

CHATZOT – WHAT IF

written by Chaim Kramer
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Rebbe Nachman teaches: Chatzot has the power of redemption. It can sweeten harsh decrees!

In addition to getting up for the *Chatzot* prayer, it is also important to get all the sleep you need. Not everyone can get enough sleep before midnight that will enable him to wake up and function the whole day. There are options: you can break up your sleep, rising at midnight to recite *Tikkun Chatzot* and then sleeping afterwards; or, you can remain awake until after the morning prayers and then get a few more hours sleep. If a person cannot rise at midnight, then at least let him rise before morning (*Orach Chaim* 1:1; *Mishnah Berurah* 1:9).

Reb Dov of Tcherin very much wanted to rise at midnight to recite the *Chatzot* prayer, but found it impossible to wake up. When nothing else worked, he hired a man to wake him and stand

over him until he got dressed. But, because he wasn't getting sufficient sleep, Reb Dov began suffering terrible headaches. Finally, Rebbe Nachman told him that his *chatzot* was at three in the morning, thus giving him a few more hours of unbroken sleep. "Sleep and eat, just watch your time," the Rebbe told him. After this, those chassidim who awoke during the wee hours of the morning knew exactly when it was three a.m. by Reb Dov's arrival at the synagogue (*Kokhavey Or*, p. 25 #21).

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My Rosh Yeshivah would say, "If a person cannot wake up every night for Chatzot, then let him try to get up at least once a week." Perhaps, when someone can't even consistently get up once a week, he could begin with once a month. This would not be so difficult, waking up to recite the Midnight Lament once every thirty days and the best time for this would be Erev Rosh Chodesh, as the Eve of the New Moon is in any case set aside as a day of prayer.



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THE GREATNESS OF CHATZOT

Rebbe Nachman teaches: *Chatzot* has the power of redemption. It can sweeten harsh decrees (*Likutey Moharan I*, 149).

At the time of *Chatzot*, great Loving-kindness descends from Heaven (*Likutey Halakhot, Hashkamat HaBoker* 1:14).

Just as the Exodus from Egypt began at *chatzot*, so too, the Final Redemption will take place at *chatzot*. This teaches us that the Redemption we await will come due to the merit of those who rise for *chatzot* (*Likutey Halakhot, Hashkamat HaBoker* 1:15).

Reb Noson said: The reason the song *Adir Hu* (Mighty is He) is sung at the end of the Haggadah on Pesach night is because it corresponds to the *Chatzot* prayer, which bemoans the destruction of the Temple. In “Mighty is He,” we ask – in a holiday spirit – that God rebuild the Holy Temple (*The Breslov Haggadah* p. 145).

(Taken from the book [Crossing the Narrow Bridge: A Practical Guide to Rebbe Nachman's Teachings](#), chapter 8 – Prayer)