for example Likutei Sichos vol. 24 p. 204, Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 3 p. 1134-35.

14. Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 3 p. 1135.

15. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 1 p. 117.

16. *Ibid* p. 218.

17. Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 1 p. 178.

18. *Ibid* p. 205-206

19. *Ibid* p. 242.

20. *Ibid*.

21. *Ibid* p. 176.

22. *Ibid* p. 243-245.

23. *Ibid* p. 372.

24. *Ibid* p. 379.

25. *Ibid* p. 429.

26. See Likutei Sichos vol. 19 p. 301; *Michtav K'loli Yemei HaSelichos* 5726; et. al.

27. See Toras Menachem 5748 vol. 1 p. 219-223.

28. *Ibid* p. 339.

29. *Ibid* p. 224 note 45; p. 524.

30. *Ibid* p. 97.

31. *Ibid* p. 119.

32. *Ibid* p. 97.

33. *Ibid* p. 152.

34. *Ibid* p. 118.

35. *Ibid* p. 233-234.

36. *Ibid* p. 416.

37. This includes various *parshiyos* of Devarim: From the beginning of the *sefer* through *Shema Yisrael* (6:4);

The second paragraph of *Shema*, *Vehaya im shamo'a* (11:13-21);

"עשר תעשר" (14:22-27);

"כי תכלה לעשר" (26:12-15);

The section about appointing a king (17:14-20);

The blessings and curses (28:1-69).

Also the *parsha* of *Kedoshim* (see *Rashi Vayikra* 19,2.)

38. *Ibid* p. 152.

39. *Ibid* p. 154.

40. *Ibid* p. 178.

41. *Ibid* p. 455.

42. *Ibid* p. 119

43. *Ibid* p. 153.

44. *Ibid* p. 360.

45. *Ibid* p. 162.

46. *Ibid*.

47. *Ibid* p. 163.

48. *Ibid* p. 139.

49. *Ibid* p. 163.

50. *Ibid* p. 159 and on.

51. *Ibid* p. 160.

52. *Ibid* p. 379.

53. *Ibid* p. 233.

54. *Ibid* p. 371.

55. *Ibid* p. 301.

56. *Ibid* p. 416.