

The Rebbe's Discourses

Summaries of points from the Rebbe's Chassidic Discourses בלי אחריות כלל וכלל

פרשת נח תשכ"ז ד"ה והיה מידי חודש בחודשו בלתי מוגה

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TRAVELLING ON CLOUDS

THE HAFTORAH² TELLS US THAT WHEN THE MESSIAH COMES PEOPLE WILL FLOCK TO THE REBUILT TEMPLE every Rosh Chodesh (New Moon) or even every Shabbat. Previously, in the times of the First and Second Temples, they would come only for the three Pilgrim Festivals: Pesach, Shavuot and Succot. The Sages ask how people will be able to make this lengthy journey so frequently, and their answer that we will “travel on clouds”³ suggests that there will be new forms of transport, as indeed there are now.

But why, in the time of the future Temple, will people come more frequently than ever before?

To answer this question we have to consider the nature of existence: what is the difference between ordinary weekdays, Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, Festivals? Then we can understand why in earlier times the three Festivals were the main time for pilgrimage to the Temple, whereas in the future every Shabbat will also be such a time.

From the point of view of Chassidic teaching, existence is an expression of the Divine. At some times this is more obvious than others. On ordinary week days, the Divine source of all being is hidden. The Divine energy at this time is from the Name Elokim, which in Hebrew has the same numerical value (86) as the word *hateva*, Nature. The fact of having the same numerical value expresses the idea that G-d is hidden in Nature.

¹ Maamar Vehaya miydei Chodesh BeChodsho 5727 (1966). It was not edited by the Rebbe.

² Isaiah 66:23. This Haftorah is read whenever Rosh Chodesh falls on Shabbat.

³ Yalkut Shimoni to Isaiah para. 503.

When the Torah in Genesis describes the six days of Creation, it uses only the Divine Name Elokim. Later, when presenting in more detail the task of man and woman in the world (2:12), it uses the Name Hashem (the Tetragrammaton). This is because the task of the Jewish people, on behalf of all humanity, is to reveal the G-dliness which is hidden in existence.

They do this by their activities during the week: both the Mitzvot they perform, and also their daily work. In the open presence of the Divine, one cannot work, just as a person cannot do ordinary work while they are in the Throne Room in the direct presence of the King. But during the week, the Divine Presence is hidden, so one is able to work.

On Shabbat the situation changes. The energy comes more directly from the Divine Name Hashem, the ineffable Tetragrammaton. There is much more awareness of the Divine. Hence, on Shabbat, weekday work is forbidden. Rosh Chodesh is also a time when the Divine is more revealed and more accessible, although not so much as to prevent our working. Hence Rosh Chodesh has a special quality but most kinds of work are permitted.

On Festivals, again, the ineffable Divine Name is expressed. But now there is a further component: Revelation. It is this heightened sense of Revelation of G-d which is the key to our flocking to the Temple, where we tangibly experience the sense of holiness.

This gives us the answer to our question. When the Messiah comes there will be a profound spiritual transformation of existence, on all levels. As a result, the sense of direct Revelation of G-d will be experienced not only on Festivals, but also on Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat. Hence these days too will be times to visit the Temple. Even on the ordinary days of the week, there will be an added sense of closeness to G-d. For in the time of the Messiah, all aspects of revelation of the Divine will be moved to a higher and more inward level⁴.

Today too, when studying the inner dimension of Torah, Chassidic teachings, we can gain an intimation of this revelation of the Divine.

Despite the intense Divine revelation in the time of the Messiah, we will still be able to live our daily lives. But as we draw near to Shabbat, or even the milder Rosh Chodesh (when work is permitted) – we will come to the Temple, by car, train, plane or as the Sages put it, travelling on clouds.

[Torah teachings are holy – please treat these pages with care](#)

⁴ See Pri Etz Chaim, Gate of Reading the Shema, ch.15.

