

BETWEEN GOLUS AND GEULAH

MOSHIACH CONCEALED: WHY AND FOR HOW LONG?

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There is nothing more unsettling to a person than the feeling that he doesn't know what's going on. Over 23 years have gone by since the Rebbe said that everything has been done and all that remains to bring the Geulah is to open our eyes. We hear many asking the unsettling question: "It's been over 20 years—*what's going on?!*"

We find that the Rebbe explains¹ ascending levels of how to relate to things that, the outside, appear to be the opposite of good. Such things may be experienced as painful events (*yissurim*). A higher level is to view the events as a test—a *nisayon*; after sufficiently withstanding the *nisayon* one merits to see the good revealed.

The best approach, explains the Rebbe, is to learn *Pnimitiyus Hatorah*, because it is the fastest way to reveal the good that is hidden within everything, without even needing to withstand *nisyonos*! "Through understanding *Pnimitiyus Hatorah* and the soul of the matter, one is able to see there also the hidden good, even though one does not see this revealed, or one even sees the opposite (the opposite of good)."²

This echoes the words of the *Raya Mehemna* to Rashbi (brought in *Igeres Hakodesh siman 26*) that those who taste from the Tree of Life (the *Zohar* and *Chassidus*) "do not need *nisayon*." Fur-

thermore, the Rebbe says that we must strive to be a *pnimi*, which is accomplished by coming to **understand** what we believe: the *avodah* of drawing *Emunah* into *seichel*.³

We hope, בע"ה, to present the clear explanations of *Pnimitiyus Hatorah* regarding the revelation of Moshiach and the Geulah in a manner which will help us progress from the experience of *nisayon*. Additionally, we hope to contribute to speeding up the Geulah by explaining the topic in a way that our *Emunah pshuta* in the Rebbe's words is drawn into and understood by intellect.

When we understand the *reasons* for the period that Moshiach is concealed, and most importantly **what is the avodah of this period of concealment**, we can come to regard the current situation — as unsatisfactory as it is — in a different light. No longer must we view it as a time of *nisayon* (and surely not as painful *yissurim*), but rather as a **necessary stage in bringing the Geulah in actuality**. By clearly understanding what we need to accomplish during this period in the process of the Geulah, one can leave behind the nagging doubts and proceed confidently in these final moments of *golus*.

1) Likkutei Sichos I:284.

2) Sicha, parshas Chukas, 5751.

3) Kuntres Tisha B'Av, 5751.

By Yaakov Nosson ben Esther

BETWEEN GOLUS AND GEULAH

MOSHIACH CONCEALED: WHY AND FOR HOW LONG?

I. MOSHIACH REVEALED, CONCEALED, REVEALED

Yidden are both “believers, sons of believers”, as well as “a wise and understanding nation”. Our *Eemunah* is a natural attribute of our *neshoma*, but our wisdom is derived from the fact that we were given the Torah. It is specifically through the Torah that we can understand the true nature of what occurs in the world, and draw our *Eemunah* into human intellect.⁴

When discussing Moshiach, the first thing we know is that there is a concept in Torah that Moshiach will appear in the world in a way not recognized by everyone, and then will be concealed before he will again be revealed to all. As Rashi writes at the end of sefer Daniel (12:12): “...our King Moshiach is destined to be hidden after he is revealed and to be revealed again. So we find in Midrash Ruth...”⁵

Seforim describe a dramatic difference between the first time Moshiach is revealed, when “Moshiach will be revealed but they won’t recognize him”, after which “he will be concealed, like Moshe, in body and soul” and the final revelation of Moshiach when “after this, he will be revealed as Moshiach completely and all Israel will recognize him and all Israel will recognize him and gather to him...”⁶

What does the Rebbe have to say about this period of Moshiach’s concealment?

In the brocha before Kol Nidrei, 5727, the Rebbe said “to reveal the true and complete Geulah”, which is printed in Likkutei Sichos with a footnote.⁷ The Rebbe’s footnote states: “In the Midrash Rabba (11:12) revealed and concealed [*nigleh v’nichseh*]. And in the Rambam Laws of Kings assumed and certainly [*b’chezkas*” and “*b’vadai*” —“we can assume that he is Moshiach” and “he is certainly Moshiach”]. And see the known letter of the Rebbe Rashab explaining the different expressions from chazal ‘ben Dovid comes’ or ‘Dovid comes’”.

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- 4) “When *Eemunah* becomes en clothed in the intellect, meaning that the intellect comes to the conclusion that the matter which he believes in is also true according to his intellect,—this is for the sake...that the *emunah* should also be *b’pnimiyus*.” Footnote 33: “Since he knows that the thing is true in essence based on the foundation of his strong *Eemunah*, he is not fearful to delve deeply into the matter and he does not limit the potential of his intellect to delve and seek and consider everything (אינו מגביל את כח שכלו לעיין ולחפש ולסקול כל דבר comes to the truth of the matter.” (Kuntres *Ketz Sam Lechoshech*, Tisha B’Av, 5751, ois 5).
- 5) See also *Rabbeinu Bachya*, *Shemos* 4:9: “The redeemer will be revealed and he will again be concealed...for so we find with the redemption from Egypt that Moshe was revealed to them and he was again concealed from them. And so says the midrash...so did the first redeemer appear to them and was again concealed from them, and once again revealed to them...also the future redeemer [Moshiach] will be revealed and again concealed...” Chasam Sofer, *Zohar Shemos* 7a-9b, Ohr Hachama, Arizal.
- 6) *Zohar Shemos* 7a, quoted in *Sha’ar Hagilgulim* ch. 13, *Arba Me’os Shekel Kesef*, p. 68. Ohr Hachama on the *Zohar*.
- 7) *Hosofos of Likutei Sichos* Volume 9, page 380.

Before looking at the letter of the Rebbe Rashab (which will open for us greater avenues of understanding), let us note that the Rebbe explains this same subject (referring to this same letter of the Rebbe Rashab) that the expression “**ben Dovid**” refers to Moshiach before he builds the Beis Hamikdash and is still “*b’chezkas Moshiach*” and has to fight wars.⁸ “**Dovid**” (no longer “ben Dovid”) refers to Moshiach after he succeeds and “builds the mikdash in his place”, gathers the exiles, and is “Moshiach vada!”⁹

The Rebbe has therefore given us a clear correspondence that “Ben Dovid” is “*chezkas Moshiach*” which is the first time he is revealed, whereas “Dovid” (and “Malchus Beis Dovid”, as we will see from the Rebbe Rashab) is “Moshiach *vada!*” which is when he is fully revealed. Between these two levels of Moshiach’s revelation is the stage of “*nichseh*” (concealed).

Now, let us turn our attention to the “well-known letter of the Rebbe Rashab”.

II. MOSHIACH COMES AND THEN...MOSHIACH COMES ***(LETTER OF THE REBBE RASHAB)***

In this “well-known letter”¹⁰, the Rebbe Rashab makes mention of the same aspects of Moshiach that the Rebbe notes above. The letter brings abundant sources which state clearly that the order of events of the Geulah is that Moshiach comes, builds the Beis Hamikdash, and gathers in the exiles (as is familiar from the Rambam). However, there is a *maamar* of the Alter Rebbe (in the *Siddur im Da”ch*) which states surprisingly that the ingathering of the exiles *precedes* the coming of Moshiach. The Rebbe Rashab resolves this seeming contradiction by explaining that the Alter Rebbe is referring to the “**revelations of Moshiach below**”—that only after Moshiach comes and succeeds in building the Beis Hamikdash and gathering in the exiles will there be the possibility for his kingship—because kingship only becomes relevant after the ingathering since “there is no king without a people” (אין מלך בלא עם), and this is the *inyan* of **Malchus Beis Dovid**, the fully-revealed level of Moshiach.

To clarify: the expression “the coming of Moshiach” (“*bias Moshiach*”) refers to two distinct time periods— a) Moshiach arriving *before* he has done any of his required tasks (building the Beis Hamikdash and gathering in the exiles), and b) the spiritual revelations that take place *after* he has completed his tasks. These correspond to the names “ben Dovid” and “[Malchus Beis] Dovid” as used by chazal.

In the course of the letter, the Rebbe Rashab mentions several important points which will help us understand more about this transition from one period to the other (and how it relates to us in our present situation).

8) LS 18:281, footnote 6, “*b’pnimiyus ho’inyonim*”.

9) See also sicha of 11 Shevat 5721, “that ‘Ben Dovid’ indicates that Moshiach is still not revealed, and how much more so that he is not

empowered and mighty (שאינו בתוקף ועוצם), but when he is called ‘Dovid’, this indicates that the *inyan* of Moshiach is empowered and revealed.”

10) Igros Kodesh of Rebbe Rashab, 1:309.

The Rebbe Rashab describes the spiritual meaning of Moshiach's task of ingathering the exiles: upon the completion of the process of *avodas habirurim* (the refining of the sparks of holiness in creation which fell from *Tohu*), these sparks must be elevated back to their source. These sparks must first be elevated to their source (the "spiritual exiles" are ingathered), after which follow the revelations of *Kesser*, *Chochma*, and *Bina* (the levels of Crown, Wisdom, and Understanding, which we will proceed to translate (imperfectly) as the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind*) — **these are the revelations of Moshiach.**¹¹

Furthermore, these three aspects of the *Supernal Mind* correspond to the three additional lands which Hashem promised to Avraham Avinu—the lands of the *Keni Kenizi* and *Kadmoni*. The "widening of the land,"¹² which expands Eretz Yisroel to encompass the land of all ten nations, means (spiritually) the revelations of these lofty levels in our world, **"and this is the revelation of Moshiach...after the *birurim* are finished...and all of this is explained at length in the discourse [of the Mitteler Rebbe] 'Al Tatzar es Moav'...these are two types of *birurim*, the *birur* of *ohr yashar* [from Above] and the *birur* of *ohr chozer* [from below]".** At this point the Rebbe Rashab mentions two maamarim of the Alter Rebbe: one explains Yosef's dreams of his brothers nullifying themselves to him, the other explains Hashem's desire for a unification of the two directions of Above to below and below to Above.¹³

Thus, the Rebbe Rashab is telling us that there are stages between "ben Dovid" (*b'chezkas Moshiach*, when he is first revealed) and "Malchus Beis Dovid" (*Moshiach vadai*, when he is revealed to the whole world). These correspond to Moshiach's tasks of building the Beis Hamikdash and ingathering the "spiritual exiles". The revelation which follows is called the coming of Moshiach, the revelation of the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind*, the land of all the ten nations promised to Avraham Avinu.

Before we proceed, a bit of clarification is needed for the term "ingathering of the exiles" (*kibbutz goliyos*). There are, in effect, three things which are meant by "ingathering of the exiles":

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- 11) In general, Chassidus addresses the three intellectual faculties as Chabad—*Chochma*, *Bina*, and *Daas*, but in these sources relating to the revelation of Moshiach we find the less familiar combination of *Kesser*, *Chochma*, and *Bina*. Perhaps this is related to the *avodah* of bringing *Emunah* (which is sourced *Kesser*) into intellect [mentioned in footnote above], and further, that it corresponds to the Rebbe's instruction that the "direct way" to bring about the revelation of Moshiach is by *learning* the subjects of Moshiach and Geulah.
- 12) "And when the Lord, your God, expands your boundary, as He swore to your forefathers, and He gives you all the land of which He spoke to give to your forefathers; if you will keep all this commandment to perform it, which I command you this day, to love the Lord, your God..." (Devarim 18:8-9)
- 13) V'Hinei Anachnu M'alimim Alumim (in Torah Ohr) and "V'Samti Kadkod" (in Likkutei Torah). The first maamor describes Yosef's dream (of his brothers' bundles of sheaves bowing down to his, and Yosef's own bundle of sheaves standing taller than all of them) as referring to the process of *birurim*, when all the brothers worked together equally, and that when the *birurim* are finished the brothers must nullify themselves before Yosef (who is revealed to be on a much higher spiritual level) in order to elevate the sparks that they refined, and this is the second *birur*. "V'samti Kadkod" describes how Hashem desires both the special quality of labor from below to Above, and also that of Above to below.

- The spiritual avodah explained by the Rebbe Rashab, gathering sparks of holiness;
- The simple meaning according to words of the *Amidah* "...put a banner (*nes*) to gather our exiles, and gather us together from the four corners of the world to our land" — gathering the entire Jewish people to the land of Israel from which we were exiled;
- An additional simple meaning of the verse which describes Moshiach: **"And He shall raise a banner to the nations, and He shall gather the lost of Israel, and the scattered ones of Judah He shall gather from the four corners of the earth."**¹⁴ (Rashi: "And it shall be for a sign to gather to him and to bring the exiles of Israel to Him as a present"). From this we see that the ingathering of the exiles also refers to the Jewish people ***gathering to Moshiach himself***. Thus, we find that the Rambam¹⁵ refers to the days of Moshiach when "all of Israel has gathered around him" (ויתקבצו אליו כל ישראל).

We will now take things a step further by examining a *maamor* of the Tzemach Tzedek which explains the two ways the *ketz* can come, and how it relates to inheriting the land of ten nations (which takes place *after* the ingathering of the exiles).¹⁶

III. ERETZ YISROEL OF THE GEULAH—7 OR 10 NATIONS?

Having just discussed how the land of Israel will expand to include the land of ten nations (the *Kenit*, *Kenizi*, and *Kadmoni* on the other side of the Jordan river), we will be surprised to find that in Yechezkiel's prophecy of the Messianic future he describes the borders of the land of Israel reaching only as far as the Jordan river!¹⁷ The Tzemach Tzedek examines this difficulty, and explains that it depends on which way the Geulah will come.

As stated in the Gemara, the Geulah can come in one of two ways: either "*B'itah*" or "*Achishena*". The gemara says that it means **"if they merit, 'Achishena' [Hashem will speed it up]; if they don't merit, 'b'itah' [in it's own time, not speeded up]"**. This seems to imply that if our *avodah* doesn't merit a speedy Geulah, we must settle for the a "last chance" or "second best" form of Geulah. The Tzemach Tzedek explains that it indeed depends on the avodah of Yisroel, as mentioned elsewhere (Likkutei Torah, Tazria) that when "the man conceives first a girl is born" (meaning if the awakening to bring the redemption comes from Above, the Geulah which is born is weaker); but, when "the woman conceives first a male child is born" (meaning that if the awakening is from **below**, the result is a strong, enduring Geulah).

Explains the Tzemach Tzedek:

'The man conceives first a girl is born' means the aspect of love in order to receive reward in Gan Eden (al menas lekabel pras)...if

14) Yeshayahu 11:10-12 (Haftorah of Acharon shel Pesach). 15) Laws of Kings and their Wars, 12:3

16) Ohr Hatorah Bereishis, p. 1167.

the *ketz* will come through and awakening from Above in it's time ("b'itah"), then [at the time of the *ketz*] the borders of the land will be as described by Yechezkiel.¹⁶

This first stage, is a lower level, where there are still no revelations of the Geulah (indicated by the borders of Eretz Yisroel being limited to the borders of the seven nations. But there is a more advanced stage, a higher level, when there is an awakening from below:

...but, if there will be an awakening of *Knesses Yisroel* through their own awakening from below¹⁹, this will awaken Hashem to speed up [the Geulah] before its time, which is the aspect of *Achishena*, and then Hashem will widen the borders to include the three nations of *Keni, Kenizi, and Kadmoni*.¹⁶

Furthermore, the borders of the land are not only the physical borders, but the spiritual borders as well, that only an awakening from below can bring about the true revelation of the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind*; however, if the awakening comes from Above, they are not revealed except by being en clothed in the seven *midos* (*Chesed, Gevurah, etc.*, corresponding to the land of the seven nations).

Since the Rebbe Rashab has told us that the revelation of those lands is in fact the revelation of Moshiach down below, it follows that the Tzemach Tzedek is telling us that Yechezkiel is describing the future *ketz* in a way of *B'itah*—lacking an awakening from below, **lacking the revelation of Moshiach!** But we have a question, because the Tzemach Tzedek explains further that the sparks of *Tohu* in these three lands are refined during golus together with the sparks in the other seven lands—meaning that when the *birurim* are finished this includes all the *birurim*. In other words, when the *birurim* of the seven *midos* are completed, so too are the *birurim* of the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind*! If so, then why shouldn't the they be revealed?

The explanation is that their revelation “depends on the actions of those down here (מעשה התחתונים)...if the woman, who is *Knesses Yisroel*, will conceive first with the elevation of the ‘feminine waters’ (העליאת מ"ן) and an awakening from below from below to Above then this will awaken the ‘masculine waters’ (מ"ד) from a very lofty place and a male will be born”.²⁰ While the lands of the seven nations (the seven refined *midos*) can be revealed simply by the fact that *avodas habirurim* is completed, this is not the case with the three aspects of *Supernal Mind*. The revelation of these three aspects require the “*birur sheni*” from below to Above, the *birur* of *bittul* (following the example of Yosef's brothers who bowed down to Yosef in recognition of his lofty spiritual level).²¹

17) Yechezkiel 47:18 (see Rashi there).

18) Sandhedrin 97a.

19) The Tzemach Tzedek, quoting the verse, writes that “the *ketz* will be in a way of *Achishena* because ‘you will keep all the mitzvah’”, implying that the awakening from below is to keep the mitzvos out of love of Hashem and not in

order to receive reward. This will be addressed further later in the kuntres.

20) Note this reference to feminine and masculine waters, the concept of “*halo'as Ma"N* to awaken *Ma"D*”, which the Rebbe explains is our *avodah* now, as will be explained further on.

21) See sicha of Shabbos Chanukah, 5744, ch. 36

At this point we might nervously ask the question: if the Geulah comes *B'itah*, from Above, and we don't have the revelations of Moshiach (the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind*—the land of the three nations), have we lost out, *chas v'sholom*?! The Tzemach Tzedek provides the answer: **“Even according to the prophecy of Yechezkiel about the ketz *B'itah*...afterward in the days of Moshiach, through the *avodah* of Yisroel, they will labor^{21*} and merit after several years to the aspect of *Achishena*, that the lands of the *Ken*, *Kenizi*, and *Kadmoni* will be given to them until the good that was refined from the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind* of *To-hu* will be completely revealed.”**¹⁶

We have now expanded our understanding of the different stages in Moshiach's revelation (“ben Dovid” and “Dovid”, mentioned previously). The Rebbe Rashab connected this to the *inyan* of the land of seven and ten nations, and the conclusion of the first *birur* and the need for the second *birur*, the *inyan* of “bowing down” to Yosef. The Tzemach Tzedek has now explained the *inyan* of the land of seven and ten nations as the completion of the *birurim* before a sufficient awakening from below. This is called *B'itah*—the awakening is from Above, “in order to receive reward”, an incomplete revelation of Moshiach (corresponding to the land of only seven nations).

Having reached this stage (the time when, if necessary, Moshiach is concealed—as alluded to in the Rebbe's footnote) we proceed to *Achishena* through our own *avodah*. What is “*Achishena*”? It is the awakening from **below** in a way of “not in order to receive a reward”. This results in the complete revelation of the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind* and the land of all ten nations—the Geulah in actuality!

“IN HER TIME”: THE AWAKENING FROM BELOW

As the Rebbe Rashab writes in his “well-known letter”, this same concept is explained in the *maamor* “*Al Tatzar es Moav*” by the Mittlerer Rebbe.²² In this *maamor*, the Mittlerer Rebbe provides an exhaustive analysis of the differing opinions as to how the Geulah can come—*B'itah* or *Achishena*—and finally explains that rather than being opposites, *B'itah* and *Achishena* actually go together:

“In it's time I will hasten it”. It is not the moment when there is an awakening from Above, but rather “*B'itah*”, “in her time”, *davka*, meaning that she [*Knesses Yisroel*] will be fitting for the supernal unification from her side, when will be an awakening of *Ahahva*

(Toras Menachem p.715), where the Rebbe explains that Yosef had two dreams: the first dream referring to “matters of the field” meaning that they should be dependent on him in order to acquire grain, etc.. The second dream, involving the heavenly bodies, implies the bowing down of the brothers to Yosef in **the King's Palace** and not only in the field. *V'da*’l.

21*) יגיע — which can be translated as “they will

arrive”, “they will labor”, and “they will touch”. “They will touch” recalls the Rebbe's comments to R' Z.G. after the sicha of 28 Nissan, 5751 “לא נגע ולא פגע”. See also sicha Ki Seitze, 5751, footnote 94.

22) Maamorei Admor Ho'Emtzoi, Devarim, at the beginning. Referenced by the Rebbe numerous times, it was printed as a booklet of its own in 5736.

***Rabba* and true longing on their own (מצד כח עצמם)...and this is what is stated “until it is desirous” (עד שתחפץ)²³ from her own will and desire, for then she is called ‘a desirable land’...“a land that wanted to do the will of her master”...and this is ‘B’Itah’ (‘in its time’) the time of the elevation of Malchus with her own *Ahava Rabba*, when she will desire on her own...²⁴**

When this awakening occurs—our awakening—then “*Achishena*”, Hashem will speed up the revelations of the Geulah in a miraculous way.²⁵

All of the above brings us to understand that the stages in the Geulah, and the stages in the revelation of Moshiach are dependent on *our* actions. ***We ourselves are the ones determining when the Geulah comes!*** (This includes determining when Hashem will desire to hasten it—*Achishena*). After there has been an awakening from Above to bring the *ketz* in a way of ‘*B’itah*’, once *avodas habirurim* is completed, the matter then passes into our hands to reach the level of “a land that wanted to do the will of her master” (not for the sake of receiving a reward).²⁶ This in turn draws down a greater awakening from Above—the true and complete Geulah!

Note how the Mittlerer Rebbe describes the two ways in which we can experience the end of golus:

There is one final *ketz* that will come *b’pooal mamash in olam hazeh*...It can come in two ways: the first is only in physicality, like the great success of Dovid and Shlomo, as it says “there is no difference between *olam hazeh* and the days of Moshiach [other than servitude to the nations]”, as the Rambam writes. The second is spiritually, wherein there is a powerful revelation of G-dly light in the neshomos below like Above, as in “I will pour out My spirit, etc.” and “the Earth will be filled with knowledge [of Hashem], etc.”, “all of them will know Me” ...²⁷

We can see how this corresponds with the two *tekufos* of the Rambam²⁸ as well as numerous statements of the Rebbe in the sichos of “*nun alef-nun beis*” (1991-92) that the final *ketz* has arrived, and despite this we are still in our an internal golus. The *birurim* have been completed, Moshiach has come and started to fulfill his tasks,

23) Three places in *Shir Hashirim* (2:7, 3:5, 8:4—the “three oaths”) referring to while Yisroel is still subjugated to the nations (see Rashi).

24) *Maamar Al Tatzar Es Moav*, pp. 100-101.

25) “...After *kolu kol hakitzin*, the situation of *Achishena* is after the completion of *avodas habirurim*,,,therefore, the only reason we are stuck in golus is a *strange stubbornness of Jews* that for some strange reason they don’t want to shout ‘ad mosai’! (Shabbos Hagadol, 5746, p.53.) “*Ad Mosai*” is clearly and obviously an expression of yearning “from below”.

26) “Moshiach can’t redeem Israel from below...only from Above...there needs to be an awakening from below in order to awaken the *rachamim* from Above, even if the physical Moshiach wants to redeem [them].” (*Ohr Hachama* on Shemos 9a)

27) *Maamar Al Tatzar Es Moav*, p.102.

28) LS 15:417 and 27:191 (printed in *Dvar Malchus* 2 Iyar, 5751, ch. 9). Also see Kuntres #8 in this series: “*Yemos Hamoshiach*—the Days of Moshiach”.

and now the complete revelation of Moshiach depends on our own efforts. In the Rebbe's own words: **"All that I can possibly do is to give the matter over to you. Now, do everything you can to bring Moshiach in actuality...I have done whatever I can; from now on, you must do whatever you can."**²⁹

A REVIEW OF THE PROCESS OF GEULAH

Let us review where we are holding, based on what was explained above, and examine what we need to do to speedily bring to the next stage—the *hisgalus* of Moshiach and the true and complete redemption: The Rebbe's mention of Moshiach being concealed connects to the letter of the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe Rashab's letter addresses the land of 7/10 nations, which connects with the Tzemach Tzedek's *maamor*. That *maamor* speaks of *B'itah/Achishena* and the need for awakening from below, which corresponds with *Al Tatzar Es Moav* of the Mitteler Rebbe. This *hishtalshelus* gives us a full picture of how the Geulah unfolds:

Initial Stage: Once *avodas habirurim* is completed, Moshiach comes in a manner of "ben Dovid", *chezkas Moshiach* whom we can presume to be Moshiach even though we are still lacking the full revelation. Spiritually, this means that the good which has been refined from the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind* of *Tohu* are not revealed, but are en clothed in the "land of the seven nations", meaning the *midos*.³⁰

This resembles the first *tekufa* of the Rambam (explained elsewhere²⁸) which corresponds to a state of Geulah in physical matters, "no difference between *olam hazeh* and the days of Moshiach, etc.", which the Rebbe defines as the freedom to perform Torah and Mitzvos. However, the miraculous spiritual revelations and the "seeing of wonders" are still lacking.

Intermediate Stages: Moshiach fights the wars of Hashem and is victorious, draws the Jewish people back to Torah, builds the Beis Hamikdash *bimkomo* ("in his place", see next section), and gathers in the exiles. This period also includes the stage of *nichseh*, where Moshiach is hidden from the Jewish people and they have to wait for him, as the Rebbe notes: **"one needs to wait for the coming of Moshiach (in addition to believing in the coming of Moshiach—also to wait for him) this is halacha"³¹, and the inyan of halacha is to fulfill it in actuality."**³² (In fact, the place where Rashi comments that "our King Moshiach is destined to be hidden after he is revealed and to be revealed again" is Daniel 12:12—"Fortunate is he who waits".)

The transition to the final stage depends on an awakening from below on the part of the Yidden (a love of Hashem which is not in order to receive reward) through our

29) Sich'a 28 Nissan, 5751.

30) We could explain that these revelations will not have a vessel in which to be revealed. These levels of lofty understanding cannot be revealed in the regular vessels of intellect which we presently possess. Thus, they will

only be revealed in the *midos*, like a person who feels strongly attracted to something, or vehemently against something, even though he doesn't clearly understand why.

31) Rambam, Hilchos Melachim, ch. 10.

32) Kuntres Zos Chanukah 5750, end.

bittul to Melech Hamoshiach, expressed in performance of Torah and Mitzvos *b'hid-dur* (and our efforts to help as many Jews as possible to fulfill them). This serves to bring about an even greater awakening from Above, which takes us to the final stage.

Final Stage: Moshiach is revealed and accepted by the entire world, the *nigleh* that occurs after the *nichseh*, the aspect of “Malchus Beis Dovid”, *Moshiach Vadai*. This is the stage of *Achishena*, when Eretz Yisroel will expand to include the lands of all ten nations, and will be realized spiritually through the revelation of the three aspects of the *Supernal Mind* down below. We will all experience the “coming of Moshiach” down below, the second *tekufa* of the Rambam—literally seeing wonders, G-dliness revealed, culminating with the resurrection of the dead.

ACCORDING TO THE REBBE, WHERE ARE WE HOLDING?

Examining the Rebbe’s words as to where we are holding in the process of Geulah, we see that the Rebbe—in a very clear and precise way—addresses all of the issues.

Avodas Habirurim is finished: “*Avodas habirurim* has already concluded and been completed”.³³

King stands up: “...in our present generation, when many Messianic signs are unfolding. These constitute a clear indication that Moshiach is already present in the world. Moreover, he is already a prominent Jewish leader, ‘a king from the House of David, deeply absorbed in the study of Torah,’ etc.”³⁴

Geulah in physical matters: “...in the present generation...most Jews live in countries whose governments are generous and assist them in the observance of the Torah and mitzvos, allowing them to carry out the inner service that will bring about a personal redemption which, in turn, will hasten the coming of the redemption as a whole.”³⁵

Fights the wars of Hashem: “We actually see how the [ruling of Maimonides that Moshiach] ‘will wage the war of *Hashem*’ and **he will be victorious** has been and is being fulfilled in many respects.”³⁶

Builds the Beis Hamikdash: “...’in his place,’ is a hint to Moshiach’s place in exile—that is, before he achieves the status of *Moshiach Vadai*. While still in exile, Moshiach builds a (small) Temple—a sample and model of the Beis Hamikdash. This is a preparation for the future Beit Hamikdash which will be revealed there first, in exile, and will then return (with G-d and the Jewish people) to Jerusalem....As for Beis Rabbeinu, the number of the House of Rabbeinu is “seven hundred and seventy.”³⁷

Gathers Exiles (sparks): “The *avodah* of the time of golus has already finished in the gathering and collecting (קִיבוּץ וְאִסְיִפָּת) of the sparks in the entire world.” Footnote

33) Sicha parshas Vayishlach 5752, 11, and many places.
 34) Sicha, parshas *Acharei Mos*, 5746.
 35) Sicha parshas *Achrei Mos-Kedoshim* 5751.
 36) Parshas *Chayei Sarah*, 5752, ch. 13.
 37) Kuntres Beis Rabbeinu sh’b’Bavel.

107: “To point out, ‘And behold we are binding sheaves in the middle of the field, etc.’ (*V’hinei anachnu ma’almin alumim b’soch hasadeh*)—which is the matter of gathering and collecting (קִיבוּץ וְאִסִּיפֶת) of the sparks of Holiness.”³⁸

Gathers Exiles (gathering to Moshiach): “The appointing of David, King Moshiach has already taken place, as it is written [Tehillim 89:21] ‘I have found My servant David, with My holy oil I have anointed him.’ The only thing that is [currently] necessary is the acceptance of his kingship by the people.”³⁹

Gathers Exiles (physically, to Eretz Yisroel): “...we see in recent years how the verse ‘and Moshe gathered the Jews’ is occurring literally—the ingathering of the exiles of Jews from all over the world, who are returning to the Holy Land. The [current number of] aliyos [Jews ascending to the Land of Israel] is incomparably greater than those of previous generations.”⁴⁰

Elevation from below (*halo’as Ma”N*): “All matters of *avodah* have been finished...from this it is understood that the continuation of the *avodah* after this (as long as Moshiach is still delayed for some reason (completely unknown and not understood)) is not “*avodas habirurim*” (because *avodas habirurim* has already ceased and been completed), but rather a special *avodah* to bring the revelation in actuality in the world.” Footnote 89: “Like Yaakov after he thought that Esav was already re-fined...he was no longer involved in ‘*avodas habirurim*’, but rather was involved in ‘*halo’as Ma”N* to bring down *Ma”D* of *Tohu*’.”⁴¹

Malchus Beis Dovid: “Parshas Bila’am emphasizes the special uniqueness and completeness of the *Geulah in and of itself*, Malchus Dovid...and Malchus Moshiach who arises from his descendants (even without golus), for in the prophecy of Bilaam the state of golus is not mentioned but rather a state of freedom until the point of rulership over the nations...emphasizing that the *Geulah* of Melech haMoshiach is not only because of the necessity to take Bnei Yisroel out of all the exiles...but as an addition and completion.⁴² In other words: The level of “Ben Dovid” has already occurred, the external golus has ended, what remains is to complete the *Geulah* by the Jewish people and all people of the world gathering to (recognizing and accepting the kingship of) Moshiach.

Land of Ten Nations: “We could say that the opening and the preparation for the *shleimus* of the conquest and inheritance of the land in the time to come ([land of] ten [nations]) is brought about via the settling of the land of Sichon and Og...that a sampling and taste of this revelation (of the three intellectual faculties) occurs through spreading the wellsprings outward (*hafatzas hamaayonos chutza*)”.⁴³

Achishena: “...After *kolu kol hakitzin*, the situation of *Achishena* is **after** the completion of *avodas habirurim*,,,therefore, the only reason we are stuck in golus is a

38) Sicha, Parshas *Vayeshev* 5751.

39) Sicha, Parshas *Mishpatim*, 5751, ch. 10.

40) Sicha, Parshas *Vayakhel*, 5752.

41) Sicha, Parshas *Vayishlach* 5752, ois 11.

42) Sicha, Parshas *Balak*, ch. 7.

43) Sicha, Parshas *Chukas*, 5751, note 35; ch. 9.

strange stubbornness of Jews that for some strange reason they don't want to shout 'ad mosai'!"⁴⁴

The Rebbe (in these sources and many others) is **clearly indicating that the elements of the initial stage of Moshiach have been completed**. The "awakening from Above" that comes about through the completion of *avodas habirurim* and the preliminary "coming of Moshiach" **has been concluded**: ben Dovid is *nigleh*, the *ketz* has arrived "in its time" (*B'itah*), there is freedom from subjugation to the nations, we have reached the level of "the man conceives first a girl is born".

Now we are in the intermediate stage, where Moshiach is concealed (*nichseh*) and it is **dependent upon us** to do the work from "below to Above": awakening the "female waters" (*hala'os Ma"N*) as we bring the world to gather to and accept Moshiach, learning and teaching the subjects of Moshiach and Geulah, making the place where we are "Eretz Yisroel" in order to bring about the revelation of Malchus Beis Dovid, the revelation of the three attributes of the Supernal Mind and the land of all ten nations (both spiritually and physically), all the while asking and even demanding from Hashem to accept all that we have done until now and to bring about the second of the Rambam's stages of *Yemos Hamoshiach*—the miraculous events of the Geulah *Achishena*.

CONCLUSION: IT'S IN OUR HANDS

From all of the above, it becomes clear that there is a process that must take place in order to bring about the Geulah. It begins with the actions which Moshiach must perform (as enumerated in the Rambam³¹), and then reaches a stage when it depends on the Jewish people themselves. Specifically at this point we experience the *nichseh*, the concealment of Moshiach, which firstly brings us to a *nisayon*—testing our *hiskashrus* to maintain our connection with him despite the concealment, etc.

Having said this, the question becomes: how much of this test does one need to endure before it is considered "enough"?!

To understand inner dynamic of *nisyonos*, and the Divine purpose behind them, we have the explanation of the Tzemech Tzedek.⁴⁵ He explains that through *nisyonos* it is possible to elevate sparks of *Tohu* that could not be elevated any other way.

Additionally, the Torah itself says "I am testing you to know" (לדעת), meaning not that Hashem needs to know what we will do when put to the test (for He already knows what will be), but rather that our own hidden potential will come out to the point that we will know our hidden capabilities (meaning that they will be unified and integrated). But more than that, he explains that although the sparks of *Tohu* can be elevated simply by withstanding the test, the Divine intent behind "testing you to know" (לדעת) is to bring it into the *Daas* of the one being tested—this can only take

44) 10 Nissan, Shabbos Hagadol, 5746, p.53.

the *biur* on 190b-191a.

45) Derech Mitzvosecha 185b and on, including

place when there is an *understanding* of the matter. Because the sages say “if there is no *Bina* there is no *Daas*”, meaning that the consciousness of the individual undergoing the *nisayon* can only grow if the test is accompanied by contemplating how Hashem is behind the concealment.⁴⁶

This helps us to understand why the Rebbe instructed that the “direct way to bring about the revelation of Moshiach is through learning the subjects of Moshiach and Geulah”⁴⁷, in way of understanding, especially as explained in Chassidus. Because specifically by understanding these matters intellectually we not only are empowered to withstand the *nisayon* (and thus elevate the sparks of *Tohu*⁴⁸), but more importantly to be **transformed** by the *nisayon*, to reach the level of expanded *Daas* (“I am testing you *to know*”).⁴⁹

This change *in us*, drawing down the *oiros d’Tohu* into the vessels of our *Daas*, is the essential element of this stage of the process of reaching the Geulah, for the Geulah itself is described as the time when “the world will be filled with the *knowledge* (*Daas*) of Hashem, as water covers the sea”. Thus, how much must one withstand the *nisayon* is determined by how well he succeeds at drawing down *Daas* through it. Note what is stated in the Zohar⁵⁰: **“He will do for the one who waits for it’, these are the ones who are exacting about a word of Torah (אינון דדחיקין למלה) (דחכמתא)...”** which the Rebbe *teiches* as **“making an effort and laboring to clarify the truth of a word of Torah until one knows it well—through this that one overcomes the darkness, darkness from within (in intellect or in the feeling of the heart) or from without (the concealment of the world) — he nullifies it, and even more — transforms it to a helper, until darkness is transformed to light...with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu”**.⁵¹ This is *“avodah* which needs to be done with great effort...effort that goes beyond the regular, like the *avodah* of *nisyonos*”.⁵²

Based on the sources we have examined, we find that there is a period when *avodas habirurim* is finished and the final *ketz* has already arrived—in simple language, “the Geulah is here”—and despite all that, there is still no revelation; the world seems to

46) Also explained in ch. 11 of Igeres Hakodesh.

47) Sichra parshas Tazria-Metzora 5751. Also, Balak, 5751; Ki Seitze, 5751; Lech Lecha 5752; Chayeh Sara 5752; Vayetzeh 5752.

48) Since the Rebbe repeated many times that the process of refining the sparks has been completed, we could question that the purpose of the present *nisayon* is for the sake of refining sparks of *Tohu* (as described in Derech Mitzvosecha). Since the Rebbe described the events of Yud Shevat 5710 as such a *nisayon**, and since the Rebbe (in 5751-2) has instructed us that *learning* about Moshiach is the direct way to reveal Moshiach (such a thing we do not find mentioned in the period following Yud Shevat), perhaps we can say that the aspect of *birur* that takes place through the *nisayon* has been completed, and now there is only the

aspect of bringing it into *Daas*.

* See the *hanacha* of the Rebbe’s sichra of parshas Zachor, 5710: **“As to the event which took place, and so on, this is so only in our *fleshly eyes*; it is only a test (one of the tests comprising the birth pangs of *Moshiach* which must precede the coming of the righteous Redeemer), whose function is only to *conceal the truth*... The purpose of this test is that people should strengthen themselves when confronted by it. In this way, the obscurity will be banished and nullified, and the *truth will be manifest*...”**

49) See sichra parshas Balak, 5751 about the connection between *Daas* and learning the subjects of Moshiach and Geulah.

50) Zohar I, 130b.

51) LS 8:359-60.

52) Kuntres 25 Marcheshvan, 5750.

continue in its natural way (*olam k'minhago noheig*). However, by fulfilling the Rebbe's instruction to learn about the Geulah we enable our belief in the Rebbe's words to come into *Daas*. Together with this we can wholeheartedly—and with a *pnimiyus*—fulfil what the Rebbe says is needed: **“that a Jew will agree, and more than that — that he will want and will proclaim that not only ‘the time has arrived for your Redemption’, but rather that simply the Geulah is already present...”**⁵³

HOSAFÁ—THE FALL OF IRAN (PERSIA)

We saw above [quoting both the Tzemach Tzedek and the Mittlerer Rebbe] that if *avodas harbirurim* is finished before there is an awakening from Above (and we saw that this fits how the Rebbe describes our present situation), then there is the “birth of a girl”, meaning the level of “serving the master in order to receive reward”—*al menas lekabel pras*.

“*Pras*” in the Holy Tongue means “prize” or “reward”. “*Paras*” is also the name for Persia, which is the original name of modern-day Iran. The connection between the two is explicit in Chassidus: the *klipa* of *Paras* is the *klipa* of serving Hashem for reward. Specifically, the revelation of G-dliness that the neshoma receives in Gan Eden from the spark of G-dliness that is elevated through the mitzvah.⁵⁴

Thus, at this stage in the process of the Geulah, we are challenged to overcome the *klipa* of *Paras*. Not surprisingly, the world's attention, is focused lately on the threat from Iran (*Paras*) and how to nullify it. We will add to this two interesting sources, and then attempt to explain them according to Chassidus in a way that puts all the pieces of the puzzle together in harmony with the Rebbe's words.

The gemara in Yoma ,10a, states: **“Rebbi states that Rome is destined to fall at the hands of Persia. Rav states that Persia is destined to fall at the hands of Rome.”**⁵⁵ **Can the builders [Persia, who permitted the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash] fall before [at the hands of] the destroyers [Rome, who destroyed the 2nd Beis Hamikdash]? If the King decrees.”**

It will be interesting to discover that this gemara has a connection with the Rebbe's frequent expressions of astonishment that all the work has been done and Moshiach should already be here and it is inexplicable why we are still in golus. We find that this situation is forewarned in the sefer *Yaaros Dvash*⁵⁶ where he comments on the above gemara: **“Moshiach, when he sees the time [of the ketz] has arrived and he is suffering terribly, rushes the Geulah, only that he needs to wait 9 months [of preg-**

53) Sicha of 28 Sivan, 5751.

54) Ohr Hatorah, Bamidbar, Chukas 783a, 790. See also Likkutei Torah Tzaria 20b.

55) Note that the Baal HaTurim writes that **“when Yishmael will fall in the end of days, that is when Moshiach...will arrive”** (end of Chayei Sarah), and the Mittlerer Rebbe writes that although the majority of golus is under Edom,

nonetheless the main thing of the Geulah is the fall of the heavenly *Sar* of Yishmael (Shaarei Tshuva, 90b). This does not contradict what is written here as regards *Paras*, because the Maharal writes that **“*Paras* and the kingdom of Yishmael are one.”** (Netzach Yisroel, ch. 22)

56) Authored by R' Yonason Eibshetz.

nancy] until the Romans will conquer [יתפשטו על] the Persians, which is difficult for Moshiach—the builders [falling] at the hands of the destroyers. And the Holy One, blessed be He, said ‘I have a complaint on Koresh [the Persian King who allowed the construction of the 2nd Beis Hamikdash] for he violated the command and therefore he will be punished, and this is what causes your delay.’”

What is the connection between the fall of Paras at the hands of the Romans and what we learned previously that until there is an awakening from below the Geulah remains incomplete, in a way of “serving the master in order to receive reward”? First let us examine Paras and Edom (Persia and the Romans) according to Chassidus.

We already explained the root of the word Paras is “*pras*”, meaning a reward. The Rambam is clear that serving Hashem in order receive reward is a perfectly kosher stage of Divine service, and this is how children were traditionally trained.⁵⁷ However, this is not the ultimate goal; the ultimate goal is to serve *not* in order to receive reward. The enticement of reward is a great motivating factor, but in the end one was really serving out of self-interest, the pleasure his own neshoma was receiving.⁵⁸

When the time comes to transition to the higher level of serving Hashem *not* in order to receive a reward, the previous level (of *Paras*) must fall. And since the Geulah is connected with this level, it cannot come until Paras falls. But why must it be at the hands of the Romans? And why after *avodas habirurim* is finished (meaning Moshiach should already have arrived, according to the *Yaaros Dvash*)?

“Rome” is Edom (whom our sages liken to a pig), and Edom according to Chassidus is the power of selfish desire.⁵⁹ Paras, while it must fall in the end, is in the meantime capable of bringing a Jew to keep Torah and Mitzvos, even beyond the letter of the law—“building the Beis Hamikdash”, metaphorically speaking. Edom, on the other hand, leads to indulgence in physical pleasures, abandoning Torah and Mitzvos, destroying the Beis Hamikdash. But Edom, the power of desire, can be rectified, and in fact has been, as the Rebbe states “our divine service in the exile of Edom has brought about a refinement (*birur*) in Edom, as our Rabbis say, that ‘in the future the pig will be purified.’”⁶⁰ In Chassidus this corresponds to the burning of the Red Heifer, so that all that remains are the ashes, meaning that the power of desire for forbidden things has been completely nullified and reduced to its pure state, no longer directed towards physical pleasures. Once this occurs, the power of desire (no longer selfish) can be used to serve Hashem. “Through the refinement of the kingdom of Rome, it will be transformed to a helper of holiness...”⁶¹

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- 57) Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Teshuva 10:5. Note that the letters of שָׂכָר, meaning reward or payment, can be rearranged to spell כֹּשֶׁר (kosher). These letters are also the root of כּוֹרֵשׁ, Koresh, the Persian king who preceded Achashverosh (see Rosh Hashana 3b/4a). 59) In the original: כח המתאווה לעצמו ולגרמי. Mitteler Rebbe, Shaarei Tshuva, p.90.
- Also, Daryavesh, the name of 2 Persian kings of that era, has the gematria of 520, which equals 60) Sicha parshas *Vayetzei*, 5751, ch. 8. See footnotes 76 and 78 there.
- שָׂכָר/כֹּשֶׁר (kosher/reward). 61) Sicha parshas *Vayishlach*, 5751, ch. 4.
- 58) The sages tell us that in the future the Persians will come before Hashem claiming “We built bridges, conquered great cities, and made many wars, all in order that Yisroel can engage in Torah.” Their claim is rejected by Hashem: “You intended for your own benefit!” (*Avodah Zora*, 2b/3a)

In terms of spiritual development: Edom, selfish desire, destroys the Beis Hamikdash. The aspect of Paras, serving Hashem for reward, is also essentially selfish, but it is a kosher level in serving Hashem which results in Mitzvah observance⁶² and can rebuild the Beis Hamikdash. Furthermore, it causes the fall of Edom and also (through Torah and Mitzvos) it's rectification. Once Edom is rectified, the power of desire to serve Hashem "not in order to receive reward" can bring about the fall of Paras. This desire is the motivating factor behind the awakening from below that will awaken Hashem to bring about the revelations of Geulah. As quoted above from the Tzemach Tzedek: **"When she [Malchus] will desire on her own."**²⁴ This is why the gemara concludes with the explanation "if the King decrees"— if there is complete bittul to the king, Melech Hamoshiach, so that all that matters is the "decree of the King"⁶³, then Paras falls.

(The importance of being nullified to the King is the entire reason for having a King, as explained in *Derech Mitzvosecha*⁶⁴: **"The King himself is nullified to G-dliness...this is the main thing about a King, the reason he is called Melech (King)...Since the King is nullified to the Kingship of heaven, and the Jews are nullified to the King -- this makes the Jew (via the King) nullified to G-dliness."**⁶⁵)

All of this explains why there is today a focus on the danger from Iran (Paras). It is like what the Rebbe said in 1991⁶⁶ regarding the events in Iraq (Bavel), that they were intended to awaken and guide us to fight the spiritual Bavel (confusion in Divine service): **"[The] underlying purpose [of the klipah of Bavel] is that every individual should master it. G-d will help - but only help - in this endeavor. Our own exertion is crucial, so that we will not benefit from 'the bread of shame,' but rather will carry out our Divine service on our own initiative and in this manner become G-d's partner in creation."** Surely the Rebbe expects us to apply this to the *klipah* of Paras and the situation with Iran—and, as we have seen above, this will bring the revelation of Melech Hamoshiach and the true and complete Geulah in its fullest measure!

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- 62) See Rosh Hashana 28a, about a man forced by Parsim to perform the mitzvah of eating matzoh.
- 63) "There is a second level of Mitzvos which is from the essence of performing the mitzvah alone, even without intent and reason and secrets at all. Which means not for the sake of tikkun or refinement of the 288 sparks at all, but rather only because He said and His will is done. Because this is the essence, similar to the Mitzvos we will do in the time to come which are above the level of refining sparks." (Toras Chaim, Beshalach 312). And see *Derech Mitzvosecha*, *Mitzvas Minui Melech*, that through bittul to the King there is bittul to Hashem.
- 64) *Mitzvas Minui Melech*, p. 108a-111a.
- 65) And further: **"In the same way that a King here in this world is only a King insofar as his subjects are nullified to him...the decree of the King only applies to matters which go against his subjects' intellect, and only due to his being nullified to the King does he nullify his own will to that of the King...This is called being nullified to that which is above his own wisdom -- that even though the decree of the King doesn't make sense to him, he nonetheless obeys it. He does this because the King thinks it's right and surely the King has a good reason."**
- 66) "Hidden sicha" of Bo, 5751, released in 5763.

**לע"נ האשה בעלת חסד שושנה בת לאון ארי' ע"ה קלעוואן
הקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר**

יהי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד!