

How We Can Bring Mashiach

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We think of Moses as being the ultimate prophet, someone who spoke “face to face” with God and stood between Heaven and earth. Therefore we assume that when he experienced a prophecy, its message and interpretation were obvious to him. Indeed, in this week’s *parashah* Moses states, “*This* is the word that God has commanded” (Numbers 30:2). Rashi explains that only Moses was able to say “*this*,” describing the vision that God had given him with absolute clarity, while the capabilities of the other prophets were much more limited.

Yet even for Moses, there were many prophecies that he

received only from a blurry distance. One such prophecy concerned the plague of the death of the Egyptian firstborn, when he said, "So says God, 'Around *chatzot* (midnight), I am going out in the midst of Egypt'" (Exodus 11:4). Why was this prophecy the one that God chose not to reveal clearly to Moses? And why could God not have revealed the exact time of *chatzot* to Moses?

Reb Noson teaches that the time of *chatzot* alludes to the time of the Final Redemption. Precisely at *chatzot*, many of the great tzaddikim rise to mourn the destruction of the Temple, as our Sages teach, "Whoever mourns the destruction of the Temple will merit seeing its rebuilding." Moses did not know when *chatzot*/the Final Redemption would come; his vision was blurred. And so is ours. We don't know how or when this prophecy will be fulfilled. And we despair: If so many great tzaddikim have served God with absolute piety and righteousness, and still Mashiach hasn't come, how can we merit bringing about his arrival?

Our Sages make a puzzling statement: "Mashiach will not come until we have given up all hope of the redemption" (*Sanhedrin* 97a). The Maharsha explains that the Jewish people will be so downtrodden that it will be beyond the realm of our imagination for Mashiach to arrive. But isn't the belief that Mashiach could come any day one of the fundamentals of our faith? And why would giving up hope bring about his arrival?

In actuality, the Talmud is not talking about us giving up on believing in the redemption. Instead, it refers to us believing that the redemption will come in our merit. We are being taught that God will send the Mashiach because of His righteousness and charity, not because we truly deserve him.

God's exact calculation for the time of the redemption was even beyond the perception of Moses.

We can draw tremendous encouragement from this. For God does not insist that we serve him by becoming spiritual giants, Rosh Yeshivas or Kabbalists. We have already been blessed with those great tzaddikim, and Mashiach still has not arrived. Rather, God asks us to humble ourselves and say, "Even though my actions are lacking and I am not worthy of bringing Mashiach, nevertheless, I will strengthen myself and do what I'm capable of, because I have faith in God's compassion."

For example, if I've wasted time and haven't been diligent during my study session, or if I spaced out for most of *Shemoneh Esrei*, I will make the effort to grasp whatever time I have left to study or pray with concentration, because I trust in God's charity and not in my own merit and power.

If there is one thing that should be obvious to our frail generation, it is that we are completely dependent on God's kindness. Our belief in this last ingredient is exactly what God is waiting for to finally bring us home.

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