

TWO BEGINNINGS

When will Moshiach come? It's one of those core, existential Jewish questions that just don't go away.

But what's even more puzzling is the basic premise of this age old dilemma. Don't we know that Moshiach could come any minute? What's more, we're instructed to daven, hope, and literally anticipate Moshiach's arrival every second. This building block of Yiddishkeit is one of the 13 *Ani Maamin*, recognized universally among Yidden for generations as the fundamentals of Jewish belief.

So why do we ask when will Moshiach come?

TISHREI OR NISSAN?

There are certain times of the year that we know to be especially auspicious for Moshiach's coming. The first place we see this, is in a machlokos between two Tannaim. The first opinion, Reb Eliezer, holds that although the first Geulah of Yetzias Mitzrayim happened in Nissan, nevertheless the final Geulah – Moshiach's coming – will happen in Tishrei. The other Tanna, Reb Yehoshua dissents: he says that just as the first Geula of Yetzias Mitzrayim took place in Nissan, so too the final Geulah will occur in Nissan.

Chassidus provides us with an insightful explanation into this machlokes, by first explaining the difference between Tishrei and Nissan.

Tishrei is distinct for having in it the Yomim Noraim; Rosh Hashona is the day of the creation of man and Yom Kippur is the day of Teshuva and Kaparah.

In other words, Tishrei is the time of year in which the world, and all the creations of the world, have their opportunity to shine. If one slipped and did not act appropriately they now have the opportunity to rectify

their misdeeds and start over again.

On the other hand, Nissan is the time we commemorate Yetzias Mitzrayim. During Yetzias Mitzrayim the Yidden were not on an especially high spiritual level. In fact, Chazal say, "Just as the Egyptians were idol worshippers, so too there were Jews then who were the same". And yet Hashem took us out of Golus. So Nissan is a time when Hashem assumes the role of caregiver, so to speak – irrespective of behavior.

FROM ABOVE AND BELOW

In Chassidus, these two forms of Hashpa'ah – Hashem giving to us – are known by the names "*Isarusa Dil'eila*" and "*Isarusa Dil'sato*".

The first form of Hashpa'ah is a direct result of ones achievements. When a Yid gives Tzedokah, learns Torah, or helps another person perform a Mitzva, his or her actions 'trigger' Hashem to want to give.

The second form is completely independent of our actions. Despite a person's total inaction, lack of Mitzvos, learning Torah and the like, Hashem provides Hashpa'ah nonetheless. (This is also the reason why someone can suddenly be inspired, although he didn't put any effort into it).

Each form of Hashpa'ah has an advantage over the other. When a person works and earns something, he can relate to it; it really becomes his. He takes ownership. On the other hand, if he hasn't earned it, he doesn't feel a connection to it and it would be like a foreign concept. In Avodas Hashem, this means that Elokus which is revealed through the person's Mitzvos actually unites with the person. His body and talents, intellect and emotions, are permeated with Elokus.



On the other hand, this type of Hashpa'ah also has a disadvantage: the level of Elokus that he'll reach and reveal will only be that which a finite being can reach and relate to.

However the other form, "*Isarusa Dil'eila*, is the exact opposite. When Hashem chooses to provide Hashpa'ah to the world (as opposed to when it's earned), He can give to it regardless of what level the world is on, and He can give as high a level of Elokus as he wants, since it was not earned. The disadvantage of this is that it doesn't unite, permeate, and relate to the person on the same degree. It doesn't become his.

TRAPPED!

We can better understand this with the following analogy, of a person trapped in a pit: His first instinct is to lunge for a rope or ladder, grab a foothold or any other method which will enable him to make a safe exit. But only an object within reach will be of help, anything beyond that will not help him get out (*Isarusa Dil'sato*). But if there is someone outside the pit who can pass him an object with which to find his way out – his options are nearly limitless (*Isarusa Dil'eila*).

This is precisely the difference between Tishrei and Nissan. Tishrei is Avodas Hateshuva, the effort and work of people, creations. That is also why Tishrei is the creation of the world, the level of Elokus expressed at that time of year is one that relates to, and is limited to the world and nature. By contrast, Nissan is the time of miracles – Yetzias Mitzrayim. In other words, the level of Elokus revealed at this time of the year, is not limited to the world, to the rules of nature; truly a time for miracles.

TWO APPROACHES MERGE

The above explanation (of the difference between Nissan and Tishrei) will help us connect another Machlokes between Reb Eliezer and Reb Yehoshua relates to the abovementioned one:

Reb Eliezer holds that when the Yidden do Teshuva, they will be redeemed. Reb Yehoshua says they will be redeemed regardless of whether or not they do Teshuva. Reb Eliezer follows one theme and stays true to his underlying principal throughout: since the Geulah is achieved through Teshuva, it will happen in Tishrei, which is the opportune time for Teshuva. Reb Yehoshua has a different approach and holds that the Geulah will come regardless of our Teshuva. So too, it will happen in Nissan a time of "*Isarusa Dil'eila*".

So which opinion do we follow?

Chassidus explains that the Geula will indeed take place in Nissan, following Reb Yehoshua, and yet at the same time will be achieved through Teshuva, like Reb Eliezer's opinion.

How so?

When Moshiach comes, not only will the highest levels of Elokus will be revealed, but moreover; Hashem Himself will be revealed in a way that is above calling it any specific name or level.

On the one hand, it will be above the work of the creations – Nissan, and simultaneously these rays of Elokus will permeate and unite with the entire world. We will enjoy both; the highest levels of Hashem and the unification of the entire world with Hashem. ■

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