

Keitz Moshiach Revealed

Based on "Al Totzar es Moav" by the
Mitteler Rebbe

Cited numerous times by the Rebbe, "Al Totzar es Moav" is an important and very relevant Chassidic discourse ("maamor") of the Mitteler Rebbe on the subject of the keitz, end of golus, and the Geuloh. The various opinions in the Gemora regarding how we bring about the Geuloh are explained, analyzed, and ultimately reconciled. The insights are particularly relevant in our times, as many struggle to understand our present situation standing on the cusp of Geuloh.

The maamor is very long: over 100 pages (including footnotes, which are about half of each page, so we can call it 50 pages). We will present here the main points of how the Mitteler Rebbe identifies the various opinions regarding the Geuloh. (We are basing ourselves on the relevant sections of the discourse: primarily pages 1-3, 23-34, and 98-103.)

THE MACHLOIKES

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 97b, see end of document) presents a debate regarding the Geuloh. Rav says that all the end-times (*kitzin*) have passed, and only through good deeds and Teshuva can the Jewish people bring the Geuloh. Shmuel says that the suffering of golus is sufficient, "enough that the mourner should get up from his mourning". The Gemara continues the subject with a similar dispute between Tanaaim from an earlier generation, R' Eliezer and R' Yehoshua.

R' Eliezer is quoted as saying "If the Jewish people repent they are redeemed, and if not they are not redeemed." His opinion is clearly that Teshuva is a prerequisite for Geuloh. (Let us point out that according to Chassidus, Teshuva is not only to rectify sins, but is also the "return" to closeness with Hashem that is relevant to every neshoma that has descended to this world, even without sin.) R' Yehoshua replies: "If they do not repent, will they not be redeemed at all? Rather, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will establish a king for them whose decrees are as harsh as Haman,

and the Jewish people will repent." Seemingly, this doesn't contradict R' Eliezer that Teshuva is required, only that he adds an option for a "push from Above" to bring about that Teshuva. This will become relevant as we proceed.

The gemara then brings a *Beraisa* in which the two sages argue back and forth as to whether Teshuva is required at all. R' Eliezer holds, as above, that Teshuva is a prerequisite for Geuloh. R' Yehoshua goes beyond what he said above, and makes the claim that there is in fact no need for Teshuva! They alternatively bring pesukim from the prophets as proof to their position (worthy of noting that they each find support from different pesukim in the very same prophets – Yeshayahu haNovi, and also from Yirmiyahu – which will fit with the Mitteler Rebbe's explanation). R' Yehoshua's final prooftext – the *keitz* of Daniel – leaves R' Eliezer unable to answer.

Additionally, the gemara adds the words of R' Yochanan that Moshiach will come only in a generation that is either entirely meritorious, or entirely unmeritorious. And then in the name of R' Yehoshua ben Levi that the posuk which states "in its time I will hasten it" ("*b'itah Achishena*") should be understood as "if they merit – I will hasten the Geuloh, if they don't merit I will bring the Geuloh in its time." (he supports these seemingly opposite positions with pesukim from a single prophet, Yeshayahu). The Mitteler Rebbe methodically explains what each of them is saying, and we will attempt to present it in a simplified form.

SUMMARIZING THE OPINIONS OF THE GEMARA

The silence of R' Eliezer indicates that he acknowledges that, regardless as to the effectiveness of Teshuva, there is indeed a final *keitz* that will come even without Teshuva and good deeds. R' Yochanan is summarizing the two approaches: with Teshuva ("entirely meritorious") or without ("entirely not meritorious"). Furthermore, we can summarize the approaches as follows:

R' Eliezer holds that the Geuloh is via Teshuva which causes the Jewish people to be "entirely meritorious", which is "I will hasten it" (*Achishena*).

R' Yehoshua holds that Teshuva is not required, the Geuloh can also come when "entirely not meritorious", which is "in its time" (*b'itah*).

Furthermore, although R' Yochanan divides "*b'itah*" and "*Achishena*" into two separate and opposing options, the posuk itself states them together: "in its time I will hasten it" (*b'itah Achishena*). This, according to the Mittlerer Rebbe, is a third way for the redemption to come, which he describes as rushing the final *keitz* of Daniel. This third option itself divides into three variations:

- an awakening from Above;
- the sufferings of golus; and,
- "for My sake I will do it" (*Iemaani e'eseh*).

Thus, the Mittlerer Rebbe makes order from the various opinions in the Gemara.

To summarize the options as they have been explained thus far in the maamor:

- Meritorious through Teshuva and good deeds (*Achishena*, R' Eliezer);
- Not meritorious, but Redemption comes anyway (*B'itah*, R' Yehoshua);
- Not meritorious but speeded by an awakening to Teshuva from Above (*B'itah Achishena 1*);
- Not meritorious but speeded by the suffering in golus (*B'itah Achishena 2*);
- For My sake I will do it (*B'itah Achishena 3*).

Now, the Mittlerer Rebbe proceeds to explain these options more deeply, and to describe their practical ramifications.

B'PNIMIYUS HA'INYONIM

On a deeper level, R' Eliezer holds that Teshuva is necessary in order to transform darkness to light. This transformation of evil to good is beyond *avoidas habirurim*, thus he

only mentions Teshuva (and not good deeds, through which the birurim are accomplished). This Teshuva is the required awakening from below which arouses an awakening from Above (according to his opinion).

R' Yehoshua, however, holds that the purpose of the descent into golus is for the sake of the birurim, refining the fallen sparks (*birur nitzutzos*), and thus even **without** rectifying sins through Teshuva ("without money ["kesef" – desiring to return] you shall be redeemed") the klipos will disappear as a result of the refinement of the *nitzutzos*.

The Mittlerer Rebbe then explains: what causes the klipos to disappear if not via Teshuva? The answer is an illumination of the light of *Atzmus*, which is a level where there is no difference between darkness and light (*k'chashecha k'ora*). Meaning this light, this *ohr*, can shine even when there wasn't Teshuva. But then he throws a bombshell: this lofty revelation itself of the *ohr* of *Atzmus* **causes the lengthening of golus!** Because *Atzmus* can also dwell in the darkness of *klipas noga*. Meaning that the *ohr* of *Atzmus* shines in the darkness without being hindered by the darkness, and the darkness continues to be darkness (not like other levels of light which push away the darkness because they cannot co-exist). The *ohr* of *Atzmus*, the light of Geuloh, shines in co-existence with darkness. Thus, the golus can go on longer and longer. It seems that the explanation may be as follows: Since he writes that this illumination of the *ohr* of *Atzmus* brings an end to the *yenika* of the *klipos*, then how does it result in a lengthening of golus? It would seem that the golus is lengthened by the Yidden themselves continuing to sin (since they didn't do Teshuva, and they don't notice the *ohr* of *Atzmus* which is revealed without pushing away the darkness, so their behavior remains unchanged) and thus they themselves give *yenika* to the *klipos*, r"l, even after these *klipos* have had their official life force cut off. Humanitarian aid to our worst spiritual enemies.

He then says that there is a need to transform the "Moshiach of *makif*", external and surrounding, to an internalized level. This

occurs when the *ohr* illuminates *b'pnimiyus*, without the “coarse garment” (*levush sak*) of *klipas noga*. This can only be accomplished via Teshuva and good deeds, which is the opinion of R' Eliezer. This level is called “Yosher”. On the other hand R' Yehoshua holds that the *keitz* can come by itself at the end of the “supernal refinement” (*birur elyon*), which is the level of “*Iggul*”. It doesn't require Teshuva because it's coming from a place higher than where our Teshuva can reach. Thus, when R' Yochanon says all meritorious or the opposite, he is referring to Torah and Mitzvos (good deeds), which effect the *birur* (level of *Iggul*), and is not referring to Teshuva (level of *Yosher*).

Let's understand these two terms a little. *Yosher* means “straight”, like a square box with straight sides. *Iggul* means “rounded”, like a dome or a sphere. A straight line, or a box, indicates limitation. A line might keep going, but only in one direction. The walls of a box are defined by the corners. There is a different distance to the wall than to the corner. A sphere, on the other hand, signifies the unlimited. A balloon, for example, expands in all directions equally, no limitation or differentiation. *Yosher* is connected with *ohr pnimi*, the light that enters the vessel, the illumination of Torah that affects a person internally. *Iggul* is connected with *ohr makif*, the light that transcends the limitations of the vessel. *Iggul* is unlimited, but it doesn't have much effect. *Yosher* is limited, but it is effective.

The *machloikes* of R' Eliezer and R' Yehoshua seems to be taking shape as a conflict over whether the Geuloh means limited or unlimited, if the light of Geuloh can be called Geuloh if it is shining but remains beyond our conception. R' Eliezer comes across as a Chabad'sker, demanding internalization, the transformation of the individual to receive the *ohr* of Geuloh. R' Yehoshua seems to lean towards the Polisher *derech*, that these things are higher than the Yid's personal existence and there's no need for the individual to make himself into a vessel. But the Mitteler Rebbe isn't finished yet.

B'ITAH ACHISHENA, IN ITS TIME I WILL HASTEN IT

To understand what this means for our role in the Geuloh, the Mitteler Rebbe clarifies terms for us. The expression “in its time” (*b'itah*) would seem to imply that there is a specific time that Hashem has determined that regardless of everything else the Geuloh will come. Meaning that He will arouse Himself to bring the Geuloh even if Yisroel has not done Teshuva. But, he writes, if that were the case then it would have to be “*b'ito*” (in *His* time) rather than “*b'itah*” (in *her* time, referring to *Knesses Yisroel* the source of *neshomos Yisroel*). It comes out that this “in its time” which grammatically translates as “in her time” does NOT refer to a time when **Hashem** will be aroused to bring the Geuloh (which would be “in His time”), but rather the moment when ***Knesses Yisroel*** will awaken with a great essential love and desire for Hashem (“*ad sh'techpotz*”, quoting Shir Hashirim). The Mitteler Rebbe says that this can be a time of *mersirus nefesh*, or of great suffering, or as a result of a self-motivated awakening to a great love and desire for Hashem (“a land that desired to do the will of its owner”).

Here the Mitteler Rebbe presents us with a resolution of the *machloikes* in our gemara. R' Yehoshua in fact agrees that there must be Teshuva, but for him Teshuva which is aroused from Above is also good enough. R' Eliezer is stricter, and he wants the Teshuva to be through the efforts of Yisroel themselves (“*b'koach atzmom*”). This demand of R' Eliezer for such a level of Teshuva is because in his opinion the Geuloh must come about through the “returning light”, *ohr chozer*. R' Yehoshua holds differently – that the “direct light”, *ohr yashar*, from before the *tzimtzum* can also illuminate the darkness. Yisroel will do Teshuva due to a push from Above (which will cut off *yenika* to the *klipos*, bringing Geuloh). Previously, the Mitteler Rebbe explained that R' Eliezer demands Teshuva and this is “*Achishena*”, whereas R' Yehoshua does not and his opinion is “*b'itah*”. But now, as a result of what we have learned, he reverses himself:

“*B’itah*” is now the opinion of R’ Eliezer: that *Knesses Yisroel* reaches a level of great desire, from their own efforts from below – “in her time”.

“*Achishena*” is now the opinion of R’ Yehoshua that Hakodosh Boruch Hu sends or arouses from Above a great love, *ahava rabba*, and thus speeds up the Geuloh.

THE FINAL KEITZ OF DANIEL

The Mittlerer Rebbe now states that “even though all the end times have passed, *kalu kol hakitzin, b’ruchniyus*, there is a final end time, *keitz ha’acharon*, which will come in actuality in this world, as it is stated ‘wait for it’, except that the attribute of judgement delays it.” This final *keitz* has two ways in which it can manifest (translating from the original):

- a) **Only b’gashmiyus** like the great material successes of Dovid and Shlomo, as stated there is no difference between this world and the days of Moshiach [except for servitude to the nations], and like Rambam. And...
- b) **B’ruchniyus** in a manner of illumination to the neshomos of a powerful revelation of G-dly light below like Above. As stated by the prophets “I will pour out My spirit” and “the world will be filled with G-dly knowledge” and “all of them will know me”. All of this is loftier than the G-dly revelation of Matan Torah, when the bodies were not so refined (and thus the neshomas flew out).

In other words there is a final *keitz* that will come, regardless of the state of the Jewish people. (Seemingly this is why R’ Eliezer was silent, since he concedes to this *keitz* of Daniel.) But it can manifest itself in the two very different ways described above. (One may notice that they correspond to the Rebbe's explanation of two *tekufos* in *yemos haMoshiach*.)

The Mittlerer Rebbe then writes that this is the basis of the *machloikes* between R’ Eliezer and R’ Yehoshua, between *zochu* and *lo zochu*. He then explains what is the intermediary, the *memutza*, between them: “drawing down the energy which elevates the awakening from below of Teshuva and a great love and desire for Hashem” (“*hamshochos koach hama’aleh Ma”n* of Teshuva and *ahava rabba ad sh’tchpotz*”).

Seemingly, this means that the *machloikes* is not about how to speed up the *keitz*, but rather once the final *keitz* of Daniel has arrived, how do we proceed from *lo zochu* to *zochu*, from *b’gashmiyus* to *b’ruchniyus*: does it require Teshuva from below, as R’ Eliezer holds, or can it occur via a great love that is awakened from Above, as R’ Yehoshua holds? It seems that the Mittlerer Rebbe is saying that it occurs in both manners, unifying Above to below with below to Above.

The Mittlerer Rebbe closes the maamor by explaining the dimension of “for My sake I will do it” *lemaani e’eseh*, which he previously said is the combination of “*B’itah*” and “*Achishena*” as stated in the posuk “*B’itah Achishena*”. He says that this is after *techiyas hameisim*, in the 7th millennium. It is beyond the concepts of Above and below. He calls it “essential rest” *menucha atzmis*, and is not connected at all with the elevation of Malchus. It is loftier than all that we have described until now, not a *yichud haElyon*, not via an intermediary such as Moshe Rabbeinu or Moshiach, but rather “eye to eye” we will see G-dliness. This is “for My sake” because it is above all intermediaries.

Seemingly, this cannot be influenced by our actions, neither for the good or the opposite – it comes solely from Hashem. Yet even so, the Mittlerer Rebbe says here that “*B’itah*” is the 6th millennium, whereas “*Achishena*” is this level which is not via any intermediary, an eternal unification. Which would seem to mean that we have no impact on “I will hurry it”, because it is not influenced by our actions, it is solely an issue for Hashem. This is why it is called “*Achishena*”, “I will hasten it” – because it is above all manner of connection with our awakening from below.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

The bottom line of all this could be summarized as follows:

We originally thought that B'itah means without Teshuva, the opinion of R' Yeshoshua, whereas Achishena is via Teshuva like R' Eliezer. This was rejected by the Mittlerer Rebbe, who redefined their positions: R' Eliezer demands Teshuva from below to Above (*ohr chozer*) as a prerequisite to drawing down the *ohr Ein Sof*. Thus, he becomes *B'itah*, "in her time" – when she (*Knesses Yisroel*) does Teshuva. R' Yehoshua agrees that there must be Teshuva, but in his opinion it can even be via an awakening from Above, after the *ohr Yashar* descends as a result of the completion of the *birurim*. He is now *Achishena*, that "I will hasten it" because Hashem is the one causing the awakening to Teshuva.

Then we go a step further: that their *machloikes* is not about the *keitz* before its time, but rather the **manner** in which the final *keitz* of Daniel will manifest, a *keitz* that will eventually come regardless of any merit on the part of Yisroel. If it manifests only in physical matters (success like Dovid and Shlomo), then how do we proceed to the promised prophecies of spiritual revelations? R' Eliezer wants human-powered Teshuva from below to Above, whereas R' Yehoshua sees an awakening of a level of *ahava rabba* as a result of Hashem awakening our hearts. The Mittlerer Rebbe indicates that it will be a combination of the two – *hala'as Ma"n of Teshuva* from below and *ahava rabba ad sh'techpotz* from Above – satisfying both opinions.

The final step is *B'itah Achishena*, which transcends the *machloikes* completely. *B'itah* – the awakening of *Knesses Yisroel* takes place at the end of the 6th millennium (either according to R' Eliezer or R' Yehoshua or a combination). At that point Hashem takes over entirely and we enter the 7th millennium – *Achishena* – which is the level of true unity and Oneness where there is no "Above" and

"below" – a level beyond our ability to influence. (Although seemingly there is room to understand that by speeding up the complete Geuloh of the 6th millennium (which is in our ability) we consequently speed up the coming of the next stage, which is the Achishena of the 7th millennium which follows immediately.)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US?

The Rebbe MH"M relates to the *machoikes* of R' Eliezer and R' Yehoshua in various places, connecting it with another *machloikes* between them (Rosh Hashanah 10-11) where R' Eliezer states that the world was created in Tishrei and the Geuloh will be in Tishrei, whereas R' Yehoshua holds that the world was created in Nissan and so too the Geuloh will be in Nissan (Igros Kodesh, v. 1, #69, Likutei Sichos v.1 (Tazria), and maamorim "Hachodesh Hazeh Lochem"). We see that R' Yehoshua leans towards the aspect of "from Above to below" in all these cases, whereas R' Eliezer shows the opposite inclination.

(Perhaps we can connect their opinions to their personal realities: R' Yehoshua's mother while still pregnant asked the chachomim to daven that her son will also be a Talmid Chochom, and after he was born she brought him to the Beis Midrash to hear words of Torah – gifts from Above. Also, he was a Levi, which granted him entrance to the kedusha of the Beis Hamikdash because of yichus and not due to any personal effort on his part. He holds that the Geuloh will also come in such a manner.

R' Eliezer, on the other hand, was the son of a farmer, Hurkanos, who had little admiration for Torah and did not support his son's desire to learn Torah. R' Eliezer left his father's house to learn Torah, forfeiting his inheritance and studying in poverty and hunger. R' Eliezer became one of the great Tannaim as a result of his own efforts, with no free gifts. And so he holds regarding the Geuloh.

Even their names reflect their perspectives: "Eliezer" means "my G-d will help", implying assistance in conjunction with the person's

own efforts. “Yehoshua” means “Hashem will save”, which implies salvation from Above without regard to the condition of efforts of the recipient.)

Back to the maamor, we can note that in our epoch in history, dor haShvii at the end of the 6th millenium, we definitely see in the world the tremendous material success described by the Mitteler Rebbe as being the *lo zachu* manifestation of the *keitz* of Daniel. Particularly we see it in the victories over our enemies in Eretz Yisroel (when we choose to confront those enemies and not to capitulate to their demands, r”l).

The lofty spiritual revelations and *nechomos* of the prophet Yeshayahu described in the second, *zochu*, manner of the *keitz*, do not seem to have materialized yet. We could identify ourselves as holding between “*oilom k’minhago noheg*” (described as the first manner of the *keitz*) and the next stage – which is the real *machloikes*, as the Mitteler Rebbe states.

The Rebbe Rayatz made a call of “directly to Teshuva, directly to Geuloh” – the opinion of R’ Eliezer. Decades after that the Rebbe MH”M said that Yisroel has already done true Teshuva. The Rebbe’s complaint is that we don’t cry out “*ad mosa*” in truth – and if we would do so Hashem would act similarly to bring the Geuloh – unification of below to Above and Above to below, as described in this maamor.

We could also say that the Rebbe’s words also contain in them hints to the final stage of *B’itah Achishena*, the transition to the 7th millenium, which is beyond the *machloikes* of R’ Eliezer and R’ Yehoshua. In our maamor the Mitteler Rebbe describes the 7th millennium as “to become unified with *atzmuso umahuso mamash*”, “above a unification of Above and below” without need for any intermediary. The Rebbe may be hinting at this with expressions like “*tachlis hashleimus* is that *Hakodosh Boruch Hu and Knesses Yisroel* become one *mamash*, so to speak, that *Knesses Yisroel* doesn’t need to receive, so to speak, from *Hakodosh Boruch*

Hu, since is is revealed that ‘Yisroel and the Holy One are truly one’. (Vayishlach, 5752).

One thing is certain: by learning this maamor, as well as other sources of *inyonei Moshiach* and Geuloh – as per the Rebbe’s instruction – we are speeding up the revelation down below in the most direct way possible!

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד!

Sanhedrin 97b

Rav says: All the ends of days passed, and the matter depends only upon Teshuva and good deeds. When the Jewish people do Teshuva, they will be redeemed.

And Shmuel says: It is sufficient for the mourner to endure in his mourning to bring about the coming of the Messiah. Even without Teshuva, they will be worthy of redemption due to the suffering they endured during the exile. The Gemara notes: This dispute is parallel to a dispute between *tanna'im*:

Rabbi Eliezer says: If the Jewish people do Teshuva they are redeemed, and if not they are not redeemed.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: If they do not do Teshuva, will they not be redeemed at all? Rather, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will establish a king for them whose decrees are as harsh as Haman, and the Jewish people will do Teshuva.

It is taught in another *baraita* that Rabbi Eliezer says: If the Jewish people do Teshuva they are redeemed, as it is stated: "Return, wayward children, I will heal your iniquities" (Yirmiyahu 3:22). Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: But isn't it already stated: "So says the Lord: You were sold for naught, and without money you shall be redeemed" (Yeshyahu 52:3)? "You were sold for naught" means you were sold for idol worship, which is a sin with no basis. "And without money you shall be redeemed" means you will be redeemed not through Teshuva and good deeds, but through the will of God.

Rabbi Eliezer said to Rabbi Yehoshua: But isn't it already stated: "Return to me and I will return to you" (Malachi 3:7)? Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: But isn't it already stated: "For I have taken you to Myself; and I will take you one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion" (Yirmiyahu 3:14), unconditionally?

Rabbi Eliezer said to him: But isn't it already stated: "In ease [*beshuva*] and rest shall you be saved" (Yeshyahu 30:15), indicating that redemption is dependent upon *Teshuva*? Rabbi Yehoshua said to Rabbi Eliezer: But isn't it already stated: "So says the Lord, Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him who is despised of man, to him who is abhorred of the nation, to a servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise, princes shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, Who is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, Who has chosen you" (Yeshyahu 49:7), indicating that redemption will come independent of Teshuva?

Rabbi Eliezer said to him: But isn't it already stated: "If you will return, Israel, says the Lord, return to Me" (Yirmiyahu 4:1), indicating that redemption is contingent upon Teshuva? Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: But isn't it already

stated: "And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he lifted up his right hand and his left hand to heaven and swore by the One Who lives forever that it shall be for a period, periods, and a half; when the crushing of the power of the holy people shall have been completed, all these things shall be finished" (Daniel 12:7), indicating that the time for redemption is set and unrelated to Teshuva?

And Rabbi Eliezer was silent.

And Rabbi Yoḥanan says: The son of David will come only in a generation that is entirely innocent, in which case they will be deserving of redemption, or in a generation that is entirely guilty, in which case there will be no alternative to redemption. He may come in a generation that is entirely innocent, as it is written: "And your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever" (Yeshyahu 60:21). He may come in a generation that is entirely guilty, as it is written: "And He saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no intercessor; therefore His arm brought salvation to Him, and His righteousness, it sustained Him" (Yeshyahu 59:16). And it is written: "For My own sake, for My own sake will I do it; for how should it be profaned? And My glory I will not give it to another" (Yeshyahu 48:11).

Rabbi Alexandri says: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi raises a contradiction in a verse addressing God's commitment to redeem the Jewish people. In the verse: "I the Lord in its time I will hasten it" (Yeshyahu 60:22), it is written: "In its time," indicating that there is a designated time for the redemption, and it is written: "I will hasten it," indicating that there is no set time for the redemption.

Rabbi Alexandri explains: If they merit redemption through Teshuva and good deeds I will hasten the coming of the Messiah. If they do not merit redemption, the coming of the Messiah will be in its designated time.

Rabbi Alexandri says: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi raises a contradiction between two depictions of the coming of the Messiah. It is written: "There came with the clouds of heaven, one like unto a son of man...and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom...his dominion is an everlasting dominion" (Daniel 7:13-14). And it is written: "Behold, your king will come to you; he is just and victorious; lowly and riding upon a donkey and upon a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9). Rabbi Alexandri explains: If the Jewish people merit redemption, the Messiah will come in a miraculous manner with the clouds of heaven. If they do not merit redemption, the Messiah will come lowly and riding upon a donkey. (Translation: Chabad.org)