
Sichos in English Classics 26

**Shabbos
Parshas Devarim**

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9th Day of Menachem Av, 5751 (1991)



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IN PLACE OF AN INTRODUCTION

At the Shloshim of R' Yonah Avtzon A"H, Director of Sichos in English, a resolution was taken to reprint the original weekly Sichos in English publications.

To fulfill this, a weekly booklet including a translation of a *farbrengen* as it was first published will be distributed. Our intention is to reprint the entire set in the near future.

Following the Sichos we will include an addendum with pictures, notes, and insights into the process of its publication.

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SHABBOS PARSHAS

DEVARIM

9th Day of Menachem Av, 5751 (1991)

THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE PRESENT TIME FOR *MASHIACH*'S COMING

1. ¹One of the fundamental aspects of our faith is the belief in the immanency of *Mashiach*'s coming. We must "await his coming every day," which means not only that every day we should wait for his ultimate coming, but that every day, we should expect him to come on that very day itself.

This is all the more relevant in the present era when all the signs that our Sages mentioned in connection with the coming of the Redemption are manifest. In particular, the present days are uniquely appropriate for the coming of *Mashiach*. For our Sages declared that:

A lion (Nebuchadneztar) came in the month whose sign is a lion (Av) to destroy *Ariel* ("the lion of G-d,"

1. This year, the Rebbe *Shlita* delivered a *Farbrengen* on *Shabbos Chazon*, and afterwards, unexpectedly delivered *sichos* on the eve of the eleventh of Av before the evening service and on the eve of the twelfth of Av, after the evening service. Because of the thematic connection between these talks, they were combined and presented as a single unit and revised and edited by the Rebbe *Shlita* in this form in Yiddish.

That publication is presented in this translation. Nevertheless, to allow our readers to appreciate the uniqueness of the Rebbe's addresses on these two weekdays, we have published those two addresses under separate covers and have also presented the concepts in an essay, "The Birthday of *Mashiach*."

the *Beis HaMikdash*), so that² a lion (G-d) will come in the month whose sign is a lion and build *Ariel*.

Furthermore, the name of the month *Menachem Av* stresses that there will be *Menachem*, an act of comfort, for all the negative factors associated with the present day. More precisely, this applies on the present Shabbos which falls on the date of Tishah BeAv itself.

Our sages explain that on Tishah BeAv, *Mashiach* is born. This cannot refer to his actual birth, because *Mashiach* will not be an infant when he redeems our people, but rather to a strengthening of his influence. For our Sages refer to a birthday as a day when *mazalo govair*, “the spiritual source of one’s soul shines powerfully.” On the day when *Mashiach*’s spiritual source is powerfully revealed, there is a unique potential for the redemption to come.

The *AriZal* explains that it is on the afternoon of Tishah BeAv, that *Mashiach* is “born,” and for this reason we recite the prayer *Nachaim*, at that time. Although this year *Nachaim* is not recited on the date of Tishah BeAv itself, since that date is Shabbos, this surely does not detract from the positive influences of that date.³ On the contrary, the Shabbos postpones only the negative factors associated with Tishah BeAv and enhances and amplifies the power of the date’s positive influences.

This is reflected in the name given the Shabbos, *Shabbos Chazon*, “the Shabbos of Vision.” The Berditchever Rebbe

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2. This expression implies that the destruction was merely a preparatory step “so that” ultimately G-d would build “the Sanctuary of the L-rd established by Your hands,” the ultimate *Beis HaMikdash*.
 3. This is understandable, because everything, even the influences of the spiritual realms exists “for the sake of the Jewish people and for the sake of the Torah.” Therefore, every influence must have positive bearing on the fate of our people. This is particularly true of the Shabbos, for Shabbos is described as “the partner of the Jewish people.”

explains that on this Shabbos, every Jew is granted a vision of the Third *Beis HaMikdash*. And similarly, the *Haftarah* recited on this Shabbos concludes with a verse that points toward the redemption, “Zion will be redeemed through judgment, and her captives, through *tzedakah*.”

Similarly, the very fact that Tishah BeAv falls on Shabbos and thus instead of fasting, we are obligated to take pleasure in the foods and beverages served alludes to the redemption. For every Shabbos is a microcosm of “the era that is all Shabbos and rest for eternity” and the Shabbos meals a reflection of the feast to be served on that day.

For that reason, when a fast day falls on the Shabbos, there must be an additional stress on happiness. This is reflected in the third Shabbos meal. Although it is the *seudah hamafsekes*, the meal directly before the Tishah BeAv fast which is usually associated with certain mourning rites, this year, one may serve “a meal comparable to the feasts of King Shlomo.”

Indeed, in regard to a Tishah BeAv which falls on Shabbos, our Sages use the expression, “Since it was postponed, let it be nullified.” On a simple level, it means that since the fast was not observed on its appropriate date, there is reason to suppose that in that year, one need not fast at all. On a deeper level, however, it reflects the potential for the fast to be nullified completely and totally with the coming of the redemption.



THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE OBSERVANCE
BETWEEN TISHAH BEAV THIS YEAR
AND YOM KIPPUR,
THE REVELATION OF THE POSITIVE ASPECTS
OF THE MONTH OF AV ON THE FIFTEENTH OF AV

2. Among the unique aspects of the observance of Tishah BeAv this year is a resemblance to Yom Kippur. In regard to Yom Kippur, it is said, “whoever eats and drinks on the ninth is considered⁴ as if he fasted on the ninth and tenth.” Eating “succulent meat and aged wine” on the ninth of the month, causes G-d to have this considered as a special merit. This concept can also be borrowed in regard to the Ninth and Tenth of Av this year for we eat on the ninth of the month in preparation for the fast on the tenth.

There is an intrinsic bond between the two. The *mitzvos* which the Rabbis ordained, including the communal fasts, are not totally new conceptions, but rather extensions of the *mitzvos* of the Torah. Thus the *mitzvah* of fasting is associated with the only fast ordained by the Torah, Yom Kippur. In particular, the connection shared between that day and Tishah BeAv is unique, for the prohibitions of Tishah BeAv parallel those of Yom Kippur.⁵

There is another connection between the two dates. The positive dimensions of Tishah BeAv are revealed on the

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4. Here we have used a non-literal translation. The Hebrew phrase used is מעלה עליו הכתוב, which means “the verse makes it equivalent.” This expression also has a homiletic meaning. Translated word by word it means, “The verse lifts him up,” i.e., “the verse,” the Torah, elevates the person to a new and higher level of awareness.
5. This year, there is another connection between the two. The fast of Tishah BeAv is observed on a Sunday, a day which, in the narrative of creation, the Torah refers to as “one day” and not “the first day.” Our Sages explained that it was a day of oneness, “G-d was at one with his world.” Similarly Yom Kippur is “once a year,” and is connected with the level of *yechidah*, a rung at which everything is at one with G-d.

Fifteenth of Av, the day when “the moon shines fully,” i.e., all the influences associated with that month are revealed in a complete manner. Thus, it is on the Fifteenth of Av that “the revelation of the Era of the Redemption shines incessantly.” And for that reason, our Sages taught, “The Jewish people never enjoyed holidays equivalent to the Fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur.”

The imminence of the Redemption mentioned previously allows for the possibility for a further connection to be drawn between Tishah BeAv and Yom Kippur. At the dedication of the First *Beis HaMikdash*, on the tenth of Tishrei, Yom Kippur, the Jews ate and drank in celebration. And this was considered a unique merit for them. Since we are awaiting *Mashiach's* coming today, it is possible that tomorrow, the tenth of Av, will be the dedication of the Third *Beis HaMikdash*. For the *Beis HaMikdash* is already completely built in the spiritual realms and must only descend to the earth. Were this to happen, the parallel between Tishah BeAv and Yom Kippur would be revealed in the most complete and positive sense.



**THE POSITIVE DIMENSIONS OF THE THREE WEEKS,
THEIR CONNECTION
TO THE ERA OF THE REDEMPTION**

3. The conclusion of the calendar dates of the Three Weeks on Shabbos heightens the possibility of a positive conception of this period of time. In *Kabbalah*, it is explained that these Three Weeks parallel the three *mochin*, intellectual faculties. Herein we see a connection to the Era of the Redemption, for in that era, *Eretz Yisrael* will expand and include the lands of three more nations, the *Keni*, the *Knizi*, and the *Kadmoni*.

Thus it will include the lands of ten nations, reflecting all the qualities of the spiritual realms, the three *mochin* and the seven *middos*, emotional attributes.

An allusion to this dimension is found in the Torah portions read in the *Shabbasos* connected with these Three Weeks, *Pinchas*, *Mattos-Maasei*, and *Devarim*, for all three mention the Jews' entry into *Eretz Yisrael* and its division among the tribes. (Herein, we also see a connection to *Parshas Vaeschanan* which is read in the afternoon service today. That *parshah* begins with a description of Moshe *Rabbeinu's* fervent prayers to enter *Eretz Yisrael*.⁶)

Moreover, these *parshiyos* mention in detail how the tribes of Reuven and Gad and half the tribe of Menasheh took possession of Transjordan. This is significant, because included in these lands was territory that had originally belonged to the *Keni*, the *Knizi*, and the *Kadmoni*. Thus the conquest of these lands represented a foretaste of the conquest of *Eretz Yisrael* in the Era of the Redemption.

The above must be internalized and applied by each individual in his own lifework which involves, to quote the Tzemach Tzedek, "Making *this* place *Eretz Yisrael*."⁷ This entails drawing G-dliness into our material environment, transforming our world into a dwelling for Him. Through this service in the present era, we hasten the coming of the time when *Eretz Yisrael* will spread out throughout the entire world in the Era of the Redemption.



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6. See the *sichos* of the eve of the eleventh and the eve of the twelfth of Av where this prayer is explained in depth.
 7. See the essay of this title recently published by Sichos In English.

MAKING *SIYUMIM* UNTIL THE FIFTEENTH OF AV,
CELEBRATING THE FIFTEENTH OF AV
WITH A *CHASSIDIC FARBRENGEN*

4. The imminence of *Mashiach's* coming should not cause us to slacken any of our efforts to spread positive activities at present. Indeed, even after *Mashiach's* coming, the positive effects of one's activities and resolutions will continue. In regard to the revelations of *Gan Eden*, our Sages declared, "Happy is he who comes here having acquired." Similarly, in regard to the Era of the Redemption, our efforts in Torah and *mitzvos* at present will expand our capacity to appreciate the revelations which will become manifest in that era.

The concluding verse of the *Haftorah*, "Zion will be redeemed by judgment and its captives, by charity," should serve as a cue for our conduct. "Judgment" refers to Torah study. Through increasing our study of the Torah and our gifts to charity, we can hasten the coming of the redemption.

In particular, there must be an increase in the effort to make *siyumim*, gatherings marking the conclusion of the study of a Talmudic tractate. Such *siyumim* should be made this afternoon,⁸ this evening and tomorrow (in a permitted manner), and tomorrow night. When possible, these *siyumim* should also be associated with gifts to charity. Furthermore, if, heaven forbid, *Mashiach* does not come before the fifteenth of Av, *siyumim* — connected with gifts to charity and celebratory feasts — should be continued to be made until that day.

Similarly, the Fifteenth of Av should be set aside as a day of celebration, a day when men, women, and children, gather together in a *Chassidic farbrengen*. And this should be connected with a *siyum*, donations to charity, and making resolutions to continue further positive activities. Since the

8. At this gathering, a feast should be served as is customary.

Fifteenth of Av falls on Friday,⁹ and thus questions might arise if the *farbrengen* would be held during the day, this *farbrengen* should be held on Thursday night.

This *farbrengen* should be held with great celebration and joy as befits the Fifteenth of Av, of which it was said, “The Jewish people never enjoyed holidays equivalent to the Fifteenth of Av,” a celebration which parallels the celebration of a marriage. And indeed, there is a connection between the two. For it was on the Fifteenth of Av that “the daughters of Jerusalem would go out and dance in the vineyards,” and *shidduchin* would be made. Similarly, at present, this is a time — particularly, after the interruption in the Three Weeks — when it is customary to make many weddings and engagements. May these celebrations hasten the coming of the consummation of the ultimate wedding bond, the union between G-d and the Jewish people. And then we will rejoice with unbounded celebration and join in many wedding celebrations as reflected in the promise, “Speedily, G-d our L-rd, let there be heard in the cities of Judah and the outskirts of Jerusalem, the voice of rejoicing and the voice of happiness, the voice of a groom, and the voice of a bride.” And may this take place in the immediate future.



9. This also brings to mind the fact that in a larger sense, it is Friday afternoon, that we are in the midst of the sixth millennia, preparing for the Shabbos, for “the era which is all Shabbos and rest for eternity.”

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **יונה**

בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' מאיר ע"ה

אבן

מנהל ועד שיחות באנגלית

למעלה מארבעים שנה

שבהמשך פעולותיו בהפצת המעיינות

נזכה לגאולה השלימה תיכף ומיד ממש

נדפס על ידי חתנו ובתו

הר' **יצחק וחנה** ומשפחתם שיחיו **וואלף**



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