

Geulah... Are We Ready?

ב"ה

Can You Envision It?



Let's Learn About It!

לע"נ ר' מנחם מאיר בן ר' חיים משה יהודה הכהן בלוי ע"ה
כ"א אדר א' תש"ו - כ"א סיון תשע"ו

Moshiach Is on His Way

- **Moshiach, The Purpose of Creation:** Why do we need Moshiach? If Geulah is important, find out 4 reasons why we are still Galus?
- **Believing in Moshiach:** Why must we believe in Moshiach? Does the Torah write about Moshiach? Why are the challenges to believing in Moshiach? What does belief in Moshiach really entail? Read about some incredible tzaddikim who had strong belief in the coming of Moshiach!
- **Awaiting Moshiach:** What is the difference between believing and awaiting? What does awaiting really mean? Why should we await Moshiach? How is it possible to await him if it is taking so long? How can we start awaiting Moshiach? How can we prove that we are anxiously awaiting Moshiach? Doesn't waiting for Moshiach only bring one to disappointment?
- **Demanding Geulah:** How is one supposed to ask for Moshiach? Why is it necessary to demand Moshiach?
- **The Time of Moshiach's Arrival:** When will Moshiach arrive? It is proper to calculate a time for Moshiach's arrival? Why does the Gemara calculate times? Why haven't their calculations been fulfilled?
- **Hastening His Arrival:** What can we do to hasten Moshiach's arrival? Read about 14 important Mitzvos and Peulos and why these specifically will hasten Moshiach's arrival.
- **Simanei HaGeulah:** How will we know that Moshiach is about to come, what will the signs be? What is the purpose in knowing the hardships that will occur before Geulah? Why will there be so much bad before the coming of Moshiach? Is there a way to spare the negative signs? Are there also good and happy signs that will take place before Moshiach? Have any of these signs taken place yet?

- **The Generations of Moshiach:** How is it that our generations will bring Moshiach? Find out why the women play a crucial role in bringing the Geulah.

- **Identifying Moshiach:** What are the qualities of Moshiach? What characteristics make someone a potential Moshiach, and a definite Moshiach? Who must one believe is the Moshiach of his generation? Does Moshiach have to do wonders for us to believe in him? What is the character of Moshiach? What are some of his qualities? Why does Moshiach have to undergo suffering?

"שיבנה בית
המקדש
במהרה בימינו
ותן חלקינו
בתורתך"

- **The Process of Geulah:** How will Moshiach reveal himself, natural or supernatural? Are there requirements for a miraculous revelation? What if we don't meet these requirements, how will Moshiach come?

- **The 2 Geulos, Then and Now:** How will our Geulah compare the Geulah of Mitzrayim? How are Moshe Rabbeinu and Moshiach similar? How is the Yom Tov of Pesach connected to the Geulah?

- **The Days of Moshiach:** What will happen when Moshiach comes? Who will build the 3rd Beis Hamikdash and where? Is it true that there will be material wealth and sweets all over the street? Why will HaShem make so many miracles? What will happen to the Goyim? When will Techiyas Hameisim take place? Who will return and much more....

- **Fulfilled Prophecies of Moshiach:** Which prophecies regarding the days of Moshiach have already been fulfilled and how?

The Journey to Geulah

ב"ה

Dear Women,

As we countdown to Chodesh Nissan—the Chodesh HaGeulah, in less than 40 days, women around the world are preparing themselves in an unprecedented way.

The month of Nissan is of the few whose theme is clearly stated by our Chachamim. On the possuk, *החדש הזה לכם ראש*, "החדש הזה לכם לחדשי השנה" חדשים, ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה - This month shall be the head of months, the first month of the year, they comment: "When Hashem chose Bnei Yisroel, He established for them a month of geulah." Nissan is the month of geulah.

Nissan is a month set aside for miracles that are above nature, as we see throughout history:

1. On Pesach the walls of Yericho fell.
2. On that same night, Sanecheriv's men who had surrounded Yerushalayim were miraculously killed.
3. On Pesach, Achashveirosh had Haman hanged and granted his position to Mordechai.
4. Yetziyas Mitzrayim and Krias Yam Suf took place in Nissan.

Recognizing this pattern, our Chachamim said: "In Nissan, our people were freed, and in Nissan, they will be freed in the future - בניסן נגאלו אבותינו ממצרים, ובניסן עתידין להגאל"

Nissan—Chodesh HaGeulah: Although Moshiach can come at any time, there are auspicious times that are more likely for him to come then. The Gemara tells us about a machlokes:

R' Eliezer holds: Since we were redeemed from Mitzrayim in Chodesh Nissan, the coming of Moshiach will be in the month of Tishrei.

R' Yehoshua holds: Just like the Geulah of Mitzrayim was in Chodesh Nissan, so too the future Geulah will be in Chodesh Nissan.

The Gemara goes according to the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua, that "in Nissan our fathers were redeemed from Mitzrayim, and in Nissan we too will be redeemed." In the month of Nissan, the Chodesh HaGeulah we are truly standing on the threshold!

We know that "בזכות נשים עתידין להגאל" – "Just like our fathers were redeemed from Mitzrayim in the z'chus of the righteous women of the generation, in the same way, the future geulah will come about in the z'chus of the avodah of woman and girls."

Moshiach is on his way. The task of bringing Moshiach has been given over to us. Let's not be satisfied with our Torah, tefilos, and acts of kindness. What was done until now, seemingly has not yet been enough, since we still find ourselves in galus. More importantly, we remain in galus inwardly, in our avodah to Hashem. We cannot rest until we have brought Moshiach and the final Geulah. We need to do all that is in our power to actually bring Moshiach immediately.

To hasten his arrival, every Yid should take a close look at himself, and sincerely question himself asking, 'When was the last time that I sincerely thought of how Hashem was going to take us out of Galus, and bring us to Moshiach?!'"

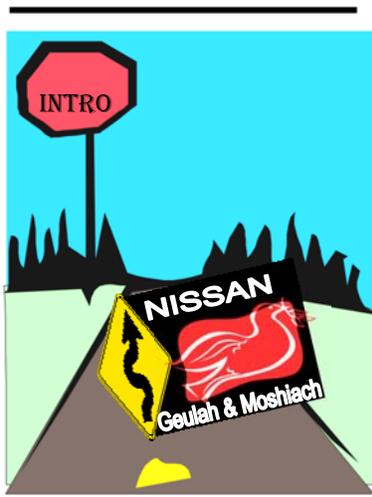
Praiseworthy are those who behave as befits this special time – by learning about Moshiach U'Geulah, until our minds are 'filled' with an understanding of these times. By learning more and more about Moshiach and the Geulah, our

hearts begin to feel that Moshiach is about to come too. This leads us to think, speak and behave in a way that befits this special time and we uplift ourselves to a state of Geulah. So learning about the Geulah and Moshiach, actually leads us, on a personal level, to live the Geulah. We must accept and fulfill the responsibility to learn about Moshiach, teach about Moshiach, and live as if Moshiach were here.

We should sincerely cry out to HaShem to bring Moshiach. In Megilas Tanis it documents the events which took place on the 20th of Adar. On this day, the Jewish nation was thirsty for rain. They approached Choni Ha-

maagal, who made a circle and prayed. He said, "I will not leave this circle until you have mercy on your children." It started dressing. He said, "Master of the Universe, This is not what I asked for, rather rain to fill the its and caves.' It then started to pour. He said, "Master of the Universe, this is not what I asked for, rather rain of blessing and graciousness." It then started to rain properly. It concluded that that day was made as a holiday. **This story teaches us how to daven.** If this is true of our personal needs, how much more so, this need of the Geulah. Regardless of our status and behavior, we are Hashem's children, so our prayer must be like a song begging his father with strength.

With the hope that this booklet will help us all 'live' with Moshiach and cause us to anxiously anticipate and pray for his coming. May it happen תיכף ומיד ממש—immediately!



Moshiach—The Purpose of Creation

ב"ה

Q. WHY DO WE NEED MOSHIACH?

A1. Geulah – The Purpose of Creation: Hashem created these low worlds in order to have a home to dwell down here, "נתארה הקב"ה לעשות לו דירה בתחתונים".

What is the significance of a home? When one walks on the street he is a lot more hidden and clothed than he is when he is found at home, because in our own home we are more comfortable. In our home we can truly express ourselves.

So too, when we are in Galus, HaShem is like one who is on the street. He is hidden behind many gashmius (material) layers, and when we look around we only see gashmius. However when the Geulah will come, the world will be a "home" for Hashem, where he will not need to hide from us. We will see ruchnius with our gashmius eyes, to the extent that we will point with a finger and say, "זה אל-י ואנודה" – this is my HaShem and I will serve him, as they did by Kriyas Yam Suf. Now we understand the statement, "The coming of Moshiach will be a fulfillment of the purpose of creation." that the shechinah will be at home and revealed within the lowest worlds.

A2. Complete Torah Observance: The Rambam states, "In the future, a descendant of Dovid HaMelech will arise... and in his days all the mitzvos will be fulfilled, as it was in the past."

(Hilchos Melachim 11:1)

The Rambam does not mention the miraculous changes that will take place in nature when discussing Moshiach; instead, he stresses one point – that the mitzvos will once again be fulfilled. This is the purpose of Moshiach's coming.

There are many Yidden who do not understand, "Why is it so important think about Moshiach and await his arrival?"

The truth is that the Geulah is the purpose of the entire world. Only during the times of Geulah will we be able to fulfill mitzvos as we are supposed to.

Until Moshiach comes, it is not possible to keep the entire Torah. Of the 613 mitzvos, only 207 apply today. All the mitzvos about the Beis Hamikdash, Jewish kings, and others, cannot be fulfilled.

The miracles are of only secondary importance. All the miracles Moshiach will perform have one goal, to make it easier for us to devote ourselves entirely to learning Torah and keeping Mitzvos, since there will be no war, hunger, poverty etc...

Q. IF THE PURPOSE OF CREATION IS MOSHIACH, WHY ARE WE IN GALUS?

Galus Is An Investment For Greater Profit: Although Galus is a very bitter and painful experience, its goal and true purpose is for the best. Take for example a businessman who invests all of his money into a new product. During the time that he still has to manufacture it, advertise about it etc. he could be penniless (possibly even needing to borrow money, for the time being, to support his family). But in the end, when he can finally sell his product, he will make a large profit.

Galus is also an "investment". Although, for the time being, it is very difficult – it is only through this investment that we will enjoy the great "profit". This will be when Moshiach comes, B'karov Mamosh. Some of the 'profits' of Galus are...

A1. Galus Forgives Our Sins: Galus is regarded as a punishment for our aveiros, as we say in davening, "מפני חטאתינו גלינו מארצינו" because of our aveiros we were sent from our land.

However, Hashem informed Avraham during the 'Bris Bein Habesarim' about galus, as an important, necessary part of the Jewish history, long before the aveiros for which it atones were committed. This shows us that Galus is not just there to forgive our sins, but there must be a deeper reason for it.

A2. Galus Refines Us: Galus is commonly referred to as a "כור הברזל" – a melting pot. Just as gold and precious metals are only refined by subjecting them to intense heat, Galus too is like an intense heat, whose purpose is only to refine Bnei Yisroel and bring out the best in them. This will make them worthy of meriting and bringing Moshiach on their own.

A3. Galus Intensifies our Ahavas Hashem: When a child comes into the house, the father may hide himself at first so that a greater love in the child for the father is aroused, when he finds him.

So too, in Galus, Hashem hides himself, but this is only like the father who does it to intensify his children's love for him, and a stronger desire to do his mitzvos." We often many examples in Jewish history when Bnei Yisroel were suffering and HaShem was hidden from them, they searched for HaShem more.

A4. Galus Increases Our Thirst For Moshiach: There is an advantage to the times of Galus over the time when the Beis HaMikdash was standing.

When a person is at home and has food and drink available to him, he is not so hungry. However, if he finds himself, in a desert where there is no water, he will be very thirsty. When a person is thirsty and has nothing to drink, he would do anything just to get a sip of water...

The same can be applied to us: When the Beis Hamikdash was standing we had the revelation of the Shechinah. Everyone enjoyed coming to the Beis Hamikdash. However, in Galus, we are deprived of this revealed holiness, so we can have even a stronger desire HaShem.

Dovid Hamelech says in Tehillim: "כאיל תערג על אפיקי מים, כן נפשי" – "Just as the deer thirsts for the water brooks... my neshamah thirsts for HaShem". In these words, Dovid Hamelech expresses the Yiddens' anguish over the galus, and their yearning for the Geulah. "Moshiach Now" is not only something we chant (as expressed in "We want Moshiach now"), it is something that our Neshama thirsts for, like the intense thirst of a man who is desperate for water to save his life...



Believing in Moshiach

Q. WHY MUST WE BELIEVE IN MOSHIACH?

A1. One of the Foundations of our Emunah: Believing in the coming of Moshiach and geulah is one of the "י"ג עיקרי אמונה" - 13 principles of a Yid's emunah.
(Rambam, Principles of the Emunah, #12)

Every Yid must believe that Moshiach will arise, restore the *malchus* to Beis Dovid, rebuild the *Beis Hamikdash*, gather all Bnei Yisroel, and in his days all the laws of the Torah shall be reinstated, as they had been previously.

(Rambam, *Hilchos Melachim* 11:1)

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A2. Believing in Moshiach = Believing in Torah: The Rambam states, "Whoever does not believe in him, or does not anticipate his coming, denies not only the words of the other *nevi'im* but also [those of] the *Torah* and of Moshe, our teacher, for 2 reasons:

A. The Torah clearly writes about Moshiach.

B. The purpose of creation was Moshiach.

Where does the Torah write about Moshiach?

A. "ושב ה' אלקיך את שבותך" - "Hashem will return your captives and have compassion on you. He will return and gather you..." So far in history the shevatim that were dispersed have not returned.

(Devarim, 30:3-5)

B. Hashem commanded that six *Arei Miklat* – cities of refuge should be set aside. The Torah then instructs that when Hashem will expand the borders of Eretz Yisroel you should establish another three cities. However, we do not find anywhere in Torah that the Yidden fulfilled the mitzvah of the additional three *Arei Miklat*. Hashem definitely did not give this mitzvah for nothing. If he gave us this mitzvah he gives us the obligation to fulfill it and he knows that it will be fulfilled.

We therefore must say, that there will come a time in the future, when both of these mitzvos will be fulfilled—in the times of Geulah. These mitzvos then prove that Geulah will arrive!

(Rambam, *Hilchos Melachim* ch. 11)

Q. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO BELIEVING IN MOSHIACH?

A1. We Live In A Dark Tunnel: Imagine that you have lived your entire life in a dark tunnel. Your parents and grandparents lived there too, and so did their parents and grandparents. You have grown accustomed to the darkness and developed the necessary skills to survive. You move through life, sometimes staggering in the dark, at other times feeling your way along. You are totally resigned to the fact that this is what life is, and that it will continue to be so. You don't even realize that there is light beyond the tunnel.

But you have been told or have read in some ancient books that long ago, your ancestors lived in a very different, well-lighted place. You have heard that there is indeed a light at the end of this tunnel; that you don't necessarily have to spend your entire life in darkness. Galus is also like a dark tunnel that desensitizes us, so we don't feel that things are not the way they should be.

A2. We Are Imprisoned: A person kidnapped or in prison, if captured long enough, soon begins to identify with his captors. The captive becomes accustomed to the situation, begins to feel that he owes his life to his jailor or kidnapper who feeds him, gives him shelter and who can kill in a moment, on a whim.

People kept in captivity begin to deny the value of freedom, and become reluctant to leave their imprisonment even when their lives are not so good. Instead of realizing the kidnapper is the threat, he comes to be seen as one who gives out rewards. The victim can't think of going anywhere else. In fact, the prospect of being free makes the prisoner uncomfortable, even frightens him. He doesn't want it, and has to be shown how to appreciate freedom again.

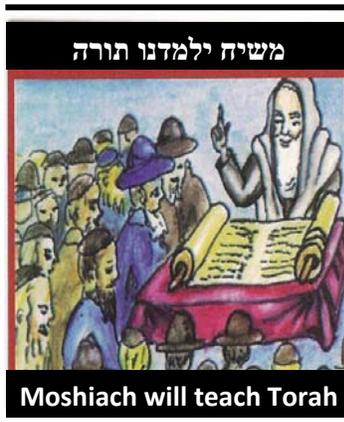
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Galus is the same, a prison for the Yidden. We have grown accustomed to conditions where we are indebted to other leaders. We cannot imagine that this is not the way it was meant to be, and there is a better world waiting for us. We were, and still are, imprisoned. Moshiach is coming to lead us out by the hand to freedom.

A3. Galus Seems Real; Geulah like a Dream: There are Yidden who question the whole matter of Geulah. They wonder why speak non-stop about one subject, the coming of Moshiach.

"They think: It would be understandable if mention of Moshiach's coming were to be made occasionally. But why talk and get excited about it at every farbrengen, as if the purpose was to force the concept of Moshiach into the listener's head!?"

"They conclude that this whole idea of Moshiach's coming is like a dream. A good dream, a nice dream – but not realistic. Why, they ask, is it necessary to talk about dreams? (continued on next page)



Believing in Moshiach

ב"ה

Q. WHAT IS SO HARD ABOUT BELIEVING IN MOSHIACH?

The knowledge that we are still in galus, has caused the galus to appear real, and the geulah to appear to him as if it was a dream. The exact opposite is true. **Galus is but a dream; geulah is reality!**

Regarding the times before Moshiach it says: "היינו כחולמים" - "We are like dreamers", since galus is really a dream world. It seems to exist, but it is merely a dream. Soon we will wake up and realize that the galus is over and we will enter the times of Moshiach.

Things will be different when Moshiach comes. We will all realize that galus was like a dream, and the only important things are Hashem and Kedusha.

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Galus is Temporary; Geulah is Permanent: Yaakov Avinu's best years were in Mitzrayim; nevertheless, before his passing, he made Yosef swear that he will take him out of Mitzrayim and bring him into Eretz Yisroel.

Our Chachamim learned that one of the reasons that Yaakov did not want to be buried in Mitzrayim, was so the Yidden should remember that their true place is not in Mitzrayim, chas v'shalom, but in Eretz Yisroel.

Even though nowadays we are in Galus and free to learn Torah and do Mitzvos, we must always remember that our place is not in Galus, and await the Geulah. Our place is in Eretz Yisroel with Moshach.

Therefore we beg Hashem (like Yaakov begged of Yosef), "Take us out of Galus, and bring us to Eretz Yisroel."

Q. WHAT DOES BELIEF IN MOSHIACH REALLY ENTAIL?

A2. Believing Moshiach Will Arrive Today: In a small town in Eastern Europe, a Rabbi portrayed this belief. Whenever he would hear noise or a commotion outside, he would rush out and inquire eagerly, "What is going on? Has Moshiach arrived?"

For many years, this Rabbi was in urgent need of a new house. Once, his followers informed him of a house that was available for sale. "It has many rooms, it's in perfect condition, it's near the shul, and the price is right," they told him excitedly.

However, the Rabbi shrugged indifferently. "Why should I purchase a house here? Moshiach is coming very soon and I look forward to settling in Yerushalayim. I will buy my house there!" **Believing in Moshiach means believing that he will come today!**

Wasted Payment: A Jew operated an inn and a store for which he prepaid an annual rent to the local Poritz. As he was growing old, he sent his son one day to sign the annual contract on his behalf. The son, hoping to avoid the difficult trip every year, asked the Poritz to agree to a three-year contract, which he did, and the son paid for the three years in advance.

Hearing this, the father was very upset. "Look here! We believe with perfect emunah in the immediate arrival of Moshiach. In fact, he is coming this year, for sure. And you've gone and wasted two years' payment for nothing!"

This is the simple emunah of a yid—to believe that at any moment Moshiach will come.



The New Parah Adumah: When a new Parah Adumah was born in Eretz Yisroel, R' Moshe Feinstein said, that we will not use this cow as a Parah Adumah and he explained why:

"The Din says that a Parah Adumah has to be at least two-years-old, in order to be used as a Kosher Parah Adumah. Since, by the time this Parah Adumah had reached the age of two, Moshiach will definitely be here already, therefore we have to go and search for a Parah Adumah that is already two-years-old."

Next Year in Yerushalayim: After the Seder on Pesach night, we proclaim, "L'shanah Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim" – next year in Yerushalayim. Why do we say "next year in Yerushalayim" if we want Moshiach now?!

This doesn't mean that we should have to wait until next year to be redeemed. The Geulah should happen immediately. And then, next year at this time, we will already be in Yerushalayim.

Awaiting the Geulah

Q. WHAT DOES BELIEF IN MOSHIACH REALLY ENTAIL?

(CONT'D)

Moshiach is coming Today: The Gemara tells us that the great Tanna, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi once met Eliyahu Hainavi, at the entrance to Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai's cave. He asked him: "When is *Moshiach* coming?"

"Go and ask him yourself," Eliyahu replied.

"Where is he to be found?"

"Among the paupers at the gates of Rome, replacing the bandages over his wounds, one by one. All other paupers remove all their bandages at once and then replace them. The one who does it in layers, you will know is *Moshiach*." (Why does he do them in layers? Because if Hashem will tell him to go redeem all the yidden, *Moshiach* does not want to hold back until he puts on his bandages.)

Following Eliyahu's directions, Rabbi Yehoshua went to Rome and discovered *Moshiach*. "When are you coming, my master and teacher?" he asked him.

"Today," *Moshiach* answered.

The rest of the day the Tanna waited eagerly for *Moshiach* to come. When the day had gone by and *Moshiach* still had not come, he disappointed returned to Eliyahu. upset. "He deceived me," he complained. "He said 'I am coming today,' but has not come."

"What he had in mind," Eliyahu replied, "was the possuk: "היום אם בקולו תשמעו"- Today, if you would listen to His voice."

The lesson is: When *Moshiach* was asked, "When are you coming?" he didn't answer, "If all the Yidden listen to Hashem, then I will come today." He simply said, "Today" without any conditions.

Only when the day has passed and he has not arrived, do we have to 'answer' that the reason must be that we have to listen to Hashem's voice.

We have to also behave in this way; when we are asked when is *Moshiach* coming we must say, "Today!" without adding any conditions...

Q. WHAT DOES AWAITING REALLY MEAN?

A1. Believing vs. Awaiting: We wait for many things. We wait on line in a supermarket. We patiently wait our turn in the dentist's office. We have to wait for what we know will eventually come, but takes time to arrive.

A visit to the dentist is a good example. We know that it is coming but we aren't exactly looking forward to it. Other things we await impatiently – our next vacation, a special birthday present, etc. We count the days, and wait anxiously for them until they arrive.

The same is true of waiting for *Moshiach*. It is not enough, the Rambam writes, to simply believe that *Moshiach* will come and patiently wait for him. One must anxiously look forward to his arrival.

You are waiting for something important a letter, a package, information to include in a report. You are certain it should have already come. The deadline is fast approaching. Each time the telephone rings, you hope. Every person who passes through the door could be the messenger-service. The mail carrier and the UPS truck take on a new importance. You are on edge, waiting and waiting.

Every single day, we are supposed to wait for and expect the arrival of *Moshiach*, much like the impatiently awaited arrival of an important item or event.

The Yismach Moshe's Excitement: The great Tzadik Reb Moshe Teitelbaum, also known as the Yismach Moshe, sat at his desk studying Torah with great concentration.

Meanwhile, his family waited anxiously for their beloved guest to arrive. It had been a long while since they had last seen him. When the Yismach Moshe heard that his son-in-law would stay over for Shabbos his heart filled with joy, and he could hardly wait for his arrival. Therefore his family positioned themselves in the street, and they kept going to the window to check if he was coming down the road yet, so they could immediately inform the Yismach Moshe of his arrival.

After a long while, one of the family members spotted him and yelled in great excitement, "He's here! He's here!"

The Yismach Moshe, who heard the excited shout all the way from his room, cried out with joy, "He's here! Quick, give me my Shabbos clothing, so that I can greet him face to face.

After a few minutes the guest arrived. When the Yismach Moshe saw that this guest was in fact his son-in-law, he slumped to the ground in a faint. When the others heard the 'thump' they quickly rushed to his room to see if everything was okay. Upon seeing that he had fainted, they hurriedly brought water and smelling salts, and moments later Reb Moshe opened his eyes.

"What happened?" they all asked him, "You awaited his arrival with such great eagerness?!"

"When someone yells, 'He's coming!' with such great excitement," explained the Tzadik, "who else could they mean if not *Moshiach* himself. I therefore fainted when I saw that it was not *Moshiach* after all!"

{Application: We should be honestly expecting *Moshiach* to come at any moment; so much so that the very thought of it fills our body with excitement.}



Awaiting the Geulah

Q. WHY SHOULD WE AWAIT MOSHIACH? (CONT'D)

The Chafetz Chaim related the following story: "There was once a great Gaon, who was asked to become Rav over a very large town, but he absolutely did not want to.

"When the men of the city saw that he did not want to come, they sent two messengers to tell him that, "Thirty thousand Jews (as many as lived in the city) are waiting for you..."

"When he heard that this large amount of Yidden are awaiting his arrival, he took his coat and said... "I'm coming right away!"

"So too," the Chafetz Chaim concluded, "is with the coming of Moshiach. When Moshiach knows that we are awaiting him, he too will come speedily!"

A4. Hashem is waiting for us to await him: In Shemoneh Esrei every day we say, "Speedily cause the descendant of Dovid (Moshiach) to flourish... for we *hope* for salvation all the day.."

The meaning is clear: "Speedily cause the descendants of Your servant Dovid to flourish," and if it is said that we lack merit, cause it to flourish anyway — "*because we hope for your salvation..*" that is, because we have the hope. In the merit of that *hope we deserve* that You redeem us!

Q. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO AWAIT HIM IF IT IS TAKING SO LONG?

A. The Longer It Takes, The Sooner His Arrival: Some people get discouraged by the fact that Moshiach's arrival is long overdue. If he has taken so long already, they ask, why should we still bother waiting for him now? However, in truth, it is the opposite. When something is truly dear to you, the longer it takes to arrive, the more eagerly you anticipate it.

The Bottom of the Pile: A fellow, R' Yosef, once dropped an important bank note, worth many thousands of dollars, into a huge box of scrap paper. He rummaged through the papers for hours trying to find his note. A man passed by and was surprised at the fellow's eagerness and mounting excitement, even after hours of unsuccessful searching. "Now that I am nearing the bottom of the stack I am more encouraged," exclaimed the fellow as he scrutinized each piece of paper, "Because I know it is in here, and I'm coming closer to finding it!"

(רייז תפודים)

Application: Since we know Moshiach is certainly coming, even though he didn't arrive today we don't despair.

Just like in the mashal, because he saw with his own eyes that the paper fell in to the garbage, he was sure he would find it there, so with every paper that he took out, he knew he was getting closer.

So too we are certain that Moshiach is going to arrive. Every day that passes and Moshiach is still not here yet, should make us await his arrival even more on the following day, for we are now a day closer to his arrival!}}

A Second Closer: The Chozeh of Lublin had a clock that would chime, marking every second that passed. One day, he received a guest, who heard his clock chime, and said, "You know, each time I heard the noise of your clock it makes me more scared, because it means, once second closer to the day of my death..."

The Chozeh answered him, "By me, it's quite the opposite! Each second that I hear the clock chime, I become happier, because it's one moment closer to the "coming of Moshiach!"

Q. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO BELIEVE IN HIS COMING IF THERE IS SO MUCH EVIL IN THE WORLD NOW?

A. The Bottom of the Wheel: In these days, when all around us we see the thick darkness of Golus, it is clear that we have already reached its last days. Since any lower darkness is unimaginable, we are certain that the darkness must immediately be followed by the Geulah—the sun rises after the darkest part of night.

When someone is halfway up the edge of a (ferris) wheel its next turn can either raise him or lower him. When, however one is at the very bottom of the wheel, whatever direction it turns must raise him. Now in Galus we are at the bottom of the wheel and it could only get better!



Q. HOW DO WE START BELIEVING IN MOSHIACH, AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY AWAIT HIS ARRIVAL EVERY DAY?

A. Simply by reading, discussing, thinking, and asking questions about Moshiach.

It is hard for us to understand what life will be like in the Geulah, which is perfectly normal, too. For the times of Moshiach are something that no one has ever experienced before... However, we can at least learn about it to get over our fear of the unknown.

Once the Geulah comes all our doubts will disappear. We will crave Torah and Mitzvos just as today we hunger for food. There will be no war, no hatred, or jealousy, because we will see that every other person is part of us, and only together are we complete.

The Geulah will simply redirect the world to the way it meant to be - toward goodness and holiness.



Awaiting the Geulah

Q. DOESN'T BELIEVING IN MOSHIACH ONLY BRING ONE TO DISAPPOINTMENT?"

A. Buying a Lottery Ticket: When you buy a lottery ticket, although statistically you have only a one-in-thirteen-million chance of winning, everyone who buys a ticket hopes that he will win. The proof is that you bought a ticket. You begin to fantasize about what you will do with all the money when you win. The "hope of winning" adds a spirit of excitement to your life. You are now more cheerful, more joyful, and, most of all, more productive because maybe, just maybe, you will be the winner.

The same is true with Moshiach. The mere hope that Moshiach can, and will, come today and change your life for the better, renews your hope and gives you a spirit of optimism and joy that makes your day more productive.

It is ridiculous to say that believing in Moshiach is wrong because it brings disappointment, as the very same people who believed they would win the Lotto and didn't, still bought tickets the following week. For even if you are disappointed, once again your hope is reawakened and you buy another ticket. Even though Moshiach did not come last week and we are disappointed, we reawaken the spirit of hope that today will be the day.

A3. By Demanding Moshiach! True and sincere awaiting, is proven by what is done to achieve it. For something truly desired and awaited, one will ask, beg, demand, and do everything possible to attain it. The same applies to awaiting Moshiach.

Hashem insists that we prove the sincerity of our claim to want Moshiach by doing everything in our power to bring it about, including storming the gates of Shamayim with demands for the geulah: "Bnei Yisroel shall not be redeemed until they will confess and *demand* the Kingdom of Shamayim, the Kingdom of the 'Beis Dovid', and the *Beis Hamikdash!*" (*Beis Yosef on Tur-Orach Chayim* c. 188)

Requesting Moshiach in Davening: The task of this generation is to bring Moshiach immediately by demanding, "We want Moshiach Now!"

This is not a new concept. After all, every Yid requests in Shemoneh Esrei that Hashem send Moshiach immediately. And when it is time for Mincha, and Moshiach has not yet arrived, we repeat it again, and if chas v'shalom Moshiach is further delayed, we repeat the same tefilah yet again in ma'ariv.

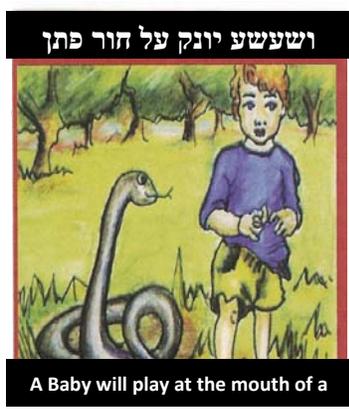
Falling in Battle: Moshiach's coming is hastened when it is asked for and eagerly anticipated. The chachomim say that the thousands of people who fell in the battle of Dovid Hamelech, fell because they did not demand that the Beis Hamikdash be built.

For this reason the chachamim instituted the request for the rebuilding of Yerushalayim and the coming of Moshiach several times a day – in Shemone Esrei and in bentching.

Like a Hired Worker: We daven for the geulah several times every day. Even so, requesting by itself is not enough. The Chofetz Chaim writes, "Several times a day we ask for geulah, but asking alone is not enough. One *must demand* the geulah, just as a hired worker demands his salary, because if the worker does not *demand* his wages, according to halacha, his employer is not obligated to pay him on the very day that he completes his work.

(*Baba Metzia* 9:12 -111a)

So, too, we must *demand* our geulah. Failure to do so shows that this matter is clearly not that urgent to us! (cont'd)



Q. HOW CAN WE PROVE THAT WE ARE ANXIOUSLY AWAITING MOSHIACH?

A1. By Learning The Laws of Moshiach's Times: The Chafetz Chaim arranged that his Kollel would learn the laws of Karbonos.

One of his students didn't want to learn these laws, instead he wanted to learn other laws... This Chafetz Chaim told him, "You are a Kohein, what will you do if Moshiach comes tomorrow, and he will ask you to bring his Karbon... How will you know what to do if you didn't learn these laws.

By learning these laws we prove to Hashem that we are anxiously awaiting Moshiach's arrival, today!

A2. By Talking about Moshiach: We must talk about Moshiach to show Hashem we are ready. When we yearn for something, and earnestly desire it, it is obvious in all we say and do. And our concern itself, because we talk about it, has a powerful effect on others. Those around us begin to become concerned, to share our anticipation, to sympathize and feel a part of the experience of worry, longing and hope. Then the others who have joined in our wait will do all they can to assist us.

Demanding Geulah, When Will Moshiach Come?

ב"ה

Q. HOW CAN WE PROVE THAT WE ARE ANXIOUSLY AWAITING MOSHIACH? (CONT'D)

A4. If We Will Demand: "If we will scream "עד מתי?" sincerely, Moshiach will definitely come very soon..."

If all Jews, great and small alike, together said: "Father, enough! Have pity on us and send our Moshiach!" – Moshiach would certainly have come!

*

Pesach Sheini: When the Yidden in the Midbar celebrated Pesach for the first time, there were many people who were not allowed to bring the Karbon Pesach, because they were Tamai. They were so upset, that they complained to Moshe Rabbeinu, "למה נגרע?" - Why should we be left out? Why can't we also bring a Karbon Pesach? And because they were so sincere, Hashem gave them another chance, by making Pesach Sheini.

These Yidden were upset that they could not fulfill one mitzvah, and Hashem gave them the chance to do it. How much more so, we – who are deprived of so many more mitzvos because we don't have the Beis Hamikdash etc. We must demand from Hashem that He redeem us, and let us be able to fulfill all of His mitzvos.

And, just like Hashem fulfilled the demands of the Yidden in the midbar, Hashem will listen to our tefilos too when we cry out "עד מתי?" and send us Moshiach, NOW!

Q. HOW DO WE ASK FOR MOSHIACH?

In English: It is important to ask for Moshiach, and express hope and faith in the immediate arrival of Moshiach, not only in Lashon Hakodesh, but also in English. The benefit in this is: In this way, the whole world will know that the Yidden want Moshiach now.

Nowadays, so many yidden do not understand Lashon Hakodesh. We cannot wait until all the Jews will know Lashon Hakodesh, since we need Moshiach now. Therefore, we declare in a language that all can join in demanding that we want Moshiach now!"

Q. WHEN WILL MOSHIACH ARRIVE? HASTENING HIS ARRIVAL!

It Depends: The navi Yeshayahu says: "The actual date of the Geulah is a guarded secret. It will happen in its time, predetermined from the beginning of creation, I will hurry it."

The wording of Yeshayahu seems to display a contradiction:

"בעתו" - "In its time" means a set date;

"אחישנה" - "I will hurry it" means that it may occur earlier, *before* "its time."

The contradiction is resolved as follows:

"בעתו" will occur if they are worthy "זכו"

"אחישנה" will occur if they're not worthy "לא זכו" –

The meaning is clear: Moshiach can come *any* day, even before the predetermined date: Every generation has a special "קצ" *time when its appropriate for Moshiach to come*, for Moshiach is alive and present in every generation, although hidden. He is ready to be revealed at any moment but it depends completely on us to hasten it.

(Yeshayahu 60:22)

Q. WHAT IS CONSIDERED "בעתו", THE APPOINTED TIME BY WHICH MOSHIACH WILL DEFINITELY COME?

A. Six Days = Six Thousand Years: The mefarshim explain that there will be seven millennia (periods of 1,000 years) of human history, corresponding to the seven days of the week. Each day of creation can be seen as a thousand years, as we are told in Tehillim: "A thousand years in your eyes are like the yesterday that has just passed." (Kappitel 90)

The seventh millennium will be *יום שכולו שבת* "the day which is all Shabbos."

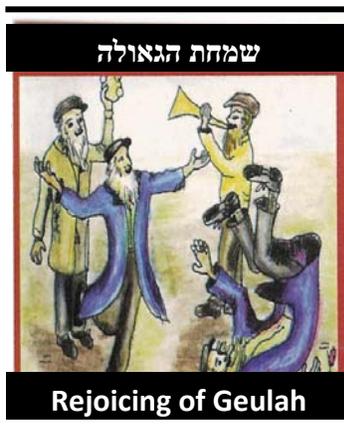
The Torah teaches us that Hashem created the world in six days. On each day, He added something to the world to make it more livable. The environment improved until, at last, on the seventh day, man could survive in comfort, with food and shelter at his fingertips, without labor.

Hashem provides gashmius conditions of life, so that we can create a *ruchnius* world that is fit to be a home for Hashem. Like *Shabbos*, it will be an time period devoted to learning Torah in comfort. According to the cycle of the world, Moshiach will definitely be here by the year 6,000 corresponding to the 7th millennia. (We are now in the year 5,779)

Q. IS IT PROPER TO DESIGNATE A CALCULATED TIME FOR MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL?

A. The Gemara Opposes Calculations: We may ask further: Is it even appropriate to know when Moshiach will come? After all, when Yaakov Avinu wanted to reveal the date of Geulah to his sons, Ruach Hakodesh was removed from him, so that he would not be able to tell them. And although the Nevi'im discussed the conditions that will precede Moshiach, they did not predict exactly when he would come, refusing to reveal the deadline for Geulah.

We should not be surprised, therefore, that the Talmud strongly opposes any such calculations, declaring, "Those who calculate the end, may their bones decay." The Rambam rules that one should not try to calculate the time of Geulah.



When Will Moshiach Come?

Q. IS IT PROPER TO DESIGNATE A CALCULATED TIME FOR MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL? (CONT'D)

But many of our greatest leaders and chachamim did, in fact, calculate when Moshiach would come. The Gemara itself, right after it criticizes calculating, puts its own calculations! Many of the greatest chachamim, such as R' Sa'adyah Gaon, Ramban and Abarbanel calculated dates for the Geulah. And even the Rambam, in his letter to Yemen, writes that his family tradition predicts when the end of the galus will occur. Thus, in generation after generation, even to our own day, our greatest leaders and chachamim have foretold the time of Geulah, apparently against the Gemara's warning to refrain from this!

Q, WHY DID CHACHAMIM CONDEMN THIS?

A. Weaken the People's Belief: The Gemara's also explains why it's forbidden. The Gemara continues: "The people will say, 'since the time for Geulah has been reached and it has not come, it will never come'."

In other words, as the Rambam explains, a predicted Geulah that does not occur may weaken the people's belief, be an obstacle for them. It may cause them to err: Having expected Moshiach and been disappointed, their emunah in the coming of Moshiach may be lessened - or, *chas v'shalom*, lost altogether. Therefore, the chachamim davened that those who speculate regarding Moshiach's coming, their calculations should be destroyed.



Q. IF THE GEMARA CONDEMNS IT, WHY DID MANY CHACHAMIM CALCULATE THE TIME?

Why would the Rambam in one work say one should not try to figure out when the Geulah will occur, and in another say his family has already done it?

A1. They are Qualified: Clearly we see, the Gemara condemns only the unqualified - who, by their speculations and miscalculations, will mislead the people and weaken their emunah in Moshiach. But a true tzaddik will not publicize guesses; he speaks the truth. The certainty of a tzaddik's prediction depends not on calculations, but on an inner connection with Hashem.

A2. Their Words Encouraged the People to Believe: The tzaddikim who discussed dates for the Geulah did so although aware of the result. They said it at a time when the Jewish people were physically oppressed and b'ruchnius depressed. Their words concerning Moshiach gathered the people together and strengthened their emunah, arousing in them the desire for Geulah and giving them the confidence to endure hardship, whatever its form.

A3. Their Words Encourage People to Increase their Avodah:

Furthermore, these tzaddikim did not reveal possible dates for Moshiach just to give the people encouragement. Rather, they recognized that in order for the final geulah to be complete - there had to be an increase in avodah, between the revelation of the date of Moshiach, and Moshiach's arrival.

In the past when Chachamim have suggested a date or a year as an auspicious time for Moshiach, based on calculation of Pessukim in Tanach, and the time went by without the Geulah, the Jewish people did not despair, but resolved to work harder, to do more to bring Moshiach. When these auspicious times for Moshiach did not work out, (as in the case of Bar Kochva), the next generation pushed even harder for Moshiach.

A4. Chachamim Hint to Hashem to Bring Moshiach:

Furthermore, tzaddikim would engage in predictions in order to hint to Hashem to bring Moshiach, as if to say, "Father, isn't that what is promised in Your Torah?"

A tzaddik is obligated to reveal what he knows, to publicize that by a certain future date an aspect of Geulah ought to reach completion, and may therefore be appropriate for the actual coming of Moshiach.

Q. WHY HAVEN'T PREDICTIONS REGARDING THE DATE OF MOSHIACH'S COMING BEEN FILLED?

A. **Unworthy Generation:** Most mefarshim agree that these forecasts were indeed auspicious times for the geulah if only the Yidden would have been deserving. (Ketz HaPla'os, ch. 2) In fact, according to the Zohar, every generation has its date for geulah but an unworthy generation forfeits the opportunity. (Tikkunim 95b)

Yet we should not dismiss these dates as unimportant, because each one of them has been a stepping stone to Geulah.

Q. WHAT WAS OUR GENERATION TOLD REGARDING THE TIME OF MOSHIACH'S COMING?

Gedolei Yisroel of our generation have shown us that if we look at current events and compare them with various nevuos and midrashim, with regard to the path of Geulah, we can see in every day news the process of Geulah unfolding before our eyes.

We see this through the negative events and through the positive that we begin to see the Geulah shining through.

Hastening Moshiach's Arrival

Q. WHAT DID THE REBBE SAY REGARDING THE TIME OF MOSHIACH'S COMING? (CONT'D)

A. Waiting For Our Mitzvah: When Moshiach declares the world is ready for geulah, it is because he knows the ruchnius accomplishments of this generation and of the world until now. His words about Moshiach, are clear and precise. The time is and must be now. Of course, there are questions. There is a need to study, to prepare. Moshiach is on the threshold. We must prepare ourselves, open our own eyes, arrange and prepare our homes before 'opening the door'.

Yes, one is allowed to demand, "Why hasn't Moshiach come? What can we do to hasten his coming?" But we may never question, "What if he doesn't come?" The latter question has no basis in Yiddishkeit. Its very wording makes no sense. It's like asking, "What if Hashem doesn't exist or the Torah isn't true?" After all, Moshiach is the fulfillment of Torah, the completion of Hashem's purpose in creating the world.

There is, however, a "what if" we should ask- "What if Moshiach is waiting for my next mitzvah, my next act of kindness?"

Q. HOW DO WE HASTEN MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL?

A. It all depends on our actions throughout galus (Tanya, perek 37). Every mitzvah we do, every word of Torah we study, every effort for goodness and kindness adds some light that pushes away a little more darkness, and adds another brick, so to speak, to the ruchnius *Mikdash HaShlishi* - the third Beis HaMikdash. When we have done all that we are able to do to purify the gashmius world, Moshiach will come.

The concept of a time for geulah is difficult to understand. Although there may be an appointed time for Moshiach's arrival all that is necessary for *Moshiach* to come is that the Jewish people "listen to His voice" and carry out their Avodah of Torah and Mitzvos in an appropriate manner.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HASTEN MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL?

- A1. Bring in Shabbos Early – Act Moshiachdik:
- A2. Do Teshuva
- A3. Keep Shabbos
- A4. Learn Torah and Keep Mitzvos
- A5. Go on Shlichus and Do Mivtzoyim
- A6. Give Tzedakah
- A7. Increase Achdus, Ahavas Chinam
- A8. Beseech Hashem, Daven
- A9. Study About Moshiach
- A10. Await Moshiach
- A11. Have Children
- A12. Mitzvos of Women
- A13. Rejoice in the Geulah
- A14. Prepare the World

A1. Bring in Shabbos Early – Act Moshiachdik: There is a Yid in Yerushalayim who by noon on Friday has already prepared his home for *Shabbos* and is seated by his table, dressed in his *Shabbos* garments, studying the weekly Parshah. In many communities, people will recite Kabbolas Shabbos davening while it is still day. That's acceptable; we are even commanded to add from the weekday to the holy and accept Shabbos before sunset.

Just like we can and should bring in Shabbos early by beginning to act the way we would on Shabbos, it is possible to usher in the times of Moshiach early by acting in a manner befitting Moshiach.

Make Here Eretz Yisroel: A Jew who wanted to travel to Israel was asked by a great Tzaddik: "Why must you travel to Eretz Yisroel? Make this place Eretz Yisroel!"

The difference between Eretz Yisroel and the rest of the world is – Eretz Yisroel is the Holy Land. We must also make the place where we live a holy land. When we use our rooms to daven and learn Hashem's holy Torah and do other mitzvos, like inviting guests to our house, then we make our house holy. We are making our private rooms just like Eretz Yisroel!

And when we live our lives in this way, using our time for only holy things, and making our surroundings holy, then we are "making this place Eretz Yisroel", and we have a personal Geulah. And this will bring Moshiach, who will redeem us and make the whole world holy.

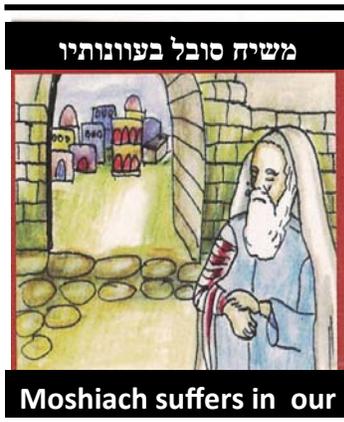
Just a Sniff: Reb Mendel Horodoker was a great Tzadik. In his later years, he lived in Eretz Yisroel. Once, he heard a great commotion in the streets.

When he asked what had happened, he was told that the sound of a Shofar was heard coming from one of the tall mountains and people are saying that Moshiach is here!

Reb Mendel walked over to the window, opened it and said, "Moshiach did not come yet. I don't feel the presence of Moshiach." (Later it became known that some crazy man had climbed to the top of the mountain, and had blown the Shofar.)

Now, we can ask, if R' Mendel could know by sniffing the air that Moshiach had not yet arrived, why did he have to go to the window?

R' Mendel lived with Moshiach. In R' Mendel's room, there was always the spirit of Moshiach. Therefore, Reb Mendel had to sniff the air outside to know if Moshiach had come to the entire world.



Hastening Moshiach's Arri-

Q. HOW DO WE HASTEN MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL? (CONT'D)

There are numerous other ways to hasten the geulah prior to its final date. We cannot just sit back and wait for it to happen. We learn this from Noach. After forty days of the Mabul, Noach opened the window of the Teivah, and sent the dove to see if the water subsided. He did whatever he could to find out if the land was dry, so that he could leave the Teivah.

We too, who realize that the time has come for us to "leave the Teivah" and get out of Galus, must yearn for the Geulah, and do whatever we can to bring it about.

Special Mitzvos... The Rambam teaches us that the world is compared to a "scale that is evenly balanced". The tiniest weight on any side will tip the scale. So too, the world is evenly balanced, half Mitzvos and half Aveiros. By doing even the 'tiniest' Mitzvah, that can be the final action that will tip the scale and bring Moshiach NOW!

We must increase in performing good deeds, both toward our fellow man and toward Hashem, while specifically intending to hasten the Geulah. Every time we assist a needy person, every act of kindness, every effort in studying the Torah and fulfilling its mitzvos - all these actions hasten the Geulah.

When a person sows the ground and plants seeds, he knows that eventually beautiful flowers will grow. In the same way, when a person studies Torah or fulfills a mitzvah, he should be aware of the effect of his actions. It should be clear to him that he is now sowing something that will lead to an ultimate sprouting of Moshiach.

In truth, one's entire Avodah during this period of Galus should be permeated with the constant anticipation and longing for the Geulah. In every mitzvah that he does - a yid should sense that he is thereby hastening the Geulah.

When Moshiach comes, he will ask us all of us, "What did you do to bring Moshiach closer?" Since he wants, to come so badly, he will also thank each and every one of us, who helped bring Moshiach closer!

A2. Teshuvah: First and foremost, among these special *mitzvos* is *teshuvah*. "When you return unto Hashem... Hashem will have compassion upon you, and restore and gather you from all the nations..." (Devarim 30:2ff.)

"Immediate Teshuva will bring about immediate Geulah!" We say in the Yom Tov tefilah, "מפני חטאתינו גלינו מארצנו" - "because of our sins we were sent from our land", therefore we can realize because of our Teshuva we will also return to our land.

It says in Gemara (Shabbos 153: 1) that the reason we must do Teshuva every day, is because man can never know how long he will live.

In the seforim of the Maharal, it says another reason why one must do Teshuva every day: "When Moshiach will come it will be too late to do Teshuva. And since we hope that Moshiach can come today, we must take the opportunity to do Teshuva now, so that we will not remain with our aveiros when Moshiach comes.

The Rebbe said: "Instead of doing Teshuva because you fear the "day of death", better do Teshuva because you await the coming of Moshiach every day..."

In these days especially, when by Hashem's kindness we stand at the threshold of Geulah, we must make every possible effort to strengthen every part of our frumkeit. Mitzvos must be observed b'hiddur - with beauty, and לפנים משורת הדין, beyond what is required. Minhagim must be kept carefully, and nothing compromised.

Q. Will the Geulah be delayed because there are unfortunately many Jews who do not conduct their lives according to Torah?

A1. It's Not Our Fault: Absolutely Not! In our times, any Yid that does not follow the Torah simply was never taught the importance of following Hashem's mitzvos. And since he doesn't know, he cannot be blamed for doing something wrong - it isn't his fault, he is considered to be "an infant that was captured", - "תינוק שנשבה", who does not know any different. So what Teshuva can we expect?

A2. Moshiach Will Inspire Teshuva: It is true that Moshiach's coming requires Teshuva, but Moshiach himself will inspire the Teshuva, when he arrives. Even before revealing himself, he will be busy

persuading Yidden to walk in the ways of Torah. If his campaign succeeds, geulah will come immediately and without undue suffering. Even the beginnings of Teshuva are enough, and full Teshuva will follow after Moshiach comes.

A3. Every Yid has Done Teshuva: The Geulah will not be withheld! The Gemara states: If a man marries a woman on the condition that he is a tzaddik even if he is now a complete Rasha, the marriage remains. Why? Because in a moment he could do Teshuva in his heart. We learn from this that even if man does Teshuva in an instant, he is considered a tzaddik.

The lesson for us is: Every Yid has for sure, by now, done a moment of Teshuva in his heart, where he regrets imperfect actions that he has done in the past, and resolves to be a better person. Therefore, we see that the Geulah cannot be withheld because we are missing Teshuva, because every Yid has already done Teshuva.

A4. Forgiveness: First Hashem will redeem us, then Hashem will forgive all our sins, like we say in Tehillim (Kappitel 130) "יהוה יפדה את ישראל מכל עונותיו" - "Hashem will redeem, forgive all of our sins".



A Tiger and Goat will

Hastening Moshiach's Arrival

Q. HOW DO WE HASTEN MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL? (CONT'D)

A3. Shabbos: If Bnei Yisroel will keep just one Shabbos properly, Moshiach will come immediately. Moshiach will come if they just keep one Shabbos, because Shabbos is equivalent to all the Mitzvos. (Shemos Rabba, 25:12)

A4. Learning and Teaching Torah: As the Zohar says, "Because of Torah study they will return to Eretz Yisroel and be gathered in from the galus. Especially by studying *pnimiyus Hatorah*, chassidus.

The Baal Shem Tov writes in a letter that on Rosh Hashanah of the year 5507, his neshamah ascended to the ruchnius realms, and beheld incredible sights. On his way back to earth, the Baal Shem Tov stopped off in 'Gan Eden Ha'Tachton' (the lowest of the seven Gan Edens) where he met many different types of neshamos. The neshamos recognized the great Tzadik and asked him to accompany them to higher places. R' Yisrael agreed, however he was afraid that once he went up so high, Shamayim wouldn't let him back down. He therefore asked his teacher Achiyah HaShiloni to go up with him.

Soon they rose to an incredibly high place, and before their eyes stood the heavenly palace of Moshiach, which is where Moshiach learns Torah with all the Tannaim and Tzaddikim who have already passed away. They were granted the privilege of entering the palace of Moshiach. The Baal Shem Tov asked, "אימתי קאתי מר?" - "Master, when are you coming?"

Moshiach answered, "כשיפוצו מעיינותיך הוצה" - "when the wellsprings of your chassidus will be spread outward."

Upon hearing these words, the Baal Shem Tov immediately returned to earth and spread his teachings, in greater amounts and to more people than he had ever done before.

Spread Chassidus: Since this was publicized, throughout previous generations they have worked on spreading Chassidus. However, in our times there is a difference: We should also spread Chassidus but we must stress and emphasize that this is to bring Moshiach closer. The same is with Torah learning and doing Mitzvos. All must be with the Kavanah to hasten the coming of Moshiach.

A5. Shlichus and Mitzvot: "When your wellsprings are spread..." This means, not only must we learn Chasidus to hasten Moshiach's coming, but also spread the teaching's outward

Every Jew has **10** ruchnius powers within his Neshama that he uses to serve Hashem. Hashem made every one of us his Shliach to bring Moshiach. Shliach, in Hebrew, has the numerical value (gematria) of **348**. So, as a Shliach(=348) we take our **10** powers and do all that we can to bring Moshiach. The numerical value (gematria) of Moshiach=**358**, teaching us that spreading the teachings outwards will lead to Moshiach.

On the end of the Kohein Gadol's robe, along the hemline, were golden bells. Whenever the Kohein Gadol would come into the Beis Hamikdash, the bells would ring to announce his arrival.

The many years in Galus can be compared to a long robe. We, who are at the very end of Galus, can be compared to the bottom of the hemline with the bells.

What lesson can we learn from bells that would ring when the Kohein Gadol entered the Beis Hamikdash?

We, too, can enter the Beis Hamikdash, by bring ourselves and others into a life and environment of kedusha. And we should do with with much publicity just like the Kohein Gadol was heard when he came into the Beis Hamikdash.

באהבת ישראל נקרב את הגואל



Ahavas Yisroel hastens

Learn From the Order of Parshiyos: There is significance of the names and order of the Parshiyos in Bereishis. **Vayishlach**, after one goes on Shlichus, spreading Torah and Mitzvos, comes **Vayeisheiv** – sitting in peace with Moshiach;

Mikeitz – and end to all evil; **Vayigash** – coming close to Hashem; and **Vayechi** – Techias Hameisim and Chayim Nitzchiyim (living forever)!

A6. Tzedakah: Our compassion for the poor causes compassion in return from Shamayim, which hastens the coming of Moshiach and the days of our geulah. (see Shabbos 139:a) "ציון" "גדולה צדקה שמקרבת את הגאולה" "במשפט תפדה, ושביה בצדקה" "Zion shall be redeemed by justice and her settlers with *tzedakah*." (Yeshayahu 1:27)

In the Gemara it says, "גדולה צדקה שמקרבת את הגאולה" – The mitzvah of Tzedakah is great, for it hastens the coming of Moshiach. When one gives Tzedakah he should have Kavanah that this Tzedakah should bring the Geulah closer.



Hastening Moshiach's Arrival

Q. HOW DO WE HASTEN MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL? (CONT'D)

A11. Having children: It says, "The descendant of David Hamelech will come when all the neshamos have been taken out of the heavenly treasury." (Yevamos 62a) When all the neshamos will descend to this world, Moshiach will come. It therefore follows that the birth of a Jewish baby is not only a private cause for celebration for his parents and family, it is a cause for rejoicing for all Yidden. Every Jewish baby that is born, every neshama that comes down to this world, brings the geulah closer.

A12. Through the Mitzvos of the women: "בזכות נשים עתידין" "Just like our fathers were redeemed from Mitzrayim in the z'chus of the righteous women of the generation, in the same way, the future geulah will come about in the z'chus of the avodah of woman and girls." In order to help bring Moshiach we must be very careful with the special mitzvos of the women, among them – Kashrus, Tznius and lighting Shabbos candles. Specifically about Shabbos candles it says, אם אתם משמרים נרות של שבת, אני מראה להם נרות של ציון – "If you keep the mitzvah of Shabbos candles, I will show you the candles of Yerushalayim."

(Likkutei Sichos, vol. 20, p. 227)

A13. Rejoice in the Geulah: The story is told of one of the tzaddikim of Poland, the Ruzhiner, that when he was a little boy asked his father for an apple but was refused. But the little boy really wanted some. He kept asking for the dessert, but his father didn't give it to him.

Suddenly, he had an idea. In a loud and clear voice, he made a brachah on the apple. Now his father, who did not want him to make a brachah L'vatolah, had no choice but to give it to him.

In our situation too, if the Yidden begin now to rejoice already in the geulah, out of absolute bitachon that Hashem will speedily send Moshiach, this joy (and emunah) itself will 'force' Hashem – our father in heaven – to fulfill his children's wish and to take them out of Galus.

Simchah Breaks Boundaries: The nature of Simchah is that it breaks all boundaries. As we see, when a Yid rejoices by the wedding of a son, even if he has a shy nature, suddenly on this night he's talking to everyone, because his great Simchah drew him out of the boundaries.

Or even a man who is a miser, and never gives away as much as a penny to anyone, but when he is at his child's wedding suddenly he let's loose and gives because of the Simchah...

From this, we understand, that with great Simchah we can break the boundaries of Galus, and dance to the complete Geulah!

A14. Prepare the world: A team of reporters from CNN was recording the distribution of dollars. After a while the Lubavitcher Rebbe turned to them and gave them a dollar, saying, "This is for charity."

They asked; Can you tell us the message you have for the world about Moshiach?

The message was, "Moshiach is ready to come now. It is only that on our part we do something additional in the realm of goodness and kindness. At least a little more, then he will come immediately.

The future geulah will apply not only to Yidden, but to the whole world as well. In order for the world to be ready for a state of geulah, it needs to be prepared. Yidden must take action to prepare even the Goyim in the world for the geulah. We have to influence the nations of the world to act in a civilized manner, through the observance of the Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach. It is for this reason that we need to publicize these seven mitzvos to the goyim around us.



The World is Ready: 'A question has been asked. 'If the sheva mitzvos have been in effect for so many hundreds of years, why is it that only recently it has been stressed, and so constantly?'

The simple reason why these mitzvos must be spread now. In previous generations, it was impossible to influence non-Jews in this regard. Any attempt to influence a non-Jew in religious matters would usually endanger one's life, thus

people were exempt from reaching out to the Bnei Noach.

Today, however, we see that the world has changed drastically. Not only is it possible to influence non-Jews without endangering oneself, but they are actually appreciative. When you tell them that there is a Creator and that they can help make the world a better place in which to live, through keeping the Sheva Mitzvos, they see that you care for their well-being.

Furthermore, the Rambam uses the expression, 'lakuf' – to forcefully influence them. Even if after you tried several times they still don't listen, try again. We frequently see that although people are sometimes spoken to five times, they don't change until they hear it a sixth time."



Hastening Moshiach, Simanei HaGeulah

ב"ה

Q. HOW DO WE HASTEN MOSHIACH'S ARRIVAL? (CONT'D)

A14. Prepare the World (cont'd) Someone might wish to complain: "Is teaching Goyim about Sheva Mitzvos what we should focus on? There are so many other issues with Yidden which need our attention."

Obviously, this complaint cannot be taken seriously. By the same reasoning, you could do away with all 613 mitzvos, chas v'shalom. Ask someone to do a mitzvah, and he can reply, "But there's something else important that I am attending to." Therefore, we must be concerned with all the mitzvos – in this case, spreading the sheva mitzvos B'nei Noach.

Apparently Not Enough Has Been Done: When Mr. Binyamin (Bibi) Netanyahu passed by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, he was received with a smile, and while shaking his hand, "I have not seen you for a long time, "Since we met last, many things have happened, but one thing has remained the same – Moshiach has not yet come! You must do things to speed his coming?"

To which, Mr. Netanyahu replied: "We are doing!"

"But apparently, this is not enough, because a number of hours in this day have already gone by and he has still not come. Since there are still a few hours left in this day, we can still try today."

"WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE IF WE ARE SPARED A SECOND FROM GALUS, AFTER BEING IN THIS GALUS FOR MORE THAN 1900 YEARS?"

The Gemara (Sukkah 52: 2) tells us that Galus is one of four things that Hashem regrets making, and Hashem doesn't want us to stay in Galus.

Why does the Gemara have to tell us this? So that we should not be too happy and comfortable with Galus, and we should always remember that Galus is something which is not good, and we don't belong here.

We must utilize every second in Galus to fulfill Torah and Mitzvos with a 'storm', and through this we could bring the Geulah even a second closer.

We have to explain to the child that every second that we are in Galus, Hashem is also found in Galus with us, with all his Malachim (and Hashem has more Malachim than the pennies in America's treasury). And every second longer is not just another second, it causes Hashem more pain...it is another second of keeping the Shechinah in Galus, along with all these Malachim, and all neshamos of Yidden. This adds up to hundreds of thousands of seconds. Which is therefore understood that every second earlier which Moshiach arrives, is really a lot earlier.

Simanei HaGeulah—Signs of the Geulah

It is difficult to believe that Moshiach can come right now when we see so much evil in the world. It says that Moshiach will come 'B'hesech Hadas' when our knowledge is removed from it. Does that mean we shouldn't think about his coming—chas v'shalom! It means, though, that Moshiach will come when our knowledge tells us that it's impossible for him to come now, with much evil going on in the world!

Q. HOW WILL WE KNOW THAT MOSHIACH IS ABOUT TO COME?

WHAT WILL BE THE SIGNS?

A: The time appointed by Hashem for the Geulah is a closely guarded secret. Nevertheless, we are offered many hints to recognize its closeness: "When you see a generation declining, hope for him... when you see a generation overwhelmed by many troubles..., await him". (Sanhedrin 98a)

"When you see nations fighting each other, look toward... Moshiach." (*Bereishis Rabbah* 42:4). When certain conditions come about, expect the imminent coming of Moshiach.



Most of these conditions are quite disturbing, clearly displaying a situation of the very "bottom of the pit." *The Talmud relates that in the time before Moshiach: children will despise their parents, arrogance will rule, wrong will be called right, everyone will do as they please, and society will be stretched and torn., nations will fight against each other.* In short, it will be a time of suffering that will make it look as if Hashem were asleep. These are the birth pangs of Moshiach, bearable only in anticipation of the bliss that follows them.

Little wonder that some chachamim expressed nervousness about those days in terms of, "Let Moshiach come, but let me not see him." (*Sanhedrin* 98b) The Gemara says that in 'Ikvesa D'Meshicha' in the last days of Galus, each day we continue to remain will get worse and worse!

The attitude, however, is to await his coming in spite of it all.

(The Midrash discusses a great war when Iraq who is called 'Melech Pras' waged war against Kuwait, the 'Melech Aravi', two great world nations. This is exactly what happened it the Gulf War)

Q. WHY MUST THE GEMARA TELL US ABOUT THE HARDSHIPS?

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

A. If the Torah would not tell you, we would become very discouraged, when we are nearing the end of the days of Galus, and yet we would still be witnessing many evil occurrences. It would really weaken our Emunah in the imminent arrival of Moshiach. Therefore, the Torah tells us so that not only won't our Emunah be lost, instead it will be strengthened – because we will know that when these signs occur then behold, Moshiach is about to come!

Simanei HaGeulah

Q. WHY WILL THERE BE SO MUCH EVIL BEFORE THE COMING OF MOSHIACH?

A1. Evil Rises In One Last Struggle: Before evil is erased, it will rise in one last great struggle, become stronger, attacking society and the individual, rising like a fever before it is broken.

Or, take for example, two people who are fighting with each other. They're wrestling, and finally – one is overpowering the other, and pushes him to the ground. While he lies there on the ground, fearing defeat, he makes a last effort, and with all his might, he tries once more to be victorious.

We have done so much good during all this time in Galus. We have brought so much holiness into the world. The forces of evil, seeing that their end is near, are only putting in all their last remaining strength, trying to have a bad influence.

So don't feel discouraged because of increasing bad that you might see in the world. It's just another sign, that Galus is at its very end.

A2. A Bath of Hot Water to Scrub: The times of Moshiach are compared to Shabbos. Just like before Shabbos we bathe in hot water to clean ourselves, so too the troubles of Galus 'cleans' us from anything bad, and prepares us to be able to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

A3. Yeridah L'Tzarich Aliyah: Even though we don't know all the details of the coming of Moshiach, one thing is clear: There is a yeridah before an aliyah - the world will get worse, before it gets better. This can be seen by the geulah from Mitzrayim, the closer the Yidden came to Geulah the more they suffered. For example, after Hashem sent Moshe with news of the geulah, Pharaoh instead intensified their work, withholding straw. Only then did the Maakos begin, which eventually brought the Geulah.

Similarly, the Kli Yakar writes along the same lines, "every day, closest to dawn, the darkness is at its deepest... Similarly, in the winter, close to sunrise, the dark become stronger" – but the suffering will immediately be followed by the Geulah.

A4. No Pain, No Gain: Like an olive press, the suffering of Galus extracts the "oil" of the Yidden, their mesiras nefesh and closeness to Hashem. (Menachos, 53b) The nisyanos before Geulah, pave the way for the revelation of Hashem.

The challenge for us is to turn despair into joy, evil into acts of kindness. This is the requirement for the era of happiness, and peace. This will bring Moshiach.

Even with all the explanations for Golus, we still cannot understand why it has to be done in such a painful way? Yet, we trust in Hashem, and believe with complete faith, that it is really for our good.

When Moshiach comes, we will understand all this. We will see clearly the good that there is in Galus. And then, we will thank Hashem for all that he has done.

Q. WHAT CAN WE DO TO SPARE OURSELVES FROM THE NEGATIVE SIGNS THAT WILL PRECEDE GEULAH?

A. Let him busy himself with Torah and acts of loving-kindness!" (*Sanhedrin* 98b) These signs do not have to occur, if we follow in the ways of Torah and mitzvos.

Q. ARE THERE ALSO GOOD AND HAPPY SIGNS INDICATING THE IMMINENT COMING OF MOSHIACH? WHAT ARE THEY?

A. Yes. Immediately before the coming of Moshiach there will be a lot of wealth; (*Sanhedrin* 97a) more Torah-study; and opening of the "gates of wisdom above and the wellsprings of wisdom below," proven also by scientific and technological discoveries and advances. There will also be a revelation of the chassidic teachings of the Torah; and also — "In the time that Moshiach will awaken, many wonders and miracles will occur in the world."

Q. HAVE ANY OF THESE POSITIVE SIGNS TAKEN PLACE YET?

A1. Advances in Knowledge: The Zohar predicted that in the era before Moshiach, the world would see an extraordinary explosion of knowledge, secular as well as holy, an overwhelming expansion of technology and miraculous material advancement.

Since the Industrial Revolution, some two hundred fifty years ago, science and technology have given us: radio, television, automobiles, airplanes, telephones, computers, penicillin, vaccines, laser surgery, sanitation, refrigeration, food in abundance, internet and - increased longevity. The possibility of prosperity exists for the first time in history.

Gashmius progress prepares for the coming of Moshiach.

Our current wealth results not from coincidence or the sudden "brilliance" of modern life, but to the approaching geulah and fulfillment of Hashem's plan.

A2: Attack of Planet Jupiter: One sign taught by the Zohar predicts that around the time of Moshiach's coming, a tremendous war will take place. This is what will take place: a group of objects in space will attack the planet Jupiter, and all this will be seen by people on earth.

Well, it was Shabbos afternoon—July 17, 1994, at exactly 4:04 p.m. when the first space object crashed into Jupiter and exploded into a huge fireball. This object, which was about a mile long, was actually part of a huge comet, which had recently split apart into 21 pieces. The hole that this object made in Jupiter was around a 1000 miles wide. But don't worry - Jupiter is nine times the size of the earth, so it's not a big deal for it. The very same night two more of these twenty-one space- objects attacked Jupiter. This three-attacks-a-day business repeated itself every day for an entire week.

Now scientists predict that even people with very powerful telescopes would not be able to see much. But they were wrong! Just as the Zohar predicted, even people with weak telescopes were able to see amazing flashes of fire on Jupiter. And that's not all; the U.S. had a spacecraft there named "Hubble" which took pictures of what was happening and transmitted them back to Earth!

Another amazing sign of the special times that we are living in!



ומלאה הארץ דעה את ה'

The earth will be filled with knowledge of



The Generation of Moshiach

Q. HOW IS IT THAT OUR GENERATION, "IKVESA D'MESHICHA" (THE HEELS) WILL BE ABLE TO BRING MOSHIACH?

Many times we ask, is it fair that the present generation should be able to merit the Geulah when this was withheld from previous generations? Those before us were so much greater and more pious than we are, as it says: "אם הראשונים כמלאכים, אנו כבני אדם." "If the earlier generations were like malachim, we are but like plain humans; if they were like humans, we are like donkeys!"

(Yerushalmi, Shekalim 5:1)

A1. Feet Heal the Head: The following Mashal can be given to answer this famous question. In recent years, a new method in healing, called reflexology was found. The doctors using this method cure all sicknesses in the body through applying pressure on different parts of the foot. As a result, even diseases that are found in the head are cured through the foot.

The same is true with our generation. Although the previous generations were indeed greater than ours, nevertheless, it is within our power, the power of 'Ikvesa D'Meshicha' the heels of Moshiach - to heal what was done in all previous generations and bring Moshiach.

A2. On Giants' Shoulders: Additionally, the answer could also be understood through a different example: In general, a giant can see a lot farther than a dwarf. This is when they both stand on the same ground. However, perched atop giants' shoulders, a dwarf can see even farther than the giant. So too our generation is dwarfed in comparison to previous great generations but, having inherited all their Torah and Avodah, we stand on their shoulders, and we can reach a higher level than they did.

What about past sins, are they cumulative too? Unlike bad—which once Hashem forgives ceases to exist—goodness is eternal and increases from generation to generation. Our generation therefore is full with goodness collected over time from the Avos and previous generations, but none of their sins.

A3. Because Only a Minor Task Remains: Each generation has its own mission. Previous generations were given difficult and complicated tasks. These generations brought tremendous holiness into the world, refining the darkness of Golus. They brought the Shechina almost completely down here. Thanks to them only a minor task remains, which even simple people like us can do. When our lowly generation completes our Avodah, Moshiach will not only come in our merit, but by virtue of all previous generations. Their good remains.

The Last Saw: A great Tzadik once told the following mashal as an example: "There was once a rich and powerful king who had many beautiful gardens surrounding his huge, magnificent palace. The king loved to stroll through the gardens and look at the beautiful flowers and trees. There was one thing, however, which upset the king very much; right in the center of one of the gardens stood a tremendous, ugly tree. It was old and dry with roots sticking out on every side, and it detracted from the beauty of the garden. The king had already tried a number of times to have the royal gardeners chop it down, but they hadn't been able to do it; the tree was simply too thick.

One day the king had a wonderful idea. He sent messengers throughout his kingdom to announce to the people that anyone who would succeed in chopping down the huge, ugly tree would receive the honor of marrying his daughter, the princess.

Strongmen came from far and wide with all kinds of axes. They each took their turn in hacking at the tree, but it was useless; not even a dent could be seen on the tree. One day, a skinny, little man with a small hammer in his hand arrived at the palace gates and said that he wants to take a swing at the tree. Everyone laughed when they heard this, but they let him try for the king had said that anyone was permitted to try.

The little man walked up to the tree, and hit it once with his small hammer. Down came the tree, crashing into many pieces!

Everyone just stood there in amazement, unable to believe what they had seen. After they regained their wits, one of the ministers hurried to inform the king of what had taken place. The king rushed to the scene, where the little man with the hammer was standing next to the fallen tree, a

smile on his face.

"How can it be," asked the king in wonder, "that the strongest men in all of my kingdom, using the sharpest axes couldn't even dent the tree, and you, little man, knocked it down with a small hammer?!"

"It's very simple," answered the little man. "After all the mighty blows which the tree received from the strongmen and their axes, it was ready to fall down. Although it appeared to be as strong and tough as ever, in truth, the only thing needed to push it over was one small thing."

{Application: Our generation must be especially aware of the importance of every little mitzvah. One small mitzvah may be all that's left to bring Moshiach, after the hard work of all previous generations.}

A4. We should not say that we don't have the power, we are given special Koichos. It's up to us now!



Identifying Moshiach

Q. HOW IS IT THAT OUR GENERATION, "IKVESA D'MESHICHA" (THE HEELS) WILL BE ABLE TO BRING MOSHIACH?

A5. A Good Deed Done From Hardship Has Greater Merit:

Finally, the very deterioration of our conditions, makes it so much more difficult for us to achieve ruchnius perfection, which makes even our slightest mitzvah much more valuable to Hashem, for "one thing in suffering is better than a hundred in ease." (*Avos of R. Nosson* 3:6) Which teaches us that: "a very small act in this generation is equal to many great *mitzvos* in others; for in these generations evil is extremely overpowering, to no end, unlike in previous times!" (*Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:2)

Q. WHO IS IT THAT WILL BRING THE GEULAH?

A. Dependent on and in the merit of the Women of our

Generation: The Gemara relates that only through the merit of the Jewish women were Bnei Yisroel redeemed from slavery in Mitzrayim. בזכות נשים צדקניות נגאלו אבותינו "בזכות נשים צדקניות נגאלו אבותינו" "בזכות נשים צדקניות נגאלו אבותינו" Centuries later, the Ari"zal wrote that the same will be true in the future: "ובזכות נשים צדקניות נגאלו אבותינו" "ובזכות נשים צדקניות נגאלו אבותינו" - Moshiach will come to redeem the Jewish people from galus through the merit of the Jewish women.

Q. WHAT IS THIS UNIQUE QUALITY OF THE JEWISH WOMEN, AND WHY IS IT RELATED SPECIFICALLY TO GEULAH?

A. Emunah: To answer this, we must understand the nature of Geulah and the basic difference between man and woman, or, male and female..

Geulah means going beyond "reality," – leaving our mitzrayim, our limitations. To go beyond reason requires a belief, a trust in that which cannot be analyzed or understood. And this is the ruchnius nature of women – to have Emunah.

Throughout the history of our Yomim Tovim we see an expression of Emunah of the women often in the form of mesiras nefesh. As we see in the following examples:

A. By Cheit Ha'eigel: Moshe did not come down from Har Sinai when he promised. Reality says something went wrong. Emunah says Moshe must come down when he promised, so "reality" is wrong. Nevertheless, the women did not participate in Cheit Ha'eigel.

B. Purim: Achashveirosh has decreed that anyone may kill the Jews. Logic would say to hide from him or bribe him. But Esther fasted and davened for three days, and the Yidden were saved.

Rationally, we know Geulah is not near. We have too many troubles, there's too much suffering, life is as hard as always. But the women demonstrated that we should have Emunah.

The Qualities of Moshiach:

Q. WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF MOSHIACH?

A1. Human King: The Jewish belief in Moshiach requires belief not only in the days of Moshiach, but also belief in a human being – a king - a leader of the Jewish people who, through Hashem's power, ushers in this new era.

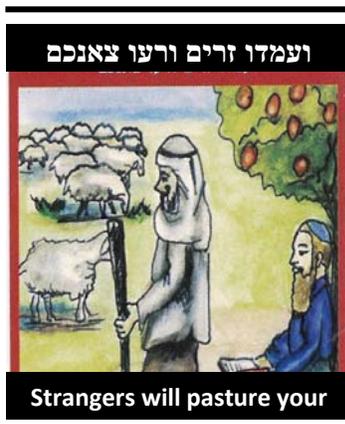
Our belief in Moshiach being a Human king is so important, that the Rambam states that whoever does not believe in a Jewish leader and king who will usher in the times of Moshiach has denied the Neviim and the entire Torah.

Q. Why a human Moshiach? Why can't Hashem bring about these changes Himself, without a human messenger? Why can't Hashem simply inspire people to live in peace and harmony?

A. In truth, Hashem has always chosen individuals to lead His people. Moshiach will not be the first person in Jewish history to lead his generation to geulah, to be the messenger of Hashem's revelation to the Jewish people. Moshe did that. Moshiach will not be the first person to lead the Jews into Eretz Yisroel. Yehoshua did that. And Moshiach will not be the first through whom Hashem will build a place to dwell. Dovid HaMelech and Shlomo HaMelech did that.

The concept that chosen individuals become leaders of the Jewish nation has always been a part of Jewish life. Jews, in all times, flocked to a person who represented a Torah way of life, whether it was a *Navi*, *Melech*, or a *Rav*. In fact, according to the Zohar, every generation has its own Moshe, its own leader.

Hashem created His world so that people will change the world, perfect it and ultimately make the world that which Hashem intended it to be: "A home for Hashem." Moshiach, too, will be only one more link in the glorious chain of Jewish tradition of great and inspiring leaders to direct the Jewish people and the entire world into an era of peace.



Identifying Moshiach

Q. We may ask, how can one person change the world? We must understand how a Jewish leader may deeply influence the Jewish people, but how can he affect the 5 billion non-Jews?

A. One possible approach, oddly enough, can be found in a mashal to the power of evil. We have witnessed one of the most horrifying events in history. One evil individual nearly shattered civilization and almost destroyed the Jewish people. Hitler's ability to persuade the masses, to arouse the evil side of millions of people, uncovered unimaginable levels of wickedness, producing a disaster from which the world still has not fully recovered.

Even recently, we have seen other tyrants influence a large part of the world. If one individual can persuade millions to abandon all compassion, how much more so can a single good and holy person influence tens of millions towards decency and morality.

Such a person, however, must possess more than charisma and great leadership skills. He is chosen by the qualities he possesses.

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Q. WHO IS MOSHIACH?

A. Determining Moshiach is a **three-stage** process:

1) In every generation there exists an individual, hidden or recognized as a leader, who has the potential to be Moshiach.

2) This individual emerges on the world scene and displays the *characteristics* of Moshiach as described in the Torah and Halacha. We then assume he is Moshiach – 'Chezkas Moshiach'

3) Finally, he brings about the changes, which mark the times of Moshiach. We then know he is definitely Moshiach – 'Moshiach Vadai.'

A. A Tzaddik from your generation. Any time is a potential time for the coming of Moshiach. Moshiach is already on earth, a tzadik appearing and existing in every generation. "In every generation is born a descendant of Yehuda fit to be Bnei Yisroel's Moshiach!" (R. Ovadiah of Bartenura)

"And just as Moshe the first redeemer of Bnei Yisroel, reached the age of eighty years and did not know or sense that he would redeem Bnei Yisroel, even when Hashem said to him, 'Come and I will send you to Pharaoh..' (Shmos 3:10), he declined and did not want to accept that mission. So too it will be with Moshiach.

At the proper time, Hashem will reveal Himself to Moshiach, and the spirit of Moshiach, which is hidden above, until his coming will rest upon him.

(We also find with Shaul Hamelech that the malchus and the Ruach Hakodesh '

which he had not sensed at all within himself, came upon him after he was anointed.)

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Our Chachamim insisted that we expect Moshiach's revelation every day. We have a responsibility to familiarize ourselves with the qualifications for Moshiach, to look for his arrival, and to search, without prejudice, for any individual in our generation who emerges as a potential Moshiach.

Every generation must have an individual who is the potential Moshiach, chosen by Hashem to redeem the Jewish people and usher in the times of Moshiach, should it be the appropriate time.



Identifying Moshiach

2) What are the characteristics of the 'Potential (Chezkas) Moshiach'?

A. The Rambam briefly summarizes the conclusions of the Neviim and chachamim who preceded him. (*Interestingly, although one may find different opinions about the details of other areas of Halacha, all later ones agree with the Rambam's principles concerning the identity of Moshiach.*)

In order to be presumed to be Moshiach, an individual must:

1. "יעמוד מלך מבית דוד" Be from the House of Dovid.
2. "הוגה בתורה, ועוסק במצות כדוד אביו" Be knowledgeable in all aspects of Torah and Halacha, and fully observe them.
3. "ויכוף כל ישראל לילך בו ולהזק בדקה" Guide his fellow Yidden back to keeping Torah.
4. "וילחם מלחמת ה'" Fight the war of Hashem, leading the fight against evil.

We have clear-cut guidelines for judging an individual's ability to be Moshiach. Let's look at them closely.

1. Many Jewish families today can still trace their lineage to Dovid HaMelech. For example, the Maharal of Prague, had documented evidence of his descent from Dovid HaMelech, and we have records and testimony easily verifying ancestry back to his time.

2. What does it mean that Moshiach will be expert in all aspects of Torah? It means, simply, he will be an extraordinary scholar, constantly discovering new and deeper insights into Torah, whose knowledge extends from the Torah She'Beksav to the Torah She'Baal Peh, from knowing the details of Halacha to a profound understanding of more ruchnius concepts. This phenomenal knowledge will be demonstrated by his published works and speeches, available for the public.

3. What of the third guideline, the ability to lead his fellow Jews back to frumkeit? This means that Moshiach must be a great Jewish world leader, who actively reaches out to all Jews in every corner of the globe. This can only be done by establishing a network of religious, educational and social institutions that affect everyone, regardless of background and affiliation, and touching non-Jews as well.

4. Finally, our assumed Moshiach energetically involves himself in every aspect of Jewish survival, from fighting assimilation and intermarriage to insisting on the security of the Jews in Eretz Yisroel. He must also be a force for universal morality, promoting freedom, responsibility and civilization among the nations.

According to the Rambam and all other experts, we must consider anyone who possesses these traits to be Moshiach.

What are the qualities of a Definite Moshiach?

Then the Rambam continues: We can identify that he is definitely Moshiach (Vadai) If...

1. He did [these things above] successfully (and defeated all the nations around him),
2. "בונה בית המקדש במקומו" Built the Beis Hamikdash on its site
3. "ונקבץ נדחי ישראל" Gathered all Bnei Yisroel from the dispersed lands.

He will [then] correct the entire world to serve Hashem in unity.

If he meets all the above criteria, then he is definitely Moshiach. Had the Yidden only paid more attention to these halachos, we could have spared ourselves much of the crushing disappointment generated by false Moshiachs throughout the ages. For these fakes built their cases on misinterpreted midrashim, signs etc., but none passed the Rambam's Halachic test.

Q. DOES MOSHIACH HAVE TO DO WONDERS FOR US TO BELIEVE IN HIM?

A. The Rambam does not hold that one of the qualities of Moshiach will be that he will perform miracles and wonders (like Techiyas Hameisim) to prove that he is Moshiach.

A proof for this is seen in the story of Ben Kuziva. Decades had passed since the destruction of the second Beis Hamikdash, and the persecution of the Jewish people by the Roman Empire just kept getting worse. At that time, the Romans still allowed the Yidden to remain in Eretz Yisroel, however, they governed the land in a cruel manner.

During this time period there lived a great tzaddik and leader by the name of Shimon Ben Koziva. He learned and taught great amounts of Torah, and was exceptionally careful in his observance of Mitzvos.

Ben Koziva – as he was called at that time – couldn't bear the suffering of his Jewish brothers and so, in secrecy, he organized a small Jewish army and began to strike back at the Roman soldiers stationed in Eretz

Yisroel. His small army grew very quickly and the Romans soon began to fear him very much. They sent thousands of soldiers from Rome to Eretz Yisroel in order to defeat him. But Hashem was with Ben Koziva, and instead it was they who defeated the Romans battle after battle, and made a great Kiddush Hashem.

It was at this time in history that the great Tanna, R' Akiva lived. Rabbi Akiva recognized the great level of Ben Koziva and announced to the Jewish people that Ben Koziva was in fact – Moshiach! (From then on R' Akiva called him Bar Kochva because Moshiach is referred to as Kochev, a star.) When Bar Kochva would go to battle the Romans, R' Akiva would carry his armor.

More than two years passed, and one day, unexpectedly, the Romans attacked. Bar Kochva and the Jewish people fought back, but this time they did not have HaShem's help, and so they lost the great battle. Due to his aveiros, Bar Kochva was eventually killed, thus disqualifying him as Moshiach. It was only afterwards that all understood that he wasn't Moshiach. However, the entire time that they did believe in Moshiach, we don't find that they asked him to "show them miracles." Because Moshiach will not need to perform miracles for us to believe in him.

(Rambam Hilchos Melachim, ch. 11, To Await Moshiach)



Identifying Moshiach

Q. WHAT IS THE CHARACTER OF MOSHIACH?

A. The first critical trait is humility, which all true Jewish leaders have possessed. Moshiach, in particular, will be the most humble of men, despite the greatness of his leadership.

We see this in Moshe - the very first Moshiach of the Jewish people - described as possessing both royalty and humility. Moshe's power, his leadership, his royalty came from his bitul, his ability to be ego-less, so as to be a keili for transmitting Hashem's message to the world.

Q. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE QUALITIES OF MOSHIACH?

A1. Very Wise: "Behold, My servant shall be wise, he shall be dignified and lofty...." (Yeshayahu 52:13). His wisdom shall exceed even that of Shlomo HaMelech

A2. Greatest Leader: He shall be greater than the Avos, greater than all the nevi'im after Moshe, and in many respects even more exalted than Moshe. His stature and honor shall exceed that of all kings before him. He will be an extraordinary navi, second only to Moshe, with all the ruchnius and mental qualities that are necessary to be blessed with the gift of nevuah.

A3. Worried about his people: As a faithful shepherd he already cares so much about his people that he volunteered to suffer all kinds of agonies to assure that not a single Jew of all times will be lost.

A4. Occupied with Torah and Mitzvos: Moshiach shall meditate on the Torah and be preoccupied with *mitzvos*. He shall teach all the Jewish people and instruct them in the way of Hashem. He will prevail upon Bnei Yisroel to follow and observe the Torah, repair its breaches, and fight the battles of Hashem. Moshiach will reveal altogether new insights, making manifest the hidden mysteries of the Torah.

A5. Respected by Goyim: Though Moshiach comes first to Bnei Yisroel, all the nations will recognize his wisdom and sublimity and submit to his rule. He will guide and instruct them as well.

A6. Performs Miracles: The Rambam says that there is no need for Moshiach to perform signs and wonders to prove himself. Nonetheless, he will do so.

The Suffering of Moshiach: The Gemara describes the whereabouts of Moshiach in Galus saying, "He is sitting among the sickly paupers at the gate to Rome, putting bandages over his sores." Yeshayahu describes at length "a man of pains and acquainted with sickness." Many mefarshim, such as Ramban and Abarbanel, explain this refers to Moshiach.

Q. WHY MUST MOSHIACH, THE INDIVIDUAL WHO WILL BRING GEULAH TO THE WORLD, UNDERGO ILLNESS AND PAIN?

There are two basic reasons.

A1. Suffers For His Generation: The first has to do with the relationship between Moshiach and his generation. The suffering of Moshiach is for the sake of, and to atone for, his generation.

There is a famous story about a Rebbe. At a yechidus, a young man expressed grief over some aveiros. His Rebbe uncovered his arm and pointed out a section that had shriveled, saying, "See how my skin clings to my bones, and all this from your 'aveiros of youth.'" The story shows that, despite this Rebbe's high ruchnius level, he was so bound up with his chassidim that one's unsatisfactory ruchnius state could affect his physical health - literally shrinking his skin.

Another example of a leader's devotion to his people, to the extent that he suffers for them - After the Jewish people sinned with Cheit Ha'eigel, Hashem said he would destroy them and build a new nation through Moshe. However, Moshe, who had not sinned, who had not even been with the people at the time, replied that he was willing to continue only if Hashem would forgive the people. If Hashem would not, however, Moshe demanded to be removed from the Torah. That Moshiach not only is willing to suffer, but, Chas v'shalom, may have to suffer for his people, follows naturally from his relationship, the inseparable bond he has with them.

A2. Suffers from Transformation: The second reason for Moshiach's illness has to do with Moshiach himself. As we have explained before, geulah is a process: the potential Moshiach becomes the presumed Moshiach (chezkas Moshiach), and then the confirmed Moshiach (Moshiach Vadai). The suffering of Moshiach, then, is part of the transformation, the process of becoming Moshiach.

For this reason, the time of the coming of Moshiach is often referred to as the "birth pangs of Moshiach," for just as the labor and delivery of a newborn involves a tremendous, difficult struggle, so, too the emergence of Moshiach may well require a painful disruption of previous conditions, leading to confusion, agitation and disorder. Naturally, this would affect the generation and Moshiach.

Q. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US TO KNOW ABOUT THE SUFFERING?

A. Knowing of the illness and pain that Moshiach accepts for our sake must change us as well. When children see a parent sacrificing for them, it arouses a determination to improve, to be worthy of what is being done for them. The Ramban explains that the pain of Moshiach will result in our self-improvement, thus bringing Moshiach. This means that we can spare Moshiach his pain and hasten his revelation by increasing our mitzvos. Our actions - our words and thoughts - count in the struggle to bring Geulah.



The Process of Geulah

Q. HOW MOSHIACH WILL REVEAL HIMSELF – NATURAL OR SUPERNATURAL?

A. One opinion, based on *pessukim* in Tanach, suggests that geulah will come suddenly, changing reality in an instant. The Navi Malachi (3:1) declares, "פתאום יבוא אל היכלו האדון אשר אתם, מִבְּקֵשִׁים" "The Master whom you seek will suddenly come to his Beis HaMikdash," and Metzudas Dovid comments this is understood as a reference to Moshiach. This means, Moshiach will arrive immediately, without any advance warning or preparation.

The very belief in the coming of Moshiach includes the daily expectation of his arrival - without preparation or forewarning. As the Rambam puts it: "Even though he tarries, I will wait for him every day", which means, Moshiach can come at any moment.

Q. BUT HOW IS IT POSSIBLE FOR MOSHIACH TO JUST SUDDENLY APPEAR?

A. When we look at the world of nature, sometimes we can see the development of a major event - a hurricane, for example. Even so, we cannot forecast - until practically the last minute - where it will land, make itself felt. Other times, acts of nature occur unexpectedly, as if spontaneously - like the volcano that explodes without warning or the tornado that suddenly springs into existence.

In retrospect, we can trace the process of development; uncover the preconditions for the devastating, senses-numbing event. But until the earthquake happens, until it abruptly emerges, it has been concealed. And so we are surprised, wondering how it could have happened without warning.

The miraculous appearance of Moshiach will be like these - a sudden, spontaneous emergence. And of course, though taken by surprise, in retrospect, we will be able to mark the hidden steps, discover the prior ruchnius development.

He Will Reappear: When Moshe Rabbeinu came to the Yidden, the first time, he told them the news of their Geulah. Afterwards, he hid in Midyan for a while, Moshe Rabbeinu first came to the Yidden to tell them that Hashem will take them out of Mitzrayim. Then he reappeared a long while later, (after the 10 *makkos*, and *karbon* Pesach...) and actually took them out of Galus.

The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 11:2) tells us that the same is with Moshiach. Just like the Goel Rishon is first revealed and then hidden so too the Goel Acharon.

(ע"פ מ"ש בשפת אמת על השם ר"ה י"א, ב)

Q. ARE THERE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS MIRACULOUS REVELATION?

A. Chachamim explain: If we are worthy, geulah will be sudden and supernatural, with the third Beis HaMikdash descending from *shamayim*. The advantage of such an arrival is obvious: we avoid the wars, the suffering, and the 'birth pangs' that would otherwise precede Geulah.

Q. WHAT IF WE DON'T MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS? HOW WILL MOSHIACH COME?

A. Our tradition also says Moshiach can come "in his time," after long preparation, struggle and through natural means.

In the Gemara, the movement toward geulah is compared to the unfolding of the dawn. There will be a period of confusion and turmoil; the people will doubt Moshiach, question his qualifications, and even persecute him - because of the uncertainty and chaos of the times. Moshiach will even appear as a pauper, as the

navi says, "עני רוכב על ההמור" - lowly and riding a donkey,

According to this perspective, the time before Moshiach will be one of unprecedented difficulty. There will be increased personal problems: ruchnius dilemmas, emotional traumas, deteriorating relationships. There will be economic disaster, national and international upheavals, strife and conflict. All this will lead to a war.

In fact, the Rambam declares that Moshiach must come in a natural manner. Unlike the opinion of a sudden, miraculous, yet peaceful revelation of Moshiach, the opinion of a natural process of geulah speaks of a period of turmoil and violence immediately prior to Moshiach.



Q. IF THERE ARE TWO OPINIONS OF HOW MOSHIACH WILL COME, (a peaceful revelation or painful appearance) HOW CAN WE RECONCILE THE TWO? DOES THE RAMBAM CONTRADICT HIMSELF?

A. The Rambam supports both views. Surely, there must be a combination of "בעתו" - in its time and "באחישה" - I will hasten it."

How can this be so? Every phase of "in its time" can be hastened supernaturally. The process of geulah can be speeded up, condensed into a brief period. In fact, the process itself contains the potential for the instantaneous revelation of Moshiach: the more effort we put into preparing, the more diligently we perform mitzvos and learn Torah, the more we try to add a little kindness and a little goodness to the world, the more we know about Moshiach and the more anxiously we await - the more quickly Moshiach will come -- immediately.

The 2 Geulos—Then &

ב"ה

Q. WHAT WILL OUR GEULAH BE COMPARED TO?

A. The Navi says about the days of Moshiach, "כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים, אראנו נפלאות" - "As in the days of your going from the land of Mitzrayim, I will show you wonders." The galus from Mitzrayim, which we celebrate every Pesach, is the model for the final Geulah, in which we will also be shown many wonders, but even greater ones.

It also says in the writings of the Arizal that the neshamos of the last generation of Galus, are 'gilgulim' from Yidden who were taken from Galus Mitzrayim. Therefore, both experience a similar Geulah.

Moshiach, in many ways, will be comparable to Moshe.

1. They will care for every individual.
2. They will be on the highest ruchnius and intellectual level and yet will be the most humble of men.
3. Moshiach, like Moshe, will undergo many trials before his leadership is finally accepted.
4. Both will disappear and then reappear: Moshe was up on Har Sinai and hidden from Bnei Yisroel. Only after 40 days he reappeared with the Torah. So too, first Moshiach will appear and announce, "The time of your geulah has arrived". Then he will be hidden for a while and only afterward reappear and give us the Torah of Moshiach.

Many comparisons are made between the times of Moshe and the times of Moshiach, and the chachamim and nevi'im agree that many details will be repeated:

1. **Intense Suffering** and slavery of the Yidden for many years before Geulah
2. **Peace Precedes Right Before Geulah:** However, just like the Yidden only went out of Galus on Pesach, but since Rosh Hashana – when the Makkos began – they enjoyed peaceful times. So too, by the Geulah, and even now, when we are at the end of Galus, Hashem helps us that it should be good for us both b'gashmius and b'ruchnius.
3. **Doubt surrounding the announcement of geulah** and the miracles connected to the geulah from Mitzrayim.
4. **We Will Not Have to Run:** Even though the two Geulos will be comparable, the future Geulah will be a lot greater. When the Yidden left Mitzrayim, they left in a hurry, like a servant runs from his master, However, when we leave we will not run, we will go out proud.
5. **Everyone Will Leave:** By the Seder we tell the Rasha, "אילו היה שם, לא היה נגאל" – If you were in Mitzrayim you would not have been redeemed. When the Yidden were slaves in Mitzrayim, and were told by Moshe Rabbeinu that they will soon be free, there were a few Yidden that did not want to go out of Mitzrayim. They died during Makkos Choshech.

A5. (continued) So why do we tell the Rasha this? Shouldn't we tell him something more positive that will make him look forward to the Geulah. We tell him, that it will be different when Moshiach comes. Every single Yid that remains in Galus will be part of the Geulah, even a Rasha. Therefore, every Yid should and must help to bring about the Geulah, speedily!

The Yom Tov of Pesach: Mitzrayim in Hebrew is associated with meitzarim - boundaries and limitations. Each year, the Yom Tov of Pesach gives us the ability to rise above our individual limitations and experience geulah in a personal sense.

Our Chachamim say: "In every generation, a person is required to see himself as if he left Mitzrayim." This is possible only when a person gives up his sense of self and personal concern. For indeed, a sense of self is the greatest limitation a person can have. Therefore, as a preparation for Pesach, we rid our homes of chametz, and refrain from eating it for the eight days. For chametz rises, pointing to puffed-up pride and conceit, while the flatness of matzah shows humility that opens us up for Hashem to take us out of our Mitzrayim, with Moshiach NOW!



Shevi'i Shel Pesach - The Seventh Day of Pesach: On this day we celebrate the anniversary of the Krias Yam Suf. How did the sea split? Nachshon, the leader of shevet Yehuda, jumped into the sea and continued advancing forward until the water reached his nostrils. Only then did the waters make a path. He sets an example for all of us teaching us to follow the Horaos of the Rebbe, confident that Hashem will do the rest, and take us out of Galus immediately.

Acharon Shel Pesach - The Eighth Day of Pesach: With all the connections between Pesach and the days of Moshiach, it is not surprising that the Baal Shem Tov instituted the "Moshiach Seudah," that connects Pesach with Moshiach. On this day, the Baal Shem Tov would call his students to gather for a special meal which he called Mashiach's Seudah. The Baal Shem Tov would celebrate this meal with *matzah*, "the food of emunah," for with *Mashiach's* coming, our emunah will be lifted to higher plateaus. The Rebbe Rashab, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, added the custom of drinking four cups of wine. For on that day, the Baal Shem Tov explained, the radiance of Moshiach is openly revealed. By eating and drinking, we internalize the revealed holiness.

The *Haftorah* reading for this day centers around the coming of *Mashiach*, containing Yeshayahu's Nevuos of the era which *Mashiach* will introduce: "The wolf will dwell with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the young goat...The earth will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem as the sea covers up the ocean bed."

The Days of Moshiach

ב"ה

THE DAYS OF MOSHIACH – WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN MOSHIACH COMES!

Moshiach will introduce a new era in history. In the times of Moshiach many wonderful things will occur.

- A. The Beis Hamikdash will be restored
- B. Kibbutz Galiyus
- C. End to Evil, Tumah and Aveiros
- D. Awareness and Knowledge of Hashem
- E. Universal Worship of Hashem
- F. Universal Peace and Harmony
- G. Techiyas Hameisim
- H. Blissful Utopia: End to Disease and Death
- I. Material Abundance

A. RESTORATION OF THE BEIS HAMIKDASH

Moshiach shall restore the *Beis Hamikdash* in Yerushalayim. This refers to the third *Beis Hamikdash* that will stand forever, in fulfillment of the Nevuah of Yechezkel 37:26-28: "I shall give My Beis Hamikdash in their midst forever." Indeed, Moshiach must accomplish this task before we can with absolute certainty declare him to be Moshiach.

The Beis HaMikdash has always had a crucial place in Jewish life. Even today, before the revelation of Moshiach, the importance of the Beis HaMikdash remains: we remember it at weddings; we fast on Tisha B'Av - the day it was burned; we study its structure; our times of tefilah correspond to the karbonos and our tables, with challah and salt, are likened to the mizbeach.

We must believe that the Beis Hamikdash could be restored at any moment. In fact, for this reason Kohanim are careful not to become tamay so that they can immediately begin serving in the Beis Hamikdash.

There is even an opinion that says Kohanim should not drink too much wine so that they will always be prepared to serve, just as when the Beis Hamikdash stood, a Kohein was not allowed to drink wine. How long does it take for a small amount of wine to wear off? Not more than 24 minutes! Therefore, we see clearly from the Gemara, that it is likely for Moshiach to come with a complete Beis Hamikdash, in no more than 23 minutes and 59 seconds.

Q. Why did Hashem allow the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, twice?

A. According to Halacha, the Beis HaMikdash should never have been destroyed! Halacha states that anyone who breaks vessels, tears clothes or demolishes a building, simply to destroy, violates the commandment against being wasteful. When Hashem says, "Behold I am sending Nevuchadnezzar, king of Bavel, My servant" - does this not violate the prohibition of destruction for no reason?

The destruction of the first two Batei Mikdashos was not reckless or without reason. It was a positive act, with a constructive purpose, as it is written, "He poured out His anger on wood and stones and He did not pour out His wrath on Bnei Yisroel."

The first Beis HaMikdash was destroyed by Bavel, because the Jewish people were guilty of avodah zarah, and bloodshed, resulting in a four hundred year galus. The second Beis HaMikdash was destroyed by Romans, because of sinas chinam, the hatred of one Jew toward another without cause, resulting in our current galus of almost two thousand years. (We must therefore add in Ahavas Chinam in order to bring Moshiach now.)

In order to save the Jewish people, Hashem destroyed His house. It was the only way possible to repair and restore the relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people.

There is an additional point: Halacha explains that one is granted permission to tear down in order to build when the building will take place on the same site and for a structure of equal or higher holiness.

From this we can conclude that the goal of the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash was not the destruction itself but for the sake of something higher, "in order to build" a Beis HaMikdash of even greater holiness. This type of destruction is a preparation for, and is therefore called building. That is, the destruction and the tearing down itself is a type of building, in this case, the construction of the third Beis HaMikdash. May it be completed speedily in our days.

Q. Who will build the third Beis Hamikdash? How long will it last?

A. It says in the Zohar that the first and second Batei Mikdashos were built by man, therefore they did not last forever. The third Beis Hamikdash is different because it is built by Hashem and therefore will last forever. Hashem builds the third Beis Hamikdash with our good deeds of Torah and Mitzvos throughout the Golus. Every Mitzvah adds another brick to the walls of the third Beis Hamikdash, which is built in shamayim. It waits for us to complete the preparation for Moshiach then it will come down to Yerushalayim.

There is another opinion that says that Moshiach himself will build it. They are not contradicting each other – both opinions are true! The Midrash relates, that when the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed, it sunk into the ground, and remains hidden there until Moshiach will come speedily in our days. So the third Beis Hamikdash will come from Hashem. But, Moshiach himself will put up these doors. Could a house without doors

be considered a true house? Of course not! So, by Moshiach putting up the doors it is actually considered as if he built the entire Beis Hamikdash.

Q. Why does Moshiach have to erect the gates, why can't Hashem complete that too?

A. When someone builds something alone, he receives much more pleasure than when it is built for him. Although Hashem can build the entire Beis Hamikdash alone, because of his great chessed, he wants that we should have a part in rebuilding it.

When Moshiach will erect the gates, it will be considered as if he alone built the whole Beis Hamikdash.

Q. How large will it be?

A. It says in the Midrash that the third Beis Hamikdash will be as big as the entire city of Yerushalayim. This is because even when we are in Galus, Hashem has provided 'mini' Batei Mikdashos; Every shul and Yeshiva where Yidden gather to daven and learn is a 'Mikdash Me'at'.

When Moshiach will come and build the third Beis Hamikdash, all of the "Mikdoshei Me'at" will be brought over to Eretz Yisroel, and connected to the Beis Hamikdash. Therefore, when Moshiach will come, the Beis Hamikdash will be as large as the entire city of Yerushalayim.



The Days of Moshiach

ב"ה

B. KIBBUTZ GOLIYUS

Through Moshiach, we will have Kibbutz Goliyus, all Yidden from all over the world will reunite.

The promise of Kibbutz Goliyus occurs in Devarim 30:3-4. There it states that "Hashem... will return and gather you from all the nations where He scattered you... Even if your dispersed will be at the furthest parts of the world from there Hashem your Hashem will bring you into the land which your forefathers inherited."

The ten lost Shevatim will return: "The ten shevatim of the Northern Kingdom of Bnei Yisroel, sent by the Assyrians before the destruction of the first *Beis Hamikdash* (II-Melachim, ch. 17), and dispersed beyond the river Sambatyon and the 'Mountains of Darkness,' will also return." (Sanhedrin 110b) It was about a hundred and thirty five years before the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash when all of the Shevatim except for Yehuda and Binyamin were exiled from Eretz Yisroel by the king of Ashur (Assyria). Except for a few thousand, the rest of them did not return from their lands of Galus at the time of the second Beis Hamikdash.

Ever since then it has been accepted as a fact that most of the world's 'known' Jews are either from Shevet Yehuda or Shevet Binyamin (although hardly anyone knows their exact shevet, that is something that Moshiach will reveal to us when he comes!)

So what happened to the rest of us? Where are they? The chachamim tell us that the ten lost Shevatim were exiled to the lands that are behind the Sambatyon River. (The chachamim describe the Sambatyon as a river, which throws around rocks the entire week, but rests on Shabbos.) Exactly where the river is located has remained a great mystery throughout the years of our galus. Only a few righteous tzaddikim have ever really known the secret of the Sambatyon.

Q. Why did Hashem allow the Yidden to be scattered and separated?

A. It says in the Gemara, that Hashem did the Yidden a favor by spreading them out between all the nations. Because in this way, even if one nation would try to harm the Yidden, they could escape elsewhere, or at least the other Yidden would be safe.

Chasidus explains another purpose for Yidden being spread out amongst all the nations of the world: By learning Torah and doing Mitzvos in all parts of the world, we purify and elevate all the other nations.

Q. Who will return in Kibbutz Goliyus?

A. Rashi explains that the possuk in Devarim specifies that each and every Yid will be redeemed **individually**. Or, to quote Rashi, "He will literally seize each person by the hand and gather Bnei Yisroel, **one by one**."

This promise of the return of Bnei Yisroel is unconditional. It will occur even if they should not want to return: Interestingly, even the wicked, and even those who, materially satisfied, do not want to go out of galus - even these are to be included in Geulah. For Hashem will arouse within them - within the wicked and within the comfortable - to do **teshuvah**. This, in turn, will lead them to come before Hashem on the holy mountain in Yerushalayim.

C. ONLY GOOD – THE END OF EVIL, TUMAH AND SIN

The Times of Moshiach will mark the end of evil and sin:

(Tzeplaniah 3:13): "Bnei Yisroel will not do any wrong, and they will not speak lies nor shall a dishonest tongue be found in their mouth."

(Yirmiyahu 50:20): "In those days and in that time, says Hashem, the sin of Bnei Yisroel shall be searched for, but it will not be..."

When Moshiach comes, our true inner goodness can express itself. Hate, jealousy, laziness, and anger will disappear. We will not commit aveiros anymore, even those done by accident. When a child is born, we do not need to instruct the child not to stick their hand into a fire. The child understands on his own, that a fire is very hot, and he does not

have to be reminded of this. So too, when Moshiach comes we will not need to be reminded not to do aveiros we will know on our own, because Hashem will shecht our Yetzer Hara, as it says, "ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר, מן הארץ" - and the tumah (Yetzer hara) I will remove from the earth.

When Moshiach comes, a tamay animal, a chazer (pig) too will be kosher. Therefore, it is called by the name chazer, which means to return, because when Moshiach comes it will return to being Kosher.

Why will it be kosher, what will change? Now in Galus, it has only one sign, split hooves, but when Moshiach will come it will also chew its cud.

Hashem will also eliminate illness, hunger and other suffering, and the goodness of nature will surface in all areas of life.

D. AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF HASHEM

The times of Moshiach will be a time of universal awareness and knowledge of Hashem:

Yeshayahu 11:9: "ומלאה הארץ דעה את ה' כמים לים מכסים" .. the earth shall be full of knowledge of Hashem as the waters cover the sea.

The navi Yeshayahu 40:5, in describing the times of Moshiach, declares: "The glory of Hashem shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see together that the mouth of Hashem has spoken." A beautiful, poetic statement, of course, but what does it mean? How does this explain what Geulah will be like?

Q. How is this different from the way it is in Golus?

A. The difference between the times of Moshiach and now is: now we don't feel we are being constantly created. We have a sense of independence. (This explains how people can ignore or deny Hashem: they don't "hear" Hashem saying, every instant, "Let there be.")

The Return of Nevuah: In Olam Hazeh only 'special people' were Nevi'im, but in Olam Habah, everyone will be Nevi'im.



The Days of Moshiach

ב"ה

E. UNIVERSAL WORSHIP OF HASHEM

Moshiach shall mend the whole world so that all shall serve Hashem in unity:

Zechariah 9:16: "...every one that is left of all the nations that came against Yerushalayim shall go up from year to year to bow before the King, Hashem.."

Zechariah 14:9: "והיה ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד" Hashem shall be King over the entire earth. In that day Hashem shall be One and His Name One.

A priest once wanted to mock a chassid, and asked him, "What will you do if Moshiach will come and I won't believe in him?"

The chassid answered, "If you will not believe in him, neither will I!" Since, when Moshiach comes, everyone will believe in Hashem, without exception, for the entire world will change.

During Galus, the advantage that a Yid has over other creations is that he is able to serve Hashem. In the times of Moshiach, all creations will worship Hashem too. It says in the Midrash that when Moshiach will come, if a person will want to pluck a fruit from a tree on Shabbos, the fruit itself will call out to him saying, "It's Shabbos today!"

When Moshiach will come, the whole world will change. The world itself will recognize and feel that Hashem is the only true existence, and Shabbos is His day of rest.

Similarly, it is very important to try and study words of Torah while one is walking in the street. When Moshiach comes even inanimate objects will begin to speak. The earth will voice its complaint and say, "Why did people walk on me at times when they were not thinking or speaking Torah?!"

F. UNIVERSAL PEACE AND HARMONY

The awareness and knowledge of Hashem will remove the attitude that leads to war. It will be an era of peace in Eretz Yisroel and throughout the world:

Yeshayahu 2:4 and Michah 4:3 predict: "ויתתו הרבותם לאתים..." "they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift a sword against nation, nor shall they fight any more." Michah 4:4 continues: "Each man shall sit under his vine and under his fig-tree, and none will frighten them.."

This new attitude of mankind will also be reflected in the animal world: Yeshayahu 11:6-9: "וגר זאב עם כבש" "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie with the kid, and a calf with a lion's cub and a fatling together, and a small child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young ones shall lie down together... the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Hashem as the waters cover the sea."

The Wolf will lie with the Lamb – Peace

It is well known that Moshiach will bring an era of global peace. Yet...Every day the newspaper seems to headline the same event: strife here, war there. Only the names change. Yesterday it was Somalia, the day before the Khurds or Bosnia, today Afghanistan or Iraq, tomorrow - we'll agonize over the battles and killing and hatred starting - somewhere... Day after day, as soon as the fighting ends in this corner, hostility and bloodshed begin in another corner. The world seems to be in a sticky situation of conflict, never able to resolve the differences, to harmonize the divisions.

When the "rational" person is told that Moshiach will make it better, surely he should react skeptically. What is Moshiach going to do, wave a magic wand to end the hate? That is fantasy.

But Moshiach is not a fantasy, he is a fundamental concept of Judaism, and what he will accomplish, including universal peace, a fact of Halacha.

The Rambam, explains in the Mishneh Torah, why rivalry and hatred will cease with the coming of Moshiach: with the coming of Moshiach, the emotional source for the world's conflicts, whether between individuals or between nations, will itself disappear because all the material things we fight over, the "comforts" of life, will exist in abundance and be available to all.

The Great Day of Judgment

When Moshiach comes, our chachamim teach, there will be world peace. This means, there must also be universal justice. For the basis of true peace is true justice: when an individual both knows and feels that he is being treated fairly, that he is receiving what he deserves, that things are going the way they're supposed to, that the good people are rewarded - then he is sure that justice is being done and he is content. If a person feels he has what he wants, and knows he wants only what he needs, he will be at peace with himself and therefore with the

world.

Obviously today, we have not reached such a level of justice. We are still deficient in recognizing the guilty or identifying the innocent. What is lacking in our system of justice? Why can our judges not judge rightly? And how will Moshiach show us true justice?

Part of the problem is that we can only try actions: a person's mind and heart are, ultimately, hidden. So the picture we have of a case is never complete, but always in some sense superficial. Indeed, now we can never truly fulfill Hillel's principle, "Do not judge your fellow man until you reach his place." We can never reach his place - the depth of his mind and heart. Therefore, we have to rely on evidence and testimony, that is, sight and sound. But as we know, evidence can be falsified.

However, Moshiach will possess an internal sense. Moshiach, then, will judge, not according to sight or sound - to the superficial - but by smell, by reaching the essence. In short, Moshiach will be able to judge with absolute certainty.

As a result, there will be universal justice, for everyone will both know and feel that he is being treated fairly, that he is receiving what he deserves, that things are going the way they're supposed to, that the good are rewarded. The world will certainly know that justice is being done and be content.



The Days of Moshiach

H. END TO DISEASE

The times of Moshiach will witness ultimate gashmius and ruchnius bliss.

All will be healed. (*Bereishit Rabba* 20:5) The blind, the deaf and the dumb, the lame, whoever has any blemish or disability, shall be healed from all his disabilities: "The eyes of the blind shall be clear-sighted, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened.. the lame shall leap... and the tongue of the mute shall sing.." (Yeshayahu 35:5-6).

There will be a life of ease. Our gashmius needs will be taken care of by others, as it is said, "Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks and aliens shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers." (Yeshayahu 61:5)

The earth will be extraordinary fertile, yielding an overabundance of every kind of produce, and trees will grow ripe fruits every day. "I will call for the grain and increase it .. and I will increase the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field.." (Yechezkel 36:29-30) "At that time there will be neither famine nor war, neither envy nor strife. All good things will be bestowed in abundance, and all delicacies will be accessible like dust."

Death itself shall stop, as it is said, "Death shall be swallowed up forever and Hashem shall wipe the tears from every face.." (Yeshayahu 25:8) The wondrous events and conditions of the times of Moshiach will completely overshadow all and any miracles that happened before, even those by the geulah from Mitzrayim. (Yirmiyahu, 23:7-8)

Q. Why will all the pain and suffering vanish?

A1. These Brachos are not an end in themselves. They are but a *means* towards a higher goal: Our aspirations are to be free to devote ourselves to Torah and its wisdom, with no one to oppress and disturb us.

A2. Any sensible person who believes in a Creator must conclude that His world was not intended solely for all the pain and suffering we have experienced in the past. Yiddishkeit has always taught that all the events from creation to the present is part of a process. Every goal requires effort, and hardship. For instance, a student goes to school, stays up all night studying, takes exams and at the same time must keep up with emotional and social changes in life. But finally, after graduating, he is able to "make it in life," then he understands the reasons for his struggles and his achieved capability becomes evident. Similarly, when Moshiach comes, we will realize that all of the suffering now is only part of a process, which will become manifest in the age of Moshiach.

G. TECHIYAS HAMEISIM:

One of the most basic beliefs of Yiddishkeit is that there will come a time when every Yid who ever died (and righteous goyim) will live again. According to Jewish tradition, this will take place during the time of Moshiach. "Your dead shall be revived; my corpses shall arise; awaken and sing you who dwell in the dust..." (Yeshayahu 26:19)

"Behold I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the Eretz Yisroel." (Yechezkel 37:12-14)

"Many of them that sleep in the land of dust shall awake.." (Daniel 12:2) "You shall know that I am Hashem when I open your graves and when I revive you from your graves, My people. I shall put My spirit into you and you will live, and I will place you upon your land." (Yechezkel 37:12-14)

"Many of them that sleep in the

Who will arise at the Techiyas Hameisim of the Dead? The Torah tells us that if a Jew lives well and fulfills his purpose, his reward is Olam Habah. On the other hand, we are told "כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא" that *all* Yidden, without exception, will inherit Olam Habah (Sanhedrin: Chelek). This implies even those who have not lived well and fulfilled their purpose. Which is correct? The Rebbe has explained (*Sefer HaMaamarim Melukot Vol. 4, p. 177*) that *Olam Habah* (the World to Come) is a term which refers to two separate states.

The first is *Gan Eden*. It is for *neshamos*, when they have successfully finished their *mitzvos*. The *neshomah* is in *Gan Eden* as a reward. There it learns the Torah it learned on earth at a much higher level, and enjoys the glow of *Hashem's* shechinah. We are told that this is so pleasurable that one moment of this pleasure is greater than the entire life on this world (*Pirkei Avos 4:17*).

The other state of Olam Habah, is *Techiyas HaMeisim*. This will be a time when *neshomos* are restored to life into their bodies. The period of *Techiyas HaMeisim* will follow the revelation of Moshiach (*13 Principles of the Rambam*).

Those people who are alive when Moshiach comes will not necessarily die before the period of *Techiyas HaMeisim*. So the contradiction is resolved; *Gan Eden* is a reward for some; *Techiyas HaMeisim* rewards all Yidden - both are Olam Habah.

Even as to those of whom the Chachamim said that they do not have a share in Olam Habah, this means that their body will decompose, while the Divine *neshamah*, which is eternal, will be restored to life in a different body.

At what stage will the Techiyas Hameisim take place? The Geulah will follow this order: the building of the Beis HaMikdash, the Kibbutz Galiyus, and forty years later *Techiyas Hameisim*. Until the era of *Techiyas Hameisim*, the world will remain unchanged and will follow the laws of nature.

Where will the Techiyas Hameisim take place? Both for those buried in Eretz Yisroel and for those buried outside the Land (to which the bodies will be brought by the Malach Gavriel), the *Techiyas Hameisim* will take place in Eretz Yisroel. (For, since Hashem swore that he would rebuild Yerushalayim, the *neshamah* will enter the body only in a place that will stand forever, so that the *neshamah* likewise will live in the body forever.)

The bodies of those buried outside Eretz Yisroel will have to roll through the ground until they reach Eretz Yisroel. Yet *Tzaddikim* will be spared this ordeal, for tunnels will be formed through which they can walk upright to Eretz Yisroel.

In what manner will the body be restored to life? Our chachamim teach: As a person leaves [dies], so will he come - whether blind, deaf, clothed, or whatever; as Hashem says, "Let them arise as they left, and I shall heal them." Some understand "clothed" as referring to the shrouds in which a person was buried, others understand it as referring to the clothes he was accustomed to wear.

Hashem says, "Let them arise as they were before, then I shall heal them." Hashem will do this by removing the protective cover of the sun, thus enabling the intense rays to reach the earth and heal all the sick people."



The Days of Moshiach

In what order will all the Yidden be restored to life?

According to the Gemara: The first to be restored to life will be the dead of the Eretz Yisroel, after them the dead of other lands, and then those who died in the wilderness. Some hold that the order will be: the dead of the Eretz Yisroel, after them the dead of other lands, and then "those who slumber in Chevron" (i.e., the Avos) in order that the Avos should awaken in joy, when they see their descendants who have arisen from their graves, in a world filled with righteous people.

According to the Zohar: The tzaddikim will take precedence over other men. They will all be called by name in alphabetical order. There may be exceptions to this schedule – certain people will reach Techias Hameisim right away and lead us out of Galus to Eretz Yisroel.

Other opinions mention that it will go in the above order, except that the first to be restored to life will be those who are humble.

What of the people who will be alive at the time of the Techiyas Hameisim?

They too will die, and Hashem will immediately resurrect them, in order that no trace whatever should remain of the tumah of this world - so that there will be a new world, Hashem's handiwork. When the body returns to dust, any bad that might have gotten mixed into it also "turns to dust", so the body once again becomes pure.

(This should not be a matter of concern: Imagine you see everyone lying down for a moment -- and then 'wake up' completely refreshed. Would you hesitate to do the same?)

This process is necessary because of the curse given to Adam (Bereishis 3:19), "For dust you are, and to dust shall you return". The truth is that this curse can be accomplished instead in a ruchnius sense by being humble. Just like the ground is stepped upon and does not complain, a person who is humble does not get offended when things don't go exactly his way. Only those who are extremely humble (and have b'ruchnius "returned to dust" through self-nullification), will be able to avoid this experience.

Q. How will the body be rebuilt?

When a person's neshamah leaves his body, and he is buried in the ground, as time passes, the body turns to dust. How will it come back by Techiyas Hameisim?

A. Even when the whole body turns to dust, there is one bone of the body that remains intact, called the 'Luz' bone. (Some hold that it is part of the spine: some say at the nape of the neck where the knot of the *tefillin* is placed, and others say that it is the lowest bone of the spine.)

Andrius once asked R' Yehoshua ben Chananya, "How will Hashem restore the bodies at the time of Techiyas Hameisim?"

Rabbi Yehoshua answered: "From a tiny bone in the spine called Luz."

Andrius asked: "How do you know that this bone will not rot until then?"

Rabbi Yehoshua replied: "Bring me the bone and I will show you!"

The bone was brought and ground in the set of millstones, but couldn't be damaged. It was thrown into a burning fire but was not consumed. It was then soaked in water but did not dissolve.

In the Sefer 'Eliyahu Rabbah' it is written that this bone receives its nourishment from the food eaten Motzei Shabbos at Melava Malkah. This makes death and decay unable to destroy it.

The Zohar writes that at the time of the Techiyas Hameisim Hashem will soften this bone with 'טל התחי' the Dew of the Techiyas Hameisim forming a clear and pure liquid: it serves as yeast to dough, and from it, the entire body will be rebuilt. All other parts of the body will come together, expand and then take shape, the skin, flesh, bones and vessels, Hashem will then complete this body with a Neshamah.

Q. In the case of a neshamah which descended to this world more than once, in which body will it be restored to life?

A. If one does not complete his mission on earth, the neshama must return again to complete the unfinished work. A Neshama therefore, may have been in many different bodies.

The famous question is: "Which person will receive the neshama at the time of Techiyas Hameisim?"

At the time of Techiyas Hameisim, each part of the neshamah will descend into their respective bodies, as separate entities. The part of the neshamah utilized and developed during the first life will be give chayus to the first body. The part of the neshamah developed during the second life span will give life to the second body, and so on.

(There is no problem in saying that a man has only "part" of a neshamah, for each part of the neshamah incorporates all of its parts, which together constitute the level of a complete neshamah.)

Q. How will life be after the Techiyas Hameisim?

A. Chayim Nitzchiyim: In the era of the Techiyas Hameisim there will be neither eating nor drinking, neither jealousy nor hatred nor competition; rather, the tzaddikim will sit with crowns on their heads, and enjoy the light of the shechinah. They will not return to their dust, but will live forever. After Techiyas Hameisim we will live forever! In fact, even non-Jews are going to live very long lives. As the navi Yeshaya tells us, "a one-hundred-year-old person will be called a child!"

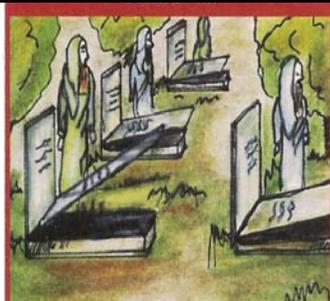
When Hashem created the world, he intended that man will live forever. It was only because of Cheit Eitz HaDaas of Adam and Chava, that Hashem introduced the concept of death.

Q. What was so evil about this sin that because of it we have the concept of death?

A. The Rebbe explains: When Adam sinned, a spirit of evil, of *tumah*, entered him. If he would have lived forever, the bad would have also remained forever. Instead, when he passed away, so did the evil.

When Moshiach will come, it will be, "ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר מן הארץ", all *tumah* will be removed from the earth. Therefore, we will have the resurrection of the dead, and all will live forever, Chayim Nitzchiyim.

תחיית המתים



Resurrection of the Dead



The Days of Moshiach

ב"ה

I. MATERIAL ABUNDANCE: The Rambam says at the end of Yad Hachazakah, that when Moshiach comes delicacies will be found like sand on the floor, "וכל המעדנים מצויים כעפר" but everyone will be so involved in understanding G-dliness, they will not be interested in this. (But telling of the sweets, will help interest a child now to await Moshiach.)

In the times of Moshiach, all trees will bear fruit. First there will be a time period when all trees of Eretz Yisroel will give forth fruits, then as second time period when all trees around the world will bear fruit. In Galus, fruit grow only once or twice a year, whereas in the times of Moshiach new fruit will blossom every day.

Large Fruit: Nowadays, the wheat grows to the length of man's feet; when Moshiach comes, it will grow to the height of a very tall mountain. (Maharasha)

The grapes will be so large, that we will need a large wagon or ship to carry even one grape. But, if they will be so large, how will we carry it from place to place? The midrash says that Hashem will send a wind which will blow the fruit to us, exactly when we need it.

Bread and Clothing: Rabban Gamliel taught that when Moshiach comes the city of Eretz Yisroel will give forth baked loaves and clothing. When one of his students heard this teaching he laughed, and said, "How can it be?"

Rabban Gamliel took him outside and showed him mushrooms which were growing on buildings, and then the student understood that if during Galus, things can grow from building, definitely when Moshiach comes, baked loaves of bread and nice clothing will 'grow' from Eretz Yisroel!

Children When Moshiach Comes: It says in the Midrash that in the times before the Mabbul, when a baby was born he was already able to stand on his feet and go work in the field. How much more so, when Moshiach comes – when there will be no resha'im in the world – this is how it will be.

Additionally, now it takes a woman nine months to carry the baby; when Moshiach comes a woman will carry the baby for nine hours. In each one of those hours, the baby will grow in one hour what normally takes one month.

Days of Joy: During the seven days of Sheva Brachos following the Chasunah of the Rebbe Rashab (in Elul, 5635) the chassidim celebrated with indescribable joy. On one of those days, his father, the Rebbe Maharash, sat at his window and watched the dancing in the garden in dozens of circles.

Turning to two chassidim, standing next to him, he said: "See my children, how chassidim are glad in the joy of a mitzvah. This is how Jews will dance in the streets in the days of Moshiach."

HOW WILL WE KNOW THAT THE DAYS OF GEULAH HAVE BEGUN?

If the prophecies regarding the Days of Geulah are fulfilled.

WHICH PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE DAYS OF GEULAH HAVE BEGUN BEING FULFILLED?

A1. No More Wars: One of the Nevuos about the future geulah is that at that time there will no longer be any wars. The world will use its weapons and war machines only for good things.

On January 31, 1992 the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Russia, together with some leaders of other powerful countries, gathered together at the central meeting place of the United Nations (a special organization whose goal is to create peace and harmony among the different nations) and decided that once and for all they were really going to put an end to war. This would be done by each country destroying a certain amount of its weapons and by working together to create peace, unity, harmony and friendship among themselves. Billions of dollars' worth of nuclear weaponry was destroyed, thousands of tanks were remodeled into tractors, and leaders of the superpowers met and slashed their military budget!

This is the fulfillment of Yeshayahu's nevuah, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares..." These signs are all taking place because, Moshiach is almost here

Another event took place not long ago in which we see these words of the Navi coming true. There is a country in Africa called Somalia which had a terrible civil war in 1991. The main fighting took place in the capital- Mogadishu. As a result of the war, there was not enough food in the city, and so about four million people were in danger of starving to death. In fact, every day, hundreds of people were starving to death. When the United States of America heard about this, they sent warplanes loaded with food, medicine and clothing to help out these people. Rather than using these planes for war, and rather than keeping the food and clothing for themselves, the USA was now using these things to help out needy people who were not related to them and never had anything to do with them. This is the exact opposite of how things used to be.

We are seeing how the entire world is beginning to change and just as the navi said- beginning to change **for the better.**

A2. Kibbutz Goliyus: Another sign of the coming of Moshiach is we see that Kibbutz Goliyus has already begun. The nevi'im predict that at the time of the future Geulah, one of the great miracles that Hashem will perform will be that the northern part of the world (which is where Russia is located) will even help the Jewish people leave so that they can settle in Eretz Yisroel.

Among the many horrible decrees placed upon the Jews in Russia, the Yidden were forbidden to leave the country. That is how they got the nickname the Iron Curtain. In the year 1990, Mikhail Gorbachev became the president of Russia; to everyone's surprise, he began to make changes for the better in the laws of the government. Slowly it began to be easier to be a Jew in the land of Russia. Then on August 19, 1991, while

Gorbachev was on vacation, some wicked members of the government tried to take over the entire country. With the help of the army and the Russian secret police, they tried to force the people to go back to following the old laws.

Hashem however, made a miracle and an amazing thing happened. Instead of being afraid, the people – led by one of their good leaders – rebelled against the troublemakers. Three days later these dictators surrendered and Gorbachev took over once again. Shortly afterwards many of the 15 republics of Russia made their own government and so by late 1991, Russia was no longer the powerful country it had once been, and the Iron Curtain collapsed.

They Jews were ecstatic. They left Russia by the tens of thousands. Most of them went to Eretz Yisroel, but many of them went to the U.S. as well. To date, over 400,000 Jews from the Soviet Union alone, have emigrated to Eretz Yisroel.

Just as the nevi'im predicted, the non-Jews actually helped the Yidden by teaming up with Israel, to arrange a special airline, (Aeroflat) to carry Yidden to Eretz Yisroel. This is similar to the way it happened in Mitzrayim. During Makkos Bechoros, when the Egyptians saw that so many people were dying, they knew that they had to free the Yidden. They were so desperate to have the Yidden leave, they actually gave them their own sheep, cattle, gold, silver, and clothing as gifts!

Similarly, we now find ourselves just before the ultimate Geulah, and we have seen how the Russian government actually helped the Jews leave! Judging by these signs taking place throughout the world, the preparation for geulah is complete, and all we must do is, "receive Moshiach in actuality, in order for him to fulfill his mission and redeem Bnei Yisroel."



Fulfilled Prophecies of

The Ten Lost Shevatim: Lately, we have begun to see the fulfillment of the Nevuah which says, "The ten shevatim will also return." (Sanhedrin 110b) They too will be part of the Geulah.

Indeed, in recent times it has been discovered that in various lands such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, China and Burma there live shevatim or groups of people who claim to be descendants of certain shevatim. Numbering around 40 million altogether, some of their tribes have names very similar to the names of the shevatim. Others have named the areas in which they live after places mentioned in the Torah.

Some of the tribes actually have ancient customs that are either similar or exactly the same as some of the mitzvos mentioned in the Torah – like Shabbos, Kashrus, Tzitzis and Bris Milah on the eighth day. Some of these Tribes have special charms with words like, 'Sh'ma Yisroel', written on them; some have peyos, some have ancient Siddurim; some have ancient cemeteries in which the names of their ancestors are written in Lashon HaKodesh, and some shect animals very similar to the way it was done in the Beis Hamikdash.

Another interesting point: In the northeastern part of India, there are about a million such people. Around 3,500 of them have their own separate Jewish community, in which they daven, study Tanach, do Bris-Milah and keep Kosher as best as they can. They call themselves Shevet Menashe. Just a few years ago, a few of them moved to Eretz Yisroel and underwent proper conversion just to be sure about their Jewishness.

A3. An Increase in the Knowledge and Recognizing of Hashem: A number of non-Jewish schools in the U.S. now have something called, 'a moment of silence'. This is a special moment at the very beginning of the school day in which the students sit silently and think about the fact that there is a creator Who controls the world and Who hears and sees everything. These thoughts cause the children to behave differently, better!

It's an excellent thing for Jewish public-school students, who don't get to learn about Hashem the rest of the day, and it's also a very good thing for the other students because it will help them grow up to be righteous gentiles. For this reason, we need to work on instituting a 'moment of silence' in the public schools in their area.

The world is getting ready. An amazing event had transpired. An American leader, who for years opposed prayer in public schools, and even a 'moment of silence' in the schools, has suddenly made an about-face. He publicly stated, "How is it possible that schoolchildren learn math, geometry, etc. and learn nothing about what is right and wrong? The latter is certainly more important," he claimed, "because it is necessary for daily life."

this shows us the prophecy that one day the "whole world will serve Hashem" is already beginning to take place. Even governments are now realizing how important it is to teach students about the Creator of the world!

Q. WILL WE STILL HAVE MITZVOS WHEN MOSHIACH COMES?

A. The word "mitzvah" means a commandment, an expression of Hashem's will. By observing a mitzvah in all its details, we do what Hashem wants, namely bring Hashem into the world. When Moshiach comes, however, the whole world will be filled with knowledge of Hashem, as the waters cover the sea. So why will we need to perform a mitzvah?

The Rambam writes that the objective of Moshiach is to restore mitzvos to their original glory. Moshiach will restore both the quantity and the quality of the mitzvos, so they may be observed as they were before the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed and the Jewish people driven into galus. For now, we cannot observe all 613, and our performance of those we can is limited and restricted. But Moshiach will change that.

Indeed, one of the qualifications of Moshiach is that he be totally, completely dedicated to mitzvos. In his own life, Moshiach will show us how to fulfill the mitzvos completely and totally. Far from being irrelevant, the mitzvos themselves will become purer, holier.

Why, then, does the Talmud say that when Moshiach comes, all the festivals except Purim and Yom Kippur will no longer be in effect? Doesn't this suggest some mitzvos, at least, will be annulled?

We can answer this with a simple analogy: A candle shining in the sunlight still provides illumination, but it is so dominated by the sun, its light is almost invisible and largely irrelevant. In the same way, the light of Moshiach, and the "new" holidays that will be established with his coming, like the transformation of Tisha B'Av, the day the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, into a festival, - this light will overwhelm the light of all other Yomim Tovim.

Today, mitzvos are performed because they are a command. Doing a mitzvah during the times of Moshiach, however, will be natural, and automatic, because our every thought, word, and act will be but an expression of Hashem's Will.



The Livayason Banquet: A Taste of things to come: It's Friday afternoon and everyone is busy, but we stop to taste the food of Shabbos. Actually tasting the Shabbos food while it's still Friday afternoon is a mitzvah. In the history of the world, it's now like Friday afternoon. Soon, when Moshiach comes, it will be Shabbos for the whole world.

Then we will have a special feast. We will have fish, wine and meat. The wine is a special wine kept since the beginning of creation. The fish will be from the giant Livayason. The meat will be from the wild ox, the Shor Ha'bar. Some say we will live in a Sukkah made from Livayason skin.

The Torah of Moshiach: It says about the times of Moshiach, תורה "חדשה מאתי תצא" – A new Torah will be taught. This is the Torah of Chasidus, which explains why only now, close to Moshiach's coming, have we been privileged to learn this.