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Sanhedrin Daf 98

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Mashiach

And Rabbi Abba says: There is no sign that the end is approaching that is clearer than *Eretz Yisroel* giving tremendous fruit. This is as the verse says: *And you, mountains of Israel, you should give your branches and carry your fruit for My nation Israel.*

Rabbi Elozar says: There is no sign clearer than the following verse: *Because before those days there will be no wages for people or animals, and for those exiting and entering there will be no peace from the narrowness (i.e. difficult situation).* What does the verse mean when it says, *And for those exiting and entering there will be no peace from the narrowness?* Rav says: Even Torah scholars, regarding whom it says peace, as the verse says: *there is much peace for those who love Your Torah,* will not have peace because of the narrowness. Shmuel says: Until all the market prices are even.

Rabbi Chanina says: *Mashiach* will not come until a fish is sought for a sick person and will not be able to be found. This is as the verse says: *Then I will sink their waters, and I will lead their rivers like oil.* The verse then says: *On that day I will raise the “horn” (status) of the house of Israel.*

Rabbi Chanina says: *Mashiach* will not come until there is no longer even a lowly kingdom for Israel. This is as the verse says, *And they will cut off the vines with a tool (used for this).* The verse then says: *At that time they will bring a present to the Lord of Hosts with a nation that was pulled and plucked.*

Zeiri says in the name of Rabbi Chanina: *Mashiach* will not come until haughtiness seizes to be present amongst *Yisroel*. This is as the verse says: *For then I will remove from amongst you the ones who are happy with haughtiness.* The verse continues: *And I will leave in your midst a poor nation, and they will be covered in the name of Hashem.*

Rabbi Simlai says in the name of Rabbi Elozar the son of Rabbi Shimon: *Mashiach* will not come until there are no more judges and policemen (i.e. enforcers of *beis din's* law) amongst *Bnei Yisroel*. This is as the verse says: *And I will return My hand on you, and I will purify your impurities like using soap...And I will return your judges.*

Ulla says: Yerushalayim is only redeemed with charity. This is as the verse says: *Tzion will be redeemed with judgment, and its captives with charity.*

Rav Pappa says: If haughtiness is nullified, this means there are no more warlocks. If there are no more judges, there are no more gentile judges who persecute Jews. If haughtiness is nullified, this means there are no more warlocks, as the verse says: *and I will purify your impurities like using soap and I will remove all of your judges.* If there are no more judges, there are no more gentile judges who persecute Jews. This is as the verse says: *Hashem has removed your judges; He has removed your enemies.*

Rabbi Yochanan says: If you see a generation that is dwindling, wait for it. This is as the verse says: *And a poor nation you will redeem.*



Rabbi Yochanan says: If you see a generation that numerous troubles come over it like a river, wait for it. This is as the verse says: *For it will come like a narrow river, the spirit of Hashem will wear it away.* The verse then says: *And a redeemer will come to Zion.*

Rabbi Yochanan says: *Mashiach* only comes to a generation that is totally innocent or totally guilty. He comes to a generation that is totally innocent, as the verse states: *And your nation is all righteous, forever they will inherit the land.* He comes to a generation that is totally guilty, as the verse states: *And he saw there was no man, and he was stunned for nobody met him.* The verse continues: *For My sake I will do this.*

Rabbi Alexandri says: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says that there is a contradiction in the verses. One verse says the redemption will be *in its time*, and another verse says, *I will hurry it!* [He answered] If they deserve it, I will hasten it. If they do not, it will come in its time.

Rabbi Alexandri says: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says that there is a contradiction in the verses. The verse says: *With the clouds of the heavens, like a man (Mashiach) he will come.* The verse also says: *He is poor and riding on a donkey.* [He answered] If they deserve it, he will come riding on the clouds. If they do not, he will come on a donkey.

The Queen of Sheba said to Shmuel: You say that *Mashiach* will come on a donkey. I'll send him my best horse! He replied: Do you have a one hundred color horse? [He implied that *Mashiach* will have a special donkey. Rashi explains he just told her this to push away her question.]

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi found Eliyahu by the opening of the cave where Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was buried. He asked Eliyahu: Will I go to the World to Come? Eliyahu answered: If this master (*the Shechinah*) wishes. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: I saw two, but I heard three (*as the*

Shechinah also replied). He asked Eliyahu: When is *Mashiach* coming? He replied: Go ask him. He asked: Where is he sitting? He replied: In Gan Eden opposite the gate of Rome (*see Rashi*). He asked: How will I recognize him? He answered: He sits between poor sick people. They all undo all of their bandages and tie them again at once; *Mashiach* unties and ties one wound at a time. He replied: Perhaps I should go implore him not to wait to come. He went to *Mashiach*. He said: *Shalom Alecha Rabbi u'Mori* ("peace unto you, my master and teacher"). *Mashiach* said: Peace unto you, son of Levi. He said: When are you coming? *Mashiach* replied: Today. Rabbi Yehoshua went to Eliyahu. Eliyahu said: What did he say to you? He replied: He said: Peace unto you, son of Levi. Eliyahu said: He has promised that you and your father will have a portion in the next world. Rabbi Yehoshua said: He lied to me, as he said that he is coming today, and he did not come! Eliyahu replied: He meant, *today if you will listen to His voice.*

Rabbi Yosi ben Kisma's students asked him: When is *Mashiach* coming? He said: I am scared that you might ask that I should give you a sign. They answered: We are not asking for a sign. He said: When this gate (*of Rome*) will fall, be built again, fall again, be built again, and fall again, and they will not be able to build it until *Mashiach* comes. They said: Our teacher, give us a sign! He said: Didn't you say you are not asking for a sign? They replied: Even so, give us a sign. He said: If so, the waters of Pamyais should turn to blood, and they did. When he died, he said to them: Make my grave deep in the ground, as there is no palm tree in Babylon that the tail of a horse is not connected to it, and there is no casket in *Eretz Yisroel* that a horse from Madai does not use to eat straw.

Rav says: *Mashiach* will not come until the evil kingdom will spread over Israel for nine months. This is as the verse says: *Therefore he will put them until the time that the one who gives birth will give birth, and the rest of his brothers will return to Bnei Yisroel.*



Ulla says: He should come, but I should not see him. Rabah also said this. Rav Yosef says: He should come, and I should merit sitting in the shade of the dung of his donkey.

Abaye asked Rabbah: Why do you say that you should not see him? If you mean because the time before *Mashiach* will be difficult (*known as "chevlei Mashiach" -- "the pain before the birth of Mashiach"*), this is against a *braisa*. The *braisa* states: Rabbi Eliezer's students asked him what a person should do in order to be saved from *chevlei Mashiach*. He answered: They should involve themselves with Torah study and acts of kindness. Being that you (*Rabbah*) are someone who has both of these merits, why would you worry about *chevlei Mashiach*?

Rabbah answered: Perhaps my sins will make me unworthy. This is as stated by Rav Yaakov bar Iddi. He asks: The verse says: *And behold I am with you and I will guard you everywhere you go*. The verse also says: *And Yaakov was very scared, and this pained him*. (*Why would he be scared if Hashem said he would be with him?*) It must be that he was worried his sins would cause him to be unworthy. This is as the *braisa* states: *Until you nation passes, Hashem*. This refers to *Bnei Yisroel* entering *Eretz Yisroel* for the first time. *Until he will pass, this nation You have acquired*. This refers to them entering a second time (*in the time of Ezra*). This shows that *Bnei Yisroel* originally were deserving of having miracles happen when they entered *Eretz Yisroel* for the second time, just as many miracles happened for them the first time. However, their sins caused them to be found unworthy for these miracles.

Rabbi Yochanan also said: He should come, but I should not see him.

Rish Lakish asked him: Why do you say this? If it is because the verse says: *Like a man will run from a lion and a bear will greet him, and he will come home and lay his hand on the wall and a snake will bite him*, I can show you similar occurrences now. When a person goes into the field and

meets the one who measures the borders of the fields, it is as if he meets a lion. When he goes into the city and meets the tax collector, it is as if he meets the bear. When he goes into the field and sees his sons and daughters starving from hunger, it is as if he is bitten by a snake.

Rather, Rabbi Yochanan said this is because of the verse: *Please ask and see if a boy was born, why is every man with his hands on his sides like a woman giving birth, and all faces have turned green?* What does the verse mean when it says, *I saw every man?* Rava bar Yitzchak says in the name of Rav: This refers to the One who all strength is His. What does it mean: *And all faces have turned green?* Rabbi Yochanan says: The ones on high (*angels*) and the ones below (*Bnei Yisroel*).

Hashem said: These are both My handiwork. How can I destroy one before the other? Rav Pappa says: This is like people say: When the ox runs and falls, a horse is put in his place.

Rav Gidal says in the name of Rav: *Bnei Yisroel* in the future (*time of Mashiach*) will have plenty.

Rav Yosef asks: This is obvious! Who else should benefit from this time, Chilik and Bilik (*fictitious names*)?

The *Gemora* answers: Rav Gidal is excluding the opinion of Rabbi Hillel who says that *Mashiach* will not come, as he was already in time of Chizkiyah (*and did not come*).

Rav says: The world was created in the merit of David. Shmuel says: It was created in the merit of Moshe. Rabbi Yochanan says: It was created in the merit of *Mashiach*.

The *Gemora* asks: What is the name of *Mashiach*? The academy of Rabbi Shilo says: His name is Shilo, as the verse says: *Until Shilo will come*. The academy of Rabbi Yanai says: His name is Yanun. This is as the verse says: *His name should be forever, before the sun his name is Yanun*. The



academy of Rabbi Chanina says: His name is Chanina, as the verse says: *That I will not give you Chanina*. Some says his name is Menachem ben Chizkiya, as the verse says: *For far is it from me Menachem, the one will returns my soul*. The Rabbanan say: His name is the leper of Rebbi's house. This is as the verse says: *Indeed our sickness he carries and our disease is their burden, and we have considered him afflicted, hit by Hashem and pained*.

Rav Nachman says: If he is alive, it is someone like me. This is as the verse says: *And his officer will be from him, and his ruler will come from his midst*. Rav Chiya says: If he is alive, it is someone like Rebbe. If he is dead, it would be someone like Daniel.

Rav Yehudah says in the name of Rav: Hashem, in the future, will give them another King David. This is as the verse says: *And they will serve their G-d and David their king that I will establish for them*. It doesn't say that I established, but rather that I will establish.

Rav Pappa asked Abaye: Doesn't the verse say: *And My servant David will be their king forever*?

Abaye answered: This is like a Caesar and half Caesar. [*The new David (Mashiach) will be king, with the old David second in command.*] (98a – 98b)

DAILY MASHAL

Removing the Barriers

Rav says: *Mashiach* will not come until the evil kingdom will spread over Israel for nine months. This is as the verse says: *Therefore he will put them until the time that the one who gives birth will give birth, and the rest of his brothers will return to Bnei Yisroel*.

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This *Gemora* is puzzling. How can one express reluctance to greet the redeemer of the Jewish People because of fear of sin? It would appear that the opposite is true. If one actually merits seeing the *Mashiach*, this should be an indication that he is righteous and not sinful.

The *Gemora* brings a proof from Yaakov. Hashem promised Yaakov that he will be protected, and when he heard that Esav was on his way, he became afraid. Is it possible that Yaakov was afraid after Hashem assured him that no harm would befall him?

The *Gemora* states:¹ It was taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Simai says: It is stated,² and I shall take you unto me as a people. And it is stated in the very next verse,³ and I shall bring you to the land [of Israel]. By placing these two verses in juxtaposition, [the Torah] thereby compares [the Israelites'] exodus from Egypt to their coming to the land of Israel. Just as their coming to the Land was realized by only two survivors out of six hundred thousand, so too their exodus from Egypt was realized by only two survivors

¹Sanhedrin 111a

²Shemos 6:7

³Ibid verse 8

out of every six hundred thousand. Rava said: and so it will be in the Messianic Era, as it is stated,⁴ and she will be humbled there as in the days of her youth, and as on the day she came up out of the land of Egypt.

In a previous discourse,⁵ we commented on the profundity of this *Gemora* in regard to the realization of the final redemption. Here we have an added dimension. Not only do we not know who will merit the redemption, but even those who would appear to be deserving of the redemption fear that they are lacking because of some unknown sin. What is the premise for this fear? It appears that the righteous are preoccupied with self-improvement. Dovid Hamelech said,⁶ for I recognize my transgressions, and my sin is before me always. This statement was not declared out of guilt. Rather, it was an acknowledgement of his status in his relationship with Hashem. This is ultimately the position where we have to place ourselves. When Yaakov saw Esav coming to attack him, he did not begin to cower and doubt if he was strong enough to face his brother who was coming with four hundred armed men. Rather, Yaakov conducted his life with the basic principle that everything comes from Hashem, and if Esav is suddenly allowed to infiltrate his camp, then he must examine his actions to determine if he is lacking. Similar to this, the *Gemora*⁷ records: When Yaakov, lying on his deathbed, wanted to reveal the final redemption to his sons. Hashem removed the Divine presence from Yaakov, thus rendering him unable to perceive the future. Yaakov questioned his sons, “perhaps there is a sin amongst you”? They responded,⁸ “hear O Israel, Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is the One and Only. Just like in your heart there is only One, so too in our hearts there is only One”. It is clear that Yaakov sensed that the obstacle to revealing the redemption was sin. If Hashem would not allow the redemption to be disclosed at that time, it was not because the redemption was to remain concealed. It was due to a

deficiency in the twelve sons of Yaakov. Their response was a reaffirmation in the oneness of Hashem. If our introspection would lead us to reaffirm the Oneness of Hashem, we would certainly merit the redemption immediately. The forces of evil prevent us from expressing that Oneness, as is stated in the *Gemora*,⁹ Rabbi Alecsandri, upon finishing his prayers, declared, “Master of the world, it is revealed and known to you that our desire is to fulfill your will. Who is preventing us? The yeast in the dough (a reference to the evil inclination¹⁰) and the enslavement to the kingdoms. May it be your will that you shall deliver us from their hands, and we will return to perform your statutes with a complete heart.

If we truly desire the final redemption, it is time to reflect on our relationship with Hashem, and remove the barriers that prevent us from performing His will. When we do that, we will certainly merit the coming of *Mashiach*, speedily in our days.

⁴ Hoshea 2:17
⁵ See Parasha Vaera
⁶ Tehillim 51:5
⁷ Pesachim 56a
⁸ Devarim 6:4

⁹ Berachos 17a
¹⁰ Rashi Ibid s.v. Seor shebisah