

AWAITING THE GEULAH

We *daven* everyday in *Shemoneh Esrei* for the *Geulah*. But what are we *davening* for? Why do we want the *Geulah*? Is so that we will all sit under a tree and relax, as the *Navi* depicts about the future, “They will be settled, each man under his fig tree and under his grapevine, and there will be no fear”? When we await the *Geulah*, are we hoping for things that are frivolous and superficial?

The Rambam says the reason to await the *Geulah*, which all the righteous people awaited for and desired, is solely because it will be a time in which we can learn Torah with no distractions. According to one view in the Gemara, nothing will change in the future except for the fact that we will go free from the jurisdiction of the nations. Even according to this view, the reason why we should want the *Geulah* is not simply that we should go free from the governing power of other nations. The point is that we will be able to sit and learn Torah peacefully, without being disturbed by the nations of the world.

Is a person awaiting the *Geulah* simply because he’s stressed out from his life...? Does a person really yearn to live in a world which will entirely be about doing Hashem’s will? If a person doesn’t yearn for the *Geulah* for this reason, his heart inside is not aligned with the words being uttered from his lips when he *davens* for the *Geulah*. He is *davening* for something he doesn’t really want!

Imagine in if a person would be given the choice right now to live with no stress from life, and to instead just sit and learn Torah be entirely immersed in doing Hashem’s will. What would he choose? If a person feels “Yes”, then his prayer for the *Geulah* is an earnest *tefillah*. But if a person has no desire for such a life, and he simply wants to be free from the stresses of life, he is not directing his soul to the *Geulah*. His soul isn’t prepared to disconnect from this world, and thus he won’t be able to connect with Hashem. Our prayer for the *Geulah* needs to be coming from a truthful place in ourselves. It has to be something we wish for, something we hope for.

When we ask Hashem to blow the shofar and gather in all the exiles, we need to clarify what’s going on inside of us. Of course, even if one doesn’t make this inner clarification, he is still obligated to *daven* in *Shemoneh Esrei* for the *Geulah*. But this doesn’t exempt us. One needs to make sure his prayers are truthful and thus ask himself if he really wants what he *davens* for. It’s very possible that a person is always *davening* for the *Geulah*, but deep down, he doesn’t want it! It’s tough to admit

this. A person can *daven* and *daven* for the *Geulah*, but his soul does not really want the *Geulah* to happen! Is he really ready to connect to that world of the future? Does he really want it?

There is a major difference between this world and the Next World (of the future). What is the difference between our physical existence now, and our spiritual existence of the Next World? The Jewish nation is “a nation that is scattered and individual among the nations” (as Haman observed), and this is true not only with regards to the general whole of the Jewish people, but it is also true within one’s private soul as well, that a person’s soul can be scattered inside. One’s actions can be connected to many things; he speaks about many things he wants - he has many desires that he feels connected to. All of this scatters the soul inside. That is a description of This World – the constant chasing of various desires that people feel so connected to.

In the Next World, there is only one desire alone that people will have. People there realize that besides for Hashem, there is nothing else to want. In the Next World, it is revealed that we have one desire alone: to desire our Father in Heaven. “They (the nation of Yisrael) have only one heart, directed towards their Father in Heaven.” This is the inner way to define the difference between This World and the Next World. The Next World is not just a place of reward - that is just the superficial understanding. The reward of the Next World is that we get to leave a viewpoint of disparity (*pirud*) and instead attain the perspective of oneness (*achdus*), to leave all the many desires we may have on this world, and to connect to the one true desire of our soul. And, if someone on this world is truly connected with Hashem, he lives a paradise-like kind of existence – he is called a “*ben olam haba*”. It is possible for a person already on this world to live in a world that resembles the Next World.

The *Chovos HaLevovos* warns that a person needs to avoid *pizur hanefesh*, a “scattering of the soul”. A person’s soul can be scattered inside due to the many varying desires that a person is pursuing, and this can even be due to spiritual desires. As the generations continue, the *pizur hanefesh* in the world increases. In our generation, the amount of *pizur hanefesh* is astounding. There is almost no time for people to reflect about their priorities. It used to be that a person would sit calmly and reflect on his priorities. The whole lifestyle of today’s generation, especially in the last couple of years, does not allow for any calmness in a person’s life. The lifestyle of today is the antithesis of *yishuv hadaas*.

A cellphone inside one’s pocket might have a *hechsher*, but

it can still cause many problems in a person's *ruchniyus* by causing *bittul* Torah and being a threat to any Jew's *kedushah* and *taharah*. The very fact that there is a cellphone in one's pocket is enough to disconnect a person from being a *ben olam haba*. It is such a sickness. It's *bittul* Torah not only because it takes away time from learning, it takes away a person's very connection to the Torah that he learns. With a cellphone in his pocket, a person cannot really gain an internal connection to the Torah that he learns.

All the many kinds of cellphones and devices today, whether they are in our pockets, or whether they surround us wherever we go, they don't let us focus, they take us out of a life of living a focused life. They cause *pizur hanefesh* - they make our soul scattered inside. Even if a person claims that he has a cellphone in his pocket all the time so that he can help people and do chessed with it, is it really because he loves others so much? Is it worth it? How much of his *ruchniyus* is he losing in the process?

The Next World will be one thing alone – the recognition and desire for Hashem. It will be the total opposite of today's world, which is all about so many different desires that people have. The *Geulah* will be the situation of the Next World. The entire *Geulah* will be a redemption from our current situation, in which people are scattered inside themselves. The *Geulah* will return us to the situation of wanting only one desire alone: a desire to know more and more of Hashem.

It is impossible for any one person to change the generation and the lifestyle that the world is living. But each person, on his own, can search for the truth, for closeness with Hashem, and realize how much *pizur hanefesh* surrounds us. A child born into today's generation is being born into a world of tremendous *pizur hanefesh*. And those who have been around before the new generation have also entered a lifestyle of total *pizur hanefesh* as well.

If one's soul doesn't yearn for the general *Geulah*, as well as a private *Geulah* – in other words, if one's soul doesn't have a yearning to live in a pure world where there will only be Hashem and His Torah – then he needs to unify his desires into one desire alone: to desire the situation of the Next World, and to leave all the many scattered desires behind. We must desire to live in a world of oneness, and if not, we won't be able to live in the future times, where there will only be Hashem with His Torah! Without this desire to live in a world of oneness, maybe a person will still have a will for holiness, but he hasn't yet 'programmed' himself yet to live in a world in which there will be only one desire alone: Hashem.

In order to be *zocheh* to the *Geulah*, we need to prepare ourselves and make ourselves into a container, a *kli*, that will

receive this light (*ohr*). This is by disconnecting from all that we are connected to on this world, and by inwardly connecting ourselves to the pure state of the future. Even if a person feels that this is too hard and that he can't change his lifestyle, this does not exempt him from having the aspiration. He has to try his hardest at this. One should therefore set aside time, an hour or two a day – each according to his ability – and during this time of solitude, disconnect yourself from the entire world. Don't do anything during this time of solitude and just connect yourself, totally, to the Creator. For anyone who searches for Hashem in his life, this is the essential ingredient he needs: to have this time of solitude every day, totally disconnected from the world - and totally connected with the Creator.

If a person does this and sets aside time every day for this reflection, he will receive great *siyata d'shamaya* in his life and see tremendous growth. If a person doesn't have times of solitude every day with the Creator, it is almost certain that he will be swept up with the dismal situation of this generation. Through setting aside times of solitude every day in which we disconnect from the world and instead connect ourselves as much as we can with *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*, we are doing our part on this earth, which awakens all Heavenly blessing to come from above. That will awaken the great *ohr* of the *Geulah* that will come to the masses, where we will all hear together the great shofar blow of Moshiach. Amen v'amen. 480. (תפילה. תקע בשופר. חיבור)

We are in *Galus*, and we await the *Geulah*. What is the *Galus*? There are many layers to it. There is physical suffering, there are illnesses and other troubles, but all this is but the physical aspect of the exile. A deeper aspect of the exile is that Jews are living in other countries other than *Eretz Yisrael*. We are controlled by gentile governments and we aren't free to be on our own. An even more inner aspect of the *Galus* is that the laxity in keeping the *mitzvos*. Going deeper, even those fully dedicated to Torah and *mitzvos* are often lacking inner vitality and joy, and are not inwardly connected to the *mitzvos*. All of this is yet the external layer of the exile. The core of the exile is that we aren't yearning for the state of spiritual perfection of *Moshiach's* times. That is the true inner meaning of the exile we are in, and therefore awaiting the *Geulah* means yearning to live in a state of perfection. (ספר דע את הויתך פרק ד)

...It is brought in our sefarim that *Moshiach* will come with "weapons of war" and conquer all the nations. This is explained to mean that *Moshiach* will reveal how good prevails over evil. Will *Moshiach* throw a bomb on the world? Iran can do that too. How would that bring peace to the world? How will he 'win' over the entire world? *Moshiach* will be so connected to the reality of Hashem *echad*, to the oneness of Hashem, how there is nothing other than Hashem, and that is how he will

connect to all of Creation, with an enormous, all-encompassing love. Moshiach will win not through the conventional means of fighting, but from being utterly connected to the oneness of Hashem - and nothing can oppose the oneness of Hashem, so he will be invincible. It will be like how Avraham Avinu was thrown into a fire and he wasn't harmed. The depth of this was because he was so connected to the oneness of Hashem, that nothing could harm him. It wasn't just a miracle, it was because he lived in a world where nothing could oppose him and harm him, because he was so connected to the oneness of Hashem. Of course, people fought him and he had wars. But he could not be harmed, because he lived in the oneness of Hashem (ספר דע את הויתך פרק י)

MAKING IT TO THE GEULAH

QUESTION Besides for disconnecting from the “50th level of tumah” - the internet - are there any other criteria that a person needs, in order to be *zocheh* to the Geulah? **ANSWER** There is a verse, “Seek righteousness, seek humility, and perhaps you will be saved, on the day of the wrath of Hashem.” We need to disconnect from the very root of all evil [the use of media and internet], and we also need to “await the salvation of Hashem”, and to connect ourselves to the concept of the revelations of the *Geulah*. That is the main way to prepare for the *Geulah* (becoming connected with what the *Geulah* is). This is besides for keeping the mitzvos, which is always needed, throughout all of the duration of *Galus*.

QUESTION But every person is lax in some of the mitzvos and commits aveiros, especially common aveiros such as lashon hora and wasting time from Torah study, etc.? **ANSWER** If a person fell into an aveirah and he makes effort to do teshuvah for it, he is still included in the category of one who keeps the mitzvos.

QUESTION If a person struggles very much in the area of Shemiras HaBris and he *davens* a lot about it and sometimes even cries about it to Hashem, but he keeps falling in this area, will he merit the *Geulah* if he hasn't yet fixed these aveiros by the moment the *Geulah* arrives? Especially because the sefer Taharas HaKodesh of the Shomer Emunim, and other sefarim kedoshim, say that only those are shomer the *bris* (people who are careful in the area of *Bris Kodesh*) will merit the Geulah.

ANSWER If a person tried very hard all of his life to improve himself in this area, and he also suffered in the process, then this [his efforts and suffering] do not disqualify him from the Geulah.

QUESTION What is the way to view the *nisyonos* in Eretz Yisrael today? ... (1) The possuk says, “Darkness covers the earth”, and therefore it is impossible for me to get involved in all of the details of the *alma d'shikra* (world of falsity). I will just

say a general perspective about the topic. Until the last couple of years, the main evils that we faced were coming from the “outside” - there were laws made about drafting, laws about conversion, allowing work on Shabbos, issues with non-slaughtered animals, immodesty, and many other issues, Rachmana Litzlan. But in the last decade especially, the main evil we are facing is not on the outside, but on the inside - it has entered into the Torah observant world. It is the root of all tumah in the world, and it has penetrated into the Torah world: through the use of devices of media/internet. Therefore, the direction of the wars we are fighting now has changed. Most of the wars that were being fought until now were against “outside” factors, more or less, and now that has all been overturned. Now, the wars are mainly against the evil that has entered into our inner circle. It is that evil which is destroying the entire world, and especially the Torah observant world. This is where we need to be spending most of our energy, at fighting the war that has penetrated into our inner circle of the Torah observant world. We need to gain a new perspective, of what the main wars were until now, and what the main wars now are. (2) In the past, we were mainly fighting outside influences that were coming into the Jewish people, which were either being forced on us, such as various laws of the government that were decrees against religious Jewry, and the issue of the “Erev Rav” (the Israeli government) mixing themselves in to the world of religious Jewry, who were trying to convince the religious world into certain things for their own self-gain, so that they [the government] would gain more money, prestige, and power - all as a means of influencing their views and lifestyle into the religious Torah world. The leaders of our generation have been fighting these influences for several decades already. But from about the year 5760 (2000) and onward, and especially in the last decade, basically all of the tumah (the terrible culture of our world today) has entered from the outside into our own inner circles. (This is a resemblance of how before the sin of Adam, evil only existed outside of man, and after the sin, the evil entered within man, as the Nefesh HaChaim explains). The tumah that entered the Torah world today is mainly through using media in all of its many different forms. The “50th level of tumah” itself - the lowest level to sink to - also has within it another 50 levels. The 50th level that is within the 50th level of tumah has, Rachmana Litzlan, entered within our own inner circles, into the world of Torah observant Jewry, and even worse, it has entered into the Torah world itself. And from this point onward, the war that we face with those who throw away the Torah is no longer our main war that we need to fight today - though it certainly is raging strongly. And our main problems today are not with neighbors or friends who aren't being so stringent on keeping every last minute detail of halachah who may be a harmful influence on our children, and the like. Rather, the large part of the war we need to be fighting

today is within our own homes. Couples are split between their values: One of the spouses is connected with media/internet, or at least wants very much to have it in the house, or the parents want it and the children don't want it, or vice versa. Or, some of the children want to be connected with internet devices, while the other siblings are holding strong not to. This is the realization of the verse, "The enemies of a man are those in his household". In many cases, each person as an individual needs to develop his or her own inner world (*olam pnimi*) to live in, within his or her very own house, so as not to be influenced by the rest of the household. This is the secret of the "*Yechidah*" level of the soul, which resides in one's home. And therefore, today the main war we are fighting today is found in our own homes.

QUESTION Are we supposed to be concerned about preventing *chilul Hashem*, which is inciting increasing anti-semitism? Or should we just go inward and not care at all about what's going on around us, and we should just strengthen ourselves in learning and *davening*, and to focus more on personal growth and becoming closer to Hashem? **ANSWER** To our great pain, the generation today is full of a vast array of severe issues. The problems you are mentioning are just a few of them. But they are not even the main issue of today. And because we don't have the capacity or energy to deal with every single issue taking place today in our generation, each person as an individual needs to focus on fixing his personal weaknesses, or at least with the primary issue that we are facing collectively. The primary issue which Jews are facing collectively in this generation is that we are too close to the non-Jewish lifestyle, and especially using the media/internet, which is the actual *Shaar HaNun d'tumah*, the "50th

gate of impurity", and that includes everything else involved with media influence. This *tumah* is exactly what is what's blocking the light of *Moshiach* from being revealed upon the world, and it has already brought down tens of thousands of *neshamos* into the *Tehom*. It has had a devastating effect even on the most Torah observant people, on almost everyone without exception, causing everyone to take a dip in their general level *ruchniyus* – for some it was less, and for some it was more.

MASHIACH

QUESTION How will *Moshiach* be equally respected by every kind of *frum Jew* today when there are so many different mentalities and viewpoints today by all different types of *frum Jewry*? Can one person really contain every view, even though each view contradicts the other? Or will *Moshiach* reveal one single viewpoint that will unify everyone together? **ANSWER** *Moshiach* will show how all of the paths together complete one true path.

QUESTION Will *Moshiach* come to *Eretz Yisrael* or will he come to the rest of the world as well? Though he will "gather all the dispersed" together, will he do this by actually coming to each country of the world where there are Jews, or will everyone gather together to come see *Moshiach* in *Eretz Yisrael*? If *Moshiach* is only coming to *Eretz Yisrael*, then people from *chutz l'aretz* would have to be in *Eretz Yisrael* by the *Geulah* in order to greet *Moshiach*, but if he's coming to *chutz l'aretz* then he will gather us from where we live and we don't need to go anywhere now. **ANSWER** It depends on the way *Moshiach* will be brought. If *Moshiach* will be brought due to *isarus d'lisata*, "an awakening from below" [i.e. due to our *teshuvah*], he will come to

all the different countries of the world, resembling a person who has to travel to find himself a wife. If *Moshiach* will come due to *isarasua d'leila*, "an awakening from above" [if his arrival is due entirely to Heavenly compassion], then he will come only to *Eretz Yisrael*. It has already become very, very, very important to be in *Eretz Yisrael* for some time now.

QUESTION In the era of *Moshiach* will there be a use for technology? Or will technology not be in use anymore?

ANSWER There will be no need for it anymore because it will lose all its value, just as in the times of *Shlomo HaMelech* when there was no use for gold and silver because it lost all its value.

QUESTION What will happen to our physical desires after *Moshiach* comes? Will we only have spiritual pleasures then or will we be able to enjoy everything?

ANSWER Only subtle physical pleasures will remain, such as music and beautiful sights. All other physical pleasures are only needed for the "animal soul" (*nefesh habehaimis*), and at the beginning of the days of *Moshiach* those pleasures will still exist, but gradually these pleasures will weaken and the world will become transformed into a spiritual place. As *Chazal* said about the Next World, "There is no eating in it and no drinking in it, only the *tzaddikim* sitting with their crowns on their heads and enjoying the rays of the *Shechinah*."

QUESTION Will we only have spiritual enjoyment then, or will our physical enjoyment remain and it will be used as a way to get closer to Hashem? **ANSWER** The pleasure will remain [at the beginning of the times of *Moshiach*] only to the extent that our *nefesh habehaimis* will need it. As the *Mesillas Yesharim* says, a person should make use of physical pleasure only to the extent that it helps him serve Hashem.

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