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# THE MESSIAH II

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## The Nature of the Messianic Era

The first Morasha class on the Mashiach addressed the centrality of the belief in the existence of Mashiach, who he will be, and what he needs to accomplish. This second class will explore the nature of the Pre-Messianic and Messianic Eras, when they will occur, and what we can do to hasten the arrival of the Messiah.

During the time of the Mashiach there will be two resurrections of the dead. One will be at the beginning of the Messianic Era for those who are completely righteous, and a second at the end of the Messianic Era for everyone else. (The concept of resurrection and its role in the World to Come will be addressed in the Morasha class *The World to Come Part III: The New Me! Resurrection of the Dead.*)

This class will address the following questions:

- When will the Mashiach arrive?
- Is there anything we can do to cause the Mashiach to arrive more quickly?
- What will the world be like immediately prior to the arrival of Mashiach?
- Are we already experiencing those times?
- What will the world be like after Mashiach arrives? How will it be different from the world we know?

### Class Outline:

- Section I. When Will Mashiach Come?
  - Part A. Any Day
  - Part B. Do Not Calculate the Exact Time
  - Part C. Predetermined or Not?
  
- Section II. What Can We Do to Bring Mashiach?
  
- Section III. The Pre-Messianic Era
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- Section IV. The Messianic Era
  - Part A. A Time of Peace and Prosperity
  - Part B. Knowledge of God
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  - Part D. Bridge to the World to Come

## SECTION I. WHEN WILL MASHIACH COME?

In this section we will discuss the timing of the coming of Mashiach, the preconditions for his arrival, and whether we can predict when he might come.

### PART A. ANY DAY

#### 1. Talmud Bavli (Babylonian Talmud), Eruvin 43a-b – Mashiach could come any day except Shabbat or Yom Tov.

[If a person takes an oath by saying:] “I will be a *nazir* [who is forbidden to drink wine] on the days that the son of David [Mashiach] is due to come,” then he is permitted to drink wine on Shabbat and Yom Tov [because Mashiach will not come on Shabbat or Yom Tov], but the person is forbidden to drink wine on any weekday [because Mashiach may come any day] ... [We know this because] the verse says, “Behold, I send you Eliyahu HaNavi (before that great and awesome day of God)” (Malachi 3:23) ... There is an ancient tradition in Israel that Eliyahu will not come (to announce the imminent arrival of the Mashiach) on the eve of a Sabbath or Yom Tov because of the disruption it would cause (by people neglecting their preparations for Shabbat in order to go and greet him).

הריני נוזר ביום שבן דוד בא מותר לשתות יין בשבתות ובימים טובים ואסור לשתות יין כל ימות החול ... דאמר קרא (מלאכי ג:כג) הנה אנכי שלח לכם את אליה הנביא (לפני בוא יום יקוק הגדול והנורא) ... כבר מובטח להן לישראל שאין אליהו בא לא בערבי שבתות ולא בערבי ימים טובים מפני הטורח (שמניחין צרכי שבת והולכין להקביל פניו – רש"י).

Eliyahu HaNavi (Elijah the Prophet) will come to herald the Mashiach the day before he arrives. The Mashiach therefore cannot come on Shabbat or Yom Tov since everyone would flock to greet Eliyahu on the previous day, causing a disruption in their preparations. The point, though, is that Mashiach could potentially come on any other day.

#### 2. Chofetz Chaim, Zachor L'Miriam, Ch. 18 – Mashiach can come at any moment, as long as we merit it.

It is also written, “Behold, I send you Eliyahu HaNavi” (Malachi 3). When one pays careful attention one sees it is not written in the future tense, “I will send,” but rather “I send” in the present tense. This implies that God can send him to us at any time and any moment – if we would only merit it!

גם כתיב (במלאכי ג') הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אילה הנביא. וכאשר נדייק היטב נראה דלא כתיב לשון אשלח שמשמע לעתיד, אלא כתיב שולח בחולם לשון הווה, וכונתו, יכול אני לשלוח אותו לכם בכל עת ובכל זמן רק אם תזכו לזה.

### PART B. DO NOT CALCULATE THE EXACT TIME

We are instructed to “anticipate every day that the Mashiach will come” (Rambam/Maimonides, Thirteen Principles of Faith), and therefore we should not calculate the exact day he will come. Furthermore, if we miscalculate his arrival we may despair of his ever coming, as the next source illustrates.

1. **Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 97b – Calculating when he should come can lead to denial of him ever coming.**

Rabbi Shmuel ben Nachmani said in the name of Rabbi Yonatan, “The bones of those who calculate the end should rot! For they would say that since the predetermined time has arrived and yet he has not come, he will never come. Rather wait for him, as it is written, ‘Even though he might delay, wait for him’ (Yeshayahu/Isaiah 30:18).”

א"ר שמואל בר נחמני אמר ר' יונתן תיפח עצמן של מחשבי קיצין שהיו אומרים כיון שהגיע את הקץ ולא בא שוב אינו בא אלא חכה לו שנאמר אם יתמהמה חכה לו.

2. **Rambam, Hilchot Melachim (Laws of Kings) 12:2 – Getting overly involved in the details of Mashiach should not be the main focus of a person's spiritual development.**

A person should never involve himself with the Aggadot [regarding Mashiach] nor with the words of Midrash that speak about this topic. Do not make them the prime focus, because they do not bring a person to love or fear [God]. Also do not calculate the end [i.e. the time of Mashiach's arrival] ... Rather wait for him and believe in the general principle, as we have explained.

ולעולם לא יתעסק אדם בדברי ההגדות, ולא יאריך במדרשות האמורים בענינים אלו וכיוצא בהן; ולא ישימם עיקר-- שאין מביאין לא לידי יראה, ולא לידי אהבה. וכן לא יחשב הקיצין... אלא יחכה ויאמין בכלל הדבר, כמו שבארנו.

**PART C. PREDETERMINED OR NOT?**

Even though Mashiach could come any day, one may still ask: Is the time of the coming of Mashiach predetermined or is it up to us to make it happen? As the sources below will show, the answer is: both!

1. **Rabbi Sa'adiah Gaon, Emunot ve'Deot 8:2 – There are two ways that Mashiach can come.**

We believe that God has appointed two alternative periods for the duration of our exile, one extending until such time as we do *teshuvah* (lit. “return,” repentance) the other being determined by a fixed time in the future. Whichever of these times arrives first will be the time of the redemption. If we will do complete *teshuvah* then the fixed time will be disregarded ...

אבל (ירחמך האל) הדבר אשר נאמין, שהוא שם לשעבודנו בי' זמנים, אחד מהם זמן התשובה, והב' זמן הקץ. ואי זה בהם שיקדים תתחייב בו הגאולה, ואם תשלם תשובתנו אין מביטין אל הקץ...

2. **Ohr HaChaim, Bamidbar (Numbers) 24:17 – The nature of the Mashiach's arrival will depend upon its impetus: if we earn the Mashiach, then his arrival will happen in a miraculous fashion; if not, it will still happen, but in a more natural way.**

“I shall see him, but not now, I shall look at him but it is not near. A star has issued from Yaakov (Jacob) and a scepter-bearer has risen from Israel ...”

אֲרָאֵנוּ וְלֹא עֵתָהּ אֲשׁוּרֵנוּ וְלֹא קְרוֹב דְּרַךְ פּוֹכֵב מִיַּעֲקֹב וְקָם שִׁבְט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל...

**Ohr HaChaim**

The double expression ["I shall see him, I shall look at him"] and unusual wording of the verse may be explained according to the words of the Sages (Sanhedrin 98a), that if the redemption comes about on behalf of the merit of Israel [by their doing teshuvah], then it will be in a most miraculous way and the redeemer will be revealed through miracle and wonder, as it says in the Zohar (1:119).

Not so, however, if the redemption comes about at the predetermined time when Israel is not worthy of it; in such a case it will happen in a completely different manner. About that it was stated that the Mashiach will come "lowly, riding upon a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9).

וכפל הענין, ושינוי הלשון, יתבאר על פי דבריהם ז"ל שאמרו (סנהדרין צח.) שאם תהיה הגאולה באמצעות זכות ישראל יהיה הדבר מופלא במעלה, ויתגלה הגואל ישראל מן השמים במופת ואות, כאמור בספר הזוהר (ח"א קיט).

מה שאין כן כשתהיה הגאולה מצד הקץ ואין ישראל ראויים לה תהיה באופן אחר, ועליה נאמר (זכריה ט ט) שהגואל יבא עני ורוכב על חמור:

**KEY THEMES OF SECTION I:**

- ∞ The belief in the coming of Mashiach demands a faith that he could come in an instant. And even though we are supposed to anticipate his arrival at any moment, our Sages have cautioned us not to let that anticipation lead to an attempt to calculate exactly when Mashiach will arrive, nor to let it distract us from our purpose of spiritual growth.
- ∞ While we do not know exactly when Mashiach will come, we do affirm that his coming is inevitable, whether we deserve it or not. Nevertheless, the nature of his arrival will depend upon its impetus: if we earn the Mashiach then his arrival will happen in a miraculous fashion; if not, it will still happen, but in a more natural way.

## SECTION II. WHAT CAN WE DO TO BRING MASHIACH?

The following analogy sheds insight into what we are missing without Mashiach, to help us appreciate the importance of making the effort to bring Mashiach through our behavior and actions:

*Rabbi Shimon Schwab gave a beautiful parable for our state of being without Mashiach, as well as for our own blithe unawareness of the situation we are in. Imagine you are at a wedding. Everybody is well-dressed, the band is playing, the photographers are snapping away, the smorgasbord is wonderful. Everyone is having a grand time. Only one thing is missing: the bride has not shown up. No matter how attractive the surroundings, most of us realize that a wedding without a bride is nothing. Well, a world without Mashiach is a wedding without a bride. Only one difference: we don't even realize that the bride isn't here. (From Rabbi Yissocher Frand: In Print, ArtScroll Publications, pp. 241-242.)*

As we saw at the end of the previous section, there are two ways that Mashiach can come: either by us earning his arrival, or at a calculated time in the future regardless of our merit. As we shall see in the following sources, one's personal actions can help hasten the arrival of the Mashiach and thereby bring the world to perfection.

Teshuvah is the process by which a person improves his character and actions, and returns to God. In the next source we see how teshuvah can hasten the arrival of the Mashiach.

**1. Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 98a – The Mashiach will come either when the generation is completely righteous through its having done teshuvah, or completely wicked.**

Rabbi Yochanan said, “The son of David will only come either in a generation which is completely righteous [through the process of teshuvah – Maharsha], or one which is completely wicked.”

ואמר רבי יוחנן אין בן דוד בא אלא בדור שכולו זכאי או כולו חייב.

The next few sources explain those actions which have a special ability to hasten the Mashiach’s arrival. In source 8 below, Rav Dessler explains how the Mashiach might come to a generation which does not exhibit that merit.

**2. Ibid. – The Mashiach has the potential to arrive any day. All that is required is for the Jewish people to listen to the word of God and fulfill it by doing the mitzvot.**

[Rabbi Yehoshua] asked [Eliyahu HaNavi], “When will Mashiach come?” He answered, “Go and ask him.” “Where is he?” “Sitting at the gates of Rome.” “How will I recognize him?” “He sits among the poor lepers. All of the others unwind all of their bandages at the same time and then cover their sores with clean bandages. The Mashiach unwinds and rewinds his bandages one at a time, thinking, ‘Perhaps this will be the moment when I will be needed and I don’t want to delay.’”

[Rabbi Yehoshua] went to [the Mashiach] and said, “Peace be upon you, my master and teacher.” He replied, “Peace be upon you, son of Levi.” Rabbi Yehoshua asked him, “When will the Master come?” He replied “Today.”

Rabbi Yehoshua returned to Eliyahu HaNavi, who then asked him, “What did he say to you?” Rabbi Yehoshua replied, “He said, ‘Peace be upon you, son of Levi.’” Eliyahu said, “He guaranteed you that both you and your father will have a place in the World to Come [since he gave you a blessing of peace and mentioned your father too – Rashi]!” Rabbi Yehoshua said, “But he lied to me, saying, ‘Today I will come.’ But he has not come.” Eliyahu HaNavi said, “This is what he meant [as the verse says:] “Today – if only you will listen to God’s voice” [Tehillim/Psalms 95:7].

אמר ליה: אימת אתי משיח? - אמר ליה: זיל שייליה לדידיה. - והיכא יתיב? - אפיתחא דרומי. - ומאי סימניה? - יתיב ביני עניי סובלי חלאים, וכולן שרו ואסירי בחד זימנא, איהו שרי חד ואסיר חד. אמר: דילמא מבעינא, דלא איעכב.

אזל לגביה, אמר ליה: שלום עליך רבי ומורי! - אמר ליה שלום עליך בר ליואי. - אמר ליה: לאימת אתי מר? - אמר ליה: היום.

אתא לגבי אליהו. - אמר ליה: מאי אמר לך? - אמר ליה: שלום עליך בר ליואי. - אמר ליה: אבטחך לך ולאבוך לעלמא דאתי. - אמר ליה: שקורי קא שקר בי, דאמר לי היום אתינא, ולא אתא! - אמר ליה: הכי אמר לך היום אם בקלו תשמעו.

Based on the previous source, the Talmud states that if the all the Jewish people would observe two consecutive Shabbats, the Mashiach will appear and the final redemption would be ushered in immediately (Shabbat 118b).

There are special merits that can help expedite the arrival of the Mashiach. As described in the next three sources, the Second Temple was destroyed by *sinat chinam* (baseless hatred). Therefore, the Temple can be rebuilt under the reign of Mashiach by caring for our fellow Jews: by demonstrating love, practicing kindness, building peace, and eradicating *loshon hara* (destructive speech).

3. **Sfas Emes, Rosh HaShanah, 5641 – We can bring the redemption by loving our fellow Jews.**

Since the Temple was destroyed by baseless hatred, therefore, it will surely be rebuilt by loving our fellow Jews.

כיון שע"י שנאת חנם נחרב. כ"ש שע"י אהבת ישראל יהי' נבנה בעזה"י.

4. **Chasam Sofer on the Pesach Haggadah, Ha Lachma Anya – By practicing acts of kindness we can expedite the redemption.**

If you will ask, "What have we gained in being freed from Egypt, we are back in exile!" Rather, the difference is that when we were enslaved in Egypt we did not have the capability to expedite our redemption; however, in this exile we are capable of ending it through acts of kindness. That is why [at the beginning of the Passover Seder we invite guests into our homes saying], "Whoever is hungry come and join the Seder." In that merit [we can rebuild the Temple] and be "Next Year in Jerusalem!"

שמוא תאמר, מה הרוחנו ביציאת מצרים ואנחנו בגולה – אלא שבגלות מצרים לא יכולנו לדלג על הקץ, ובגלות זה בידינו לקרב את הקץ על ידי צדקה ומעשים טובים, לפיכך "כל דכפין ייתי וייכול", ונזכה לשנה הבאה בירושלים, שהרי בידנו הדבר.

5. **Chofetz Chaim, Shmirat HaLashon, Chelek Sheini, Ch.7 – Mashiach will come when we maintain peace in our communities by eradicating both baseless hatred and speaking in derogatory ways about others.**

It is written in the name of the Holy Zohar that even one congregation that maintains peace properly can merit bringing the Mashiach. Therefore, the coming of the Mashiach is dependent upon us. And it is known that preserving peace can only be accomplished if we are careful in avoiding both baseless hatred and speaking derogatorily of one another. Each individual who endeavors to rectify these shortcomings will have a share in rebuilding the future Temple; without this, the Temple could remain destroyed forever, God forbid.

והנה כתבו הספרים בשם הזוה"ק דבי כנישתא חדא אם היו שומרים מדת השלום כדבעי יכולים לזכות לביאת המשיח, אם כן ביאת המשיח תלויה בדינו. וידוע שבמדת השלום אין אנו יכולים לזכות בה רק אם נהיה זהירים מתחלה מעון שנאת חנם ולשה"ר וכל אחד שיתחזק לתקן החטא הזה יהיה לו חלק בבית הבנוי לעתיד, דבלתם היה הבית חרב לעולם ח"ו.

One might conclude that it is beyond us to bring the Messiah; if the earlier generations who were more in touch with spirituality could not, how will we ever be capable! We offer two answers to this question, the first from Rav Dessler citing the Kabbalist Arizal, and the second from the Chofetz Chaim.

6. **Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, Michtav M'Eliyahu, Vol. IV, pp. 301-2 – Any spiritual effort and accomplishments today on our part is considered extraordinary by God.**

What is the benefit of our exile; our

מה תועלת בגלות, הרי הדורות פוחדים והולכים,

generations grow increasingly out of touch with spirituality, how can the rectification of the world be possible? The truth is that as the generations become distanced from Torah, any involvement with Torah study and mitzvot tremendously sanctifies the Name of God.

[See the Sefer Chasidim, siman 945 and the Chida's Sefer Brit Olam who cite the question of Rav Chaim Vital to his teacher the Arizal, "We know that the holiness of the Tanaim and Amoraim was astounding, and our generation is one-thousandth in comparison (so what effect can it have in bringing us closer to Mashiach)?" The Arizal answered, "Now the force of the *Sitra Acher* (evil) is great, and whatever little is achieved now is considered by God on par with the great deeds that were accomplished by the Rishonim!].

ואיך יבוא התיקון? אבל האמת היא שככל שהדורות מתקטנים והסביבה מתרחקת יותר מתורה, הקידוש השם שבכל נטיה קלה לתורה ולעבודת ה' מתרבה ומתגדל עד אין שיעור.

[עיין בספר חסידים סי' תתקמ"ה ובברית עולם להחיד"א ז"ל שם שמביא מה שהקשה ר"ח ויטל ז"ל לרבו האריז"ל שרואים שקדושת התנאים והאמוראים הוא דבר מבהיל ולא יוכל אדם בדורנו לעשות אחת מאלף, והשיב לו הרב ז"ל שעתה גברה מאד הסטרא אחרא והמעט שעושים עתה חשוב לפניו ית' כהרבה שעשו הראשונים. עכ"ל. והוא כנ"ל].

## 7. Chofetz Chaim, Zachor L'Miriam, Ch. 18 – Each person can contribute to bringing the Mashiach by utilizing his unique abilities.

And if you would ask, what should we change, how can we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Messiah? I would answer and say that God does not expect from us great accomplishments and things that are impossible for us to achieve. Rather each person should strive to accomplish what is within his capability.

For example, if one is able to study Mishnah, he should set a fixed daily time when he should free himself from his business and study an appropriate amount of Mishnah. And similarly, if he has the ability to understand the Agadatta of the Talmud in Ein Yaakov, Midrash and similar works, he should study what he is capable of. All the more so, if he is a person who can comprehend Talmud and Jewish law, he is also obligated to set a fixed schedule to learn Talmud and Jewish law ...

Therefore, my brothers and dear friends, we need to prepare ourselves in every way possible for the coming of our Messiah; each and every person should strengthen his resolve to introspect and improve his actions completely before God in order that we may merit to reveal the honor of God in the world according to His Will, speedily in our days.

והיה אם שאול ישאלונו, במה נתקן, ובמה עלינו להיות נכונים לביאתו של משיח צדקנו. ואען ואומר, שאין הקב"ה רוצה ממנו גדולות ודברים שאי אפשר לנו להשיגם, אלא כל אחד ואחד לפי מה שהו כפי יכולתו.

אם יכול ללמוד משנה, צריך לקבוע לו זמן בכל יום שבאותו זמן יתפנה מעסקיו וילמד שיעור משנה שלו, וכן אם יש לו לב להבין עין יעקוב מדרש וכהאי גוונא, ילמד מה שיש ביכולתו, וכל שכן אם הוא איש שיש לו ביכולת להבין גם בגמרא ובהלכה. מחויב גם כן לקבוע לו זמן ללימוד הגמרא והלכה...

...על כן אחי ורעי, צריכים אנו להכין את עצמנו בכל מה שיש לביאת משיחנו, וכל אחד ואחד יתחזק לשוב בתשובה שלמה לפני ה' כדי שנוכה להתגלות כבוד ה' בעולם כרצונו במהרה בימינו אמן.

We learned that Mashiach will only come if a generation is either entirely righteous or completely guilty. Why should a generation without *any* merits deserve the arrival of the Mashiach? Surely, even a generation with some good should be more deserving.

8. **Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, Michtav M'Eliyahu, Vol. III, pp. 222-3 – When there is some goodness, people can feign virtuosity; when there is only evil, people come to realize that they need God.**

It is a very perplexing thing; for why should a completely guilty generation have more of an ability to bring Mashiach than a generation with a mixture of good and bad?

The idea is that as long as there is a mixture of good and bad, people will use the good to hide the bad and masquerade as righteous when they really are not ... In such a state a person is far from teshuvah and also far from being ready for the Redemption. But in a generation that is completely guilty, when people are materialistic and inclined toward physicality without a semblance of spirituality, specifically in such an instance does one virtue shine forth: simplicity. At such a point it becomes impossible for people to cover up the evil within them with trickery and self-deception. Without a notion of righteousness, there is simply no façade left for a person to trick himself with. Precisely at that point a person is close to teshuvah, for he can sense that if God does not assist him, he is completely lost (God forbid), as the saying goes, "We have none to rely upon except our Father in Heaven." This recognition is the precondition for the coming of the Mashiach.

כי הלא לכאורה דבר קשה הוא מאוד; וכי איזה כח  
טמון בדור שכולו חייב שמחמתו קרוב הוא יותר לגילוי  
המשיח מאשר דור שטוב ורע מעורבים בו?

אך הענין הוא שכל זמן שיש תערובת טוב ורע,  
משתמש האדם בטוב שבו לכסות על הרע, ומשלה  
את עצמו שהוא צדיק... וע"כ במצב כזה האדם רחוק  
מתשובה, ורחוק גם מההכנה לגאולה. רק בדור שכולו  
חייב שהאדם חמרי ומגושם ואין בו גם נדנוד קל של  
רוחניות, דוקא במצב זה מעלה אחת יש בו – מעלת  
הפשיטות, שכבר אי אפשר לו לכסות על הרע שבו  
בערמוניות ואשליות, כי אין בו כל זכות שיוכל לרמות  
את עצמו בה שהנהו צדיק – דוקא אז קרוב הוא  
לתשובה, כי מרגיש הוא שאם לא יגאל ע"י ה' – אבוד  
הוא לגמרי ח"ו, כאמור "אין לנו להשאן אלא על אבינו  
שבשמים." והכרה זו היא ההכנה לביאת המשיח.

**KEY THEMES OF SECTION II:**

- ⌘ Far from being an event out of our control, the time of the arrival of the Mashiach is in our hands. When the Jewish people will collectively improve their actions and return to God, the Mashiach will arrive.
- ⌘ Since his arrival depends on the collective merit of the Jewish people, every individual can bring that day closer by improving his actions, his character, returning to God, and inspiring others to do the same.
- ⌘ Since the Second Temple was destroyed by *sinat chinam* (baseless hatred), the Temple can be rebuilt under the reign of Mashiach by caring for our fellow Jews in demonstrating love, practicing kindness, building peace, and eradicating *loshon hara* (destructive speech).
- ⌘ Even though we are not as spiritually advanced as the previous generations, our efforts to grow take on more weight seen in the context of the global spiritual downturn. God only asks that we do what we can.



- ∞ If the world were to have no merits, the Mashiach can still come when people realize they have no hope other than God.

## SECTION III. THE PRE-MESSIANIC ERA

Regardless of the nature of the final redemption, it is generally understood that the time leading up to the coming of Mashiach, known as “the Footsteps of Mashiach” (Rav Tzadok, Poked Akkarim 6) will feature its own distinctive and discernible characteristics. Certain political, economic, and sociological developments mark this period and make one wonder: are we already living in the pre-Messianic era?

### PART A. POLITICAL PRECURSORS

#### 1. Tehillim 147:2, with Metzudos David – Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

The builder of Jerusalem is God, the outcast of Israel He will gather in.

##### Metzudos David

God will be the builder of Jerusalem in the future. Then He will gather all the dispersed to Jerusalem from the ends of the earth.

בוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם ה' נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִכְנֹס.

מִצֹּדֶת דָּוִד

הוּא הַבּוֹנֵה לְעֵתִיד אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם, וְאֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּדְחִים  
בְּקֶצֶה הָאָרֶץ יִכְנֹס אֵלָיו.

#### 2. Talmud Bavli, Megillah 17b, with Rashi – The Land of Israel will flourish.

Why did the Sages institute saying the blessing for the Ingathering of the Exiles [in the silent Amidah] after the blessing for [bountiful] Years? Because [this order of events is hinted to in] the verse, “You mountains of Israel *give forth your branches and bear your fruit* for My people Israel, for they are *close to returning*” [Yechezkel/Ezekiel 36:8].

##### Rashi

This implies that the Ingathering of the Exiles will happen at a time of bountiful harvests.

וְמָה רָאוּ לֹמַר קִיבוּץ גְּלוּיֹת לְאַחַר בְּרַכַּת הַשָּׁנִים –  
דְּכַתִּיב וְאַתֶּם הָרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲנַפְכֶם תִּתְּנוּ וּפְרִיכֶם תִּשְׂאוּ  
לְעַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי קָרְבוּ לְבֹא.

רש"י: אֵלֵּמָּא: קִיבוּץ גְּלוּיֹת בְּעֵת בְּרַכַּת הַשָּׁנִים הִיא.

#### 3. Bereishit (Genesis) 25:18-19, with Baal HaTurim – Arab nations will have prominence but will eventually fall.

[The following two phrases appear one right after the other:]

“... and he [the descendants of Yishmael] fell before all his brothers. And these are the generations of Yitzchak (Isaac) ...”

...עַל פְּנֵי כָל אֶחָיו נָפַל: וְאַלֶּה תוֹלְדֹת יִצְחָק ...

**Baal HaTurim**

[These two phrases are placed next to each other] to teach that when Yishmael [from whom the Arabs are descended] will fall at the End of Days, then the son of David [Mashiach], who is descended from Yitzchak, will arise.

על פני כל אחיו נפל – וסמיך ליה ואלה תולדות יצחק  
לומר כשיפול ישמעאל באחרית הימים אז יצמח בן  
דוד שהוא מתולדות יצחק.

**PART B. BIRTH PANGS OF MASHIACH**

The Sages of the Talmud anticipated that the time leading up to the coming of Mashiach would be difficult and trying times for the world in general and the Jews in particular. They referred to this phenomenon as “the birth pangs of the Mashiach” (Ketubot 111a). For this reason, some of the Sages actually feared living through this era. Nevertheless, these times are a crucial stepping stone on the path toward Mashiach.

**1. The Gaon of Vilna, Even Shleimah 11:5 – The intensity of the pre-Messianic era is the prelude to the dawn of a new age.**

The redemption is referred to as the morning, as the verse says, “The morning will come [i.e. the redemption], and also night [for the wicked].” It is also referred to as a birth, as the verse says, “For Zion has ... also given birth ...” Just as the most intense darkness comes immediately before the day, and a pregnant woman has the greatest pain just before the actual birth, so too, before the redemption, the exile will be more intense than it had been during the entire length of the exile.

הגאולה מכונה בשם בקר כמו”ש אתא בקר וגם לילה.  
וכן מכונה בשם לידה כמו”ש “כי הלה גם ילדה ציון כו.”  
וכמו שקודם שמתהיל להאיר היום הוא מחשיך ביותר  
וכן ההרהר כשמתקרבת הלידה כואבת יותר מכל ימי  
הריגה בשיושבת על המשבר כן קודם הגאולה יכבד  
הגלות יותר מכל הגלות.

The darkness or birth pangs will take the form of a decline in spirituality and moral virtue.

**2. Talmud Bavli, Sotah 49b – Society will deteriorate in the pre-Messianic era.**

In the times of the footsteps of Mashiach insolence will increase and honor decrease; the vine will yield its fruit [abundantly], but wine will be expensive; the government will turn to heresy and there will be none [to offer them] reproof; the meeting-place [of scholars] will be used for immorality; Galilee will be destroyed and the borders made desolate; and the dwellers on the frontier will go about [begging] from place to place without anyone to take pity on them.

The wisdom of the learned will degenerate; those who fear sin will be despised; truth will be lacking; youths will put old men to shame; the old will stand up in the presence of the young; a son will revile his father; a daughter will rise

בעקבות משיחא חוצפא יסגא ויוקר יאמיר הגפן תתן  
פריה והיין ביוקר ומלכות תהפך למינות ואין תוכחת  
בית וועד יהיה לזנות והגליל יחרב והגבלן ישום ואנשי  
הגבול יסובבו מעיר לעיר ולא יחוננו

וחכמות סופרים תסרח ויראי חטא ימאסו והאמת  
תהא נעדרת נערים פני זקנים ילבינו זקנים יעמדו מפני  
קטנים בן מנוול אב בת קמה באמה כלה בחמותה אויבי  
איש אנשי ביתו פני הדור כפני הכלב הבן אינו מתבייש  
מאביו ועל מה יש לנו להשען על אבינו שבשמים:

against her mother; a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household; the face of the generation will be like the face of a dog; a son will not feel ashamed before his father. So upon whom can we rely? Upon our Father in Heaven.

### 3. **Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 97a – Jewish scholarship will decline in the times before Mashiach.**

Rabbi Yochanan said, "In the generation when the son of David [Mashiach] will come, Torah scholars will be few in number, and as for the rest, their eyes will fail through sorrow and grief. Multitudes of trouble and evil decrees will be promulgated anew, each new evil coming with haste before the other has ended."

אמר רבי יוחנן דור שבן דוד בא בו תלמידי חכמים מתמעטים והשאר עיניהם כלות ביגון ואנחה וצרות רבות וגזרות קשות מתחדשות עד שהראשונה פקודה שניה ממהרת לבא.

The purpose of these travails is to spiritually pave the way for the arrival of Mashiach and the new era he will usher in.

### 4. **Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, Michtav M'Eliyahu, Vol. V, p. 207 – The rise in materialism of the pre-Messianic era will arouse a spiritual awakening that will be the catalyst to the coming of the Mashiach.**

It is known in the world of medicine that healthy people are given inoculations by injecting a weakened form of an illness in order to arouse antibodies to fight off that disease. So too in spiritual matters, it is sometimes necessary to inject ourselves with a state of extreme materialism, even at a time when the Good Inclination is not under attack from the Evil Inclination in order to arouse the Good Inclination's ability to fight the Evil Inclination when the need arises.

This is the reason that Adam was sent into the world of physicality, and it is also the reason behind the test of the pre-Messianic era: the arousal to fight physicality will itself be a spiritual catalyst to bring the Mashiach.

ידוע ברפואה שנותנים לאדם בריא זריקות לשם חיסון, היינו שזורקים לדם חמרים מעין מחלה מסויימת שיעוררו למלחמה את חלקי הדם הלוחמים נגד חידקי החולי ההוא. וכן ברוחניות, לפעמים יש הכרח לזרוק לתוכנו בחינה של גשמיות גסה ביותר, גם בשעתא דיצה"ט שאין התקפה כעת מצד היצר, כדי שיתעורר להיות מוכן למלחמה לעת הצורך.

זה טעם שהשליכו אדם הראשון אל הגשמיות, וזה גם טעם לנסיונות עיקבא דמשיחא, כי התעוררות המלחמה להתגבר עליהם תביא לידי ביאת משיח.

### 5. **Ibid. – The darkness of the pre-Messianic era will teach us just how spiritual we really are.**

Another reason [for the travails of the pre-Messianic era] is because it is impossible to appreciate the positive without seeing its opposite. Even about the future it is written: "You shall return and you shall see the difference

עוד טעם, כי אי אפשר ללמוד דבר חיובי מבלי לראות ההיפך. ואפילו לעתיד לבוא כתוב "ושבתם וראיתם בין צדיק לרשע וכו'" (מלאכי ג:ח). ולעולם לא ילמד אדם רוחניות אלא א"כ יתברר לו עד כמה הוא עצמו מוגשם.

between the righteous and the wicked” (Malachi 3:18). A person will never learn how spiritual he is until he understands how physical he can be. For this reason we need the pre-Messianic era and all its darkness.

ובשביל זה צריכים לעיקבא דמשיחא ולכל החושך  
אשר עמו.

Although the pre-Messianic era is a crucial time of preparation for the coming of Mashiach, the difficult spiritual challenges presented by these times have never been considered something to look forward to.

## 6. **Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 98b – Some Sages did not want to witness the birth pangs of Mashiach.**

Ulla said, “Let the Mashiach come, but let me not see him.”

Rabbah said likewise, “Let him come, but let me not see him.”

Rabbi Yosef said, “Let him come, and may I be worthy of sitting in the shadow of his donkey’s saddle.”

Abaye enquired of Rabbah, “What is your reason [for not wishing to see him]? Is it, because of the birth pangs [preceding the arrival] of the Mashiach? But it has been taught: Rabbi Elazar’s disciples asked him: ‘What must a man do to be spared the pangs of the Mashiach?’ He answered, ‘Let him engage in Torah and acts of kindness.’ And you, Master, do both.”

Rabbah replied, “[I fear] lest sin cause [me to lose my merits].”

אמר עולא: ייתי ולא איחמיניה.

וכן אמר [רבה]: ייתי ולא איחמיניה,

רב יוסף אמר: ייתי, ואזכי דאיתיב בטולא דכופיתא  
דחמריה.

אמר ליה אביי [לרבה]: מאי טעמא? אילימא משום  
חבלו של משיח - והתניא, שאלו תלמידיו את רבי  
אלעזר: מה יעשה אדם וינצל מחבלו של משיח? -  
יעסוק בתורה ובגמילות חסדים. ומר - הא תורה והא  
גמילות חסדים!

אמר [ליה]: שמא יגרום החטא.

## PART C. ARE WE LIVING IN IT?

### 1. **Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, The Real Mashiach, NCSY, pp. 83, 89-90 – Even more so in our day, it seems that the conditions of the pre-Messianic era have been fulfilled.**

If one looks with an unprejudiced eye at the world today, he will see that we are living in an age where almost all the Jewish prophecies regarding the prelude to the Messianic Age are coming to pass ... Religious studies will be despised and used by nonbelievers to strengthen their cause; the government will become godless, academies places of immorality, and the religious will be denigrated [Sotah 49b, Sanhedrin 97a, Derech Eretz Zuta 10]. Judaism will suffer greatly because of these upheavals. There is a tradition that the Jews will split up into various groups, each laying claim to the truth, making it almost impossible to discern true Judaism from the false. This is the meaning of the prophecy (Isaiah 59:15), “truth will fail” [Sanhedrin 97a]. It has also been predicted that many will leave the fold of Judaism completely ... [Rambam, Igeres Teiman 1]. Of course, there will be some Jews who remain true to their traditions ...

One of the most important traditions regarding the Messianic Age concerns the ingathering of the Diaspora and the resettlement of the Land of Israel. It will begin with a measure of political independence, and according to some, with the permission of the other nations. There are numerous traditions that Jews will begin to return to the Land of Israel as a prelude to the Messiah. There is also a tradition that the land will be cultivated at that time, based on the prophecy of Yechezkel (See source III. A. 2 above).

### KEY THEMES OF SECTION III:

- ∞ The pre-Messianic era is known as the “Footsteps of Mashiach” as his impending arrival becomes more and more palpable. Jerusalem will be rebuilt, the Land of Israel will flourish and the Jewish people will return to it.
- ∞ But the general fabric of society will be in decay and religious knowledge will wane – symptoms that already seem evident. These painful times are the birth pangs of Mashiach that will ultimately give way to a new world order: the Messianic Era.

## SECTION IV. THE MESSIANIC ERA

In contrast to the chaos that will dominate the pre-Messianic era, the age of Mashiach itself will be a time of peace and the proliferation of the knowledge of God. During the time of the Mashiach there will be two resurrections of the dead. One will be at the beginning of the Messianic Era for those who are righteous, and a second at the end of the Messianic Era for everyone else. (The concept of resurrection will be addressed in the Morasha class *The World to Come Part III: The New Me! Resurrection of the Dead.*)

### PART A. A TIME OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY

1. **Rambam, Commentary on the Mishnah, Introduction to Sanhedrin, Ch. 10 – In the Messianic era there will be no political oppression, knowledge of God will be all pervasive, and peace and perfection will reign.**

The great benefit which will be in those days [of the Mashiach] is that we will rest from our subjugation to the non-Jewish governments, which is what prevents us from fulfilling all the mitzvot. Wisdom will increase, as the verse states, “The world will be filled with knowledge [of God as water covers the sea bed]” (Yeshayahu 11:9).

War will cease, as the verse states, “[They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.] Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and neither shall they learn war any more” (Ibid. 2:4). In those days there will be ultimate perfection and we will merit the life of the World to Come.

והתועלת הגדול אשר תהיה באותם הימים הוא שננוח משעבוד מלכיות שהוא מונע אותנו מעשיית המצות כולם, ותרבה החכמה כמו שנאמר “כִּי מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דְּעֵדָה [אֵת ה' בַּיָּמִים לְיָמֵי מְבָסִים]”,

וישבתו המלחמות כמו שנאמר “[וְכִבְּתוּ חֶרְבֹתָם לְאֵתִים וְחַנִּיתוֹתֵיהֶם לְמִזְמְרוֹת] לֹא יִשָּׂא גֹי אֶל גֹּי חֶרֶב [וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה]”, ויהיה נמצא בימים ההם שלימות רב ונוכח בו לחיי העולם הבא.

2. **Ibid. – With miraculous assistance, Mashiach will ensure world peace, whether by force or consent.**

The Messianic Era will be a time when kingship will return to Israel and [all Jews] will return to the Land of Israel. This king will be very great and his palace will be in Zion [Jerusalem]. His name and fame will spread and become more widespread than that of King Shlomo (Solomon). All the nations will make peace with him and all the countries will serve him on account of his great righteousness and because of the wonders that will be done by him. Anyone who rises against him will be destroyed by God, and will be given into his [Mashiach's] hand.

אמנם ימות המשיח הוא זמן שתשוב המלכות לישראל ויחזרו לארץ ישראל, ויהי אותו המלך גדול מאד ובית מלכותו בציון יגדל שמו וזכרו יהיה מלא הגוים יותר מן המלך שלמה, וישלימו אתו כל האומות ויעבדוהו כל הארצות לצדקו הגדול ולנפלאות שיהא על ידו, וכל מי שיקום עליו יאבדהו השם יתעלה וימסור אותו בידו.

3. **Yechezkel 37:22 – The Jewish people will unite under the Mashiach.**

And I will make them into one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be to them all as a king ...

וְעָשִׂיתִי אֶתְכֶם לְגוֹי אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ בְּהָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמֶלֶךְ אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכֻלָּם...

## PART B. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Peace is certainly pleasant in its own right, but it is not an end in and of itself. The purpose of the peace that will reign during the era of Mashiach is to facilitate the promulgation of God-awareness.

1. **Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 12:5 – The purpose of peace and prosperity is to facilitate the promulgation of the knowledge of God.**

In that time there will be no famine or war, no jealousy or competition. Goodness will be bountiful, and every type of delicacy will be readily available. The task of the whole world will be purely and simply to know God. The Jewish people will have exceptional wisdom and understand the deepest secrets of existence. They will attain knowledge of their Creator as much as is humanly possible, as the verse states: "The earth will be full of knowledge of God, like water covers the sea bed" (Yeshayahu 11:9).

ובאותו הזמן, לא יהיה שם לא רעב ולא מלחמה ולא קנאה ותחרות--שהטובה תהיה מושפעת הרבה, וכל המעדנים מצויין כעפר. ולא יהיה עסק כל העולם, אלא לדעת את ה' בלבד. ולפיכך יהיו ישראל חכמים גדולים, ויודעים דברים הסתומים; וישגו דעת בוראם כפי כוח האדם, שנאמר "כי מלאה הארץ דעה את ה' כמים לים מכסים" (ישעיהו יא, ט).

2. **Yeshayahu 2:2-3 – All the nations of the world will come to the Beit HaMikdash (Temple) in Jerusalem to seek out knowledge of God.**

It will happen at the End of Days: The mountain of the Temple of God will be firmly established as the head of the mountains ... and all the nations will stream to it. Many peoples will go and say,

וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נִכּוֹן יִהְיֶה הַר בֵּית ה' בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂא מִגְבְּעוֹת וְנִהְרָו אֵלָיו כָּל הַגּוֹיִם: וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכֵן וְנַעֲלָה אֵל הַר ה' אֶל בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וִירְנוּ מִדְרָכָיו וְנִלְכָה בְּאֲרָחֹתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא

“Come, let us go up to the Mountain of God, to the Temple of the God of Yaakov, and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall the Torah come forth, and the word of God from Jerusalem.

תורה ודבר ה' מירושלם:

### 3. **Rabbi Tzadok HaCohen, Pri Tzadik, Chukat 16 – The knowledge of the Oral Law shall be expanded.**

The main revelation of the Oral Law will be through Mashiach, as it says in the Midrash (Kohelet Rabbah 2:1): “All the Torah that you learn in this world is as nothing compared to the Torah of the World to Come,” which refers to the time of Mashiach.

ועיקר התגלות תורה שבעל פה יהיה על ידי משיח, כמו שדרשו במדרש (קהלת רבה ב' א'), כל התורה שאת למד בעולם הזה, הבל הוא לפני תורה שבעולם הבא, והיינו ימות המשיח.

## PART C. WEAKENING OF THE EVIL INCLINATION

### 1. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 30:6, with Ramban (Nachmanides) – God will remove the impediments to serving Him and there will be a natural drive for the good.**

God will remove the barriers from your hearts and from the hearts of your descendants, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. Thus shall you live.

#### **Ramban:**

Since the dawn of Creation, man has had the free will to choose whether to be righteous or wicked, and so it was at the time of the Torah. This situation facilitated man being able to earn merit through the correct use of his free will for good or to be punished for misusing it for the bad. But in the days of Mashiach it will be natural to choose the good. There will be no desire for that which is not correct; people will simply not want it.

ומל' ה' אלקיך את לבבך ואת לבב זרעך לאהבה את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך למען חייך:

#### **רמב"ן**

כי מזמן הבריאה היתה רשות ביד האדם לעשות כרצונו צדיק או רשע, וכל זמן התורה כן, כדי שיהיה להם זכות בבחירתם בטוב ועונש ברצותם ברע. אבל לימות המשיח, תהיה הבחירה בטוב להם טבע, לא יתאוה להם הלב למה שאינו ראוי ולא יחפוץ בו כלל.

### 2. **Yechezkel 36:26, with Rashi – God will grant man a new psychological makeup.**

And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

#### **Rashi**

“A new heart” – an inclination that has been renewed for the better.

ונתתי לכם לב חדש ורוח חדשה אנתן בקרבכם ויהסרתני את לב האבן מבשרכם ונתתי לכם לב בשר:

רש"י: לב חדש - יצר שנתחדש לטובה:

## PART D. BRIDGE TO THE WORLD TO COME

Although freedom of choice will be limited in the Messianic Era, nevertheless the awareness of God that will prevail in those times will present us with an incredible opportunity for spiritual growth. As we discussed in Section I in the first Morasha class on Mashiach, this development is not a denial of the purpose of our existence, but rather its ultimate fulfillment.

In the Messianic Era we will earn closeness to God, not through the subjective growth of overcoming the Evil Inclination – it will have been so weakened – but through the objective growth of imbibing the spirit of God experienced by all. As such, the Messianic Era will provide a bridge from life in this world to the eternal life of the World to Come.

### 1. **Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *The Real Messiah*, NCSY Publications, p. 96 – The Messianic era is the transition to the World to Come.**

Although man will still have free will in the Messianic Age, he will have every inducement to do good and follow God's teachings. It will be as if the power of evil were totally annihilated. And as man approaches this lofty level, he will also become worthy of a Divine providence not limited by the laws of nature. What is now manifestly miraculous will ultimately become part of the nature of things. This, wedded to man's newly gained powers to bring forth the best that untainted nature has to offer, will bring man to his ultimate destiny, which is the World to Come (Avodas HaKodesh 2:38, Netzach Yisroel 50).

### 2. **Rabbi Chaim Friedlander, *Sifsei Chaim: Pirkei Emunah U' Bechirah*, Vol. II, p. 186 – The Messianic Era will be a time of unparalleled spiritual growth through the perfected service of God.**

We find, however, that the Era of Mashiach will be a time for the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvot, even as the nature of free will changes, becoming in Ramban's terms the "natural will" that flows from a clear recognition of God's Will. By virtue of the service of God we will perform in those days – a service perfected by the understanding that will come about through the flourishing of wisdom, knowledge, and tranquility – we will merit life in the World to Come.

Then we will ascend one level after the next by virtue of this perfected form of Divine service until we reach that exalted state that Adam was to have reached. We will have then brought the world to its final, completed state, in which free choice will be completely nullified along with the desire for evil, as Ramchal has said, "The existence that could have been had [Adam] not sinned, the existence that will be in the future."

נמצא, איפוא, שתקופת "ימות המשיח" אמנם יהיה בו קיום תורה ומצוות, אלא שסוג הבחירה תהיה שונה, כהגדרת הרמב"ן "בחירה בטבע" הנובעת מתוך הכרה ברורה מהו רצון השי"ת, וע"י עבודת ה' שתעשה בצורה מושלמת ביותר באותה תקופה, מתוך השגה של ריבוי הדעת והחכמה ובמנוחת הנפש, מתוך עבודה זו נזכה לחיי עוה"ב,

ואז יעלו עליה אחר עליה ע"י עבודת ה' שתעשה בצורה נעלית ביותר, עד שיזכו להגיע למדרגה העליונה שאדה"ר היה מיועד להגיע אליה ולהביא את הבריאה לתיקון הגמור, שאז הבחירה תתבטל לגמרי עם ביטול היצירה, כמש"כ הרמח"ל: "מצויאותו מה שהיה יכול להיות אם לא היה חוטא, והוא המציאות שיהיה לעתיד לבוא".

The three Morasha classes on The World to Come and Resurrection will discuss how the world will reach its ultimate destiny.



**KEY THEMES OF SECTION IV:**

- ∞ In contrast to the pre-Messianic era, the age of Mashiach will be a time of political peace and social harmony under the universally recognized leadership of Mashiach.
- ∞ Knowledge of God will proliferate as man finally makes this the priority of his existence. Keeping mitzvot and studying Torah will come easily as man is given a new heart, one free from the barriers to serving God.

## CLASS SUMMARY:

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**WHEN WILL MASHIACH ARRIVE?**

He could arrive on any day except a Shabbat or Yom Tov. Even though we are required to anticipate his arrival at any moment, we should not unnecessarily distract ourselves from our task of spiritual growth by speculating about his time of arrival.

**IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO CAUSE THE MASHIACH TO ARRIVE MORE QUICKLY?**

Far from being an event out of our control, the time of Mashiach's arrival is largely in our hands. Since his arrival depends on the collective merit of the Jewish people, every individual can bring that day closer by improving his actions, his character, returning to God, and inspiring others to do the same.

**WHAT WILL THE WORLD BE LIKE IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF MASHIACH?**

In the pre-Messianic era, known as the "Footsteps of Mashiach," Jerusalem will be rebuilt, the Land of Israel will flourish, and the Jewish people will return to it. At the same time, the general fabric of society will be in decay and religious knowledge will wane – symptoms that already seem evident.

**WHAT WILL THE WORLD BE LIKE AFTER MASHIACH ARRIVES? HOW WILL IT BE DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD WE KNOW?**

In contrast to the pre-Messianic era, the age of Mashiach will be a time of political peace and social harmony under the universally recognized leadership of Mashiach. Knowledge of God will proliferate and keeping mitzvot and studying Torah will come easily as man is given a new heart, one free from the barriers to serving God.

## ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READING & SOURCES

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Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *Handbook of Jewish Thought*, Vol. II, pp. 360-378  
 Ner Le'Elef Books, *This World and the Next*, pp. 86-92  
 Rabbi Ezriel Tauber, *Days are Coming*, pp. 142-178

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