

ניצוצי אור Sparks of Light

בס"ד



No. 41

פרשת מטות מסעי תשע"ה

Awaiting the Geulah (1)

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The Value of Longing

The **Rambam** writes that not only is it obligatory to believe in the coming of *Moshiach*; but one must also await his coming. Moreover, a person who does not do so is denying the Torah, Moshe Rabbeinu and all the other *nevi'im*.

(רמב"ם הל' מלכים פי"א ה"א)

The **Medrash** writes that at the time of the *churban*, Yitzchok Avinu asked HaShem, "Will the *Yidden* perhaps never be *zocheh* to return?" HaShem answered: There will come a generation that will await the *Geula*, and they will immediately be redeemed.

The **Medrash** adds that even if that is the only merit they have, for that alone they are worthy of being redeemed. In this spirit, the **Chida** explains the meaning of our daily request, "את צמח דוד עבדך מהרה תצמיח... כי לישועתך קיינו כל היום". What kind of a reason is this - to merit Hashem to redeem us; "merely" because we hope for his redemption all day?

The **Chida** answers: We are asking HaShem to send us *Moshiach* immediately, and as to the possible argument that we are undeserving, we say, "...because we hope for your salvation all day" - as a reward for actively awaiting *Moshiach*, we deserve to be redeemed.

(ילקוט שמעוני איכה תתקצז, תהלים תשלו, מדבר קדמות ערך קיווי)

Chazal teach us that when a person is brought for judgment to the *Beis Din shel Maalah*, one of the questions he is asked is, *Tzipisa liyeshua?* - "Did you hope and look forward to the salvation promised by the *nevi'im*?"

(מסכת שבת דף ל"א ע"א)

Yearning for Moshiach

The *tzaddik* **Reb Yitzchok of Radvil** heard so much of the greatness of **Reb Avrohom HaMalach**, son of the **Mezritcher**

Maggid, that he resolved to travel to see him. He arrived in town on *erev Tisha B'Av*, as everyone was gathering in *shul*. Sitting on the floor, as they were reading *Eicha*, a loud and bitter cry broke out. Turning around, Reb Yitzchok saw that the cry had come from none other than Reb Avrohom HaMalach. Sitting with his head between his knees, the *Malach* started weeping bitterly. Long after everyone had left, Reb Yitzchok continued watching Reb Avrohom, who sat in the same position without moving. When the clock struck midnight, Reb Yitzchok retired for the night.

The following morning, arriving early to *shul*, he found the *Malach* in the exact position still mourning, in the midst of a puddle of tears. From time to time, he would lift his head and ask in pain: "He's still not here...!"

(יחס טשרנוביל)

Tzaddikim living in the time of the *tzaddik* **Reb Moshe Teitelbaum**, the **Yismach Moshe**, used to say that he was a *gilgul* of *Yirmeyahu HaNovi*, who prophesied the *churban* of the First *Beis HaMikdosh*. He would constantly cry about this lengthy *golus*, especially during the Three Weeks, and he longed for *Moshiach* intensely. Whenever he heard some hustle in the street, he would run to the window: Had *Moshiach* arrived? Next to his bed, his best *Shabbos* clothing always lay prepared. And every night, before going to sleep, he would warn his *shammes* to wake him the moment the *shofar* of *Moshiach* was heard.

He once received a letter informing him that on a certain date his beloved son-in-law would be arriving for a visit. The whole household prepared excitedly for his arrival. The great day came, but the visitor was nowhere to be seen. The family became restless. What could possibly have delayed him? The *Yismach Moshe* sat in his room engrossed in his *seforim* while some family members waited outside impatiently, when a carriage suddenly appeared on the horizon. The Rebbe's *shammes* ran indoors to bring him the good news: "Rebbe, he has arrived!"

The Rebbe jumped up from his chair, put on his fine *Shabbosdiker kapota* and *shtreimel* and ran outside towards the approaching carriage. Seeing none other than his son-in-law stepping down from the carriage, he was unable to bear the pain and fell to the ground in a faint. When he came to, his family heard him moaning to himself, "Oy! It's not him... He hasn't yet arrived..."

(ומביא גואל ע' 127 ואילך)

The **Rambam** writes that the *chachomim* looked forward to the days of *Moshiach* because at that time *Yidden* will be able to learn Torah and keep *mitzvos* undisturbed, not because of the pleasures that will then be freely available.

Although the perfection of the world is part of the belief in *Moshiach*, it is not part of the *mitzva* of waiting for him.

(רמב"ם הל' מלכים ספ"ב, שערי גאולה ע' מד הע' 13)

Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev would say: On *Shabbos Chazon* every *Yid* is shown a vision of the Third *Beis HaMikdosh*. This sight inspires us to yearn for it, and to follow a path that will enable us to be *zocheh* to behold its actual rebuilding, with the ultimate *Geula*.

(אוה"ת נ"ך (ח"ב) ע' א'צז בשוה"ג)

Consider This

Why is longing for the *Geulah* so significant, that it merits us its arrival?

Can one truly yearn for *Geulah* if he doesn't crave *ruchnius*? How does one "live with *Moshiach*"?

Sparks of Greatness

ה' מנחם אב - The Arizal

Reb Yitzchak Luria, better known as the **Arizal** or the **Ari Hakadosh**, was one of the greatest *mekubalim* and *tzadikim* of all time. He had studied under the **Ramak** (a famous *mekubal*), and then when on to teach a new approach in *Kabbalah* which greatly affected all future generations. He was also famous for the many great miracles he performed. His primary student was **Reb Chaim Vital** who transcribed many of his teaching in what is known as "*Kisvei HoArizal*." The Arizal was born in Yerushalayim in the year ה'רצ"ד (1534) and passed away on the 5th of Av ה'של"ב (1572).

The Arizal would learn six explanations in the literal meaning of a *halacha*,

corresponding to the six days of the week, then learn the halacha according to *Kabbalah*, corresponding to Shabbos.

With his personal needs, he was sparing, wearing simple clothes and not eating much. However for his wife, he provided generously, even when he did not have the means to do so. With *tzedaka* and other *mitzvos* he also maintained a very generous standard.

He was extremely careful not to talk in *shul*, even if it was not the time for davening. He would not even talk words of *mussar* in *shul*, lest he come to speaking mundane talk.

Library Sparks

In the Torah, two different names are used to refer to the tribes of Israel-- "*shevatim*" and "*matos*" (as in the name of the first of the two Torah portions read this week, "*Matos*"). "*Shevet*", literally a staff and "*mateh*", literally a rod or stem, both denote the branches of a tree. The difference between them is that a *shevet* is a supple branch, attached to a living tree, whereas a *mateh* is a hardened stick already cut from the trunk.

The two names used to denote the Jewish tribes have spiritual significance, and refer to the type of connection every Jew has with G-d, as symbolized by the tree. When the connection between the Jewish soul and its G-dly source is open and revealed, the word *shevet* is used. When, however, the bond between the Jew and G-d is hidden and obscured, the word *mateh* is used.

In general, the first description refers to the Jewish soul as it exists before coming down into the physical world. The soul, united with G-d, is directly connected to its source, just as the branch is still connected to its source of life, the tree.

After the soul makes its descent into a physical body, however, it more closely resembles the *mateh* which has been severed from the trunk. The vital connection to its source, to G-d, is no longer easily perceived and apparent, so much so that the soul may feel as if it has been totally cut off, G-d forbid. The afflictions of the physical body and the demands

of the material world harden the tender soul, making it tough and less sensitive to spirituality.

Yet despite the fact that the *shevet* is still connected to its source, it is not as strong and rigid as the superior *mateh*, which has been tempered by its experience. The branch, while attached to the tree, is green and flexible. Only after it is cut off does it become a sturdy and dependable rod.

This, in essence, is the purpose for which the soul is sent down into this world and distanced from its G-dly source--to uncover the soul's hidden strengths and enable it to reach an even higher level of spiritual closeness to G-d than before. When the soul overcomes the challenges of the Evil Inclination and the hardships of a physical existence, its bond with G-d becomes infinitely stronger and deeper.

The distinction between *shevet* and *mateh* exists on another level, too. When the Holy Temple existed and G-dliness openly illuminated the world, the Jewish people were on the level of *shevet*. After the destruction, however, and the advent of the dark and bitter exile, we find ourselves on the level of *mateh*. For almost two thousand years the Jewish people have had to develop its hidden resources and stand strong in the face of suffering. When *Moshiach* comes and the G-dliness which is concealed within all of creation is revealed, the Jewish people, through having uncovered the "*mateh*" within their souls, will enjoy an even closer relationship with G-d.

Halacha Sparks

A White Lie

Rabbi Chaim Chazan

Is it permissible for someone shipping fragile merchandise, for example matzos, to write on the box "glass" thereby increasing the likelihood that the box will be handled with care?

It is forbidden to lie even when no harm will befall anyone as a result¹. Writing dishonestly is also included in the prohibition². [Chazal permitted changing details or even outright lying in some specific instances, such as to avoid conflict between people. These *halachos* are complex and several entire *seforim*³ have written discussing the specifics].

It is forbidden to say a white lie, such as answering in an ambiguous manner that can be interpreted in two ways, even if what he actually says is not false, but it leaves his friend with the wrong impression⁴. Included in this prohibition is omitting details that misleads the listener, although he has not said anything actually incorrect⁵. However, omitting details is permitted if the general intent and purpose of what is being said is not changed by the omission⁶.

In our case he is not explicitly writing that the content of the box is glass, rather merely the word "glass". Although doing so misleads the reader, the omission of the detail that the word does not reflect the content of the box, does not change the purpose of what was written. The point the person wants to convey by writing "glass" on the box is that it should be handled with care. This point comes across by writing the word "glass", despite the omission⁷.

If the box contains *matzos*, there is another reason to allow writing "glass" on the box. One may be dishonest in a case when no harm will be caused to another in order to fulfill a *mitzva* or in order not to transgress an *aveira*⁸. (There are many details to this *din*, hence one shouldn't see this as a blanket *heter*.) In the case of transporting a box of *matza*, the reason he wants the *matzos* to remain whole is to fulfill the *mitzva* of *lechem mishneh*⁹.

Obviously if there is no benefit from writing "glass" on the box and writing "fragile" will accomplish the same goal, one shouldn't be dishonest.

1. אמנם דעת היראים (סי' רלה) דלא אסרה תורה אלא שקר שיכול לבוא לידי היקף לחבירו, שאר רבונות לא חלקו כן, ומפורש לאיסור בספר חרדים (מ"ע מה"ת התלויות בפה פ"ד אות כו), ואף לדעת היראים נקטו רבים דעכ"פ איסורא איכא.
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4. חת"ס לכתובות ז' ע"א מהר"ת.
5. כן דייק מהרמב"ם (פ"ד ה"ג מהל' גזילה ואבידה) בספר גיב שפתיים הנ"ל כלל א"ה.
6. גיב שפתיים שם בחידושים.
7. תתן אמת ליעקב הנ"ל חלק התשובות סי' יג בשם הגרי"ש אליישוב והגרי"י פישר ועוד.
8. ר"י בשע"ת מאמר קפא, דרישה חו"מ ס"ס רסב, ט"ז או"ח סי' תקס"ה סק"ו.
9. כן הביא בספר תתן אמת ליעקב מספר גיב שפתיים עמ' יט ולא מצאתיו בעמ' זה (עכ"פ במהד' שתח"י).

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