



What's Left

Moshiach will come once everyone does teshuva, is that a reasonable expectation?

In the summer of 5750, Saddam Hussein, the president and dictator of Iraq, accused the neighboring country of Kuwait of “economic warfare.” He claimed they were stealing Iraqi oil by drilling at an angle across the border into Iraqi territory. It was obvious to the world that he was just looking for an excuse to invade Kuwait, and indeed, two weeks later, Saddam Hussein’s forces invaded Kuwait.

The Iraqi army, with one million soldiers, quickly overpowered the 20,000 Kuwaiti soldiers. By the end of the day, Kuwait was completely conquered, and Saddam Hussein declared that it was now a province of Iraq.

That whole summer, and through Teves of 5751, world leaders tried

to get Iraq out of Kuwait peacefully, using diplomacy. Saddam Hussein refused, and he declared that if there were attacks on Iraq by any Country, he would fire missiles at Eretz Yisrael, even though it was in no way party to this whole episode. The missiles themselves were frightening enough; one missile alone could cause great damage. But worse was that he threatened to fire missiles filled with poison gas—weapons of mass destruction—which would cause much greater harm than the missiles themselves, r”l.

In Eretz Yisrael at that time, a certain *rosh yeshiva* gave public speeches talking horribly about B’nei Yisroel and claiming that terrible things would happen to them. At a

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time when the fear of Yidden around the world was reaching its peak, he gave a speech implying that Hashem was going to bring another holocaust on *Klal Yisrael*, r”l.

It was during that time that the Rebbe dedicated a few sichos in response to this rhetoric.

On Asara B’Teves after *mincha*, the Rebbe said a *sicha* addressing these terrible predictions. To preface:

If the world was the way it was meant to be, we would all be in Eretz Yisrael. The *Beis Hamikdash* would be standing, the Kohanim would be bringing *korbanos*, and there would be a king and a *novi* to lead us.

Why is that not how the world looks today? Well, any child could tell you, and indeed we say so every day in davening: “ועתה בעונותינו, חרב בית” —because of our sins, the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed. And as we say in *musaf* on Yom Tov, “ומפני חטאינו, גלינו מארצנו” —because of our sins, we were exiled from our land.

Why were we put into *golus*? Why didn’t Hashem allow us to remain in Eretz Yisroel peacefully, with the *Beis Hamikdash*, witnessing the open miracles that happened there every day? The reason is because the Yidden turned away from Hashem, abandoning his Torah, which brought this *golus* upon us.

So it follows, that in order for *golus* to end and for Moshiach to come, all Yidden must return to Hashem, do *teshuva*, and live their lives according to Torah. Then Moshiach will come and we will be returned to our land. Indeed, as the Gemara says, the time for Moshiach to come is here, all we need to do is *teshuva*.

There is however a slight problem with this. We know that we must

wait for Moshiach to come every day. Not only must we wait for him, but we must expect him to come every day. We wake up every morning and state that Moshiach can come today. Children proclaim “We want Moshiach now!” And, as the Rebbe often said at farbrengens, Moshiach could come during this very farbrengen, while we are sitting here, before we even get up to daven *mincha*!

But look around, how can Moshiach come? Did *Klal Yisrael* do *teshuva* yet? Are all Yidden leading their lives according to Torah? It is unrealistic to think that all of a sudden, in an instant, every Jewish person will suddenly do *teshuva*, and Moshiach will come.

In this *sicha* of Asara B’teves, the Rebbe answered this question. He began with answers that had already been given in the past, and then went on to correct all of our notions about Moshiach and *geula*.

First of all, the Rebbe said, it is indeed possible that *Klal Yisrael* can all do *teshuva*. The Zohar says that *teshuva* can be done “in one moment.” So it is realistic that in one moment everyone will do *teshuva* and Moshiach will come.

Furthermore, there is a *psak-din* in Rambam, that if someone says to a woman “I am marrying you on condition that I am a *tzadik*,” they are considered married and he must give her a *get* if he changes his mind. Even if he was a sinner all his life, we cannot say that the condition was for certain not met. It is possible that at that moment a thought of *teshuva* entered his mind, and that alone would make him a *tzadik*.

Every Yid, at one point in his life or another, entertained the thought of doing *teshuva* and returning to Hashem. Perhaps it was only for one second, and maybe he never acted on it at all, but the fact that the thought entered his mind is enough to cause Moshiach to come.

Then the Rebbe went a step further.

Every Yid descends from Yaakov Avinu. No matter which *shevet* he is from, and more so, no matter what he did all his life. *Rachmana litzlan* to disparage any Yid, saying this one has this *yichus*, and this one another. The *yichus* of every Jewish person is that he is the child of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. And when one belittles another Jew, it is as if he is starting up with the pupil of Hashem’s eye!

For an indication of how Hashem will treat the Yidden, we can take a look at the daily davening. We say in *tachnun* “פדה אלקים את ישראל מכל” —“צרותיו”—Hashem should redeem the Yidden from all their troubles. And then immediately afterwards we say “והוא יפדה את ישראל מכל עונותיו” —He will redeem them from all their sins.

This tells us what the order of the *geula* will be. First Hashem will redeem us from *golus*; not just from some of our troubles, but of ALL our *tzaros*.

He will take us out of *golus*, every individual the way he is—*tzaddikim*, *beinonim*, and the third type—and only then will he redeem us of our sins.

Hashem does not have to wait for Yidden to do *teshuva*. Not for one specific person, or two specific people, or for the whole *Klal Yisrael*. That’s not the *seider* that Hashem chose to implement. Rather, first we will be redeemed from this *golus*, and then of our sins.

May we merit the *geula shleima* speedily in our days. **1**