

The Sweetest Hour

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Rebbe Nachman of Breslov taught...

Rebbe Nachman once said, "A Jew's main devotion is to get up for the Midnight prayers / Chatzot..."

([Rebbe Nachman's Wisdom](#), #301)

What does this mean to me?

What is Chatzot? The Hebrew word *chatzot* is a form of the root “to split,” in the sense of splitting the night into two at its midpoint. That point of Chatzot has been the catalyst of many miracles throughout our history; in fact, an entire song that is traditionally sung at the end of the Pesach *seder* is devoted to that history. “And it was, in the middle of the night...” Avraham won his battle then; Sarah was released from captivity; Yaakov overcame the angel of Eisav; the last of the ten plagues released us from Egyptian exile; Balshaazar’s reign was destroyed; Daniel solved the king’s dilemma; Haman’s downfall began at Chatzot, and on and on throughout our long history.

The point of midnight is a moment of grace and a taste of redemption, available to us every single night. It interrupts the darkness of the night of exile, and for the two hours that follow the world is blessed with an *eit ratzon*, a “time of favor.”

King David knew the greatness of that time and woke for it every night: “I will arise at midnight to thank You for Your righteous judgments.”

Why did Rebbe Nachman say that a Jew’s main devotion is getting up for Chatzot? What about all of our other devotions? Why is this one so important? If we look through the prayers that are traditionally said at Chatzot we see that they all express profound yearning for the redemption and rebuilding of the Beit Hamikdash. The time of Chatzot is when we take stock of our broken world and our broken selves and turn our gaze to G-d, with real longing for redemption. In this sense, it is the ultimate devotion even if it is not an actual halachic obligation. It is the seed from which all geulah sprouts.

A prayer:

*Kind, loving King,
help me pray to You in my own words
every single day
and express everything that is in my heart...
Help me to pray to You each night after Chatzot,
since this is the ideal time for secluded prayer.
Help me enter the innermost recesses of my heart
and search for my good points and cleanse myself
of all negativity.*

*Let me develop my holy awareness,
and always remember the ultimate purpose of my
life
and my destiny in the world to come.*

(Likutei Tefillot I:54)

The Breslov Research Institute has published a
Tikkun Chatzot / Chatzot guide book called "The
Sweetest Hour." [For more info or to order, click
here.](#)

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