

We Need to Talk About Moshiach

Rabbi Y. Johnson

Pesach is a time that we celebrate Geulah. The main focus is on Yetzias Mitzrayim, yet as we celebrate this geulah at the seder we also ask Hashem for the final Geulah; *“May we rejoice in the rebuilding of Your city and be happy in Your Avodah and we will eat from the sacrifices and the Korban Pesach... And we will sing to You a new song (שיר חדש) on our redemption and the liberation of our souls”*. We pour the cup of Eliyahu Hanovi, the one who will announce the impending Geulah and open the door as if to usher in the Geulah itself.

Then on אחרון של פסח we turn our focus to the final Geulah and there is a revelation of Moshiach. The Haftorah of the last day is one of the most vivid *Nevuos* of the times of Moshiach: *“a staff will come out from the stump of Yishai... the wolf will lie with the lamb... and Hashem will extend His hand to bring back the remnant of His people from Assyria, Mitzrayim... and the islands of the sea”*.

The Baal Shem Tov instituted the celebration of Seudas Moshiach on the last day of Pesach, and the Rebbe Rashab later introduced four cups of wine. The purpose of this meal is to manifest the revelation of Moshiach of this day into a tangible experience. As we physically eat this meal, we absorb the idea of Moshiach into our flesh and blood.

So though it is always opportune to discuss Moshiach, this Yomtov it's even more fitting to do so.

At the start of the Rebbe's *Nesius*, in the very first Maamer - *Bosi Legani*, the Rebbe set forth the agenda and goal of our generation: As the seventh generation from the Alter Rebbe, we would be the ones to bring the *Ikar Shechina* back into the world; to bring Moshiach and the final Geulah.

The Rebbe's *Nesius* saw many phases and campaigns; Mivtzoim, Shlichus, Batei Chabad, Tzivos Hashem etc. These were all stages in preparing the world and guiding the Chassidim towards their final and ultimate Shlichus- the Mivtza to publicise the coming of Moshiach and to prepare to receive him. The Rebbe lived with Moshiach and anticipated the Geulah every moment. Almost every sicha would conclude mentioning Moshiach.

The reached a crescendo in the years 5771 and 5772. The *bituim* (expressions) that the Rebbe used in these years were unbelievable; *“Moshiach is already here”*. *“Everything is ready and we are sitting at the סעודת לוייתן”* *“all that we need to do is to open our eyes”*. *“הגיע זמן”* *“אט אט קומט משיח!”* *“גאולתכם! הנה זה (מלך המשיח) בא וכבר בא!”* *“behold this one (Moshiach) is coming... and has already come!”* *“Not only do we have the מציאות of Moshiach, we also have the revelation of Moshiach.”*

Every Chossid lived with Geulah, sensing with anticipation and passion the palpability and immediacy of Moshiach's arrival.

In 5772 at the last Kinus Hashluchim before Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe emphasised that the only remaining Shlichus now is to prepare ourselves and those around us to greet and receive Moshiach Tzidkeinu *בפועל ממש*. This was the final mission and instruction given to each one of us as Shluchim of the Rebbe. This remains the *Tzav Hashaah*, the call of the hour, until the mission is accomplished.



All of the things that we as Chassidim and Shluchim are doing around the world; Mivtzoim, *Hafotzas Hayahadus* and *Hafotzas Hamayonos* must still continue. But since that 5772 kinus, there is now an overriding focus. All of these activities must be permeated with the anticipation and hastening of the Geulah, the final Shlichus.

On Acharon shel Pesach 5699 (1939) the Friedike Rebbe spoke about the Keli by which we will bring Moshiach. In Yaakov Avinu's parting blessing to his son Yehudah, Yaakov says "*the sceptre (of rulership) will not depart from the tribe of Yehudah* יבא שילה עד, *until Shiloh arrives*". Shiloh refers to Moshiach to whom true kingship belongs *שלהמלוכה שלו*.

The Friedike Rebbe points out that *שילה* has the same Gematria as *משה* (345). Moshe was the *גואל ראשון*, the first redeemer of the Jewish people. The Geulah from Mitzrayim opened up the channel for all subsequent Geulos, including the final Geulah. *יבא שילה* has the Gematria of Moshiach (358), the final redeemer.

The difference between *שילה* and *יבא שילה*, between *משה* and *משיח* is the word *יבא*. In this difference, says the Friedike Rebbe, lies a deep allusion to what the Keli to bring Moshiach is.

יבא has the same Gematria as *אחד* (13). When there will be Achdus amongst the Jewish people in general and specifically an Achdus in speaking about Moshiach, *מען זאל ריידן וועגן משיח'ן*, then we will be able to draw down the Geulah Shleimah through Moshiach.

When Moshe Rabbeinu was born, the Jewish people's hearts were elevated. They would speak joyously about Amram's special son Moshe. Even when Moshe was forced to flee Mitzrayim to Midian, the Jewish people did not forget about him. They would constantly mention him and speak about him. Until finally Hashem heard the Jewish people's talking and beseeching to bring about the Geulah. The same is true in our time. We must constantly be speaking about Moshiach.

Twenty two years after Gimmel Tammuz and even longer since we heard the Rebbe's proclamations, Mivtza Moshiach is a lot more difficult. With differing opinions and understandings, sitting together - *אחד* - in speaking about Moshiach is a challenge.

But we have faith in our Rebbe's words, *דברי צדיקים חיים וקיימים לעד*. Moshe fled to Midian for 40 years, yet Bnei Yisroel did not lose hope. They continued to speak about Moshe and never did he leave their thoughts.

Just as our ancestors were redeemed from Mitzrayim in the merit of their emunah in the Geulah, We need to strengthen our own Emunah in the Geulah. How do we keep our Emunah and focus on Geulah strong?

The words of *כ"ח ניסן*, the sicha that shook the world, still ring in our ears - *tut altz vos ir kent!* The Rebbe announced that he has done whatever he can to bring Moshiach and the only thing left is to entrust it to us to do everything within our ability to bring Moshiach. There was a great deal of confusion as to what the Rebbe wanted and what was meant by *אורות דתהו* in *כלים דתיקון*. Ideas, campaigns and suggestions came from around the world.

A few weeks later on Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora, the Rebbe set forth the *שרך הישרה*, the surest and swiftest way to bring Moshiach – through learning Torah on matters of Moshiach and



Geulah (עניני מלך המשיח ועניני הגאולה); In Torah Shebichsav and especially the words of the Neviim, Gemora and Midrashim and especially... in the Maamarim and Likutei Sichos of the Nossi Hador.

In the Maamer V'ata Teztaveh, the Rebbe discusses the theme of Emunah. Every Jew has a deep Emunah in Hashem, but Emunah can remain *Makif*. Emunah needs to be fed and internalised so that it affects our conscious living, awareness and way of thinking. The same is true with our Emunah in the Geulah. Of course we believe the words and prophesy of the Rebbe. But we need to internalise it so that we can live with it and march forward in our campaign and Shlichus to bring Moshiach.

The way to internalise Emunah is through *Daas*, a personal understanding and relationship with what we learn. When we learn עניני משיח וגאולה we start to think and live Geulah. Moshiach becomes a reality.

I once heard a beautiful parable. A king betrothed a young maiden. They were deeply in love and counting the days until their upcoming wedding. But one day, the king disappeared without a word and without a trace. Days became weeks, weeks became months and month slowly gave way to years.

The bride's friends mocked her. What are you waiting for? He is never coming back. It has been so long why don't you just move on? But finally, one day, the king returned. The wedding was celebrated in great style and finally the king and his queen were alone together.

The king asked his bride how she was able to remain devoted to him throughout the long years of his absence despite the taunts and logical claims of her friends?

She replied "in truth there were times when I too had doubts, when the mocking and taunts would get to me. But on our engagement you wrote me a letter where you promised me that we would live together forever in joy and love and closeness, how you would take care of me and how we would live a perfect life together. Every time I would have doubts I would take out that letter and read it over and over again. Reading your assurances would give me the strength to continue hoping and waiting.

We all need to reread the letter to strengthen our commitment and our faith, to make it easier for us to hold on though the time draws long. Let's take a personal Hachlota to learn *Inyonei Geulah uMoshiach*; a few minutes every day or once a week. Share a *vort* with our family at the dinner table or on Shabbos. There are no shortage of publications and books to use. מען זאל ריידן וועגן משיח'ן. We need to start speaking about Moshiach.

May we merit the immediate revelation of Moshiach and be able to celebrate the Yomtov of Pesach in *Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh*, ונאכל שם מן הזבחים ומן הפסחים. Then we will sing that final song, the שיר חדש על גאולתנו ועל פדות נפשנו.

ⁱ Midrash Rabbah Shir Hashirim explains that the 9 songs which have been sung by the Jewish people to date (in the Tanach) are all referred to as שירה in feminine tense. This reflects the fact that like a woman who suffers the pain on childbirth subsequently will fall pregnant and go through the same experience, so to all previous Geulos were followed by subsequent exiles. The song which will be sung on the final Geulah 'שירו לה' is in masculine form to emphasise that this will be a complete and final Geulah.

