



VAYAKHEL

THE ULTIMATE ROI

Doing What's Right Isn't Always about Right Now

PARSHAH OVERVIEW

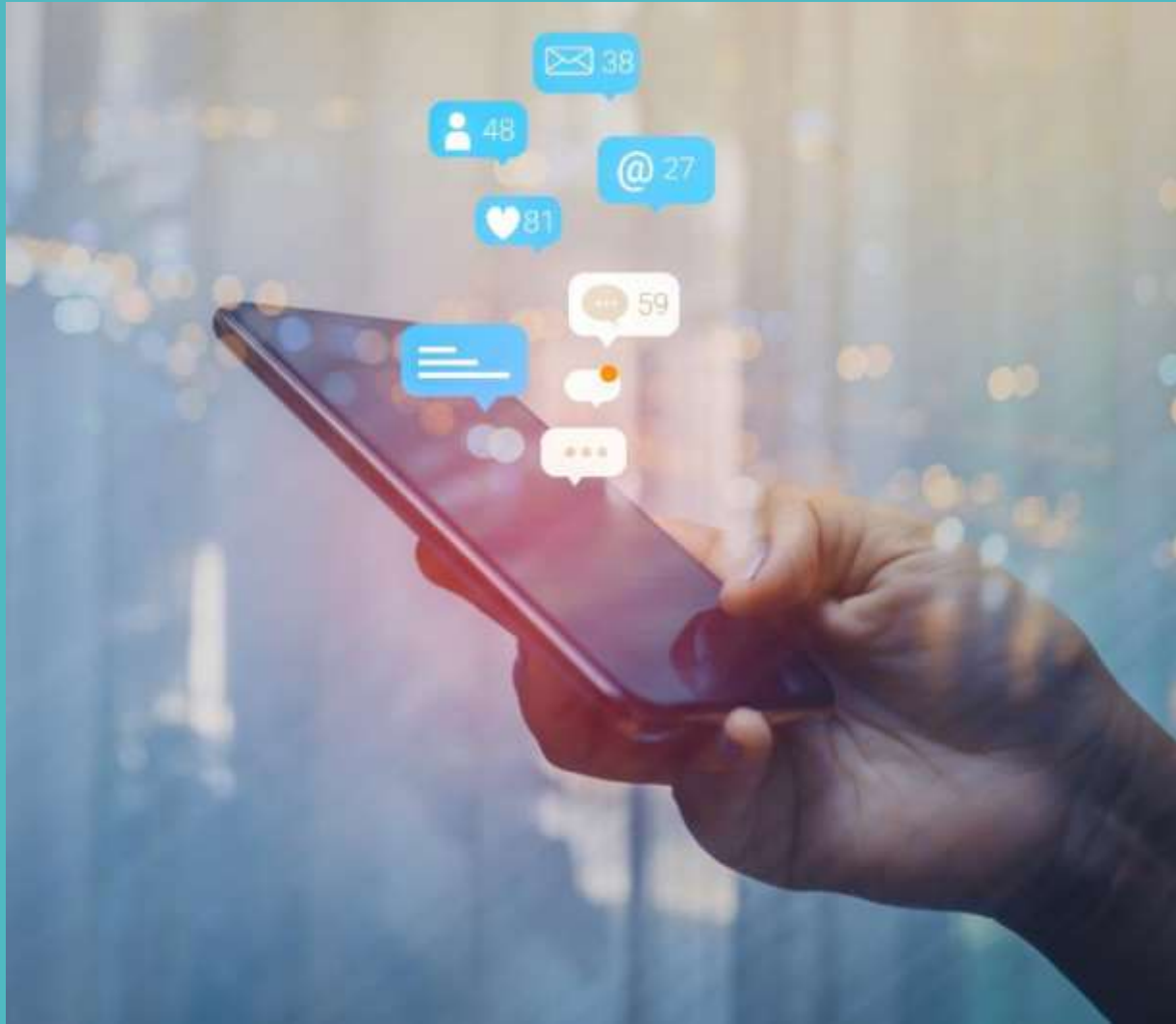
Vayakhel

Moses assembles the people of Israel and reiterates to them the commandment to observe the Shabbat. He then conveys G d's instructions regarding the making of the Mishkan (Tabernacle). The people donate the required materials in abundance, bringing gold, silver, and copper; blue-, purple-, and red-dyed wool; goat hair; spun linen; animal skins; wood; olive oil; herbs; and precious stones. Moses has to tell them to stop giving.

A team of wisehearted

artisans makes the Mishkan and its furnishings (as detailed in the previous Torah readings of *Terumah*, *Tetzaveh*, and *Ki Tisa*): three layers of roof coverings; forty-eight gold-plated wall panels, and one hundred silver foundation sockets; the *parochet* (veil) that separates between the Sanctuary's two chambers and the *masach* (screen) in front of it; the ark and its cover with the cherubim; the table and its showbread; the seven-branched menorah with its

specially prepared oil; the golden altar and the incense burned on it; the anointing oil; the outdoor altar for burnt offerings and all its implements; the hangings, posts, and foundation sockets for the courtyard; and the basin and its pedestal, made out of copper mirrors.



Have you ever experienced the tangible results of a “delayed gratification?”

TEXT 1

Exodus 35:1–3, 5

א. וַיִּקְהַל מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל עֵדֻת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם, אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת אִתְּכֶם.

ב. שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה, וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי יִהְיֶה לָּכֶם קֹדֶשׁ שַׁבַּת שַׁבְּתוֹן לַה', כָּל הָעֲשֵׂה בּוֹ מְלָאכָה יוּמָת.

ג. לֹא תִבְעֲרוּ אֵשׁ בְּכֹל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת. . . .

ה. קַחוּ מֵאִתְּכֶם תְּרוּמָה לַה', כָּל נְדִיב לְבוֹ יְבִיאֶהָ אֶת תְּרוּמַת ה', זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וּנְחָשֶׁת.

1. Moses called the whole community of the Children of Israel to assemble, and he said to them, “These are the things that G-d commanded to make.
2. “Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have sanctity, a day of complete rest to G-d; whoever performs work on this day shall be put to death.
3. “You shall not kindle fire in any of your dwelling places on the Sabbath day. . . .
5. “Take from yourselves an offering for G-d; every generous-hearted person shall bring it, [namely] G-d’s offering: gold, silver, and copper.”

QUESTION

After speaking about Shabbat, Moses pivots to the discussion of the Tabernacle, a temporary stand-in for the Holy Temple.

The efforts invested into the building of the Tabernacle and first two Temples were extensive, but everything was destroyed in such a short span of time.

Was it all worth it?

TEXT 2

Isaiah 40:5

וְנִגְלָה כְבוֹד ה', וְרָאוּ כָל בְּשָׂר
יַחְדָּו כִּי פִי ה' דִּבֶּר.

And G-d's glory shall be revealed,
and all flesh together shall see
that the mouth of G-d spoke.

TEXT 3

*Machzor, Amidah
Prayer for Rosh
Hashanah*

מלוך על העולם כולו בכבודך, והנשא על
כל הארץ ביקרך, והופע בהדר גאון עוזך על
כל יושבי תבל ארצך.

Reign over the entire world in Your glory, be exalted over all the earth in Your splendor, and reveal Yourself in the majesty of Your glorious might over all the inhabitants of Your terrestrial world.

TEXT 4

*Rabbi Dovber of
Lubavitch, Torat
Chayim, p. 329b*

ולכן אמר "וראו כל בשר", דאפילו בהמות וחיות יכירו
את בוראם, "ויבין כל יצור כו'" כבהמות בהררי אלף
שהיה קודם חטא עץ הדעת, כנזכר לעיל.

The prayer states that all flesh will see the Divine Presence, for even animals will recognize their Creator. The prayer continues, ". . . and every created being will perceive," for there will be a heightened awareness of G-dliness in the world, as there was prior to the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

TEXT 5

*Rabbi Shneur Zalman
of Liadi, Tanya, Likutei
Amarim, ch. 37*

וְהִנֵּה, פְּכֻלִית הַשְּׁלִימוֹת הַזֶּה שֶׁל יְמוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ וְתַחֲנוּת הַמֵּתִים, שֶׁהוּא גִילּוּי
אוֹר אֵין סוּף בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה הַגִּשְׁמִי, תְּלוּי בְּמַעֲשֵׂינוּ וְעִבּוֹדְתֵנוּ כֹּל
זְמַן מְשֻׁף הַגְּלוּת. כִּי הַגּוֹרֵם שְׂכָר הַמִּצְוָה – הִיא הַמִּצְוָה בְּעֶצְמָהּ, כִּי
בְּעִשְׂיִתָּהּ, מִמְּשִׁיף הָאָדָם גִּילּוּי אוֹר אֵין סוּף בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְלַמְעָלָה לְמִטָּה
לְהַתְּלַבֵּשׁ בְּגִשְׁמִיּוֹת עוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

Now, this ultimate perfection of the messianic era and the time of the Resurrection of the Dead, meaning the revelation of G-d's infinite energy in this physical world, is hinged upon our actions and Divine service throughout the period of Exile. For it is the mitzvah itself that causes (i.e., creates) its reward. By performing the mitzvah, one draws down G-dly energy from above.



QUESTION

Every mitzvah we do in Galut will yield a great manifestation of G-dly energy during the Messianic era.

But how does that help us *now*?

TEXT 6

Ecclesiastes 12:1

וּזְכֹר אֶת בּוֹרְאֶיךָ בְּיָמֶיךָ בְּחַוְלֹתֶיךָ, עַד אֲשֶׁר
לֹא יָבֹאוּ יְמֵי הָרָעָה, וְהִגִּיעוּ שָׁנִים אֲשֶׁר
תֹּאמַר אֵין לִי בָהֶם חֶפְזָן.

And remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and years arrive about which you will say, “I have no desire in them.”

TEXT 7

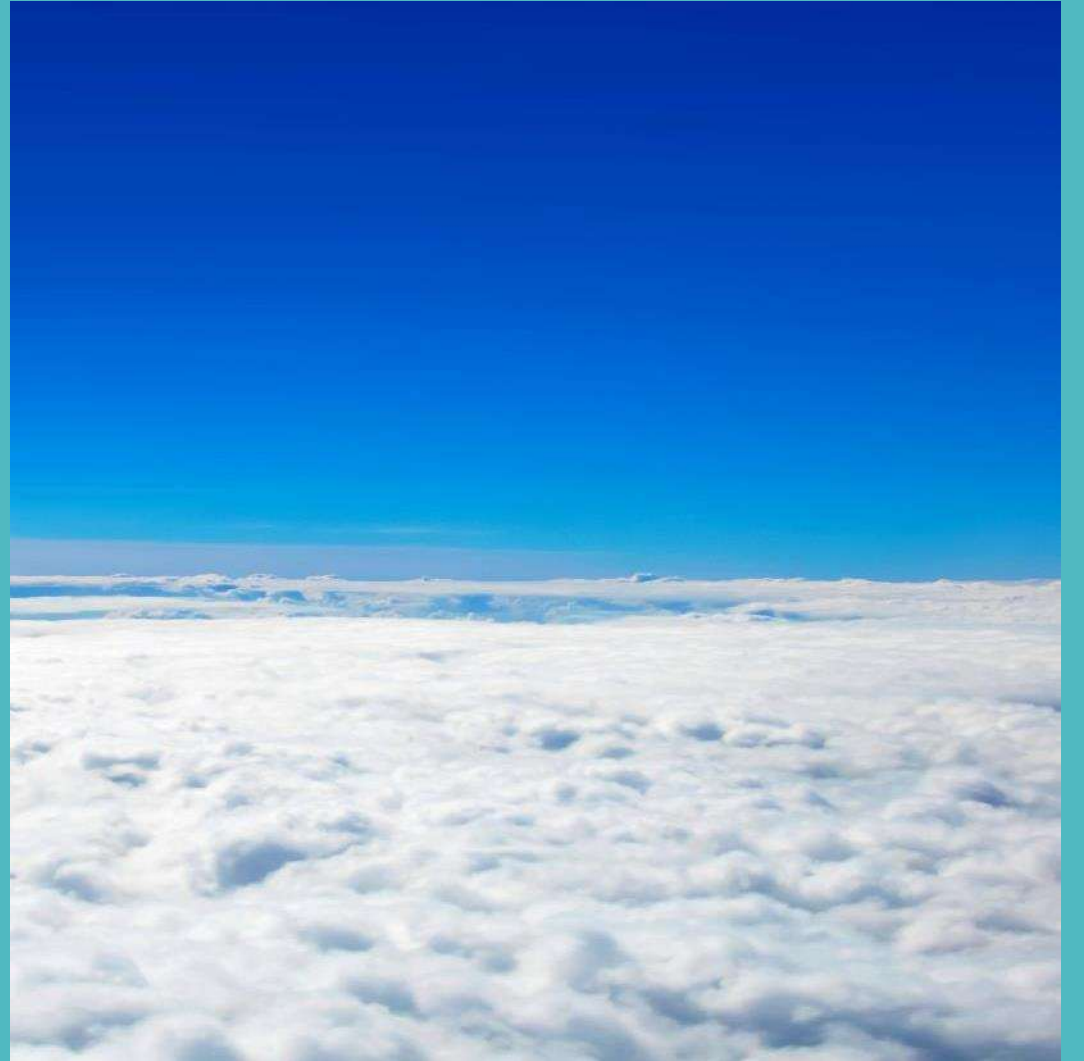
Talmud, Shabbat 151b

תְּנִיא, רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר אוֹמֵר: עֲשֵׂה עַד שְׂאֵתָה מוֹצֵא, וּמְצוּי לָךְ, וְעוֹדֶךָ בְּיָדְךָ. וְאַף שְׁלֵמָה אָמַר בְּחֻכְמָתוֹ: "וַיִּזְכֹּר אֶת בּוֹרְאֵיךָ בְּיָמֵי בְּחֻרוֹתֶיךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָבֹאוּ יָמֵי הָרָעָה" — אֵלּוּ יָמֵי הַזְקָנָה, "וְהִגִּיעוּ שָׁנִים אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵין לִי בָהֶם חֶפֶץ" — אֵלּוּ יָמֵי הַמְּשִׁיחַ, שְׂאֵין בָּהֶם לֹא זְכוּת וְלֹא חוֹבָה.

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: Perform mitzvot while you still find opportunities, and you have the financial means, and you are still under your own control. As King Solomon, in his wisdom, said, “And remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come”—this refers to old age. “. . . and years arrive about which you will say, ‘I have no desire in them’”—this refers to the messianic era, in which there will be neither merit nor liability.

QUESTION

Why does the Talmud interpret the words “I have no desire in them”, to mean the Messianic era, a time where there will be neither merit nor liability?



TEXT 8

Zechariah 13:2

וְאֶת רוּחַ הַטְּמְאָה אֶעֱבִיר מִן הָאָרֶץ.

I will remove the spirit
of impurity from the land.

TEXT 9

*Nachmanides,
Devarim 30:6*

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 . . .

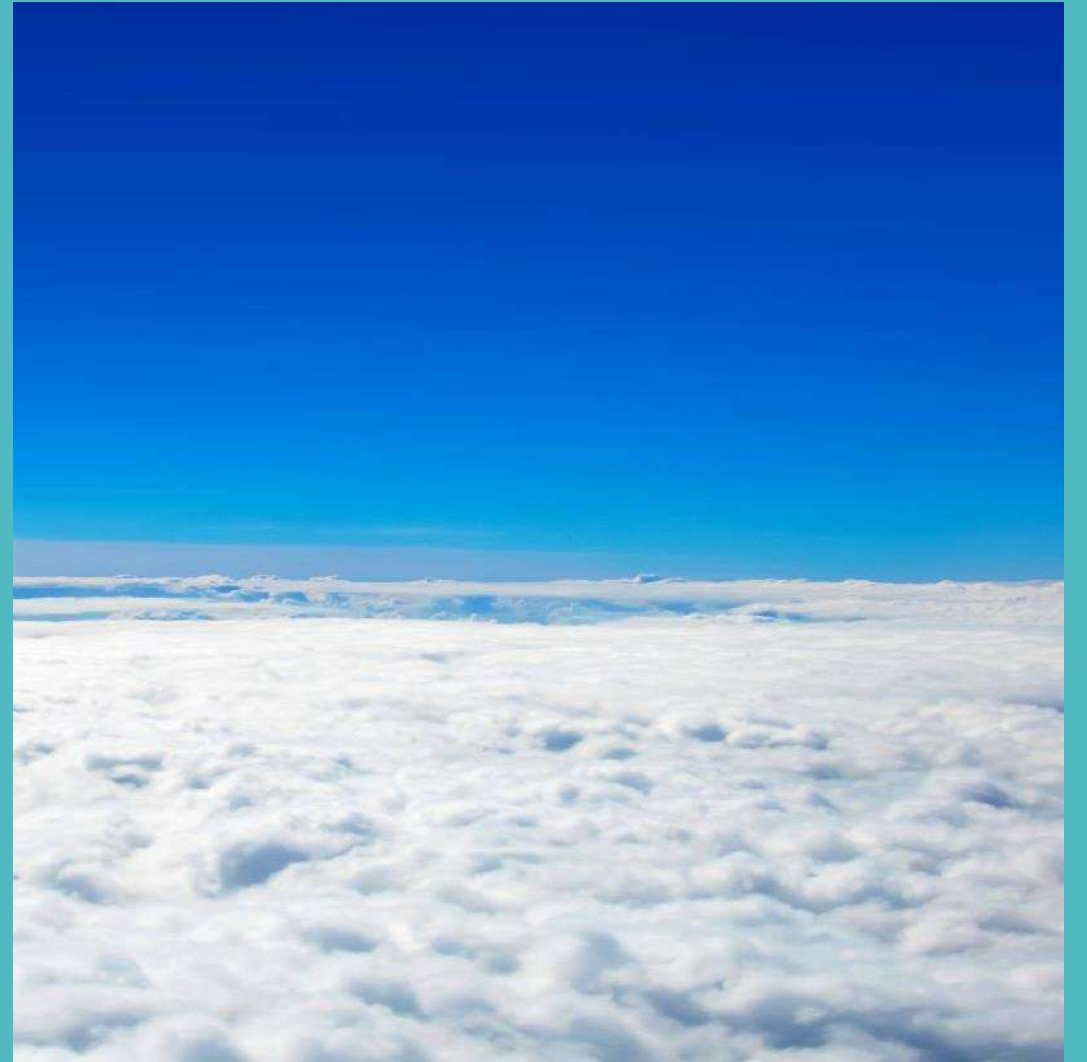
וזהו שאמרו רבותינו: "והגיעו שנים אשר תאמר אין לי בהם חפץ", אלו ימות המשיח שאין בהם לא זכות ולא חובה, כי בימי המשיח לא יהיה באדם חפץ, אבל יעשה בטבעו המעשה הראוי, ולפיכך אין בהם לא זכות ולא חובה, כי הזכות והחובה תלויים בחפץ.

From the time of Creation, every person has possessed the power to do as they pleased, to be righteous or wicked. This grant of free will applies likewise to the entire Torah period, so that people can gain merit upon choosing good and punishment for choosing evil. But in the messianic era, the choice of their genuine good will be natural; the heart will not desire the improper and it will have no craving whatsoever for it.

This is reflected in the teaching on the verse, "And years arrive about which you will say, 'I have no desire in them,'" which our sages explain refers to the messianic era "when there will be neither merit nor liability." For in the messianic era, there will be no evil desire in humanity; rather, every person will naturally perform the proper deeds. Thus, there will be neither merit nor liability in them, for merit and liability are dependent upon desire.

ANSWER

In the blissful utopia of the Messianic era, there will be no physical desires; consequently, our actions will be less valuable, lacking both merit and liability.



TEXT 10

Talmud, Eruvin 22a

אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי: מֵאֵי דְכֶתִיב "אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ
הַיּוֹם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם?" "הַיּוֹם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם", וְלֹא לְמַחֵר לַעֲשׂוֹתָם.

"הַיּוֹם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם", לְמַחֵר לְקַבֵּל שְׂכָרָם.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: What is the meaning of the verse, “And you shall keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments that I command you today to do them” (Deuteronomy 7:11)? It means today is the time to do them, in this world, and tomorrow is not the time to do them, as there is no obligation or opportunity to fulfill *mitzvot* in the World to Come.

Furthermore, it means today is the time to do them, but only tomorrow, in the ultimate future, is the time to receive reward for doing them.

TEXT 11

*Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak
Schneersohn, Likutei
Diburim, vol. 1, p. 133b*

יעמאלט ווען משיח וועט קומען במהרה בימינו אמן, וועט מען ערשט
ביינקען נאך די גלות טעג. יעמאלט וועט ערשט פארזריסען פאר וואס
מ'האט ניט געטאן אין עבודה. מען וועט ערשט דערהערען דעם גרויסען
ווייטאג פון העדר העבודה. איצטער אין די ימי הגלות, איז די ימי
העבודה צו מכין זיין זיך צו ביאת המשיח במהרה בימינו אמן.

When Mashiach comes (may it be speedily in our time, amen),
then we shall really long for the days of the Exile. Then we will
truly feel distress at our having neglected working at our
spiritual service; then will we indeed feel the deep pain caused
by our lack of spiritual service. These days of Exile are the days
of spiritual service, to prepare ourselves for the coming of
Mashiach—may it be speedily in our time, amen.



The relentless battle to uphold goodness is unique to Galut. It is something we will miss when Mashiach comes.

We must take advantage of the present moment and invest in doing mitzvot.

TEXT 12

*The Rebbe, Rabbi
Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, Torat
Menachem 5617:2 (19),
p. 361*

כבוד קדושת מורי וחמי אדמו"ר אמר:
כשיבוא משיח, "וועט מען זיך כאפן פארן
קאפ און שרייען געוואלד", זה עתה היה זמן
שיכלו לפעול בו הרבה כל כך, ולא עשו
זאת! . . .

ועל פי זה, הרי אף שעתה הוא העלם ואין
מרגישים ענין זה, מכל מקום, זה גופא
שיודעים שבקרוב יבוא הזמן שבו יצטערו
על העדר העבודה, הרי ידיעה זו גופא צריכה
להוסיף נתינת כח בהעבודה, שלא להסתפק
בההנהגה שעד עכשיו, וגם לא בהוספה על
זה "כהנה וכהנה", שהרי ככל שיוסיף
בעבודתו יהיה הכל בהגבלה; אלא העבודה
צריכה להיות באופן של בלי גבול, מצד
יחידה שבנפש, דהיינו עבודה במסירות נפש.
והיינו, שכל ענין שעושה, הן בלימוד התורה
והן בקיום המצוות, יהיה מתוך מסירות נפש.

My revered father-in-law, the Previous Rebbe, said that when Mashiach comes, we will “grab our heads” and shout, “*Gevalt!* We could have accomplished so much more in *Galut*, and we missed our chance!”

Therefore, even though now we don’t perceive the full value of our actions, the very knowledge that a time will come when we will regret our inaction should spur us to act. We must add to our study of Torah and observance of *mitzvot* in a manner exponentially greater than what we were doing until now. We must not suffice by adding only a little bit, or even a proportionally great number, for the time will come when it will be too late to add even one iota. Rather, we must increase in an infinite manner, meaning, a manner of self-sacrifice that stems from the very essence of our souls.

TEXT 13

*Maimonides, Mishneh
Torah, Laws of the
Holy Temple 4:1*

וּבָעֵת שֶׁבָּנָה שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת הַבַּיִת וַיַּדַּע שֶׁסּוֹפוֹ לְחָרֵב, בָּנָה בּוֹ מְקוֹם לְגִנְזוֹ בּוֹ הָאָרוֹן
לְמַטָּה בְּמַטְמוֹנִיּוֹת עֲמֻקּוֹת וְעַקְלָלוֹת, וַיֹּאשְׁיֵהוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ צָוָה וּגְנָזוֹ בְּמְקוֹם שֶׁבָּנָה
שְׁלֹמֹה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וַיֹּאמֶר לְלוֹיִם הַמְּבִינִים לְכֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשִׁים לֵה', הִנּוּ אֶת
אָרוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ בַּבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה שְׁלֹמֹה בֶּן דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל, אִין לָכֶם מִשָּׂא בַכְתֵּף,
עֲתָה עֲבֹדוּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְגו'" (דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים ב לֵה, ג).

When Solomon built the Temple, he was aware that it would ultimately be destroyed. Therefore, he constructed a chamber in which the ark could be entombed below the Temple building in deep, maze-like vaults. King Josiah commanded that the ark be entombed in the chamber built by Solomon, as the verse states, “And he said to the Levites who would teach wisdom to all of Israel, ‘Place the holy ark in the chamber built by Solomon, the son of David, King of Israel. You will no [longer] carry it on your shoulders. Now, serve G-d” (II Chronicles 35:3).

QUESTION

Were the extensive efforts to build the Temples worth their short-lived existence?

ANSWER

The first Temples, and the efforts invested into them, planted the seeds of holiness upon which the third Temple will forever stand and from which holiness will spread to the entire world.

TEXT 14

*Midrash, Yalkut
Shimoni, Yirmiyahu
259*

אמר רב: עלה אריה במזל
אריה והחריב את אריאל, עלה
אריה - זה נבוכדנאצר,
דכתיב: "עלה אריה מסבכו",
במזל אריה - "עד גלות
ירושלים בחודש החמישי",
והחריב אריאל - "הוי אריאל
אריאל קרית חנה דוד".

על מנת שיבא אריה במזל
אריה ויבנה אריאל. יבא אריה
- זה הקדוש ברוך הוא, דכתיב
ביה: "אריה שאג מי לא
יירא", במזל אריה - "והפכתי
אבלם לששון", ויבנה אריאל
- "בונה ירושלים ה' נדחי
ישראל יכנס".

Rav said, "An aryeh (lion) came in the month of aryeh and destroyed Ariel. The aryeh is the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, whom the verse (Jeremiah 4:7) refers to as a lion: 'A lion has come up from his thicket.' He came in the month of aryeh (the month of Av, whose astrological sign is a lion [Leo]), as the verse (Jeremiah 1:3) states, 'Until the exile of Jerusalem in the fifth month.' And he destroyed Jerusalem, which is called Ariel, as the verse (Isaiah 29:1) states, 'Woe, Ariel, Ariel, the city in which David encamped!'

"This happened so that an aryeh can come in the month of aryeh and rebuild Ariel. The aryeh is the Holy One, Blessed be He, as the verse (Amos 3:8) states, 'A lion has roared; who will not fear?' He will rebuild Jerusalem in the month of aryeh, as the verse (Jeremiah 31:12) states, 'I will turn their mourning into joy.' And He will rebuild Ariel, as the verse (Psalms 147:2) states, 'G-d is the Builder of Jerusalem; He will gather the outcasts of Israel.'"

The sole reason for the destruction of the Holy Temple was so that it may be rebuilt bigger and better.



TEXT 15

Rashi, Exodus 35:2

הַקִּדִּים לָהֶם אֲזַהֲרֶת שַׁבָּת לְצוּוֹי מִלְּאֲכַת
הַמִּשְׁכָּן, לֹאמַר שְׂאִינוּ דוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת.

The warning to keep Shabbat comes immediately before the discussion of the details of the building of the Mishkan, to indicate that the building of the Mishkan does not supersede the observance of Shabbat.

TEXT 16

*Siddur, Grace after
Meals*

הרחמן הוא ינחילנו ליום שכולו
שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים.

May the Merciful One let us inherit
that day that will be all Shabbat
and rest for life everlasting.



The Seventh Millennium

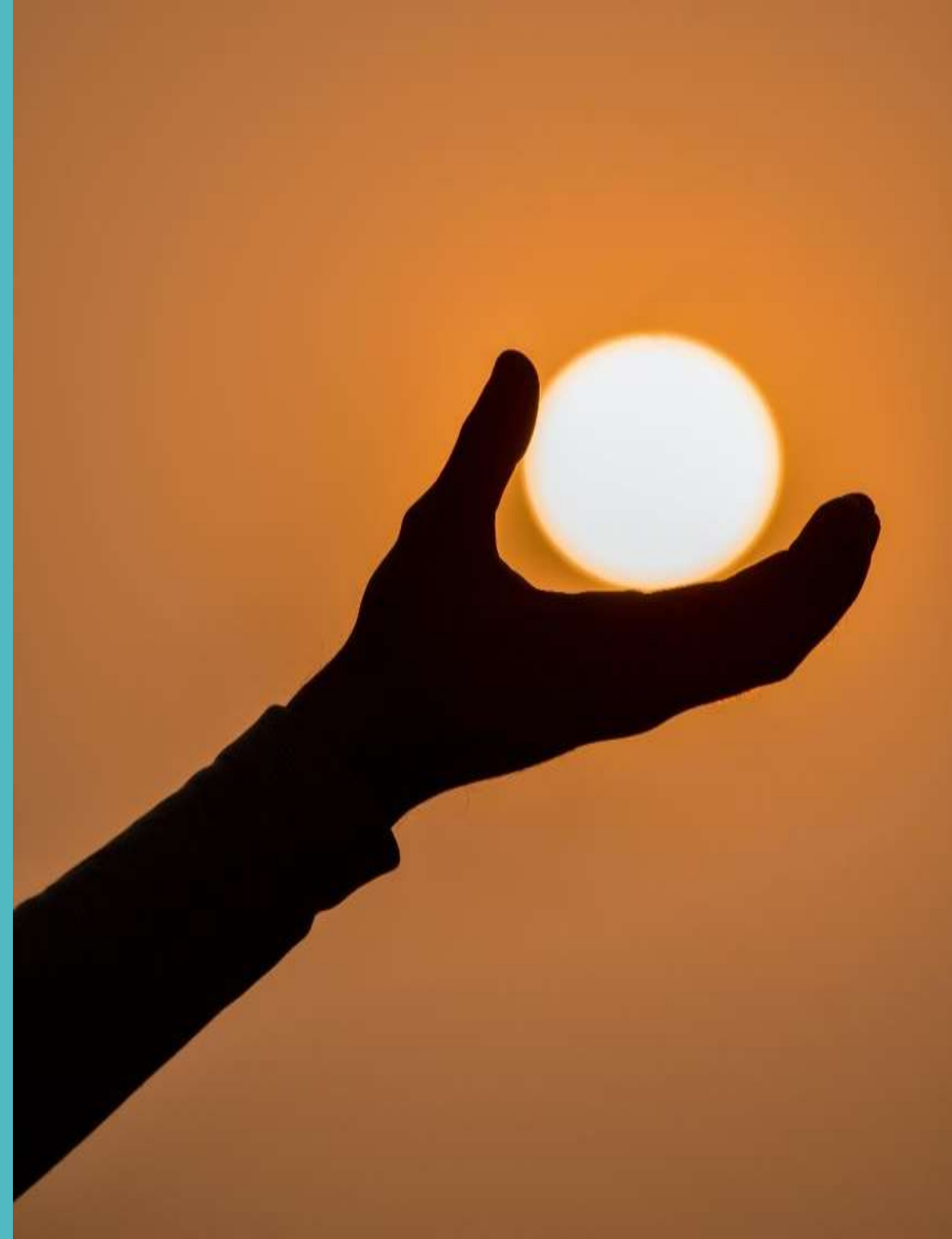
Just like we do for Shabbat, we need to prepare for the Messianic era now, during the “six days of the week”.

QUESTION

Why are our mitzvot significant in the present moment?

ANSWER

In the time of Galut, each mitzvah is an opportunity we're not going to get again.



KEY POINTS

1. We have already built a Tabernacle and two Temples—all of which were destroyed. The permanent structure and manifestation of G dliness that comes with it will be in the messianic era.
2. The G-dly revelation of future times hinges upon the work we put in now, during Exile.
3. When Mashiach comes, we will not struggle to do the right things—the right choices will come naturally to us.
4. It is only now, during Exile, that we can still change things. That's why we should invest now.
5. Solomon built the Temple from the onset as an investment for the future, permanent third Temple.

