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**Thirty years ago,
on Chof Beis
Shevat, 5752,
the Rebbe stated
that a new era
had then begun
in the greeting
of Moshiach
Tzidkeinu.
What does
this statement
mean to you?**

COMPILED BY RABBI LAZER GURKOW



RESPONSE BY

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The *Avos* and the *Imahos* worked to draw the *Shechinah* into the world.

However, Chassidus explains that they had separate areas of responsibility. The *Avos* were primarily focused on drawing down the *Shechinah*, whereas the *Imahos* were focused on ensuring that the world is a proper receiving vessel for the *Shechinah*. For example, Avraham davened for Yishmael and Yitzchak wanted to *bentch* Esav. It was Sarah and Rivkah who ensured that the flow from Above arrived to the correct vessel.

On Chof Beis Shevat, 5752, the Rebbe explained that men and women work jointly to create a *dirah betachtonim*. However, men focus more on drawing holiness into the *dirah*, while women focus more on ensuring that the *dirah* is a comfortable place to live—that it is properly appointed with comfortable furniture and a pleasant ambience. In the spiritual sense this means that the woman

ensures that the *dirah* and the holiness within it are a comfortable fit—that the *dirah* is designed to receive the holiness.

From these words it follows that a similar pattern would apply to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. The Rebbe and Rebbetzin worked together to bring the world closer to the *hisgalus* of Moshiach. If a person is permitted to speak this way, we would say that the Rebbetzin, in her wisdom, was primarily responsible for assuring that the message was delivered in a manner that the world could receive. (See Rosh Chodesh Kislev, 5749, where the Rebbe explains the role of the *Avos* and *Imahos* and says that in Chabad these roles were filled by the Rebbeim and the Rebbetzins.)

When a tzaddik is *nistalek*, the tzaddik's *avodah* in this world has been completed. With the Rebbetzin's *histalkus*, it became clear that the Rebbetzin's *avodah* was complete, i.e., the whole world was ready to receive the message of Moshiach's imminent arrival. This represents a new step in our work of preparing the world for the coming of Moshiach. Until then, we had to work to bring the

world to a state of readiness for Moshiach. On Chof Beis Shevat, the world was ready. After that, the only work left to do was to teach about Moshiach's arrival and prepare the world to greet him.

As we mark thirty years since the Rebbe delivered this *sicha*, the practical takeaway for us today is that the world is ready to hear about the coming of Moshiach. There is no place in the world that is not ready for the message. As shluchim, we cannot absolve ourselves of this *avodah* with the excuse that our community is not ready yet. We need to know that the world is ready. All we need to do is find the correct words or the correct approach to tap into their readiness. As Chof Beis Shevat approaches, we must resolve to work harder in this regard and prepare the world to actually receive Moshiach.

RESPONSE BY

**RABBI SIMON JACOBSON,
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The *sicha* of Chof Beis Shevat, 5752, explains that there are three stages in the final steps before the *Geulah*. These three stages,

marked by pre-Yud Shevat, post-Yud Shevat, and post-Chof Beis Shevat, are expressed by the numbers ten, eleven, and twenty-two (twice eleven). This continuum traces the trajectory and curve we must follow when we fuse existence with *Elokus*, a necessary three-step process in the making of a *dirah betachtonim*.

First, the *tachton* aligns itself toward the *Elyon*. Next, the *tachton* enters the *Elyon*. Finally, the *Elyon* becomes integrated and “comfortable” with the *tachton*. In our history, the first stage, during which the *tachton* aligned itself with the *Elyon*, is reflected in the centuries upon centuries of *avodas Hashem*, refining a dark and hostile world, a difficult *tachton*, and directing it toward the *Elyon*, *Elokus*. This period, covering the last few thousand years, is marked by the struggle and sacrifice to remain true to Torah and the Aibershter despite oppression, suffering, and poverty. The Jews throughout these generations always knew that every mitzvah they did, every effort they made, every price they paid, refined the material world step by step, and that their steadfast faith and commitment would ultimately produce a world filled with goodness and light—the world of *Geulah*. Indeed, this long stage came to its fullest expression and conclusion on Yud Shevat, 5710, when mil-

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lennia of Jewish persecution for the most part came to an end, and this freedom would only accelerate over the subsequent years. (Ten represents completion—the pinnacle of achievement. It is the highest rung that a *tachtón* can reach while striving for a relationship with the *Elyon*.)

The next stage—the *dor hashevii*—began on 11 Shevat, 5710, and, even more so, on Yud Shevat, 5711. Eleven represents transcendence. The Rebbe's seventh generation *nesius* ushered in an era of

unprecedented freedom and prosperity for the Jewish people, enabling them to finally serve Hashem freely as they saw fit. The Rebbe utilized this unprecedented new stage to launch a global initiative, sending out shlichim to reach every single Jew in the world, regardless of location, background, or education, with the light of Torah and mitzvos. This new era of transcendence was unparalleled in all of history. In stark contrast to the subjugation of Jews from the beginning of time, now Jews

were in a position to lead and guide the world to the age of Moshiach—of world peace and a “world filled with Divine knowledge as the waters cover the sea.” This was a function of “eleven”—on the order of *Elyon* that transcends the “norms” of *tachtón* and elevates it to another dimension.

But this shift from ten to eleven, from existence to transcendence, was not the end of the curve. The ultimate apex of all growth occurs when the imminence of existence and

the transcendence of *Elokus*—the *tachtón* and the *Elyon* (*memalei* and *sovev*)—merge (with the *gilui* of *Etzem*). This occurs when our appreciation for *Elokus* becomes grounded in the material reality of daily life—when the normal becomes holy and the holy becomes normal, the ordinary becomes extraordinary and the extraordinary becomes ordinary—when we can see that material life pulses with *Elokus* and *Elokus* is expressed in matter; matter and Divine energy becomes fused as



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one. This third stage began on Chof Beis Shevat, 5748—*Becha yevorach Yisroel*. As indicated by the number 22—twice eleven—it transcends even the transcendence of eleven, and allows that transcendence to become integrated with imminence. It introduces *Atzmus*, which is beyond all levels, and thus joins existence and transcendence.

In practical terms, the three stages reflect three progressive phases in our work to realize the purpose of creation with the Geulah:

1. Ten: Until Yud Shevat, 5710, *mesiras nefesh* was the primary form of *avodah* to ensure the literal survival of Judaism.

2. Eleven: With the Rebbe's *nesius* in the *dor hashevii* came prosperity and freedom. Now *mesiras nefesh* (*mesiras ratzon*) was required in order to wage passionate war against apathy and the *galus penimi*, by spreading Torah and mitzvos—as illuminated by Chassidus—and bringing Moshiach down to earth, *veshachanti besocham* (as explained in the Rebbe's first maamar, *Basi Legani*).

3. Twenty-two: After Chof Beis Shevat, the mission entered its next stage, that of infusing every one of our activities, mitzvos, and mitvzoim with the feeling of *ain od milvado*, *Elokus b'pshitus*—teaching pure Chassidus, *hafatzas hamaayanos chutzah*. The world has reached a place where it is receptive to hear and absorb this message. It is now our role to help the world understand that the whole of existence

is a reflection of *Elokus* and that *Elokus* is reflected in material existence. The Divine and the world, transcendence and existence, are a seamless continuum—dual expressions of eleven.

We need to show all the people with whom we come in contact that every detail of our daily and mundane activities are all vessels to channel and express *Elokus* in the world. In the words of the Rambam: “The preoccupation of the entire world will be nothing but to know Hashem.” We need to remove the barrier between the world and *Elokus* and introduce the idea that it is all one. We need not destroy the material world. Rather, *Geulah* is revealing the *alef* of *Alufo shel olam* into *goleh*—uncovering the Divine in the physical and corporeal, revealing how material existence and transcendence are joint expressions of the one singularity of Divinity.

What changed on Chof Beis Shevat? After years of refining the world, the universe reached a new stage of receptivity to unadulterated *Elokus*. This is actualized by learning and teaching Chassidus and *inyanei Geulah UMoshiach*, which makes *Elokus muchshis*—a palatable and tangible reality—by explaining the relevance of Chassidus and applying Chassidus in our personal lives. Doing so prepares everyone we come in contact with and thereby creates a butterfly effect leading to the *Geulah haamitis vehashleimah al yedei Moshiach Tzidkeinu*, who promised the Baal

“After years of refining the world, the universe reached a new stage of receptivity to unadulterated Elokus.”

Shem Tov that he will come when *yafutzu maayanosecha chutzah*.

RESPONSE BY
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In my mind, this was not a novel declaration because the Rebbe announced many times during the *nesius*—sometimes more clearly and sometimes less clearly—that we had entered a new *tekufah*. This was especially so after the return of the *sefarim* on Hey Teves, 5747. For example, I recall personally hearing the Rebbetzin say on 3 Kislev, 5748 (during a family visit to the Rebbe and Rebbetzin's home on the Rebbetzin's invitation) that we were now about to enter a new *tekufah*.

After Chof Beis Shevat, the Rebbe frequently talked about the *histalkus* in a positive sense. The Rebbe taught us

to never perceive life's events negatively. Instead, the Rebbe taught us to frame them in a positive sense, to greet them with *simcha* and to allow them to empower us to the next stage. When we, Chassidim, were confronted with the loss of our Rebbetzin, the Rebbe talked often about what the *histalkus* should mean to us (*vehachai yiten el libo*) and what opportunities it has made possible.

The Rebbe explained that the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin was a very significant and powerful event. In this *sicha* (and in many others during those years) the Rebbe declared that the *histalkus* represents a significant step forward in the process of bringing Moshiach. In practical terms this means that we must increase our efforts to prepare ourselves for Moshiach's imminent arrival. 🕊