

# Q AND A

## STRENGTHENING OUR EMUNAH IN MOSHIACH THROUGH CHASSIDUS *PART 2*

BY ARYEH GUREWITZ

**Q** In your column for Chof Cheshvan, you suggested that we need to learn Chassidus in a way that strengthens our emunah in the coming of Moshiach. Can you explain what exactly that could look like? –Yehuda M.

**A** Last week, we introduced the idea that Chassidus can train our minds to relate to our current experience of the world as a temporary one. We brought a simple example of this concept, a moshol from the Mitteler Rebbe, in which a father hides from his son only in order to get his son to look for him, with the full intention of ultimately coming out of hiding to reunite with his son.

Let's go a bit deeper into this concept by bringing it out of the haskalah of Chassidus.

As a small introduction, we must be aware that even the deepest concepts in Chassidus are relevant to our lives. One of the key points of conflict between Chassidim and Misnagdim was a detail in how to understand the teachings of the Arizal regarding the mystical concept of the Tzimtzum HaRishon—i.e., whether Hashem contracted Himself literally or only figuratively in order to create this world.<sup>1</sup> How could such an abstract concept become so contentious? It was because our ancestors understood that in this difference of interpretation lay two significantly different views of Hashem's relationship with His Creation, and it was that perspective that was worth fighting over.

In the same way, all of the concepts in the haskalah of Chassidus contain a certain perspective, and many of them are directly relevant to our faith in the coming of Moshiach. One example is a different aspect of the concept of Tzimtzum—namely, that the intent behind the Tzimtzum is revelation (“Tzimtzum bishvil ha-gilui”).

This concept is explained in many places using the moshol of a teacher and a student. The teacher wants to give over the full depth of his understanding of a certain idea, but if he would give it over as it currently exists in his mind, it would simply overwhelm the student. Therefore, the teacher has to completely set aside his current way of understanding it and “make room” for the student's current perspective. Obviously, this is only a means to an end. He only does it so that he can then present the idea in a form that the student can eventually grasp. So even though the act was an act of concealment, it is abundantly clear that the intent behind that act was the revelation that would come afterward. The concealment is only a temporary phase that happens in between.

If we choose to, we can use this moshol to shape our perspective on Golus and Geulah.

Like the teacher who wants his understanding to be revealed to his student, Hashem wants the Ohr Ein Sof as it was before the Tzimtzum to be revealed in this world, which is the idea of Geulah as it is explained in Tanya.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, until we reach the Geulah, we know that the intent of the Tzimtzum has not been fulfilled, and we are forced to recognize that this is only a temporary state. In terms of the moshol, we correspond to the student who has not yet reached the full depth of his teacher's understanding. Like that student, we are in a transitional stage, waiting for and working toward the day when we will receive our Teacher's full revelation—like the Navi tells us, “Your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, and your eyes will see your Teacher.”<sup>3</sup>

By taking the time to stop and reflect on our lives in this way—whether we use this concept or others in Chassidus with a similar message—we can remain strong in our emunah that Moshiach is coming soon.

1) Additional specifically, the Tzimtzum HaRishon is necessary for the creation not only of our world, but the higher worlds (Adam Kadmon, Tohu, Atzilus, Beriah, etc.) as well. For a detailed explanation of the machlokes and more sources to learn more on the topic, see Igros Kodesh, vol. 1, letter #11.

2) Ch. 36.

3) Yeshayah 30:20. Quoted in Tanya, there.

