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Q&A FROM THE
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MASHIACH'S NAME IS TZEMACH

את צמח דוד עבדך מהרה תצמיח – We ask Hashem to herald the coming of Moshiach, who is called “Tzemach” - one of the names of Moshiach.

We will reflect into why Moshiach’s name is Tzemach. First, we will reflect on the following.

SPROUTING AND GROWING INTO GREATNESS

In Creation, there are four organisms – the non-living, the plants, the animals, and humans. Hashem created everything on the first day of Creation, and He split it up over the course of six days. Everything was initially in a state of *he’elam* (*concealment*) and then it was brought to its *giluy* (*revelation*). Hashem told the earth to sprout forth living things, but it was all created on the first day. It is just that on each day of Creation, different creations were revealed from their potential state into their revealed state.

Until Adam, no one was able to daven for rain, so nothing was able to sprout from the ground. Although Hashem told the earth on the third day to produce plants, it couldn’t actually sprout forth until it received rain, which only came when Adam davened for it. Everything was already there, in its potential state, but it couldn’t all be revealed. That was what the world was like in the original six days of Creation.

But when Adam sinned, he was cursed that he will return to earth. In other words, man fell from the level of the living (*tzomeiach* \ *living, sprouting organisms*) into a lower level of existence – to the level of non-living things (*doimem*).

The lowest level of mankind began as soon as Adam sinned, and once again we returned to it after the sin with the Golden Calf. It appears to us that the lofty levels we used to exist on are unreachable, and that we have to come up with something new in ourselves in order to get those levels. We think that if we exert ourselves in Torah and prayer, perhaps we will be able to acquire new levels. Initially, we think we have to “acquire” greatness, and to work hard at developing new level of existence.

But this is the perspective of the non-living. The higher perspective, which is the perspective of the living, is to reveal our already existing potential.

The lower perspective is “I don’t have humility, purity, holiness, or Torah, so I need to acquire it.” This is the perspective of the post-sin state, and it comes from our element of earth which man sunk to after the sin, which causes sadness, which results laziness, and even worse, it causes despair. When a person feels far from the higher levels he knows he is supposed to reach, he becomes sad, and then he becomes lethargic and lazy to try to develop those higher levels, and this causes him to despair from any growth at all.

But the higher perspective to have is to focus on how we are really creatures that grow and sprout (*and we used to be that way before the sin, so deep down, we are really like that*). Therefore, the perspective is, when we need to reach higher levels, it’s not that those levels are far from us and we need to develop them. Rather, they are already in us, and we need to simply reveal our potential.

We are like a coal that already contains some fiery embers, and all we have to do is blow on the flames, where we our inner flame will blaze and then we can reveal all the potential inside us. The Ramchal writes that our Torah learning is like a fiery coal which we need to blow on and allow the fire that’s already in us to become bigger.

This doesn’t mean, for example, that need to finish more masechtos (*tractates of Gemara*). It is to realize that inside you, there is a fire already burning for achievement: to recognize the truth, that all the qualities you can reach are already contained in you. They are all there in their potential state - and it is our avodah to active them to their full potential.

LET YOURSELF SPROUT

So at first, we look at ourselves as “earth”, and we feel that we need to fill our emptiness with Torah, mitzvos, and spiritual growth. This is the lower perspective we start out with. But we can access the higher perspective, which is to view ourselves as living, sprouting beings, which already contain the potential for growth, and all we have to do is to reveal our already existing potential.

To illustrate, when you plant a seed in the ground, it slowly grows more and more, until it becomes a ripe plant. So too, we need to identify ourselves as being closer to a sprouting plant than being a rock. A plant grows slowly,

but the entire potential for growth exists in it, and it can slowly become more revealed.

Really, everything is already here. It appears to us that there is much that is missing, but we can compare this to the phases of the moon. At the middle of the month, we only see half the moon, and it seems deficient. But it slowly becomes more and more revealed, and then we see it in full. The moon was never missing at all – it was just that we couldn't see it in full.

When the third Beis HaMikdash will come down from Heaven, its light will reveal that all is perfect, and that all deficiencies we see is rather like the missing side of the moon, which is not really missing, rather, it is unrevealed.

At first, we can only see what we have and what we are missing. When we see what we're missing, we simply feel that we are missing it. For example, if one hasn't learned Tractate Zevachim yet, he feels simply that he is missing Zevachim, and if he hasn't learned Taharos yet, he feels that he is missing Taharos. But the higher perspective a person can have is, all that you want to reach is already in you, in its potential, and you just have to reveal it. There is also an even higher perspective to have, which is that all perfection is really inside you, but it is covered over and you can't see it.

We all identify with the first level of understanding. The higher view, when accessed, is a revelation that Moshiach will reveal.

THE REDEMPTION – IT'S SLOWLY SPROUTING

This is the meaning of **את צמח דוד** - Moshiach's revelation keeps "sprouting" – that is the meaning of why Moshiach is called Tzemach Dovid, because the redemption is constantly in the growth process, sprouting more and more. We ask that it come quickly, but even if it doesn't come quickly, chas v'shalom, it is still sprouting.

HOW TO VIEW YOURSELF

The Sages state that the current world lasts for 6000 years, and the final 2000 years of the world are called "The Era of Moshiach", which we are in. We are very close to the end of the 2000 years of this era. What does it mean

that we are in the era of Moshiach during the last 2000 years of this world? It means that everything is already here, in its potential. It is all here, and our avodah is to reveal it from its potential state.

But a person is apt to have the lower perspective on himself, which is that “you are earth” – the level of the non-living organisms - and he doesn’t realize that he is can really be like a plant that keeps sprouting.

All potential is inside us, some more and some less. Anyone who realizes this concept will discover a great inner happiness. Everything is in you! The entire Torah is in you!!

To illustrate the concept, a Torah scholar is someone who has revealed the Torah from his dormant state and he has revealed it outward from within himself. Someone who is not a Torah scholar is not missing the Torah – he is just not utilizing his potential, and that is why the Torah isn’t being revealed from within himself.

The Sages state, “Who is wealthy? The one who is happy with his lot.” There is a great source of inner wealth inside you, and when you recognize it, it changes your entire perspective. Instead of looking at yourself like a poor person who has nothing, you can realize that all perfection is really inside you, waiting to be accessed.

When a person realizes this concept he is connected to perfection. Of course, you will still have to work hard at revealing your potential. But once you realize that everything is potentially inside of you, it will fill you with awesome inner happiness, and it will change your entire perspective towards your avodah, and to how you view the potential that exists in all Jewish souls.

This is the “sprouting of Moshiach” that takes place during this 2000 year era we are in. It keeps sprouting, and the more it sprouts, the more we can reveal our potential. This is actually the reason why there is so much revelation of Torah in the final generations.

THE HIGHER PERSPECTIVE

All of what was said so far here applies from the perspective of “before Moshiach”. But after Moshiach comes, a third, higher perspective will be re-

vealed [which was mentioned briefly before]: that not only is the redemption slowly sprouting, but it's already here [and you can access this perspective already now].

The revelation of Moshiach will be pism, "sudden" – the depth of this is that at first we thought our potential was slowly sprouting more and more, but when Moshiach comes, our perspective will instantly change. We will then be able to realize that all perfection is really inside us.

It is a much deeper and more truthful perspective than the one mentioned before. Moshiach will "suddenly" reveal that all the sefarim you needed to learn are in you all along! This change of perspective will come very suddenly to us.

"A person is considered to be blind until Hashem opens his eyes." Our Rabbis wrote that even though we did not yet merit the general redemption, a person can still experience a personal redemption in his own soul – and this is unique to souls of the final era, for as the redemption draws closer, its light begins to shine more, which means that we can access the light of the redemption in our soul.

If someone doesn't merit a redemption in his soul, he feels far away from Hashem. Hashem is but a 'Keil Mistater' to him....

But when a person merits the personal redemption in his soul, he feels the meaning of Es Tzemach Dovid, that he has the potential for anything. He can feel how Hashem is not just outside of himself or in Heaven, but next to Him, in his heart – even though he hasn't actually gotten there yet fully.

From this perspective, though, when a person learns a sugya, he realizes that there are parts he can't understand no matter how much he exerts himself, and he still feels the concealment of Creation.

But when a person reveals the third, highest perspective in his soul, which is the revelation of Moshiach in his soul (*it will be revealed fully to the masses in the general redemption, but it can be experienced on a private level as well*), one can "suddenly" realize that although we live in a world of he'elam, the truth is: Hashem's existence still fills the entire universe. One will then "suddenly" realize that Hashem's existence fills everything - just, it is currently hidden from Creation.

So the inner perspective on redemption is not just to believe that Moshiach will come; he will definitely come, and we believe he will come even though he tarries; the inner perspective is rather that even now he can come, in our own private soul, once we access the perspective of the redemption, because perfection is already here; it is just hidden. It exists, and it is really here.

When Moshiach comes – may he come speedily in our days – he will open up everyone’s eyes to see the higher perspective, the perspective we all had before the sin of Adam, and all we will see is Shechinah. Not only in death can we see Hashem. Even as we live, we can see the light of Moshiach’s revelation, when we feel that everything is already here.

To clarify what this means, this is not to believe that “Moshiach” is really here – it means to believe and feel in the revelation that Moshiach will reveal, which is that everything is already here, and it is just hidden from plain sight.

IN CONCLUSION

The words here might seem distant to someone who hears them. But if a person merits to understand the truth of these words, his entire perspective will change, from beginning until end. He will feel like a new being, a personal resurrection from the “earth” he feels entrenched in and instead rise to the level of what it means to be a tzomeach, a living and sprouting being.

Even more so, it is not about realizing how the redemption keeps sprouting as we live. It is to realize that all deficiencies we see are like the missing half of the moon, which is not really missing. In the future we will be able to see how nothing is missing, but even now we can realize that nothing is missing at all, for everything is really all here. We cannot see how, but we can definitely conceptualize it. This is the true way to await Moshiach – a whole different perspective. It is a clearer, truer view, and it is a more accurate way to await the redemption. The most perfected realization our soul can have is to realize how Hashem fills everything, and even though we can’t see it, that’s only because His revelation is currently hidden from view.

When our soul feels this, it will be filled with endless joy, and then, the soul will bask in the pleasure of Hashem’s existence.

WHY ISN'T HASHEM ANSWERING MY TEFILOS?

QUESTION

After a person davens again and again for something, and his prayers don't get answered, he naturally stops davening so hard. It's only natural that when you keep asking for something and you aren't getting it, you stop asking for it. You stop trying that venue and you turn to other alternatives, or you give up. I want to ask: Why does Hashem do things this way? Why does it take so long for my tefillos to get answered?? How can a person take all of this in stride and not give up from davening, when he's not being answered?? Is a person supposed to keep davening and just never give up, or does there come a point where a Jew is allowed to stop davening, because he understands that his requests from Hashem for a certain thing are not just being answered...?

ANSWER

There are several reasons [why a person's tefillos aren't being answered] and I will mention a few of them.

(1) It may be because [by not getting answered] he is acquiring more emunah (*faith*) in Hashem. (2) It may be because [by not getting answered] he is acquiring more and more depth to his davening. (3) It may be because he needs to go through a certain amount of pain which is purifying him more, and one needs to learn how to accept this with love. (4) It may be because it's not the right time now to get answered, and it will not be good for him if he gets answered now. (5) It can all be a test that he should learn how to not despair. (6) It can all be a test that he isn't supposed to be turning so much to doctors [and instead he should be turning more to Hashem for help].

A person always needs to daven, unless he requires a miracle, because the Gemara at the end of Tractate Berachos states that it is pointless to pray for a miracle. Prayer should always be accompanied with emunah and accepting the painful circumstances with love, and then returning to prayer, in a cycle.

May you receive the blessing of “And I will remove all sickness from your midst”, may you receive a complete recovery amongst all our other brothers in Yisrael, quickly, and with ease.

WHY DAVEN?

QUESTION

Why do we daven throughout the year, if everything that will happen this was anyways decreed on Rosh HaShanah and sealed on Yom Kippur? When I daven, I always tell myself, “What will this help? It was already decreed on me what will happen, so nothing will help.”

ANSWER

The Gemara says that a person is judged on Rosh HaShanah, and according to one view, one is judged every day of the year. Even more so, a person is judged every moment. This means that any good decreed on Rosh HaShanah can be held back from a person due to sins. We find this concept by Yaakov Avinu, who was concerned that his sins will hold him back from receiving Hashem’s blessings of protection. It is the same vice versa: The Gemara teaches that if anything harsh was decreed on a person chas v’shalom that Rosh HaShanah, the decree can be removed, when a lot of people daven for that person.

The tefillah of an individual can also remove a bad decree on a person, when one’s prayers are accompanied with complete teshuvah. This accesses the spiritual light of Yom Kippur [which removes any harsh decrees from Rosh HaShanah]. This is especially the case when a person davens with tears, which has the power to tear up any harsh decree.

This is even more effective when a person davens at special opportune times of the year (*an eis ratzon*). That is why our tefillos can always help eliminate any harsh decrees on a person and merit us to receive our due portion.

Even more so, if a person is close to Hashem and has an earnest

relationship with Him, his tefillos can enable him to receive any blessing that wasn't decreed on him on Rosh HaShanah, because such a person is above the dimension of time.

CRYING TO HASHEM FOR TOO LONG

QUESTION

If a person has been crying all the time to the Ribono shel Olam for many years, to taste some real pleasure and vitality (*especially when it comes to learning Torah*), but he feels that Hashem is rejecting him, chas v'shalom, as if Hashem is pushing him away...what should such a person do? Should he continue not giving up, and keep crying to Hashem, hoping that he'll soon get answered? I've told this to myself countless times in order to strengthen myself. Or, it is all a sign that he's "not finding any sign of blessing" in his Torah learning, and therefore he should just go to work and support those who learn Torah?

I've always identified with the power of *levad (alone)* since I'm a child. It was always easy for me to reach a place of inner silence in myself, to the point that my tears would flow and I would daven a deep, heartfelt tefillah. Whenever I would feel a spark of some spiritual connection, either towards the Gemara I was learning or towards a section of sefer Tanya that I was learning, I would learn with tremendous emotion, pouring out my soul into it, and becoming very emotional in the process. Therefore it's so hard for me that each day I find myself easily crying to Hashem, from a deep place in myself, but when it comes to learning Torah, I don't feel that it's our life, and I don't find myself running after Torah learning as if it's gold and treasure, like all the verses say.

I should point out that, Baruch Hashem, I am not chasing any physical lusts, and I don't have any particular negative trait that's ruining me. I have tried all kinds of avodah, but I feel like the verse, "And we do not know what should be done". Much thanks to the Rav. I identify very strongly with the Rav's personal account at the beginning of his way, but

regarding myself, I feel that I have cried too much, and I just don't know what to do anymore.

ANSWER

(1) Sit with yourself and reflect, and write down any of your accomplishments which you have so far been zoche to. Review this list every day, and thank Hashem, verbally. Your very involvement in what you "have" will give you a sense of stability, strength, and encouragement. Right now, you are too focused on what you didn't yet accomplish, and you're not thinking enough about what you do have.

(2) There is emotional pleasure, and there is intellectual pleasure. It seems that you are having emotional pleasure in your Torah learning, but you haven't yet found the intellectual pleasure in it. That is why your soul feels that you are majorly missing something. In general, our emotional powers are usually more revealed to us than our intellectual powers. You should enter into in-depth Torah study, from connecting intellectually to your learning, and that is how you will find intellectual pleasure in your Torah learning. You can try listening to the series of "Getting To Know Your Way In Torah Learning" (*Da Es Torasecha - Darkei HaLimud*).

MY WIFE HAS AN I-PHONE

QUESTION

My wife has an I-Phone and it's totally unfiltered. She needs it for work. She has the option of having a more kosher phone and she would be able to work from it- but she doesn't want to. I tried several times to explain to her, gently, of the importance of not possessing such a phone, for the sake of her purity and for the purity of our home. I explained to her how important this is to me. Yet she is not prepared to give it up. I have to mention that I know for sure that she's not looking at bad things on it. She's not interested in looking at that stuff. She is very consistent about sticking to her boundaries. She's not the type to look at inappropriate sites. The children doesn't know about her I-Phone because she is very

careful never to turn on her phone when she's home and they're around. Still, I am very disturbed by this [the fact that she doesn't want to get rid of her I-Phone]. What should I do? I am frightened because all of the signs I see in which the Rabbonim have stated how severe of an issue it is to own one of these phones, and that this includes even a person who doesn't own one but whose wife owns one. What am I supposed to do?? I'm davening hard about this situation, but in the meantime, I am not seeing her making even the slightest change.

ANSWER

Cry to Hashem about this, from the deepest place in yourself. Cry about her situation, but don't only cry for your wife. Cry for the many other people in the world who are in her situation, Hashem Yeracheim (*may G-d have compassion on all of them*).

It is not suggested that you pressure her about this. It won't help. If putting pressure on her would help her, then that would be thing for you to do. She needs to come to a point in which she feels that it's endangering you, in the actual sense! Don't pressure her to get her to realize this. Tell it to her from clarity and pure motivations, and tell it to her from the most truthful and innermost place in yourself.

