



Tefillah - 082 Awaiting Moshiach

Like The Good Years We Used To Enjoy

In the blessing of **ברך עלינו** we ask Hashem, **וברך שנתינו כשנים הטובות** - "And bless us like the good years." We are asking for a good year to resemble the good years. What kind of "good years" are we referring to here?

There are 6000 years to the lifetime of the world, and we have already gone through most of them. There were definitely some good years in them. What were these "good years" we had? We are obviously not referring to good years which the other nations of the world enjoyed. We are referring to the good years which we used to have when we were in Eretz Yisrael.

Yitzchok went down to Grar, where he planted many crops that were blessed. Chazal say that when this happened, the angels praised Hashem for giving blessing to the year. But that was only one good year. So what are the "good years" that we are referring to?

The Yalkut (Yirmiyahu: 328) states that there were two times in which we had "good years". One period was when we were in Eretz Yisrael, and the other period of good years was when we went into exile. This is perplexing. We can understand that when we were in Eretz Yisrael we had good years, but how are we to understand that when we were exiled from the land that this was a period of 'good years'?

We are asking in Shemoneh Esrei to have a year of blessing just like those good years that we enjoyed. We need to understand what those good years were, and then we will know the meaning of these words in Shemoneh Esrei, **וברך שנתינו כשנים הטובות**.

Further From The Beginning, Closer To Salvation

Usually, the perspective we have towards Creation is that things are only good in the beginning, and further we are from the beginning, the less good we have it. For example, Adam had it all good in Gan Eden, which was at the beginning of Creation. The further we are from that state, the less good we have it.

The world has become so lowly since then; right now, it is at the lowest level possible. We live in a world in which we can clearly see the words of Chazal, "There is no day that is not more cursed than the day before it." We are living in a generation that is especially not doing well. The *yeridas hadoros* (spiritual descent of the generations) is at its lowest. We have no idea when Moshiach will come; no one knows, because it is a matter that is not revealed to anyone, for "matters of the heart are not revealed by the mouth" (*liba l'pumei lo galya*). One thing we know for sure is that we are very far from the beginning state of Adam HaRishon in Gan Eden.

That is one way to view the situation - we are very far from the beginning state of Creation, we are towards the end, and therefore, our situation is very bleak, because we are so far from the way things used to be like.

But there is a totally different way to view our situation of the Final Days. Our Rabbis tell us that the further we are from our root state of Creation, the more concealed we are from that spiritual light. But at the very same time, the closer we reach the end – and surely the more we reach the very end – the more the light begins to return and shine. Although we know that there is a concept of *yeridas hadoros* and that “each day is more cursed than the day before it”, as Chazal tell us – that is only the **external** layer of the situation. Thus, it is only the superficial viewpoint.

When a person is traveling away from his town, his path becomes darker and darker, because the lights of the town are further and further away. But the closer he gets to ending his journey, the closer he is to finding the next town, he begins to see the lights of the town even before he gets there. The lights of the coming town begin to light up his path, even though he is not yet there yet. This is the parable which our Rabbis described the End of Days.

Although we are far from the original light that was at the beginning of Creation, now that we are nearing the end – the coming of Moshiach, the rebuilding of the *Beis HaMikdash*, the resurrection of the dead, etc. – all the prophecies concerning the future – we are nearing the great light of the future. We are getting closer and closer to the great light of the future, and this will be an even greater light than the original light of Creation.

These are not my own ideas I have come up with. They are the words of our holy Rabbis, and they always applied to every soul in every generation. But they are especially applicable to today’s generation.

We are in the lowliest generation since the start of Creation. But at the same time, we are nearing Moshiach, the situation of Olam HaBa. Although we have no idea when the redemption will come, we know for sure that we are heading closer and closer to it. We keep getting further and further from the beginning, but we are nearing the end, which will be a greater light than the light at the beginning of Creation. With the closer we are to Moshiach, the more our soul can connect to that state.

We believe and await Moshiach, every day. This is not just a hope. It is a hope that connects our soul, right now, to the future! Moshiach will come suddenly, only because we feel so distant from the beginning of Creation and so disconnected from that light. Thus, the light of Moshiach will feel very sudden to us. But our soul can yearn for the redemption, and this is not just a wish, but something we can actually connect to.

Overcoming Evil In A Generation Like This

Thus, the lowly state of our “*yeridas hadoros*” is only taking place with regards to the fact that we are very far from the beginning state of Creation.

For this reason, we really shouldn’t be able to survive at all in this generation. The difficulties are getting harder and harder; the *yetzer hora* gets stronger every day, as Chazal say. Our *yetzer hora* is getting stronger and stronger, and along this, we are further and further away from the beginning state of Creation, which combines for a double difficulty.

There are people who lose all their aspirations because of this. They think, “I’m in such a lowly generation anyway. After all, there’s *yeridas hadoros*. My *yetzer hora* gets stronger and stronger, so I can’t defeat it totally. All I can do is perhaps succeed a little bit and overcome a little bit of *yetzer hora*.”

They think that it’s pointless to try to succeed in *ruchniyus* (spirituality) because it’s too hard anyway. They believe they can succeed, of course, but only a little bit. These people are of the opinion that we can only succeed a little bit in overcoming the *yetzer hora*, and that we cannot become more

successful than this.

But such a perspective is childish. If a person views himself as a small being who is hopeless, then he can't succeed. Shaul HaMelech was told that he cannot consider himself small if he is to lead the Jewish people.

There are essentially two different viewpoints with how we can view our current situation. From a logical perspective, we can't win over the *yetzer hora* in a generation like this, unless a person possesses a quality to be very stubborn to have spiritual success. It seems impossible for us to attain spiritual levels these days. This person thinks that only in the past did we have it good, and only in the future will we have it good, but not now.

But the truthful perspective to have is that because we are nearing the end, therefore we are more connected to the end, and thus we really do have the power to attain high levels. The light of the future is steadily approaching. If we connect ourselves inwardly to that light - and not out of haughtiness that "I can succeed" due to my own abilities - then we will have the root of survival in this generation.

The Abundance of Spirituality In Our Times

We can all see that there is so much Torah going on today, much more than in the previous generation. There is also an abundance of *chessed* and *tzedakah* like there never was before - at least in the amount of it. How do we view this? If we compare the quality of our Torah learning and *chessed* to the previous generations, it pales in comparison. If we just look at it like this, with a superficial perspective, then we can easily feel that all of our *ruchniyus* is worthless when compared to the quality of *ruchniyus* in previous generations. Such an outlook focuses on the lowly state of this generation, and it is a lens of negativity.

The truthful perspective is that there is an abundance of Torah and *chessed* these days because the light of the future has begun, and thus we are enjoying a great abundance of Torah and *chessed*. Of course, we still live in a very lowly and impure generation, and thus, our *ruchniyus* is not complete. Therefore, the light of the future cannot be fully revealed yet. But there is still plenty of light from the future that has begun to shine now.

Look at how much Torah learning there is going on today. In addition, Chazal say that it takes a lot of exertion to discover *Chiddushei Torah*. These days, a person has the special power to arrive at *Chiddushei Torah* with even minimal effort. This is because the light of the future has begun to shine.

Connect Yourself With The Future

But we can find ourselves amidst a problematic contradiction.

If a person is aware of the greatness we had in the past, but he isn't connecting himself in the here and now **to the future**, then the person isn't connected to that light of the future, because he is dwelling in the past. Although the light is here, the person who isn't connected to it won't gain from it, for he is connected inwardly only to the "past" great levels of the Jewish people.

The past can provide us with some aspirations, but we need to push ourselves to reach the light of the future; we must connect ourselves to the future. The past is gone.

We cannot survive in this generation, spiritually. There's a spiritual genocide on us. The only way to be saved is to turn to the future - "*A new light shall shine forth on Zion.*"

To say this in clearer language: Why does a person await Moshiach? A superficial person awaits “*the person*” who will be Moshiach, and this is a very, very superficial way to await Moshiach.

Awaiting Moshiach means to await the “*days of Moshiach*”, which will be a pure world, a world that is entirely good – when Hashem will be revealed onto the entire world, through the learning of Torah and performance of mitzvos.

If a person just focuses on the how this world is mostly evil and that he has to deal with it, on this Chazal say that “The son of David will not come until they despair from the redemption.” To await the redemption is to yearn, from our soul, for the clear revelation of Hashem onto each soul; that the light of Torah should penetrate into every soul, clearly; that Hashem’s will should be seen as the entire will of every soul. It will be a life in which all will recognize, clearly, the existence of Hashem; when all that we will want will be what Hashem wants. We must await for this and long for this.

Truly awaiting Moshiach is not something you should merely think about intellectually or to imagine that time. It is rather achieved by palpably attaching yourself to that time of the future – to wish that you could connect completely with Hashem, Whose existence will be only revealed fully when Moshiach comes.

Set aside time in your schedule so you can feel this. The more you connect yourself to that world of the future, the more you will be able to nurse forth the power to survive the current era, because you will gain spiritual stamina from this very hidden source that will eventually be revealed. This is a place you can enter into the depths of your soul. It is the place where you can connect yourself to the future, to the depth of Torah, to the will of Hashem.

Upon reaching that perception, you can then discover how we can turn this current year into a good year, that what appeared to be such a bad year can really be a good year. How? In this generation, either we live amidst total evil when we focus on how lowly it is, or we can live amidst a “good year”, by awaiting the pure world of the future and by connecting to it now.

This is not accomplished through your imagination. It is rather accomplished when you realize how much evil we are amidst, and that our soul cannot endure it, and thus our soul wants to run away from it all to a place that is pure. The more we realize how lowly this generation is, the more we can awaken our soul’s yearning to escape all the evil and yearn for the pure world of the future.

So in these words of Shemoneh Esrei, we are not just asking for a good year. We are asking for a good year precisely because we are amidst a lowly situation. We are not just asking for a good year like the good old days. That is clearly not the intention. Rather, we want a good year like the good years, like the time of the future; we are asking that the very impurity of our situation, the depth of this exile, should be the very catalyst to connect to the future purity, when we yearn so much to come out of it.

Each generation is tested with a particular choice they have to make. In our generation, this is the choice we have to make – if we will choose to remain with the lowly state of generation and have no aspirations to rise above it, because we have given up, or if we will wish to rise above it when we connect ourselves with the future.

May Hashem merit us to bless us with “good years” – that we should be connected, in the here and now, to the “good years” of the future.

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/tefillah-082-awaiting-moshiach>