

The Rebbe's Discourses

Free Summaries of the Rebbe's Chassidic Discourses בלי אחריות כלל וכלל
ד"ה ונחה עליו אחרון של פסח תשכ"ה מוגה

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MOSHIACH: TEACHER AND KING

THE HAFTORAH FOR THE EIGHTH DAY OF PESACH (OUTSIDE ISRAEL) CONCERNS Moshiach. “The Divine spirit will rest on him, his scent will be the fear of G-d... And the wolf will dwell with the lamb” (Isaiah 11:2 ff). This speaks about Moshiach himself, his personal spirituality, and also about his effect on the world as a whole, revealing G-dliness not only to humanity but also extending to the animal world (so that the wolf will dwell with the lamb), and even affecting the inanimate world, so that “the earth will be filled with knowledge of G-d”.

The Previous Rebbe discusses this in a discourse (of 1949) and asks the question why, if “the earth will be filled with knowledge of G-d”, would there will be any need for a King? Surely every person would act in a correct way, due to their own personal inspiration. Yet Jewish sources speak emphatically about ‘the King Messiah’.

He explains that there are two aspects to Moshiach. One is that he will be a teacher giving knowledge and inspiration, through his closeness to the people, with mutual love and endearment. The other is that he will be a King, supremely exalted beyond the people, who will be obeyed not because of one’s understanding of his commands, but from a sense of awe and submissive obedience.

The source of both these aspects is in the Torah. On one level, Torah teachings can be understood rationally, and are inspiring and evoke enthusiastic

¹ *Venacha Alav 5725* edited by the Rebbe in 1987

commitment. On another level, the essence of the Torah is entirely beyond one's understanding.

In the future, with the coming of Moshiach, both aspects of Torah will be revealed. Moshiach as teacher will communicate those aspects of Torah which can be grasped, including even those which can only be transmitted through the power of Sight². This will be through Moshiach acting as a Teacher. But in addition to what he can directly communicate, Moshiach will have immense wisdom which is beyond the kind of communication which connects teacher and pupil. This higher level he will transmit to others through his relationship with them as King. He will be able to transmit unfathomable knowledge in a transcendent way, across the gulf which divides and yet also links king and subject.

The Previous Rebbe explains that the power of Moshiach to teach - whether as Teacher or as King - derives from the fact of the Jewish people enduring centuries of Exile. During the darkness and concealment of the Exile, the quality which has become most pronounced is the attribute Netzach, Victory or Endurance. This is the attribute which has enabled the Jewish people to cling to Judaism with *mesirat nefesh*, dedicated readiness for self-sacrifice, despite the challenges they have faced.

The Kabbalists tell us that the attribute Netzach is rooted in the very Essence, beyond all the other Sefirot. Relating to G-d at this exalted level is the key to the exalted revelations which will be disclosed by Moshiach, both as Teacher and especially as King. Hence facing the challenges of Exile is the key to the spiritual revelations of the future.

Further, this helps us understand the true nature of existence. The Arizal tells us that before Creation, the radiance of the Ein Sof was so intense that there was no 'room' to create a finite universe. So G-d brought about the Tzimtzum, (generally explained as 'veiling' but literally 'contraction'³ of the Divine radiance) so that the finite universe could be created.

Before the Tzimtzum, G-d was the obvious (and only) reality. In the downchaining spiritual worlds created after the Tzimtzum, and especially in our physical world, the obvious reality is Existence, and one needs to ponder, contemplate or meditate in order to appreciate the presence of the fathomless Divine.

² We generally acquire knowledge of Torah by hearing words (which might be written down, but primarily we hear them). Chassidic teachings present the idea that in the time of Moshiach we will be able to gain knowledge of Torah in a more direct and immediate way, through the power of Sight.

³ Kabbalists after the Arizal disagreed on the understanding of this word. Many claimed one cannot say that G-d 'contracted' His radiance, rather that it was *veiled*.

In our time of Exile, we indeed can indeed achieve profound intimations of the Divine. But they all relate to the Divine as revealed in the downchaining worlds. By contrast, in the time of the Temple, when one entered the Temple there would be a sense of the Divine as before the veiling of the Tzimtzum.

When Moshiach comes, the Divine will be apparent, not only in the rebuilt Temple, but everywhere. Then it will be appreciated that the inner purpose of the Tzimtzum was that the Essence of G-d, as before the Tzimtzum, would be fully revealed in our finite domain.

The teachings which Moshiach will present – including those taught by ‘Sight’ - will reveal the levels of G-dliness implicit in existence, to the highest levels of holiness, and the more exalted level of his communication, expressed by the fact of his being King, will reveal the Essence of the Divine before the Tzimtzum.

The key to this revelation of the Essence in the time of Moshiach is the dedication and *mesirat nefesh* of the Jewish people today: clinging to Jewish identity and to observance of the Mitzvot of the Torah, despite the pressures to conform and to live in the same way as other people.

Hence, concludes the Rebbe, two complementary aspects of Divine service are required today: the study of the inner dimension of Torah, which reveals G-dliness in the way similar to the way that the teachings of Moshiach will reveal G-dliness, Moshiach as Teacher, and also *mesirat nefesh* for the observance of the Mitzvot, which links us to the Essence of the Divine, as it will be revealed by Moshiach as King.

Torah teachings are holy – please treat these pages with care