



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת a collection of maamarim on
תנא דבי אליהו given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Masei 5765

In this week's portion of Tana D'vei Eliyahu, we learned R. Yehuda's list of phenomena that will occur in דור שבן דוד בא, the generation of Mashiach. R. Yehuda did not provide this list in order to help people calculate the time of the Geula. Chazal in Maseches Sanhedrin, (צו:), state clearly, "תיפח רוחן של מחשבי קיצין", (let the souls of those who calculate the date of the geula, shrivel). R. Yehuda wanted us to know that when we see signs of עקבתא דמשיחא, (the footsteps of Mashiach), we must endeavor to strengthen and repair the aspects of Avodas Hashem that he describes. This will enable us to experience the actual arrival of Mashiach.

The first item in the list was, "בית הועד יהיה לזנות", (the meetinghouse will become a place of promiscuity). The Gaon R. Reuven Margolios, in his sefer, מרגליות הים, brings two wonderful explanations from the Acharonim.

"The Kuntres Zichron Shlomo explains this by referring to an explanation in Maseches Eiruvim of the posuk in Mishlei, "ורועה זונות יאבד הון". (One who consorts with harlots, loses treasure) 'Whoever says, this teaching is pleasing, and this one isn't pleasing, loses the treasure of Torah'. So too, the image of בית הועד, the house where Talmidei Chachomim gather, becoming a place of promiscuity, means that they won't learn Torah in an orderly manner. Instead, they will choose to learn only the portions of Torah that they find pleasing.

This leads to another item on R. Yehuda's list, והאמת נעדרת, explained by R. Yanai, as the truth becoming עדרים עדרים והולכת לה. (different "flocks"



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that disappear). The great Gaon, R. Yosef Shaul Natanzon zt"l, in his sefer, דברי שאול חידושי אגדות, explains that "flocks" represent, הרבה "כתות ומפלגות, וכל אחת תאמר שאך איתה אמת", (many groups and parties, each of which says that they alone represent the truth).

Both of these predictions have been fulfilled in our generation. B"H, we live in an era of Batei Medrash that are full of talmidim and avreichim, who devote themselves to learning Torah. However, we also find the phenomenon of "promiscuity", as Chazal explained it. Many decide to learn only "lomdishe" sugyos, that are the subject of Pilpulim and Chidushim of the great Acharonim. They skip pages upon pages, not only of Agadata, but entire sugyos of limudim and dinim, that don't contain "Lomdishe Yesodos", simply the Pshat of the תורה הקדושה.

The phenomenon of disparate groups, each of whom claims to have a monopoly on the truth, certainly plagues our generation. We should learn the full text of the Divrei Shaul that was referenced in Margalios Hayam.

"In my humble opinion, R. Yanai, who explained האמת נעדרת, as נעשית, is resolving his initial difficulty in understanding Chazal's statement. How could truth possibly disappear? Emes, by its very definition, is clear. Truth is an integral part of the foundation that the world stands on. As we say in Pirkei Avos, (א,י"ז) The world stands on Emes, Din, and Shalom. Could it be possible that Emes would חלילה, entirely disappear?

The concept of truth disappearing, refers to one of the many tactics utilized by the Yetzer Hora. An unscrupulous merchant may coat copper with a thin layer of gold, in order to sell it for a high price. When the coating is applied skillfully, ordinary customers won't be able to distinguish the plated copper from real gold.

So too, the Yetzer Hora disseminates multiple lies, but coats them with a patina of truth. We see with our own eyes, that for many years, Am Yisroel have split into different factions, with different approaches. Each



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declares that truth exists only with them. This phenomenon of עדרים, inevitably leads to נעדרת, it becomes difficult to find truth.”

The Divrei Shaul did not mean that people should abandon the Minhagim of their forefathers and Rabbeim, and adopt the Minhagim of other communities. On the contrary, each person should do all that he can to preserve his family Minhagim. By doing so he fulfills the instruction of Shlomo Hamelech, "שמע בני מוסר אביר, ואל תטוש תורת אמך". However, he must know and understand that there are many pathways in Avodas Hashem. Each of them, in their own way, creates a ריח ניחוח, a sweet smell that rises up to the heavens. He should value and honor each Minhag, and each positive act, performed by any community in Am Yisroel.

The Rebbe, the Beis Yisroel of Gur זיע"א, embodied this approach. While meticulously preserving and observing each and every Gerer Minhag, he always wanted to hear and learn about the good Minhagim of other communities.

On more than one occasion, he told me that when he came to Eretz Yisroel with his father, the Imrei Emes זיע"א, he often went to the Old City to learn from the elder chachamim of the Eidot Hamizrach in ישיבת בית א-ל. When his father noticed that his son often disappeared for hours at a time, he asked him where he went. The Beis Yisroel explained, that when he lived in Gur and Warszaw, he had no opportunity to learn the wisdom of Chachmei Hasefaradim. Therefore, every moment that he can spend with them in Yerushalayim is very precious.

He was constantly “thirsty” to learn anything positive from Jews who were part of each and every community in Am Yisroel.

A trustworthy individual told me that he was in the home of הרב חנניה רבי אברהם מנחם זצ"ל, father in-law of the Alexander Rebbe, יוסף הלפרין ז"ל, when the Beis Yisroel זיע"א came to visit him just before Pesach. He said that the Beis Yisroel asked about all of the Pesach Minhagim observed in



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the Alexander community. Rav Halperin was amazed that the Beis Yisroel invested time and effort to learn about Alexander Minhagim, especially since, before the war, there were those among Gur and Alexander, who did not “get along”.

When he asked the Beis Yisroel about this surprising interest in Alexander Minhagim, the Rebbe answered sharply, "ואס איז, אלכסנדר איז חמץ?" (What's the problem? Is Alexander chometz?).

This was his way. He tried to find and learn about the good that exists in each Jew. This is a vital lesson for the days of Bein Hametzarim. As we said above, the phenomenon of each person believing that his way is true, and all others are false, delays the Geula. We must educate our children to value and honor any positive Minhag of any community in Am Yisroel. We should desire to learn and understand each person's Minhagim. If we truly endeavor to see the good and praiseworthy in each community's customs, Hashem will see the good, both hidden and revealed, of each and every Jew, and redeem us speedily, במהרה בימינו, אמן.



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