

The 17th Day of Tamuz – A "Good" Day

Based on the Dvar Malchus of the Shabbos Parshas Bolok, 5751

A fast day – A favorable time

On the 17th day of Tamuz, 5751, Shabbos, we read Parshas Balak. We didn't fast then because Shabbos is a happy day and therefore don't fast. As usual, the Rebbe Melech Hamoshiach Shlita has a deeper and happier answer. Shabbos doesn't postpone the fast. Instead, it changes and reveals the good it already has, similar to the times of *yimos hamoshiach*, when all of our fast days will become happy and joyous.

We learned last week that a fast day has an "inner" and higher type of good with a good purpose and therefore such a day is called an *eis ratzon* (a favorable time), especially the fast of the 17th day of Tamuz. The number 17 has the same numerical equivalent as the Hebrew word *tov*, which means good. In the time of the true and complete redemption, this good and favorable time will reach a state of

perfection and the "inner" good of all the fasts throughout the year will be revealed. As a result, they will become happy and joyous days.

A fast day that occurs on Shabbos is a preparation for something that will take place in the redemption. Shabbos is called *chemdas yomimin*, words that appear in the Shabbos davening. Hashem desired and wanted this day of the week the most. This Shabbos, however, is connected to the redemption, as the Mishnah teaches us, "A song with musical accompaniment for the Shabbos day – A day that is totally Shabbos and rest for eternal life". Therefore, when a fast day occurs on Shabbos, things that have to do with the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* and exile aren't appropriate. What is appropriate are things that are happy and joyful.

Generally speaking, on Shabbos we eat meat and drink wine. On this Shabbos we don't



fast, but rather add so much more happiness than a regular Shabbos. The Rebbe Melech Hamoshiach Shlita says that on this Shabbos we have to add so much more to our Shabbos meal than a regular Shabbos in order that people shouldn't even think that today is a sad day. By doing so, we turn the 17th day of Tamuz into a happy day.

Instead of emphasizing the fast and mourning period during the three weeks over the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, we start with the happiness and joy of Shabbos, which in turn emphasizes the good during these three weeks – the preparation for the redemption.

The Parsha of the week

During the *yimos hamoshiach*, everything will become good. We find the same thing in this week's parsha, parshas Balak. When Bilam prophetically said, "A star should step forth from Yaakov and a staff will rise from Israel", the Torah is telling us for the first time about the coming of Moshiach. When does the Torah do this? When the Torah talks about Bilam the wicked one who has nothing to do with Moshiach! Why?

He wanted to curse the Jews,

but was only able to bless them, as the Torah teaches us, "Hashem your Hashem changed your curse into a blessing". The same thing will be during the redemption. All of the curses and not good things there are in the world, including the fast days, will be changed into happy and joyous things.

The ultimate (best) time

We mentioned above that when a fast day occurs on Shabbos we emphasize its positive side, a preparation for the redemption, and not the sad side of the day, the mourning and sadness over the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*. In a similar way, passing and upcoming generations that are getting closer to the actual time of redemption, place positive emphasis on the happiness and joy within the fasts. When the 17th day of Tamuz occurs on Shabbos, we feel the preparation towards the redemption, the "inner" good and good side the 17th day of Tamuz and the continuation of the three weeks.

This is especially true in our special and unique generation. In the past, whenever anyone would mention the words "The month of Tamuz", they would be reminded of destruction and suffering. Things changed when the Rebbe Harayatz



was released and redeemed from prison on *Yud Beis – Yud Gimmel Tamuz*. What we now see is that the month of Tamuz is a month of happiness and redemption. It was a time when the Rebbe Harayatz was redeemed from prison, and therefore the entire Jewish nation was redeemed. This is true because when he was saved, he in essence saved all of our Torah and mitzvos.

This is a preparation for the big redemption of the entire Jewish nation. This was the start the wellsprings of Chassidus coming to America, called "the lower half of the globe". The dissemination of the wellsprings of Chassidus brings the King Moshiach in his full honor and glory, as the Rebbe Harayatz proclaimed, "*Lialter liteshuva – the alter ligeulah*" (doing teshuva immediately would bring the redemption immediately).

The Rebbe Melech Hamoshiach clearly states that after the divine service of this generation, and all of us returning to Hashem (תשובה), "...There is no doubt whatsoever that the time for the redemption has arrived..."

The Rebbe adds once again and emphasizes that we especially feel the redemption this year in actually; it's not only something that's about to take place – it's

already taking place.

This is what this year, תשנ"א, a year when "I will show you miracles", is all about. We saw the amazing miracles and wonders during the Persian Gulf War, which in fact are witness to the fact that this is the year when the King Moshiach is revealed.

Since we find ourselves in such a special time on this Shabbos, the 17th day of Tamuz, we're not just in the planning stages of redemption; we really feel and emphasize its arrival in actuality...The rest of the three weeks will become a happy and joyous time.

Based on the above, when we learn this year the *hilchos beis habichira* (the laws of the *Beis Hamikdash*) during the three weeks as the Rebbe Melech Hamoshiach Shlita told us to do, our learning will be so different! We wouldn't learn any more in order to fix the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, but instead would learn with the yearning for the third *Beis Hamikdash*, may it be built immediately!

Learn and believe!

The Rebbe continues the farbrengen and in the middle asks a practical question that's applicable

to all of us.

We see that in spite of all the miracles and wonders Hashem showed us and all the amazing things we heard from the Rebbe on the redemption, it's still hard to really feel that we're on the verge of redemption and live accordingly in such a unique time. What should we do?

The answer is that we have to learn in the Torah about the Moshiach and the redemption and think deeply into what the Rebbe said that the redemption is so near. The Rebbe also said that the Torah has the ability to change our nature in order that we should start to feel and live with the *yimos hamoshiach*, having in mind that Moshiach is coming.

The most important for us to know is that it's no longer necessary to speak about it, because everyone will see the King Moshiach, the complete redemption, and the third *Beis Hamikdash* with their own eyes.

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Published by the Youth Movement
"Army Of Hashem" of Israel

718.290.4444

Editor: **Ben Menachem** • Proofreading (Content accuracy): **Rabbis and educators** •
Translated and adapted into English by **Rabbi Yehoshua Lorber** • Published under the auspices of: The
National Campaign to Teach 'Dvar Malchus'

"The Dvar Malchus for Youth" can be downloaded from www.chabad.info