

רמב"ם | הלכות מלך המשיח | פרק י"ב הלכה א

From the Rambam's **Laws of Moshiach: WEEK 4**

MOSHIACH'S TIMES

- ▶ Will there be miracles after Moshiach is revealed?
- ▶ What do the prophecies foretelling supernatural events mean?



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BACKGROUND



NEW AGE SAGE



CROWN JEWELS



STORY TIME



DVAR MALCHUS



ESSAY





WILL THERE BE MIRACLES AFTER MOSHIACH IS REVEALED?

FROM GOLUS TO GEULAH

In Perek Yud-Alef, the Rambam tells us that a basic belief of the Torah is to believe that a human but perfectly pious king from *beis Dovid* will rise up, teach and inspire *Yidden* of all different backgrounds, fight assimilation and defend Eretz Yisroel. This will happen in *golus*. Then, one day, Hashem will decide it is time for *Yidden* to go out of *golus*. Just like Moshiach himself does not have to show any miraculous behavior, the change from *geulah* will also, possibly, happen without supernatural events: Moshiach will succeed in all his campaigns, conquer Eretz Yisroel from our enemies, build the Beis Hamikdash in its proper place in Yerushalayim and bring all *Yidden* back there.



What about now, after Moshiach has arrived and we live in peace in our land with complete *shleimus*? Should we expect miracles now? The Rambam tells us...

רמב"ם הלכות מלכים ומלחמות פרק י"ב הלכה א

It should not occur to a person to think that in the days of Moshiach anything will be cancelled from the natural conduct of the world that will change how nature works. Nor should you think that in the days of Moshiach there will be anything new in the work of Creation and that supernatural events will occur. Rather, we will live in the world functioning in its customary behavior within the laws of nature.

אֶל יַעֲלֶה עַל הַלֵּב
שְׂבִימוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ יִבְטֹל
דָּבָר מִמְּנַהֲגוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם,
אוֹ יִהְיֶה שָׁם חֲדוּשׁ
בְּמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.
אֲלָא עוֹלָם כְּמִנְהַגוֹ נוֹהֵג.

WHAT ABOUT THE PROPHECIES FORETELLING SUPERNATURAL EVENTS?

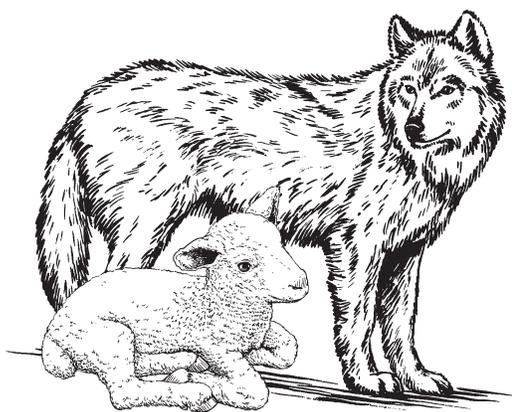
NATURAL OR SUPERNATURAL?

Perek Yud-Alef of *navi Yeshaya*, which we read in the *Haftorah* of *Acharon shel Pesach*, tells us of a time when someone from *beis Dovid* will “shoot up.” The spirit of Hashem will rest on him, and with his many *ruchniyusdike* talents, he will lead the Yidden to serve Hashem and conquer the wicked people. Sound familiar? Yes, this is similar to how the Rambam describes the time when Moshiach will reveal himself.

Then the *navi* continues: Lions, bears, leopards and wolves will laze around and be friendly to those who in the past they would viciously attack! Instead of preying on other creatures, they will graze like cattle. Young children will play with poisonous snakes!



Doesn't all this mean that nature will indeed change? How can we say that the world will continue as usual? The Rambam answers this question now:



Regarding **this** that it **says** in the *navi Yeshayah*:

“The wolf will dwell with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the young goat,”

(meaning, that wild animals will no longer kill and eat animals they would attack before the *geulah*).

זֶה שְׁנֵאָמַר בִּישְׁעֵיהּ:

וְגַר זֵאֵב עִם כֶּבֶשׂ

וְנִמְר עִם גְּדִי יִרְבֹּץ

These words of Yeshayah **are a model** of similar behaviors **and a riddle** for us to explain something else that compares to it. **The idea** that is represented by **this *nevua*** is that *Am Yisroel* will live comfortably and safely with the wicked gentiles who are compared to a wolf and a leopard and will not be harmed by them. Where are they compared to wild animals? **As it says** in the *navi Yirmiyah* about the destruction of the *Batei Mikdash*:

מִשָּׁל וְחִידָה. עֵינֵי הַדָּבָר
שִׁיהִיו יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹשְׁבֵי
לְבַטָּח עִם רְשָׁעֵי גוֹיִים
הַמְשׁוּלִים כְּזֵאֵב וְנִמְר

שְׁנֵאמַר:

“A wolf from the wilderness will spoil them

”זֵאֵב עֲרֻבוֹת יִשְׁדָּדֵם

And a leopard will stalk their cities.”

נִמְר שֶׁקָּד עַל עָרֵיהֶם”

(Rashi explains that the wolf is the Kingdom of Modai and the leopard is Ashur who will attack the Yidden in Yerushalayim.)

And the next *possuk* of the *navi* Yeshaya about what will happen in the times of Moshiach are also talking about how **they**, the gentiles of the world, **will all return to the true religion** with belief in Hashem. **And they will no longer steal or destroy.** But **rather, they**, the gentiles of the world, **will eat permitted food** and live **at peace with Am Yisroel**, as it says:

וַיִּחְזְרוּ כָּלֶם לְדַת הָאֱמֶת.
וְלֹא יִגְזְלוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתוּ,
אֲלֵא יֵאָכְלוּ דְבַר הַמִּתָּר
בְּנַחַת עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל.

שְׁנֵאמַר:

“the lion will eat straw like an ox.”

”וְאַרְיֵה כִּבְבָקֵר יֵאָכֵל תֶּבֶן”

(This could also be a *moshal* that people will no longer take food or other things by force or through hurting others.)

And the same goes with **all those** other *nevuos* about supernatural things in *navi* **that are similar to these matters regarding the concept of Moshiach.** They are all *masholim*. **And in the days of the king Moshiach it will become known and understood to all** and everyone will realize **to which matters were these masholim and which concept is hinted by them** in these *pessukim*. In other words, the Rambam is saying that if these miracles do not occur literally, they will happen some other way. At that time, we will see how things unfold and will be able to match a specific event to the *nevuah* that hints to it.

וְכֵן כָּל פִּיּוּצָא בְּאֵלּוּ
הַדְּבָרִים בְּעֵינֵי הַמְּשִׁיחַ-
הֵם מְשָׁלִים. וּבִימֹת
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ יִנָּדַע לְכָל
לְאִי זֶה דְּבַר הָיָה מְשָׁל.
וְמָה עֵינֵי רְמִזּוֹ בָּהֶן.

DVAR MALCHUS

The last of the Rambam's *ikrim* (principles of *Emunah*) is that we will experience *techiyas hameisim* in the future. What can be more miraculous than dead people coming back to life? This seems to be a contradiction to what he says here in this halachah: עולם כמנהגו נוהג, the world will proceed in its usual, natural fashion.

The Rebbe explains that there will be two stages in the times of *geulah*. During the first stage, the world will continue in a way of *teva*, nature. During the second stage, the world will exist in a supernatural state. There are many other places in *navi* that speak about miraculous events after Moshiach comes which will happen literally—even according to the Rambam!



דבר מלכות סימן ג

It seems that the Rambam has the opinion

וְנִרְאָה שֶׁסִּבְרָא לֵיהּ לְהַרְמִיב"ם

that there are two ideas (that are part of) two different times.

שֵׁשׁ ב' עֲנִינִים בְּשְׁנֵי זְמַנִּים שׁוֹנִים:

One idea and time in the days of Moshiach that is connected with Moshiach's coming,

יֵשׁ עֲנִין וְזְמַן בְּיָמֵי הַמְּשִׁיחַ,
שֶׁקְשׁוּר עִם בִּיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ

and there is an extra idea

וְיֵשׁ עוֹד עֲנִין נוֹסֵף,

that will be added after that first stage of the early days of Moshiach.

שֶׁיִתּוּסַף לְאַחַר תְּקוּפַת הַתְּחִלַּת יָמֵי הַמְּשִׁיחַ,

In (that time) there will be more acts,

שֶׁבָּה יִתּוּסְפוּ הַנְּהֻגוֹת,

things that Hashem will do (specifically) at that time

דְּבָרִים שֶׁיַּעֲשֶׂה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא,
בְּאוֹתוֹ זְמַן,

to increase in those things that are a change from the world's order.

לְרַבּוֹת עֲנִינֵי שְׁנוֵי מִנְהַגוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם,

And this will be a later stage

וְזֶה יִהְיֶה כְּאֲמוּר בְּתִקּוּפַת מְאַחֶרֶת יוֹתֵר

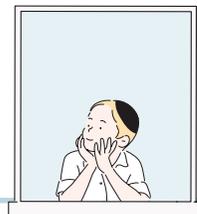
within the days of Moshiach themselves.

בְּיָמֵי הַמְּשִׁיחַ גּוֹפֵא.

NEW AGE SAGE

Why does the Rambam take the opinion that *nevuos* that talk about miraculous events after the *geulah* arrives are just a *moshal*?

Hint: This is similar to the reasoning of why the Rambam says in *Perek Yud-Alef* that *Moshiach* will not have to perform miracles.



CROWN JEWELS

In the last lesson, we spoke about two different situations that will cause Moshiach to come. The first possibility is that they deserve the **geulah (zochu)**. The second is that even if they do not merit the **geulah**, Hashem will eventually take us out of **golus** anyway.

These timeframes are actually hinted to in the **navi** Yeshaya itself: **אָנִי ה' בְּעֵתָהּ אֲחִישָׁנָה**. **Hashem says... at its time, I will hurry it.** This seems like a contradiction. Will it be on a schedule or hurried up?

But, the Gemara answers, the **possuk** is talking about two different possibilities. It will be rushed if **Yidden** merit it, but it will be at the set time Hashem gave if they don't.

There are other seemingly opposite **nevuos** and **midrashim**. Some of them can be solved the same

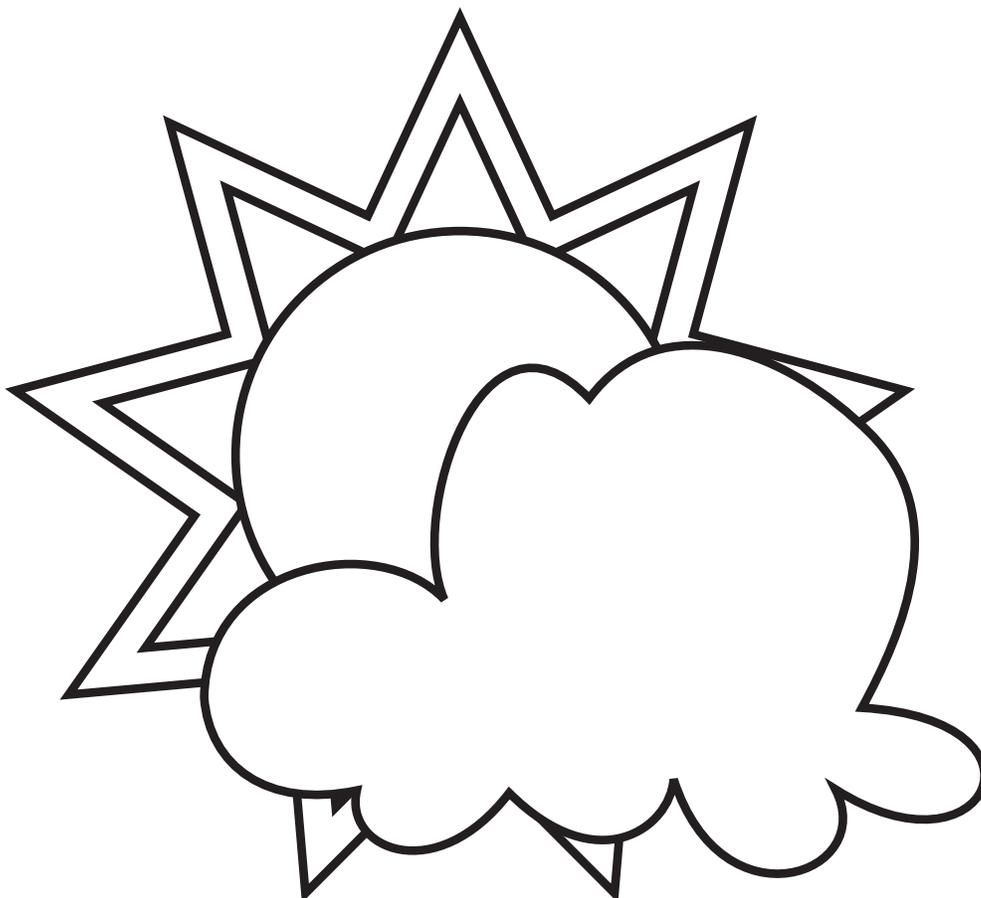
way: Will Moshiach build the Bais Hamikdash or will it descend from above? Will he be "a poor man riding on a donkey" (one **possuk** from **Navi**) or will he arrive "on the clouds from the Heavens" (a different **possuk** from a different **navi**)? If Moshiach will have all human faculties, how will he be able to "sniff out" those who are guilty? (Remember? We spoke about this miraculous ability in the first lesson.)

Earlier in this lesson, we asked the question: When will **techiyas hameisim** happen if the world won't change? The Rebbe's solution is that there will be a natural stage and a supernatural stage of Moshiach's arrival. But the Rebbe goes on to say that in a situation of **zochu**, like we are now, miracles will happen in the first stage as well!



@ LAST

Will the sun still rise and set every day? Will we eat normal food to nourish our bodies? Will animals keep their basic nature once Moshiach arrives? Yes, the Rambam says. The world can still work within the laws of nature, at least right away (later this will change!). But with world peace, the Beis Hamikdash and Moshiach's ruchniyusdike influence, our daily lives will surely change. Therefore, the Rambam continues, events foretold by the Navi do not have to occur supernaturally, and we can understand them as a moshal. For example, a wolf lying with a lamb can represent how a nation that attacked Yidden in the past now lives peacefully with us.



BRINGING THE GEULAH WITH BITACHON

Assyrian soldiers swarmed the valley below as far as the eye could see, one hundred eighty-five thousand troops in all. The elephant brigade shored up one side. War chariots, each of four horses and four riders in armor of chain mail, held iron-tipped arrows at the ready. Strong slaves strained their muscles to roll the huge battering rams uphill into position to best strike the huge stone walls ahead. Towering over the walls, they cast shadows on the rows of Yidden, who were interrupting their erev **Yom Tov** rush to gather on the ramparts of the Holy City. The air shuddered.

It was erev **Pesach** 3213, in the fourteenth year of Chizkiyah's reign. Eight years earlier Sancheirev's armies had swept through the north of Eretz Yisroel, taking countless **Yidden** from **malchus Yisroel** into **golus**, never to be heard from again. Just a short time ago, Sancheirev attacked again, destroying settlements in the hills of Yehudah around Yerushalayim. Now, the Assyrian troops surrounded the city itself.

And as Yerushalayim's citizens stood watching, General Ravshakei rode ahead toward the gates of Yerushalayim, stopping on the road by the upper pool that flowed into Ir Dovid. He was well on his way to complete the Assyrian conquest of Bavel, Kush, Tzur, the Pelishtim, and now Eretz Yisroel. There stood Eliyakim ben Chilkiyah, Shevna **Hasofer** and Yoav ben Asaf, the king's secretary, awaiting him.

"Tell Chizkiyah in the name of Sancheiriv," cried the mighty Ravshakei in **lashon hakodesh**. "How do you think you will win over such a mighty army? Will Mitzrayim really help you? Will you cry to your G-d? Hashem is angry at you, so you are lost! You cannot even win over the least of Sancheiriv's officers. Agree to surrender and we will spare you! But if not...we will completely destroy you!"

"Why do you speak to us in our language," the king's messengers asked. "Most Yidden do not understand Arameic, but we do, and we can pass on your message just fine!"

"Who is the message for, do you think? It's for those who are watching!" In a booming voice, Ravshakei turned to the Yidden on top of the walls of Yerushalayim and insulted them: "Will you stupid people trust in Chizkiyahu? He is tricking you! He can never win over Sancheirev! Come out to join us and you will be saved..."

But the people did not answer, for their king, Chizkiyah, had commanded them so.

Wearing torn clothes, mourning because Ravshakei had cursed Hashem, the messengers came to King Chizkiyah. He too tore his clothes and put on sackcloth.

"The majority of Sanhedrin has ruled that you can accept the peace treaty of Sancheirev," Shevna told the king. "We are meant to work within the rules of nature and cannot rely on a miracle to be saved."

But, instead, Chizkiyah sent Eliyakim and Shevna to Yeshaya **Hanavi**. The **navi** assured them that Yerushayim will be saved. Chizkiyah took the written words of the **nevuah** and brought them to the Beis Hamikdash. Then he davened for Hashem to save His people.

Again, **Yeshaya Hanavi** sent a message telling Chizkiyah and the **Yidden** that they should not be afraid. He added that listening to the **navi** will help that soon, in the days of Moshiach, all the **Yidden** already taken into **golus** will return and peace will reign over Eretz Yisroel.

After hearing the message, King Chizkiyah returned to his chambers. hundreds of thousands of armed soldiers circled his city, armed to the teeth with the most advanced weapons. This undefeated army had already conquered half the world. What did the king do? "I do not have the strength to kill nor to pursue the enemy or even to sing praises to You," he said. "Instead, I shall sleep in my bed — and You, Hashem, will act."

And he did.

So the hours passed in complete quiet, until Yerushalayim awoke to the first day of Pesach. The burnt-sweet smell of their **karbanos** still floated through the still air. And there, far below in the valley on the other side of the wall, lay the dead bodies of 185,000 of the world's



BACK TO THE FUTURE

In Perek Yud-Alef, the *navi* Yeshaya records many amazing *nevuos* about the days of Moshiach. The end of Perek Yud talks about King Chizkiyah, whose bitachon in the *Navi's* words brought about the destruction of Sancheiriv's army. In an earlier *perek* in the *navi*, there is a hint in the possuk (a closed *mem* in middle of the word) that hints to the fact that Hashem wanted to make King Chizkiyah to be Moshiach.

The Rebbe explains that the *pessukim* from *both* these *perakim* are in the *Haftorah of Acharon shel Pesach*, because both are related to Moshiach, whose light shines on that day.

Think about what you learned in the last *perek* of the Rambam. Which part of the halachos of Moshiach could be related to this story of Chizkiyah? What lesson can we learn from the fact that the *nevuah* of the *geulah* comes right after the story that shows us Chizkiyah's faith in Hashem's *yeshuah*?



As discussed in Perek Yud-Alef, the main purpose of Moshach is to bring the entire world to belief in Hashem and the practice of Torah and mitzvos. Moshach does not need to make miracles in order for us to have *shleimus* *havurah*. Our halachic obligation is to believe that this can happen in a completely natural world. Of course, it is possible that Moshach will do miracles, and indeed, elsewhere the Rambam talks about a future time (another stage of Moshach) where we will have miraculous events.

ANSWER