

דבר מלכות

חזרת מלכות בית דוד ושלימות משפטי התורה (א)
DEFINING THE IDENTITY OF MASHIACH (1)

DVAR MALCHUS

RAMBAM'S CONCEPTION OF MASHIACH
AS ILLUMINATED BY THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS

DVAR MALCHUS | דבר מלכות סימן א

LIKKUTEI SICHOS, VOLUME 18, P. 271FF.

Adapted from *sichos* delivered on 12 Tammuz, *Motzaei Shabbos Parshas Balak*, and *Motzaei Shabbos Parshas Pinchas*, 5738 [1978]

Introduction

During one of his visits to the city of Vitebsk, the Jews of the city approached the Alter Rebbe with a heartfelt question, “Rebbe, when will *Mashiach* come?”

The Alter Rebbe answered, “The *Mashiach* that the world at large wants will never come. The true *Mashiach*, no one wants. If so, how can he come?!”¹

G-d certainly wants to bring *Mashiach*, as our Sages said,² “The world was created solely for *Mashiach*,” since *Mashiach* will enable the world to reach the purpose for which G-d initially created it – to be His dwelling, a place where His presence is manifest. But He wants this dwelling to be fashioned by man. Our mission and responsibility is to create a setting for *Mashiach* to come by transforming the world into a G-dly place.

For this reason, it is necessary to understand what is meant by “the true *Mashiach*,” i.e., what is the nature of the redemption G-d desires to bring about and what are the characteristics of the leader who will initiate it.

The Rebbe wanted these ideas to be in the forefront of the consciousness of the Jewish people. Shortly after calling on the Jewish people to do everything they can to bring *Mashiach* in the classic *sichah* of 28 Nissan, 5751 (1991), the Rebbe explained what the initial step and most “direct path” to accomplish that purpose must be – to study “the subject of *Mashiach* and the Ultimate Redemption,... and in particular, the development of these topics in the *maamarim* and the *Likkutei Sichos* of the *Nasi* of our generation.”³ By gaining awareness of the nature of *Mashiach*’s leadership and the changes he will bring about within the world, we can create a setting that readies the world for his coming.

In that context, the *sichah* that follows is of fundamental relevance for, in it, the Rebbe focuses on the point raised at the outset: What are the qualities that will characterize the Redemption and the *Mashiach* that *Hashem* wants to bring?

In his analysis, the Rebbe turns first and foremost to the writings of the *Rambam* because of all the Torah authorities who have spoken about *Mashiach*, the single *halachic* source that focuses on the subject in an inclusive and systematic manner is *Rambam’s Mishneh Torah*.

While G-d’s will is expressed in the Torah as a whole, it is specifically the realm of *halachah* that defines the practical application of His will, teaching us how He desires that we conduct ourselves. Our Sages teach⁴ that “these and these are the word of G-d” and thus there is a possibility for there to be divergent theoretical views that are all valid Torah perspectives. Nevertheless, it is *halachah* that constitutes the crystallization of G-d’s will – what He wants us to do and how He wants us to live.

1. *Migdal Oz* (Mondshine), p. 170.

2. *Sanhedrin* 98b.

3. *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora*, 5751.

4. *Eruvin* 13b.

How is *halachah* developed? A seemingly straightforward statement of the *Mishnah* is questioned, debated, and analyzed until a new, deeper, and more specific understanding is developed. This was the pattern followed by the Sages of the *Gemara* and a similar pattern was followed by Rabbis in later generations. The later authorities would analyze a parent text, going back to its sources, present dissenting opinions, and apply the principles thus discerned to a particular circumstance which the original text had not touched upon.

The Rebbe follows that pattern in this *sichah*, analyzing a seemingly straightforward passage in *Rambam's Mishneh Torah* carefully, raising core questions that prevent us from accepting *Rambam's* words at face value. By emphasizing that *Rambam* is stating a *halachah* – not just offering a theoretical exposition – and analyzing it as one would a passage of *halachah*, the Rebbe creates a fertile intellectual setting. As a result, a deeper understanding of that passage springs up from *Rambam's* words on its own, as it were.

That understanding not only provides a basis for the intellectual comprehension of the nature of *Mashiach*, it teaches us what to do – how to conduct ourselves in a manner that prepares the world for *Mashiach's* coming and hastens the advent of the time when it will become an actual reality.

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Introduction

Reb Mendel Futerfas spent fourteen years in Russian hard-labor camps for his efforts on behalf of the Jewish people in the Soviet Union. While in the camps, for a variety of reasons, he chose not to remain totally aloof from the non-Jews who shared his lot and spent a few hours a day in conversation with them.

Included in this group were many ordinary people jailed for “crimes” which neither they nor, for that matter, many others understood the criminal nature of. Among them was a circus performer whose claim to fame were his feats as a tight-rope walker. He and Reb Mendel had a standing debate over the perils of such acts. This was before safety nets had become standard circus practice, and Reb Mendel could not understand why a person would risk his life walking on a rope extended several stories above the ground.

“There must be some hidden strings holding you in case you slip,” Reb Mendel maintained. But the tight-rope walker insisted that there was no need for such support. The act was not all that dangerous. One began practicing on low ropes, and once he gained experience, the chance of falling was minimal.

This debate continued for years until, after Stalin died, the prison authorities – in a move to relax their rules somewhat – allowed the prisoners to prepare a makeshift circus in celebration of May Day. The tight-rope walker suddenly came alive, becoming the center of attention; he organized various acts for the event, making his own performance the highlight of the show, needless to say. And he made sure that Reb Mendel was in the audience.

After the other performances were completed, he climbed the pole and positioned himself at the rope’s end, as a drumroll began. His first steps were somewhat hesitant, after all it had been several years since he had last performed, but within a few seconds, he felt at home.

It all came back to him. He began to twirl a hoop with his hands and wave to his friends. As he reached the end of the rope, he hesitated for a moment, made a fast turn, and then proceeded to the other side. On his way back, he exuded confidence; he caught hats thrown to him by his fellow inmates and performed several other stunts. After he reached the end of the rope for a second time, he climbed down the pole and ran to Reb Mendel.

“You see, no strings holding me up,” he gleamed in satisfaction.

“Yes. You’re right, no strings,” agreed Reb Mendel.

“You’re a smart man,” the performer continued. “Tell me. Can you figure out what is the trick? Is it in the hands or the feet?”

Reb Mendel paused to think. The tight-rope walker had moved his hands freely and it appeared that his footwork was not the determining factor. After reviewing the scene in his mind several times, Reb Mendel said, “It’s the eyes. From the beginning to the end, your eyes were riveted on the opposite pole.”

The performer nodded in agreement, “When you see your destination in front of you, you know where to put your feet.”

Begin with the Destination in Mind

To build on the circus performer’s words: It is always important to have your goal in mind – to establish a mission statement, to state your purpose in the initial stages of an undertaking – so that you know where you are going.

G-d Himself followed this motif, revealing His goal in creating the world in the opening verses of *Bereishis*. Thus, on the verse,¹ “The spirit of G-d was hovering over the waters,” our Sages comment,² “This refers to the spirit of *Mashiach*.” *Mashiach* will bring the world to the ultimate purpose for which G-d initially created it.

In his commentary on the first verse of the Torah, *Rashi* further clarifies the goal of creation, interpreting the word בראשית by dividing it into ב' ראשית, meaning “There are two ‘firsts,’” *Rashi* proceeds to explain that the phrase teaches that all existence was created “for the sake of the Torah, which is called ‘first,’ and for the sake of the Jewish people, who are called ‘first.’” Simply put, *Rashi* is telling us that G-d created the world for the Jews to study and apply the Torah.

What G-d Told the Jews at Sinai

When G-d assembled the Jewish people together to give them the Torah, He began the Ten Commandments with the word, *Anochi*, אנכי, “I.” Our Sages³ interpret that word as an acronym for the Aramaic phrase אנא נפשי כתבית יהבית, meaning “I have inscribed and conveyed My soul.” G-d was letting the Jewish people know that He invested the very essence of His being in the Torah.

This concept is integrally related to G-d’s creation of the world. Our Sages⁴ teach that G-d created the world because “He desired a dwelling in the lowest realm.” Our dwellings, our homes, are where we are most ourselves. We do express ourselves outside our homes as well, but it is not the same. No matter how hard a host tries to make his guests feel comfortable, there are always accepted social conventions, personal reservations, and the like. But when we’re at home, it’s different. That’s where who we really are comes out. This is what our Sages meant when they said that G-d created the world because He wanted a home; He desired a place where His essence would be revealed.

That is why He gave us the Torah. He wanted man to be His partner in creation,⁵ transforming the nature of this material world and revealing His essence within it. This can be achieved only through living according to the Torah’s laws and guidelines.

Rambam’s Goal

Just as a writer tries to state his purpose at the outset, so too, he also seeks to encapsulate and summarize it at the end. *Rambam* conceived of his *Mishneh Torah* as “a compilation of the entire Oral Law,”⁶ i.e., a reiteration of the entire Torah. Therefore, he placed the laws of *Mashiach* at the

1. *Bereishis* 1:2.

2. *Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis*, sec. 1:4.

3. *Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar*, p. 48d,

et al., interpreting *Shabbos* 105a.

4. *Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Naso*, sec. 16; see *Tanya*, ch. 36.

5. *Shabbos* 119b, the Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch* 268:1.

6. *Rambam’s* Introduction to the *Mishneh Torah*

very end of the *Mishneh Torah*. By doing so, he was making a statement: It is *Mashiach* who will bring the Torah and the creation to its consummate fulfillment.

What is the Torah? The text in which G-d “inscribed and conveyed [His] soul.”

Why was the world created? For the sake of the Torah.

Mashiach's mission is to bring that purpose to fruition by creating a setting in which the Jewish people will study and observe the Torah in a consummate manner, enabling its teachings to permeate the entire world.

What We Can Do

Rambam did not intend for his words to be merely abstract teachings. Psychology defines learning as a change in behavior. This includes even mere intellectual study, because when we change the way we understand things, our conduct also changes. This is particularly true at present, since ideas and information are the forces molding our society today. A revolution in thinking can send ripples of change throughout the world.

To use a metaphor: Ships have long been guided by the movement of a rudder. As ships grew larger, the rudders necessary to turn them also increased in size. Moving these larger rudders became difficult. Therefore, a small rudder referred to as a trim-tab was attached to the large rudder. This smaller rudder is easier to move, and it then moves the large rudder, which in turn changes the course of the entire ship. In today's world, each of us can be such a trim-tab. The direction in which we point our lives can affect the direction of the vessel that is humanity.

Living with *Mashiach*, learning about the ideals which G-d envisions for our world, and integrating these principles in our lives, can enable each of us to serve as a trim-tab, channeling the direction of global change. By anticipating the Ultimate Redemption in our minds and lives, we can precipitate its coming.

Defining the Identity of *Mashiach*

Dual Prophecies

1. Early in his discussion of the subject of *Mashiach* in the conclusion of *Hilchos Melachim* in his *Mishneh Torah*, Rambam writes:¹

Whoever does not believe in him, or does not await his coming, denies not only [the statements of] the other prophets, but also [those of] the Torah and of Moshe, our teacher, for the Torah attests to his [coming], stating,² “And G-d your L-rd will bring back your [exiled] captivity.”

Not content with a single proof-text, Rambam continues:

There is also a reference [to *Mashiach*] in the passage [concerning] Bilaam. There, he prophesied about the two anointed [kings]: the first anointed [king], David, who saved Israel from her oppressors, and the ultimate anointed [king] who will arise from among his descendants and save Israel (at the End [of Days]).³ That passage states:⁴

“I see him, but not now” – this refers to David; “I perceive him, but not in the near [future]” – this refers to the anointed king (*melech haMashiach*).

“A star shall go forth from Yaakov” – this refers to David; “and a staff shall rise up from Yisrael” – this

א. כתב הרמב"ם בסוף הלכות מלכים: "וכל מי שאינו מאמין בו (במשיח) או מי שאינו מחכה לביאתו לא בשאר נביאים בלבד הוא כופר אלא בתורה ובמשה רבנו שהרי התורה העידה עליו שנאמר ושב ה' אלקיך את שבותך כו". ולאחרי זה ממשיך: "אף בפרשת בלעם נאמר ושם נבא בשני המשיחים. במשיח הראשון שהוא דוד שהושיע את ישראל מיד צריהם ובמשיח האחרון שעומד מבניו שמושיע את ישראל [באחרונה]. ושם הוא אומר אראנו ולא עתה זה דוד אשורנו ולא קרוב זה מלך המשיח. דרך כוכב מיעקב זה דוד. וקם שבט מישׂראל זה

1. *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim* 11:1.

2. *Devarim* 30:3.

3. This phrase is set off by parentheses because – although it is included in the standard printed text of the *Mishneh Torah* – in the hand-written manuscripts and uncensored editions of the *Mishneh Torah* (the Rome edition of 5240 [1480], the Soncino edition of 5250 [1490],

the Constantinople edition of 5269 [1509], the Venice edition of 5284 [1524], the Bragadin edition of 5310 [1550], and the Giustiniani edition of 5311 [1551]), this phrase actually reads “and save Israel from the hands of Esav’s descendants.”

The full, uncensored version of this chapter (ch.11) that is based on hand-written manuscripts and early editions together with a preface and

a comparison of different versions was printed in the *Pardes* edition of the *Mishneh Torah* (Jerusalem, 1958.) That edition also includes copies of several hand-written manuscripts of this chapter. Throughout this *sichah* and in the footnotes, we have cited primarily the differences that are germane to the subject under discussion.

4. *Bamidbar* 24:17-18.

refers to the King *Mashiach*.⁵

“He shall crush Moab’s princes” – This refers to David, (as it is written,⁶ “He struck down Moab and measured them with a cord”); “he shall break down all of Seth’s descendants” – This refers to the King *Mashiach*, (about whom it is written,⁷ “He will rule from sea to sea”).

“Edom will become an inheritance” – This refers to David,⁸ (as it is written,⁹ “Edom¹⁰ became the servants of David¹¹”); “his enemy, Seir, will become Israel’s inheritance”¹² – This refers to the King *Mashiach*, (as it is written,¹³ “Liberators will ascend Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau...¹⁴”).

This extensive exegesis of the Torah’s prophecies is totally out of character for the *Mishneh Torah*. As *Rambam* explains towards the end of his introduction to that text, he structured it as a work of *halachah*, Jewish law. For this reason, he generally refrains from quoting

הַמְלִיךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ. וּמַחֵץ פְּאֵתַי מוֹאָב
זֶה דָּוִד. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר וַיַּךְ אֶת
מוֹאָב וַיִּמְדְּדֵם בַּחֶבֶל. וְקִרְקַר כָּל
בְּנֵי שֵׁת זֶה הַמְּלִיךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
בּו וּמִשְׁלוֹ מֵיַם עַד יָם. וְהָיָה אֲדוֹם
יְרֵשָׁה זֶה דָּוִד. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְתָהִי
אֲדוֹם לְדוֹד לְעַבְדֵי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.
וְהָיָה יְרֵשָׁה שְׂעִיר אוֹיְבָיו זֶה הַמְּלִיךְ
הַמְּשִׁיחַ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְעָלוּ מוֹשִׁיעִים
בְּהַר צִיּוֹן וְגו'.

וְהִנֵּה סֵפֶר הַיָּד הַרְי הוּא
סֵפֶר הַלְכוֹת - כְּדַבְרֵי הַרְמַב"ם
בְּהַקְדַּמְתּוֹ בְּסוּפָה - (וְלֹא שֶׁל
דְּרָשׁוֹת עַל פְּסוּקֵי הַתּוֹרָה וְכִיּוֹצֵא

5. The addition of the word “the” (as in “the King *Mashiach*”) is based on the early editions and some of the hand-written manuscripts cited in footnote 3,* which in the first clause refer to *Mashiach* as *Melech HaMashiach* and in the latter three clauses refer to him as *HaMel-ech HaMashiach*. The difference in wording can be explained as follows: The first clause – which introduces *Mashiach* – refers to him as the anointed king. Since the first clause already established the existence of *Mashiach*, the latter three clauses referred to him as “the King *Mashiach*,” using a definitive article.

* The standard printed texts do not use the definitive article in the second clause, only in the final two. Several hand-written manuscripts of the *Mishneh Torah* (Oxford 591, Stockholm, as cited above) do not use the definitive article at all. Conversely, the Oxford 568 and 610 hand-written

manuscripts use it in all four clauses.

6. *II Shmuel* 8:2.

7. *Zechariah* 9:10.

8. The majority of hand-written manuscripts and early editions mentioned in footnote 3 use a slightly different version.

9. Cf. *II Shmuel* 8:6.

10. *II Shmuel* 8:6 refers to Aram, not Edom. However, *II Shmuel* 8:14 states, “All of Edom became servants to David.” Similar wording is found in *I Divrei HaYomim* 18:13. From the wording of the Stockholm manuscript of the *Mishneh Torah*, it appears that the reference is to *II Shmuel* 8:14.

11. The standard printed texts of the *Mishneh Torah* include the Hebrew abbreviation גַּ, which implies that one should refer to the continuation of the verse. That would be appropriate if the reference was to *II Shmuel* 8:6, since the continuation of that

verse (“carriers of gifts”) is relevant here. However, most of the manuscript copies do not contain this abbreviation. This could be seen as an indication that the reference is to *II Shmuel* 8:14, because the continuation of that verse is not relevant.

12. With regard to the translation of the verse, see *Sifsei Chachamim*.

The standard printed texts of the *Mishneh Torah* only spell out part of the phrase and include the Hebrew abbreviation גַּ which alludes to the continuation of the phrase. However, the hand-written manuscripts and early editions mentioned in footnote 3 spell out the entire phrase, as in the main text.

13. *Ovadhiah* 1:21.

14. This latter phrase is included in most of the hand-written manuscripts mentioned above. The Oxford 610 manuscript also contains an allusion to the continuation of the verse, “and sovereignty will be G-d’s.”

interpretations of passages from the Torah and the like. Seemingly, to bring support for the law that “whoever does not believe in [*Mashiach*]... denies the Torah and Moshe our teacher,” it would have been sufficient to state, “There is also a reference [to *Mashiach*] in the passage [concerning] Bilaam.¹⁵ There, he prophesied about the ultimate anointed [king] who will arise from among [David’s] descendants and save Israel (at the End [of Days]).” Why did *Rambam* find it necessary to expound upon that passage at length and to describe both anointed kings, David and *Mashiach*, explaining in detail how the various component phrases of the prophecy allude to each of them? From the context, we would have known that it is referring to a prophecy that speaks of “what this nation will do to your nation at the End of Days.”¹⁶

Even if *Rambam’s* intent was to point out which verses explicitly refer to *Mashiach*, it would have been sufficient to cite merely the beginning and the end of the prophecy, “I see him, but not now.... his enemy, Seir, will become Israel’s inheritance.”¹⁷

The Parallel between David and *Mashiach*

2. This difficulty can be resolved on the basis of another question: Why not merely state, “The Torah attests to his [coming], stating,² ‘And G-d your L-rd will bring back your [exiled] captivity.’” That verse serves as support for the essential concept that the Jews will be redeemed at the End of Days. What does the mention of Bilaam’s prophecy add?

To answer: It is apparent – and understood from the simple meaning of the wording *Rambam* uses

בְּנֵהוּ, וְצָרִיךְ לְהַבִּין: כְּדֵי לְהוֹכִיחַ אֶת הַהִלְכָה שֶׁ“כָּל מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ מֵאֲמִין בּוֹ כו” הוּא מוֹפֵר “בְּתוֹרָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה רַבְּנּוּ”, הִיָּה מְסַפֵּיק אֵלּוֹ הִיָּה כּוֹתֵב רַק “אִף בְּפִרְשֵׁת בְּלָעַם”¹⁵ נֶאֱמַר וְשֵׁם גִּבְאָה בְּמֹשֶׁה (הָאֲחֵרוֹן שֶׁעוֹמֵד מִבְּנֵי) שְׁמוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל [בְּאַחֲרוֹנָה]” וּכְבֵר הֵינּוּ יוֹדְעִים דְּמִירֵי בְּפִסְוִקֵי הַגְּבוּאָה שֶׁהִתְחַלְתָּם הִיא . אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה הָעַם הַזֶּה לְעַמְּךָ בְּאַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים”¹⁶ - וְלָמָּה לוֹ לְהֶאֱרִיךְ בְּפִרְטֵי הָרְאִיּוֹת שֶׁבְּכַתּוּבִים אֵלּוֹ מְדַבֵּר אוֹדוֹת “שֶׁנִּי הַמְּשִׁיחִים” וְעַל מִי מֵרְמוֹז כָּל חֵלֶק מִהַכְּתוּב וְכו’?

אֲפֵלוֹ אִם הַכּוֹנֵה הִיא לְפָרֵשׁ בְּהִדְיָא בְּאִיזָה פְּסוּקִים מִירֵי, הִרִי הִיָּה מְסַפֵּיק אִם הִיָּה מִבִּיא רַק (אֶת הַהִתְחַלָּה וְהַסִּיּוֹם) - שְׁזֵה נֶאֱמַר בְּפִסְוִקִים “אֲרָאֵנּוּ וְלֹא עֵתָהּ וְגו’ וְהִיָּה יִרְשָׁה שְׁעִיר אוֹיְבָיו גו’”¹⁷.

ב. מִזֶּה שֶׁהֶרְמַב”ם מוֹסִיף אֶת הָרְאִיָּה “אִף בְּפִרְשֵׁת בְּלָעַם נֶאֱמַר”, אִף עַל פִּי שֶׁכְּבֵר הִבִּיא לְפָנֵי זֶה רְאִיָּה עַל עֵצֶם הַעֲנִיָּן “שֶׁהִרִי הַתּוֹרָה הַעֲרִידָה עָלָיו שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְשָׁב ה’ אֱלֹקֶיךָ אֶת שְׁבוּתֶךָ”, מִשְׁמַע (וְכַמוֹכֵן מִפְּשֻׁטוֹת לְשׁוֹנוֹ) שֶׁהַכְּתוּבִים מְפָרְשֵׁת בְּלָעַם מִבִּיא הֶרְמַב”ם בְּעֶקֶר לֹא (רַק)

15. This question in the main text is reinforced by the fact that when discussing our obligation to believe in *Mashiach* in his *Commentary on the Mishnah* (Introduction to ch. 10 of *Sanhedrin*, the twelfth principle), *Rambam* merely states, “Whoever doubts [the coming of *Mashiach*] ... denies the Torah, for the Torah has clearly attested to his arrival

in the passage concerning Bilaam and in the passage beginning *Atem Nitzavim*.” A similar understanding is reflected in Rav Kapach’s translation of that source. Since, generally, *Rambam* is far more concise in his mention of a concept in the *Mishneh Torah* than in his *Commentary on the Mishnah*, the fact that here he elaborates calls for explanation.

16. *Bamidbar* 24:14.

17. See Rav Kapach’s edition of *Rambam’s Iggeres Teiman*, ch. 3, close to the end, which states, “as G-d promised us in the Torah, saying, “I see him, but not now; I perceive him, but not in the near [future]... Edom will become an inheritance.”

– that by citing the verses from Bilaam’s prophecy, he is bringing support not only for the fundamental concept that *Mashiach* will come and the Jews will be redeemed from exile, but also – and primarily – that Bilaam’s prophecy focuses on “two anointed [kings]: the first anointed [king], David..., and the ultimate anointed [king] who will arise from among his descendants.” To clarify this point, *Rambam* explicitly explains the verses, demonstrating how they refer to “two anointed [kings].”

However, this itself requires explanation: True, the verses from Bilaam’s prophecy are quoted because they highlight a fundamental concept regarding the redemption of the Jewish people. The promise, “G-d your L-rd will bring back your [exiled] captivity,” clearly indicates that the Jews will be redeemed from exile; however, it does not mention¹⁸ that this will be accomplished by *Mashiach*, i.e., that the redemption will be led by an individual leader.¹⁹ To clarify that point, *Rambam* brings proof from an explicit prophecy in the Torah which refers specifically to an anointed king (*Melech HaMashiach*).

This clarifies why Bilaam’s prophecy must be quoted. Why, however, when citing proofs from the Torah regarding the coming of *Mashiach* is it relevant to mention a prophecy that concerns not only *Mashiach*, “the ultimate anointed [king],” but also, David, “the first anointed [king]”? And why is it necessary to mention specifically all the different verses, pointing out which refer to David and which refer to *Mashiach*?²⁰

כְּרֵאִיָּה עַל עֲצָם בֵּיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ,
גְּאֻלַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִהַגְּלוּת, אֱלֹא
(גַּם) שֶׁנִּבְּא בְּשֵׁנֵי הַמְּשִׁיחִים
בְּמִשִּׁיחַ הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁהוּא דָּוִד
כּו' וּבְמִשִּׁיחַ הָאַחֲרוֹן שֶׁעוֹמֵד
מִבְּנֵי". שֶׁמִּפְּנֵי זֶה הוּא מְפָרֵט
וּמְפָרֵשׁ אֶת הַכְּתוּבִים, אִיךְ
מוֹכַח מֵהֶם שֶׁנִּבְּא בְּשֵׁנֵי
הַמְּשִׁיחִים."

אֲבָל הָא גּוֹפֵא צְרִיךְ בְּאוּר:
בְּשִׁלְמָא מַה שֶׁמוֹסִיף אֶת
הָרֵאִיָּה מִהַכְּתוּבִים שֶׁבְּפָרֵשׁת
בְּלַעַם עַל עֲצָם הַעֲנִין דְּמִשִּׁיחַ,
יֵשׁ לוֹמַר שֶׁזֶּהוּ מִפְּנֵי שֶׁבְּכַתּוּב
"וְיֹשֵׁב ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ אֶת שְׁבוּתֶךָ"
לֹא נֶאֱמַר" שֶׁזֶּה יְהִיָּה עַל יְדֵי
הַמְּשִׁיחַ" לָכֵן מְבִיא גַם רֵאִיָּה
מִהַמְּפָרֵשׁ בְּתוֹרָה שֶׁנִּבְּא עַל
מֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ, אֲבָל מַה נוֹגֵעַ
לְהֵרָאִיּוֹת (מִן הַתּוֹרָה) עַל
בֵּיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ שֶׁ"שֵׁם נִבְּא"
לֹא רַק בְּ"מִשִּׁיחַ הָאַחֲרוֹן" אֱלֹא
גַּם בְּדָוִד, "מִשִּׁיחַ הָרֵאשׁוֹן";
וּבְפָרֵט - בְּאֵרִיכוֹת לְפָרֵשׁ כָּל
פְּרָטֵי הַלְּשׁוֹנוֹת בְּהַכְּתוּבִים
אִיזוֹה מֵהֶם מְדַבְּרִים בְּמֶלֶךְ דָּוִד
וְאִיזוֹה בְּמֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ?"

18. It must, however, be noted that *Rambam*’s wording, “the Torah attests to his [coming],” implies the existence of a specific redeemer.

19. *Sanhedrin* 99a discusses the proposition that, although there will be an Era of Redemption, this Redemption will not be led by *Mashiach*. Instead, (see *Rashi*, s.v. *ein lahem Mashiach liYisrael*, “The Holy One, blessed be He, will rule over the people of Israel Himself; He will redeem them alone.”) By citing the references from Bilaam’s prophecies, *Rambam* clearly indicates the fundamental nature of the belief, not only in a Messianic

Age, but in *Mashiach* himself.

See also *Chasam Sofer*, *Yoreh Deah*, Responsum 356, who explains *Rashi*’s statements and emphasizes how a person who ascribes to the above-mentioned proposition now, after the Sages have rejected it, “denies the Torah in its totality.”

20. It is obvious that it cannot be said that this is the only *Midrash** *Rambam* found that interpret these verses as referring to *Mashiach* and, therefore, he quoted it in its totality, including the portions that refer to David. This proposition is untenable because:

a) It is obvious that, even were that the case, it is not *Rambam*’s style to quote all the particulars in a *midrash*, only those that are relevant to the points under discussion.

b) We find *midrashim* that interpret the entire verse, including the initial phrase, “A star shall go forth from Yaakov” as referring to *Mashiach*. (See *Talmud Yerushalmi*, *Taanis* 4:5, *Devarim Rabbah* 1:20. See *Targum Onkelos* and the *Targum* of Yonason ben Uziel on the verse. Similarly, in his commentary on the verse, *Ramban* interprets all the phrases as referring to *Mashiach*. See also his

The Past and the Future

3. It is necessary to clarify the reason *Rambam* cites the proof that Bilaam’s prophecy refers to “two anointed kings,” mentioning also “the first anointed [king], David, who saved Israel [from her oppressors].” The question arises: How does the fact] that David was called an anointed king, as *Mashiach* will be and, therefore, the prophecy refers to “the two anointed kings,” relate to our faith in the coming of *Mashiach*?

By citing the historical precedent, *Rambam* strengthens the faith in *Mashiach’s* coming by making it known that the concept of a *Mashiach* is not a new phenomenon. There already was an “anointed [king], David, who saved Israel from her oppressors.” Knowing this increases the strength of our faith that also in the future *Mashiach* will come and save the Jewish people.

Similarly, when our Sages wished to offer proof of the Resurrection of the Dead, they said,²¹ “[If] those who were not [born can] live” – i.e., since G-d can create a child and give it life – “[is it not logical that] even more so those who were once alive [can live again]?” – i.e., certainly, He can grant life to those who once lived.

Alternatively, as the commentaries explain,²² since both anointed kings were mentioned in the same prophecy, the fulfillment of the first portion of the prophecy relating to “the first anointed [king], David,

ג. לְכַאוֹרָה יֵשׁ לוֹמַר, שֶׁהַטַּעַם שֶׁהֲרַמְבַּ"ם מְבִיא אֶת הָרְאִיָּה גַם עַל זֶה שֶׁנִּבְּא בְּשֵׁנֵי הַמְּשִׁיחִים, גַּם “מְשִׁיחַ הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁהוּא דָּוִד שֶׁהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל כּו” - דְּלְכַאוֹרָה, מָה נוֹגֵעַ לְאַמוּנָה בְּבִיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ שֶׁגַם דָּוִד נִקְרָא מְשִׁיחַ כְּמוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ, עַד שֶׁעַל שְׁנֵיהֶם אוֹמְרִים “בְּשֵׁנֵי הַמְּשִׁיחִים” (בַּה”א הִידִיעָה) -

הוּא מְפַנֵּי שֶׁזֶה נוֹגֵעַ לְאַמוּנָה בְּבִיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ וּמַחְזֵק אוֹתָהּ: כְּשֶׁנִּדְעַ שֶׁעֵינֵי הַמְּשִׁיחַ אֵינּוּ דָּבָר חֲדָשׁ, כִּי כְּבָר הָיָה “מְשִׁיחַ הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁהוּא דָּוִד שֶׁהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד צָרֵיהֶם”, זֶה מוֹסִיף תְּקִיף בְּאַמוּנָה שֶׁגַם לְעֵתִיד יָבֵא מְשִׁיחַ שְׁמוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל (עַל דְּרָךְ הוֹכַחַת חַז”ל” עַל תְּחִיַּת הַמֵּתִים: “דָּלָא הוּוּ חַיִּי דְהוּי חַיִּי לֹא כָּל שְׁכֹן”);

אוּ בְּאִפְּן אַחֵר, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב בַּמִּפְרָשִׁים²²: מִכֵּיּוֹן שֶׁעַל-דְּבַר שְׁנֵי הַמְּשִׁיחִים נֶאֱמַר בְּאוֹתָהּ נִבְּוָהָ, הָרִי כְּשֶׁם שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּקְּיָם חֶלֶק הַנִּבְּוָהָ בְּנוֹגֵעַ ל”מְשִׁיחַ הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁהוּא דָּוִד

Sefer HaGeulah. p. 266 in the Chavel edition, where he disputes Ibn Ezra’s comments on the verse which do not follow the above understanding and interprets the phrase as referring to David.) See *Lechem Mishneh’s* gloss on *Rambam* here, which states, “Perhaps there are conflicting *midrashim*.”

more references to *Mashiach* in our Sages’ works than in the works of the Prophets, which are the subject of *Rambam’s* statements there. Instead, *Rambam* is stating only what is explicit in the Torah and the straightforward meaning of Scripture.

cite references to Scriptural verses. Somewhat similar references are found in the Buber edition of *Midrash Agadah* on the verse. See also *Rablag’s* commentary on the verse.

c) Furthermore, and this is of primary importance, *Rambam* is not coming to cite interpretations from our Sages regarding *Mashiach’s* coming, because – to borrow his wording in *halachah* 2 – “all [their] books are filled with this.” Indeed, there are

* We find expressions similar to those used by *Rambam* in *Rabbeinu Bachya’s* commentary on this verse, beginning *al derech hamidrash*. Similar statements are found in *Midrash HaGadol* on the verse and in *Ramban’s Sefer HaGeulah*. Nevertheless, *Ramban* does not

21. *Sanhedrin* 91a.

22. See the restatement of this *halachah* in *Kiryas Sefer*. See the conclusion of *Tractate Makkos*, which explains that *Rabbi Akiva* drew faith in the fulfillment of a prophecy regarding the rebuilding of Jerusalem from seeing how the prophecy regarding the city’s devastation was fulfilled.

who saved Israel from her oppressors” provides us with assurance; it lends certainty to our faith in the fulfillment of the prophecy regarding “the ultimate anointed [king] who will arise from among his descendants and save Israel (at the End [of Days]).”²³

However, this explanation is insufficient. As understood from a simple reading of the text, *Rambam* does not cite these verses to prove that *Mashiach* will certainly come. Instead, his purpose is to emphasize that the Torah itself attests to his coming and, therefore, “whoever does not believe in him, or does not await his coming, denies not only [the statements of] the other prophets, but also [those of] the Torah and of Moshe, our teacher.” If so, why does *Rambam* find it necessary to mention the prophecy regarding “the two anointed kings,” including also “the first anointed king, David”? And more specifically, why must he explain the four pairs of prophecies in these verses, showing how the first clause of each phrase refers to the first anointed king and the second to the ultimate anointed king?

The Cities of Refuge *Mashiach* Will Establish

4. *Rambam* proceeds to cite further proof of *Mashiach's* coming in a separate *halachah*, as follows:

Similarly, regarding the Cities of Refuge, it is stated,²⁴ “When G-d will expand your borders... you shall add three more cities...” This command has never been fulfilled. Surely, G-d did not give this command in vain, [and thus the intent was that it be fulfilled after the coming of *Mashiach*].

Rambam himself divided the *Mishneh Torah* into *halachos*, individual laws, and, as is well known, he was very precise in making this division. Why did he not include the above support from the commandment to add three Cities of Refuge in the *halachah* where he cited the first two proofs from the Torah? And if his intent was to divide the various items of supporting evidence

שהושיע את ישראל מיד צריהם, כן בודאי תקים הנבואה על-דבר “משיח האחרון שעומד מבניו שמושיע את ישראל [באחרונה].”

אבל מובן שקשה לפרש שזהו כל הטעם: כי בכתובים אלו אין כוננת הרמב"ם להביא ראיה והוכחה שמלך המשיח ודאי יבא, אלא שביאתו כתובה בתורה (וכפשוטות לשונו); ומזה, ש"מי שאינו מאמין בו או מי שאינו מחכה לביאתו לא בשאר נביאים בלבד הוא כופר אלא בתורה ובמשה רבנו" -

אם כן מה נוגע לכאן ש"נבא בשני המשיחים", גם "במשיח הראשון שהוא דוד", ובפרט - לפרש את (ארבעת) הלשונות הכפולים שבכתובים אלו, שבראשונים הפונה למשיח הראשון ובשניים - למשיח האחרון?

ד. בהמשך לזה כותב הרמב"ם, אבל בהלכה בפני עצמה: "אף בערי מקלט הוא אומר" אם ירחיב ה' אלהיך את גבולך ויספת לך עוד שלש ערים" וגו' ומעולם לא היה דבר זה ולא צוה הקדוש ברוך הוא לתהו".

והנה ידוע שגם חלקת ההלכות שברמב"ם היא בדיוק - וצריך להבין: למה מביא הרמב"ם ראיה זו בהלכה בפני עצמה ולא בהלכה שלפניה ביחד עם שתי הראיות האחרות שמן התורה? ואם מתאים שכל ראיה תהיה כתובה בהלכה

23. I.e., the Rebbe is explaining two points:
a) the fact that a *Mashiach* (David) existed shows that there is a possibil-

ity for such a phenomenon.
b) since David and *Mashiach* are mentioned in the same prophecy, since the first part of the prophecy

was fulfilled, we can rest assured that the second part will also be fulfilled.
24. *Devarim* 19:8-9.

into separate *halachos*, seemingly, the proof from Bilaam’s prophecy should also have been mentioned in a separate *halachah*?²⁵

The wording he uses also raises questions: Firstly, why does *Rambam* feel the need to mention the source for the verse he cites. Secondly, beforehand, when referring to Bilaam’s prophecy, *Rambam* mentions its source as *Parshas Bilaam*, “the passage [concerning] Bilaam.” Why then does he use the wording, “regarding the Cities of Refuge, it is stated,” instead of saying, “Similarly, in *Parshas Shoftim*, it is stated”?²⁶

What does the Comparison with David Teach?

5. There is another aspect of *Rambam’s* wording that requires clarification:²⁷ He refers to “two anointed

בפני עצמה, הוה ליה לכתוב גם הראיה מפרשת בלעם בהלכה בפני עצמה.

גם: למה מדיק לציין מקור הכתוב ובפרט בלשון “אף בגנרי” מוקלט הוא אומר” ולא “(אף) בפרשת שופטים”?, על דרך מה שכתב לפני זה “בפרשת בלעם”?

ה. גם צריך להבין דייק הלשון כ”ב “בשני המשיחים”, מה

25. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 24, p. 109ff., and Vol. 34, p. 114ff.

26. Seemingly, it would be necessary to specify the source, *Parshas Shoftim*, because there are other references to the Cities of Refuge earlier in the Torah: *Bamidbar* 35:9ff., and *Devarim* 4:41ff. Thus, were *Rambam* to have merely stated, “the Cities of Refuge,” the source to which he is referring would not have been clear.

27. There are other aspects of the wording used by *Rambam* that also require clarification:

a) *Rambam* mentions “the passage [concerning] Bilaam” even though his practice is not to cite his sources, as reflected in his omission of the source for the verse cited beforehand, “G-d your Lord will return...” In that context, he does not say, “Behold, in *Parshas Atem Nitzavim*, it is said...”

b) Regarding Bilaam, *Rambam* states, “There, he prophesied...” What does this expression teach us? It is very difficult to say that since *Rambam* mentioned “the passage [concerning] Bilaam,” he felt it necessary to explain that “There, he prophesied...” See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 34, p. 120.

On the surface, it is possible to explain that *Rambam* added, “There,

he prophesied....”^{*} as a corollary to his prior statement that one who denies *Mashiach’s* coming “denies... [the statements of] the Torah and of Moshe our teacher.” *Rambam* states, “The Torah attests to his [coming]...” as support for the statement that one who denies *Mashiach* is denying the Torah. As support for the statement that such a person denies Moshe’s prophecy, he writes, “There is also a reference [to *Mashiach*] in the passage [concerning] Bilaam. There, he prophesied...” *Rambam* does not say, “and also Bilaam prophesied,” (as stated in *Kiryas Sefer* on *Rambam*, *loc. cit.*), for *Rambam’s* intent is that what Bilaam said is included in Moshe’s prophecy.

This is reflected in *Rambam’s Commentary on the Mishnah (Avos 4:4)*: “Similarly, [regarding] David... G-d foretold his existence to us through [the prophecy of] Moshe our teacher. He is ‘the star [that] came forth from Yaakov,’ as our Sages explained.” Note the interpretation of *Shelah (Torah Shebichsav, Parshas Balak*, p. 362b) regarding our Sages’ statement (*Bava Basra* 14b), “Moshe composed his book and the passage of Bilaam.” Note also *Chasam Sofer, Yoreh Deah, loc. cit.*, which elaborates, explaining that the only reason

we could possibly know of Bilaam’s prophecy is because Moshe conceived it through his own spirit of prophecy.

Thus, a person who denies *Mashiach’s* coming denies both the Torah and Moshe’s prophecy and is called an *epicurus* (“nonbeliever”) and a *kofer* (“heretic”). True, the Torah is also included in the prophecy of Moshe. Nevertheless, *Rambam* singles them out individually because they represent two separate principles of faith.** (See *Rambam, Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:8.***)

This would also explain why *Rambam* states the proof from the Cities of Refuge in a separate *halachah*. This proof is derived via logical deduction - “This command has never been fulfilled. [Surely,] G-d did not give this command in vain.” Thus, since this proof is derived through logical deduction, it is not connected to the denial of the Torah and the prophecy of Moshe. It also explains why *Rambam* mentions “the Cities of Refuge,” and does not cite its source in the Torah as *Parshas Shoftim* or the like, because this omission underscores that the person is not denying the Torah.

Nevertheless, it is understood that this explanation is also somewhat forced. This is not the place for

kings.” What relevance does this have to the subject under discussion and what is the significance of referring to David specifically as an anointed king? After all, just as David was anointed with the unique anointing oil,²⁸ having been anointed with a horn of oil²⁹ and referred to as “G-d’s anointed,”³⁰ King Shaul had also been anointed³¹ beforehand – albeit with a cruse of oil²⁹ – and was also referred to as “G-d’s anointed”?³²

If *Rambam’s* intent was to mention the respective redeemers of the early and the later epochs, seemingly, it would have been more appropriate to pair

further discussion of the matter. See sec. 11 in the main text.

* On the surface, there is a possibility of giving an alternate explanation. This explanation also clarifies the need to bring the proof from the reference to the passage about Bilaam in the Torah despite having already stated, “The Torah attests to his [*Mashiach’s* coming]” and quoting the verses from *Parshas Nitzavim*.

When a prophet conveys a prophecy regarding positive matters, it will never remain unfulfilled even if it was made conditionally (*Rambam, Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 10:4). By contrast, it is possible that a promise mentioned in the Torah – not as a prophecy for people at large – will not be fulfilled because sin will have an effect (*Be-rachos* 4a). Therefore, by associating *Mashiach’s* coming with Bilaam’s prophecy, *Rambam* is emphasizing that this prophecy will certainly be fulfilled. See *Gur Aryeh, Bereishis* 32:8; *Gevuros HaShem*, ch. 7.

However, firstly, as stated in sec. 3 in the main text, *Rambam* is not coming to prove the truth of *Mashiach’s* coming and that it will certainly materialize. Instead, *Rambam’s* intent is to clarify that one who denies it also denies the Torah and Moshe’s prophecy. Therefore, the concept of prophecy is not relevant. Furthermore, *Rambam* interprets the

above-mentioned distinction in a slightly different manner. In his introduction to his *Commentary on the Mishnah*, *Rambam* explains the difference between a promise that can be nullified as a result of sin and a positive prophecy that cannot be nullified, as follows: A personal promise by G-d to a prophet can be nullified as result of sin; however, when G-d conveys a prophecy to a prophet promising good, and commands that the prophecy be made known to others, it will not be nullified.

Accordingly, also the testimony of the Torah regarding *Mashiach’s* coming in *Parshas Nitzavim* will certainly be fulfilled. Nevertheless, further analysis is still necessary. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 34, pp. 116-117, and the footnotes there.

** See *Rambam’s Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin*, ch. 10, the seventh and eighth of his principles of faith. Note also *Rambam’s* wording in *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 8:3 and 9:1, 4, 5, where he focuses on the truth and eternity of Moshe’s prophecy and of the Torah as fundamentals of faith. Thus, a person who denies Moshe’s prophecy is also denying the Torah and is violating two fundamental principles of faith. *Rambam’s* wording in the sources cited is explained at length in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 19, p. 177ff.

זֶה נוֹגֵעַ לְכָאן וּבִמְהַ דְּוָקָא (רַק)
דּוֹד נִקְרָא מְשִׁיחַ?

[שְׁהָרִי כְשֵׁם שְׁדוֹד נִמְשַׁח
בְּשֶׁמֶן הַמְּשִׁחָה (בְּקֶרֶן²⁹) וְנִקְרָא
מְשִׁיחַ הַזֶּה, כְּמוֹ כֵן, לְפָנֵי זֶה,
נִמְשַׁח שְׂאוֹל³¹ (בְּפֶדֶי²⁹) וְגַם הוּא
נִקְרָא מְשִׁיחַ הַזֶּה³²]

וְאִם הַפְּנִינָה הִיא לְבַחֹר שְׁנֵי
מוֹשִׁיעֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (בְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה
וּבְאַחֲרוֹנָה), לְכַאֲוָרָה מִתְּאִים

*** *Rambam, Hilchos Teshuvah, loc. cit.* states, “One who says that the Torah is not from G-d... [but rather that] Moshe said it on his own initiative is one who denies the Torah.” True, by doing so, seemingly he also denies Moshe’s prophecy, which – as *Rambam* stated before in that source – places him among the three that are considered *epicursim*. However, denying the Torah is a separate matter and a person who does so is considered a different type of nonbeliever. Thus, it appears that the category in which such a person is placed is dependent upon what he seeks to deny. Although one who denies the Torah as a matter of course also denies Moshe’s prophecy, he is not considered an *epicurus* since his main intention is to deny the Torah. Further analysis is necessary.

28. The reference is to the anointing oil described in *Shmos*, ch. 30, which was made at the time of the dedication of the Sanctuary and was never replicated.

29. *Megillah* 14a.

30. *II Shmuel* 19:22. See *ibid.* 23:1.

31. *I Shmuel* 10:1. *Rambam* cites this verse when describing the anointment of a king (*Hilchos Melachim* 1:7). See *Megillah, loc. cit.*

32. *I Shmuel* 24:7, 11; 26:9, 11, 16; *II Shmuel* 1: 14, 16.

33. Note *Shmos Rabbah* 2:4; *Zohar*, Vol. I, p. 253a; *Shaar HaPesukim*,

Moshe our teacher, the first redeemer of the Jewish people, with *Mashiach*, the ultimate redeemer,³³ for they are both redeemers of the Jewish people from exile. By contrast, King David did not liberate his generation from exile.

In this regard, it is worthy of noting that when speaking about their levels of prophecies, *Rambam* states that *Mashiach* will be “greater than all the prophets [other than Moshe].”³⁴ And in the *Mishneh Torah*,³⁵ he writes that “[*Mashiach* will be] a great prophet, close to [the level of] Moshe our teacher.” David, by contrast, is not associated with such lofty levels of prophecy.³⁶

Must Mashiach be a Miracle-Worker?

6. The above questions can be answered by first explaining

Parshas VaYechi, which emphasize the connection between Moshe and the final redemption.

34. See Rav Kapach’s edition of *Iggeres Teiman*, the beginning of ch. 4, where *Rambam* writes, “*Mashiach* will be a very great prophet, greater than all the prophets who have come after Moshe our teacher.... His level is the loftiest among that of the prophets and the most glorious after that of Moshe our teacher.”

35. *Hilchos Teshuvah* 9:2.

36. See *Rashi*’s commentary to *Megillah*, *loc. cit.*, which states that David was a prophet. *Sotah* 48b makes similar statements. Nevertheless, that categorization can be challenged based on *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 154a, which states that aside from Moshe, no one ever merited to serve as a prophet and king at the same time (see *Nitzutzei Zohar* on that source).

See the opening discussion in *Shaar Ruach HaKodesh*, which distinguishes between prophecy and being granted *ruach hakodesh*, “the spirit of holiness.” Similarly, in many sources, in contrast to what is stated in *Sotah*, *loc. cit.*, David and Shlomoh are categorized as having been granted *ruach hakodesh*, which

is *Kabbalistically* associated with the level of *Malchus*, but not prophecy which is associated with the higher rungs of *Netzach* and *Hod*. This is reflected in the fact that the books they composed – *Tehillim* and *Mishlei* are included among the *Kesuvim*, “the Writings,” and not in the *Nevi’im*, the Prophets. This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

In *Moreh Nevuchim*, Vol. 2, ch. 45 (when describing the second level of prophecy), *Rambam* writes, “David, Shlomoh, and Daniel were in this category, but were not in the category of Yeshayahu or Yirmeyahu... and those like them, because they i.e., David and Shlomoh... spoke [their words]... only through *ruach hakodesh*.”

In his *Commentary on the Mishnah*, *Avos* 4:4, *Rambam* mentions David as a prophet. However, in that source, *Rambam* describes David after mentioning the unique humility that can be learned from the example of Moshe our teacher. Accordingly, that source does not serve as support for the categorization of David as a prophet, for the focus there is not on the different levels of prophecy, but rather on the quality of humility. In the context

יותר משה רבנו כגואל ראשון ומשיח כגואל אחרון, ששניהם הושיעו מגלות, מה שאין כן - דוד.

ולקעיר שגם בנוגע למדרגתם בנוואה כתב הרמב"ם שמש"ח גדול מכל הנביאים, או כדכריו בספר הידב' ונביא גדול הוא קרוב למשה רבנו, מה שאין כן - דוד.

ו. ויבן זה בהקדם בהספרת

of that discussion, the distinction between the levels of prophecy and *ruach hakodesh* is not relevant.

In his *Shemoneh Perakim*, ch. 7, *Rambam* writes, “Similarly, King David, a prophet said...” There, he explains our Sages’ statement, “Prophecy* will not rest upon anyone other than a wise man, who is courageous, wealthy...” as follows: “It is not necessary that a prophet possess all these qualities [in a consummate manner].”²⁷ Furthermore, *Rambam* proceeds to give examples of how Shlomoh, David, Eliyahu, Shmuel, and Yaakov were lacking in some of these qualities, at least to a certain degree.

* This is the wording both in the standard published text of *Rambam’s Commentary on the Mishnah* and in Rav Kapach’s translation of that work. However, there is no saying of our Sages with that exact wording. See *Shabbos* 92a which states, “The Divine Presence does not rest on anyone other than...” and *Nedarim* 38a which states, “The Holy One, blessed be He, does not rest His Presence on anyone other than....”

several points in the two *halachos* that follow in *Hilchos Melachim*. In *halachah* 3, *Rambam* writes:

One should not entertain the notion that the King *Mashiach* must work miracles and wonders, bring about new phenomena into the world, resurrect the dead, or perform other similar deeds.³⁷ This is definitely not true.

[A proof can be brought from the fact that] Rabbi Akiva, one of the greatest Sages of the *Mishnah*, was actively involved in the rebellion led by King Ben Kosiva, and would refer to him as the King *Mashiach*.... The Sages did not ask him for any sign or wonder.

[Rather,] this is the primary focus of the matter: This Torah, with its statutes and laws, is everlasting.³⁸ We may neither add to them nor detract from them. (³⁹Whoever adds to [the *mitzvos*], detracts from them, or intentionally misrepresents the Torah, implying that the *mitzvos* are not intended to be understood literally, is surely a wicked impostor and a heretic.)

The fact that *Rambam* concludes this *halachah* that describes *Mashiach* by stating, “[Rather,] this is the primary focus of the matter: This Torah, with its statutes and laws, is everlasting...,” indicates that one who says that *Mashiach* must work miracles and wonders or bring about new phenomena in the world is adding to or detracting from the words of the Torah, and is thus acting contrary to G-d’s command not to add to them.... However, it is necessary to understand: What is the connection between these two factors? How does expecting *Mashiach* to perform wonders challenge the continuity and immutability of the Torah?⁴⁰

37. In the early editions and manuscripts mentioned in footnote 3, this sentence concludes, “as the fools say.”

38. Some of the manuscripts mentioned in footnote 3 state this slightly differently, using the phrase, “will never ever change.”

39. The statements in the parentheses are found in the early editions and

hand-written manuscripts mentioned (footnote 3), but are lacking in the standard printed texts due to censorship.

40. The concluding words in this *halachah* which were removed by the censors, “Whoever adds to [the *mitzvos*]... is surely a wicked impostor and a heretic,” appear to refer to *oso ha’ish* (Yeshu of Nazareth).

כמה דיוקים בשתי ההלכות שלאחרי זה בהלכות מלכים שם. בהלכה ג' כתב הרמב"ם: ואל יעלה על דעתך שהמלך המשיח צריך לעשות אותות ומופתים ומחדש דברים בעולם או מחיה מתים וכיוצא בדברים אלו³⁷ אין הדבר כך שהרי רבי עקיבא כו' (כמו ששמביא שם הראיה מבן כוזבא, ומסיק) ולא שאלו ממנו חכמים לא אות ולא מופת ועקר הדברים ככה הן שהתורה הזאת חקיה ומשפטיה³⁸ לעולם ולעולמי עולמים ואין מוסיפין עליהן ולא גורעין מהן [וכל³⁹ המוסיף או גורע או שגלה פנים בתורה והוציא הדברים של מצוות מפשוטן, הרי זה ודאי בדאי ורשע ואפיקורוס].

מזה שבהמשך ההלכה על-דבר המלך המשיח מסיים הרמב"ם "ועקר . . . שהתורה הזאת חקיה ומשפטיה לעולם כו'" משמע לכאורה, שהאומר שמשיח צריך לעשות אותות או מופתים או לחדש דברים בעולם, הרי בזה הוא מוסיף או גורע בתורה, הפך הענין דאין מוסיפין עליהן כו'. אבל צריך להבין: מה הקשר בין שני הענינים?⁴⁰

This point is also underscored by the wording of the following *halachah*, as explained in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 8, p. 362, s.v. *kefi*. However, this is obviously not the sole intent of *Rambam's* words, for were it to be so, it would not be necessary for him to state, “This is the primary focus...: This Torah [with its statutes and laws, is everlasting. We may neither add to them, nor detract] from them.”

To add further emphasis: When describing the verification of the validity of a prophet, *Rambam* writes:⁴¹

Any prophet who arises and tells us that G-d has sent him does not have to [prove himself by] performing wonders like those performed by Moshe, our teacher, or like the wonders of Eliyahu or Elisha, which altered the natural order.

Rather, the sign of [the truth of his prophecy] will be his prediction of future events and the validation of his words, as it is written....

Though in this context, *Rambam* also negates substantiating a prophet's identity through "wonders... which alter the natural order," nevertheless, in that source, he does not conclude as he does here, "This Torah, with its statutes and laws, is everlasting." Moreover, he does mention that a prophet must perform something wondrous – i.e., he must predict the future.

Criteria for Identifying Mashiach

7. In the following *halachah* (*halachah* 4), *Rambam* proceeds to state:

If⁴² a king will arise from the House of David who, like David his ancestor, delves deeply into the study of the Torah and observes its *mitzvos* as prescribed by the Written Law and the Oral Law; if he will compel all of Israel to walk in [the way of the Torah] and repair the breaches [in its observance]; and if he will fight the wars of G-d – we may, with assurance, consider him *Mashiach*.

If he acts and succeeds [in all the above], (vanquishing all the nations surrounding him),³⁹ building the [*Beis Ha*]Mikdash on its site, and gathering in the dispersed remnant of Israel, he is definitely the *Mashiach*. He will [then] perfect⁴³ the entire world....

יְתֵרָה מִזֶּה: בְּנוֹגַע לְנְבִיא כְּתָב
הַרְמַב"ם ל"ח ש"כ לְכָל נְבִיא שִׁיעֲמוּד
לְנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר שֶׁה' שְׁלַחוּ אֵינּוּ צָרִיךְ
לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹת כְּאֶהָד מֵאוֹתוֹת
מֹשֶׁה רַבְּנוּ אוֹ כְּאוֹתוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְאֵלֵי־שַׁע שִׁישׁ בָּהֶם שְׁנוֹי מְנַהֲגוּ
שֶׁל עוֹלָם אֲלָא הָאוֹת שֶׁלוֹ
שִׁיאֵמַר דְּבָרִים הַעֲתִידִים לְהֵיוֹת
בְּעוֹלָם וַיֹּאמְנוּ דְּבָרָיו שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
כ"ו, הָרִי שְׂאֵף עַל פִּי שְׂגָם שֶׁם
הוּא שׁוֹלֵל "אוֹת" . . שִׁישׁ בָּהֶם
שְׁנוֹי מְנַהֲגוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, מְכַל
מְקוֹם אֵינּוּ מְסִיק שֶׁם (כְּבִנְדוּן
דִּינָן) "שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת חֻקֵּיהָ
וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיהָ לְעוֹלָם"; וְלֹאֵיךְ
כּוֹתֵב שֶׁם שֶׁעָלְיוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹת:
"שִׁיאֵמַר דְּבָרִים הַעֲתִידִים".

ז. בַּהֲלָכָה שְׁלֹאֲחֵרִי זֶה
בַּהֲלָכוֹת מְלָכִים מִמְּשִׁיךְ
הַרְמַב"ם: וְאֵם ל"ט יַעֲמוּד מְלִךְ
מִבֵּית דָּוִד הוֹגֵה בַּתּוֹרָה וְעוֹסֵק
בְּמִצְוֹת כְּדוֹד אָבִיו כְּפִי תּוֹרָה
שֶׁבְּכָתֵב וְשֶׁבַעֵל פֶּה וַיְכַף כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל לִילָךְ בִּהּ וְלַחֲזֹק בְּדָקָה
וַיִּלְחַם מְלַחְמוֹת ה' הָרִי זֶה
בְּחֻזְקָת שְׁהוּא מְשִׁיחַ אִם עָשָׂה
וְהִצְלִיחַ (וְנִצַּח כָּל הָאֲמוֹת
שֶׁסְּבִיבֵי^ל) וּבָנָה מְקֻדָּשׁ
בְּמְקוֹמוֹ וְקִבֵּץ נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
הָרִי זֶה מְשִׁיחַ בּוֹדָאֵי וַיִּתְקַן^ב
אֶת הָעוֹלָם כ"ו.

41. *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 10:1.

42. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 8, pp. 358, 361-362, and footnotes, where this *halachah* is explained.

43. This is the wording in the

standard printed text of the *Mishneh Torah*. However, in the manuscripts and early editions cited above, there is an entire portion that was removed by the censors, which begins, "If he was not successful..." There the

phrase "perfect the entire world," appears in the midst of his words, where he describes how "all the acts of (Yeshu of Nazareth) and that of the Ishmaelite... only serve to pave the way for [the acceptance of] *Mashiach*

Clarification is necessary: Why does *Rambam* not mention – neither in this *halachah*, nor in the entire chapter – the personal greatness and virtues that express *Mashiach's* uniqueness?⁴⁴ The question is reinforced when considering that earlier in the *Mishneh Torah*,⁴⁴ *Rambam* describes *Mashiach* as “a greater master of wisdom than Shlomoh and a great prophet, close to the level of Moshe our teacher,” as stated at the end of sec. 5.

How *Rambam* Chose to Conclude his Work

8. All the issues mentioned above can be clarified by first explaining a more general issue, namely, the location of *Hilchos Melachim*, “The Laws of Kings” – which more specifically is called *Hilchos Melachim U’Milchomoseihem*,⁴⁴ “The Laws of Kings and Their Wars,” or ...*U’Milchamos*, “... and Wars”⁴⁵ – at the conclusion of the *Mishneh Torah*. At the beginning of these *halachos*,⁴⁶ *Rambam* had stated that “Israel was commanded to fulfill three *mitzvos* when they entered the [Holy] Land – to appoint a king..., to destroy the descendants of Amalek..., and to build [G-d’s] Chosen House.” Since the appointment of a king must precede building the *Beis HaMikdash*, it would appear that it would have been more appropriate to state the laws governing the appointment of a king at a much earlier stage within the *Mishneh Torah*.⁴⁷

and for the improvement of the entire world...” See the conclusion of that censored portion and the mention and explanation of it in sec. 16 below.

44. This is the full name of this portion of the *Mishneh Torah*, as mentioned in *Rambam's* introduction to this text, titled by the later publishers as: “The Enumeration of the *Mitzvos* [as They are Found] within the Structure of *Rambam's Halachos*”^{*} and in the titles of *Sefer Shoftim* and *Hilchos Melachim*.

^{*} *Rambam* listed the *mitzvos* in this manner in his work. However, the title cited was added by the later publishers.

45. This is the wording used in the titles of *Sefer Shoftim* and *Hilchos Melachim*^{*} in the Rome edition of 5240 [1480], the Venice editions of 5284 [1524] and 5310 [1550], and the Yemenite manuscripts of the *Mishneh Torah*. This version is also found in the latter source and some manuscripts at the end of *Rambam's* introduction where he mentions the *Halachos* of *Sefer Shoftim* and when referring to *Hilchos Melachim* there. See the edition of *Sefer HaMada* (Jerusalem, 5724 [1964]), and the sources mentioned there.

^{*} However, at the end of *Rambam's* introduction to the *Mishneh Torah*,

וְצָרִיךְ לְהַבִּינֵנוּ: לָמָּה אֵין הַרְמַב"ם מְזִכֵּר כַּאֲן (וְגַם לֹא בְּכָל הַפָּרָק) אֶת הַמַּעֲלֹת הַגְּדוּלוֹת בְּהֵן מִתְאַרִים אֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחִי,⁴⁴ וְכִמוּ שְׁפָתַב הַרְמַב"ם בַּעֲצָמוּ בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר בְּסֵפֶר הַיְדֻבֵּי "בְּעַל חֻקְמָה יִהְיֶה יוֹתֵר מִשְׁלֹמֹה וְנִבְיָא גְדוֹל הוּא קְרוֹב לְמֹשֶׁה רַבְּנוֹ" (וְכִנֵּ"ל סוּף סְעִיף ה').

ח. וַיֵּשׁ לְאֹמֶר הַבְּאוּר בְּכָל זֶה, בְּהַקְדִּים מָה שֶׁהַרְמַב"ם סִדֵּר אֶת הַלְכוֹת מְלָכִים (וּמִלְחָמוֹתֵיהֶם)⁴⁵, אוּ וּמִלְחָמוֹת⁴⁶ בְּסוּיָם וְסוּף סִפְרוּ הַיֵּד - דְּלְכְאוּרָה, לְפִי סִדֵּר הַזְּמָנִים, כִּמוּ שְׁפָתַב הַרְמַב"ם בְּתַחֲלַת הַלְכוֹת מְלָכִים "שֶׁלֹּשׁ מִצְוֹת נִצְטוּוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשַׁעַת כְּנִיסַתָּן לְאַרְץ לְמַנּוֹת לָהֶם מֶלֶךְ כּו' וְלִהְכָרִית זָרְעוֹ שֶׁל עַמְלֵק כּו' וְלִבְנוֹת בַּיִת הַבְּחִירָה" - הֵן הָיָה לָיָה לְסִדֵּר הַלְכוֹת מְלָכִים הַרְבֵּה לְפָנֵי זֶה בְּסִפְרוֹ?⁴⁷

when listing the *Halachos* of *Sefer Shoftim* and also in *Hilchos Melachim*, all these editions include the phrase, “and their wars.”

46. *Hilchos Melachim* 1:1.

47. In *Radbaz's* introduction to *Sefer Shoftim*, he explains the reason for this placement because, “these laws will not be applicable until *Mashiach's* coming.” Nevertheless, this explanation requires analysis because:

a) Seemingly, several of the laws are relevant only before *Mashiach's* coming. For example, the laws in ch. 1, *halachah* 8ff., will not be relevant after *Mashiach's* coming.

To offer an encompassing explanation of all the above: it can be said that *Rambam*, nevertheless, chose to make these *halachos* the conclusion and summation of the *Mishneh Torah*, which is a book of *halachos*, indeed, a compendium of the entire Oral Law. With this, he emphasizes that the ultimate and complete observance of the Torah and its laws can be achieved only when there is kingship.⁴⁸ This is clearly understood. When can all the *mitzvos* of the Torah be performed in a consummate manner? When a king rules over all of Israel. It is then that, under his leadership, we will fulfill the *mitzvos* of waging the wars of G-d⁴⁹ (destroying Amalek) and building the *Beis HaMikdash*. Only then, will it be possible to observe all the *halachos* and *mitzvos* of the Torah.

In actual practice, this conception of the monarchy was brought to full expression by King David, who ruled⁵⁰ over the entire Jewish people (both the ten tribes of Israel and the tribe of Yehudah.) He completed the conquest of *Eretz Yisrael*, secured peace for our nation by thoroughly completing the wars with which the Jews were faced – as it is written,⁵¹ “G-d granted him

וַיֵּשׁ לְדָוִד לֵאמֹר: בְּמָה שֶׁהֲרַמְב"ם סִדֵּר
 זֶה בְּסוּיִם סִפְרוּ הַיָּד - סִפְרֵי הַלְכוֹת
 - הֵרִי הוּא מְדַגֵּשׁ שֶׁשְׁלֵמוֹת (קִיּוּם
 הַתּוֹרָה וְהַלְכָּה נַעֲשֶׂה בְשָׁעָה
 שִׁישׁ (עֵינֵי הַמְּלָכִים)⁴⁸. וְכִפִּי שָׁזָה
 מוּבָן גַּם בְּפִשְׁטוּת, שֶׁשְׁלֵמוֹת הַקִּיּוּם
 שֶׁל כָּל מִצְוֹת וְהַלְכוֹת הַתּוֹרָה הִיא
 כְּשִׁישׁ מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁעַל יָדוֹ
 מִתְקַיֶּמֶת מִצְוַת מִלְחָמוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם⁴⁹
 (לְהַכְרִית זֵרְעוֹ שֶׁל עֲמָלֵק) וּמִצְוֹת
 "לְבָנוֹת בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה", שֶׁרַק אֶזְרָא
 קִיּוּם כָּל הַלְכוֹת וּמִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה.

בְּפִעֵל נַעֲשֶׂה הַדָּבָר עַל יְדֵי דָוִד
 הַמֶּלֶךְ, שֶׁמֶלֶךְ⁵⁰ עַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל
 (יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיהוּדָה). הוּא כָּבַשׁ
 אֶת אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, גָּמַר וּשְׁלֵמוֹת
 דְּמִלְחָמוֹת (וְה' הֵנִיחַ לוֹ מִסְבִּיב

b) According to this rationale, *Sefer Avodah* and *Sefer Korbanos*, books 8 and 9 of the *Mishneh Torah*, also should have been placed at least close to the end of the entire work.

With regard to the sacrifices, a somewhat forced explanation could be offered why they were not mentioned towards the end of the *Mishneh Torah*. According to *Rambam* (*Hilchos Beis HaBechirah* 6:15; see also *ibid.* 2:4), “All the sacrifices may be offered even though the *Beis HaMikdash* is not built.” Hence, the observance of these laws is also possible in the present age. However, that cannot be said about building the *Beis HaMikdash* and everything connected with it. Note, however, *Bereishis Rabbah*, the end of ch. 64 and *Minchas Chinuch*, *mitzvah* 95, which speak about the possibility of building the *Beis HaMikdash* when granted permission by the non-Jewish authorities. However, according to *Rambam*, who writes in *Hilchos Melachim* 11:1, 4, that *Mashiach* will

build the *Beis HaMikdash*, those sources do not present a difficulty. See also his introduction to his *Commentary on the Mishnah* with regard to the Tractate *Middos* and *Hilchos Beis HaBechirah* 1:4. There is a well-known debate concerning this matter. This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

It is possible to offer an alternate explanation why *Hilchos Melachim* is placed at the end of the *Mishneh Torah*. At the beginning of the *Mishneh Torah*, when enumerating the *mitzvos* according to the *Halachos*, *Rambam* introduces *Sefer Shoftim* as follows,

The fourteenth book – I will include within it the *mitzvos* that are delegated to the *Sanhedrin*... the laws pertaining to a king and the wars he [wages].

Since the laws in *Hilchos Melachim* pertain to the king, i.e., they are *mitzvos* that apply only to a specific individual, *Rambam* mentioned them at the conclusion of his work.

(although there are several laws there that apply to every Jew. See, for example, *Hilchos Melachim* 5:7ff.)

48. Note Shlomo Ibn Iyov's translation of *Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvos* published in the Heller edition of that text, positive commandment 173, “We are commanded to appoint a king of Jewish descent who will uphold our faith.” (See, however, Rabbi Heller's own translation, the standard printed text, and Rav Kappach's translation, which use different wording.)

See *Hilchos Melachim* 4:10, which states that a king's “purpose and intent shall be to elevate the true faith...”

49. See *Hilchos Melachim* 1:8, 4:10.

50. See *Hilchos Melachim* 1:7, which states, “Once David was anointed king, he acquired the crown of kingship. Afterwards, the kingship belonged to him... forever.” See also *ibid.* 1:9.

51. II *Shmuel* 7:1, cited by *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 1:2.

tranquility from all his enemies around him” and began – at least the preparations⁵² for – the building of the *Beis HaMikdash* in Jerusalem, as it is written,⁵³ “David declared: “This is the House of the L-rd...” As a result, the consummate observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos* was possible.

Mashiach: The Ultimate Jewish Monarch

9. Within this context we can appreciate *Rambam's* conception of *Mashiach*, and understand why the two chapters dealing with *Mashiach* were chosen as the conclusion of *Hilchos Melachim* and of the *Mishneh Torah* as a whole.⁵⁴ By doing so, *Rambam* delineates the conception and definition of *Mashiach* according to *halachah*.

In other words, in Chapter 11 of *Hilchos Melachim*, *Rambam* explains not only the coming of *Mashiach* and the obligation to believe in him, but also defines who he is, what his functions and activities will be, and the manner in which he will be revealed. After taking these concepts to heart, it becomes clear what the obligation to believe in him entails.

This is *Rambam's* intent in beginning the chapter as follows:

In the future time, the King *Mashiach* will arise and renew the kingship of [the House of] David,⁵⁵ restoring it to its initial sovereignty.⁵⁶ He will rebuild the *Beis HaMikdash* and gather in the dispersed remnant of Israel. Then, in his days, all the statutes will be re-instituted as in former times. We will offer sacrifices and observe the Sabbatical and Jubilee years according to all the *mitzvos*⁵⁷ set forth in the Torah.

מִפֶּל אוֹיְבָיו⁵⁵); וְעַל יְדוֹ הָיְתָה הַהֲתַחֲלָה (שֶׁל הַהֲכֵנוֹת עַל כָּל פָּנִים⁵⁶) שֶׁל בְּנֵי בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם (וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד זֶה הוּא בֵּית ה' גוֹיִם), וּמִמֵּילָא הַתְּאֵפְשֵׁר קִיּוֹם הַתּוֹרָה וְהַמִּצְוָה בְּשִׁלְמוֹת.

ט. אֵת הַלְכוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ הַכְּנִיס הָרַמְבַּ"ם (בְּסוּיִם סִפְרוֹ הַיָּדוּ) בְּסוּף הַלְכוֹת מְלָכִים וּמְלַחְמוֹתֵיהֶם, מֵאַחַר שֶׁזָּהוּ גְדֵרוֹ וְעֲנִינוֹ שֶׁל מְשִׁיחַ עַל פִּי הַלְכָה:

הָרַמְבַּ"ם מְפָרֵשׁ בְּפֶרֶק י"א דְּהַלְכוֹת מְלָכִים לֹא רַק אֵת הָעֲנִיָּן דְּבִיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ וְהַחִיּוֹב לְהֵאֱמִין בוֹ, אֲלֵא גַם מֵהוּ עֲנִינוֹ גְדֵרוֹ וּפְעֻלָּתוֹ וְאִפֶּן הַתְּגַלּוּתוֹ, וּבְמֵילָא - בְּמָה מֵתְבַטֵּא הַחִיּוֹב לְהֵאֱמִין בוֹ.

זוֹהִי כְּנֶגַת הָרַמְבַּ"ם בְּתַחֲלַת הַפֶּרֶק: "הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ עֵתִיד לַעֲמוֹד וּלְהַחֲזִיר מְלָכוּת דָּוִד⁵⁵ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִמְשָׁלָה⁵⁶ הָרֵאשׁוֹנָה וּבִנְיָה הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וּמִקַּבֵּץ גְּדוּחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְחֹזְרֵינן כָּל הַמְּשַׁפְּטִים בְּיָמָיו כְּשֶׁהָיוּ מִקֵּדָם מְקַרְיָבִין קְרִבְנוֹת וְעוֹשִׂין שְׂמִטִּין וַיּוֹבְלוֹת כָּל מִצְוֹתָה⁵⁷ הָאֲמוּרָה בְּתוֹרָה":

52. See *I Divrei HaYamim*, chs. 28 and 29.

53. *I Divrei HaYamim* 22:1, cited by *Rambam, Hilchos Beis HaBechirah* 1:3. See *Sotah* 9a. See *Sefer Mitzvos Gadol*, positive commandment 163, which states, “The time [for the fulfillment] of this *mitzvah* of building the *Beis HaBechirah** did not arrive until the era of David.” See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 16, p. 301ff., where this

concept is explained at length.

* I.e., the *Beis HaMikdash*.

54. Significantly, in the Venice edition of the *Mishneh Torah* of 5284 [1524] and 5310 [1550], these two chapters appear under the heading *Hilchos Melachim U'Milchamos U'Melech HaMashiach* (“The Laws of Kings and of War, and of the King *Mashiach*”).

55. The standard printed text does not include the bracketed phrase. The early editions and manuscripts cited above do include that phrase.

56. The Yemenite manuscripts and the Rome and Constantinople editions cited above use slightly different wording that has the same intent.

57. Our translation follows the wording found in most of the

Rambam is not merely relating what *Mashiach* will do and what will happen in his era, he is stating a *halachah*. The definition of *Mashiach* is that “he will restore the kingship of [the House of] David to its initial sovereignty,” i.e., he will not be bringing about something entirely new. The restoration of the sovereignty of the House of David will be manifest when “He will rebuild the [*Beis Ha*]Mikdash and gather in the dispersed remnant of Israel.” As a consequence, it will be possible to reach the goal and the intent of *Mashiach*’s coming, i.e., that “in his days, all the statutes will be reinstated as in former times. We will offer sacrifices and observe the Sabbatical and Jubilee years according to all the *mitzvos* set forth in the Torah.” This perfect state of observance is dependent on the ingathering of the dispersed remnant of Israel so that the entire Jewish people dwell in their Land.⁵⁸

hand-written manuscripts cited above, which use a plural form. The standard printed text uses the singular, which appears problematic.

58. See the restatement of this *halachah* in *Kiryas Sefer*, which quotes the verse that refers to the Jubilee year which indicates that this *mitzvah* can only be fulfilled when all the Jews dwell in the Land of Israel. However, it is obvious from *Rambam*’s wording here that he maintains that also the observance of the Sabbatical years in accordance with “all the *mitzvos* set forth in the Torah” is dependent on the ingathering of the dispersed remnant of Israel, since the observance of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are dependent on the presence of the entire Jewish people in *Eretz Yisrael*. See *Hilchos Shemitah VeYovel* 10:8. Although the Sages ordained that the Sabbatical year be observed even after the exile of the Jewish people, it is only when *Mashiach* will return all the Jews to their Land that it will be fulfilled as a *mitzvah* “set forth in the Torah,” i.e., as commanded by Scriptural Law. As *Rambam* states in *Hilchos Shemitah VeYovel* 12:16, the observance of these *mitzvos* will be renewed after the return of the exiles. There is a well-

known discussion of this matter. This is not the place for more explanations.

According to this understanding, the *mitzvos* *Rambam* mentions, “We will offer sacrifices and observe the Sabbatical and Jubilee years,” are a result of the two achievements of *Mashiach* *Rambam* mentions at the outset: a) By building the *Beis HaMikdash*, *Mashiach* will make it possible to offer sacrifices. b) Ingathering the exiles will make possible the observance of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years.

Perhaps the achievement mentioned in the first clause, “In his days, all the statutes will be reinstated as in former times,” is a direct consequence of *Mashiach*’s “restor[ing] the kingship of [the House of] David to its initial sovereignty,” i.e., *Mashiach* will restore the judicial rulings in accordance with Torah among the Jewish people.

Nevertheless, further analysis is necessary because seemingly, *Rambam*’s intent by writing that “all statutes will be reinstated” refer to the judicial rulings that are dependent upon the *Sanhedrin*,* including the four types of capital punishment

אין זה ספור דברים מה יעשה המשיח ומה יהיה בימיו, אלא זוהי הלכה: הגדר דמשיח הוא זה שהוא מחדש “מלכות דוד לישנה לממשלה הראשונה” (ולא שהוא עומד לפעול ענין חדש), שבפעל מתבטא הדבר בזה שהוא “בונה המקדש ומקבץ נדחי ישראל” (וממילא באים למטרתה ולמכון של ביאת המשיח) “והוזרין כל המשפטים בימיו כשהיו מקדם מקריבין קרבנות ועושין שמטין ויובלות ככל מצותה האמורה בתורה.” שזה קשור עם קבוצת נדחי ישראל כשכל ישראל יושבים על אדמתם.⁵⁸

and other matters that will be reinstated when *Mashiach* comes (see *Sanhedrin* 51b, and *Rashi*, s.v., *hilchasa*; see also *Yeshayahu* 1:26).

However, support for the hypothesis mentioned originally can be derived from *Radbaz* on *Hilchos Sanhedrin* 14:12, who states that *Mashiach* will convey *semichah* to the judges of the *Sanhedrin*.**

Note *Rambam*, *Hilchos Sanhedrin* 2:5, which states, “The kings of the House of David... sit and judge the people.” See *Kiryas Sefer*, *Hilchos Melachim*, loc. cit., which states that *Mashiach*, “will bring back all the statutes as in former times,” i.e., implying that this will be his personal mission and achievement.

See also the wording of *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 4:10, “For the entire [purpose of] initially appointing a king is to execute justice..., as it is written, [I *Shmuel*, 8:20] ‘Our king shall judge us.’” This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

* Note that the Oxford 591 manuscript cited in footnote 3 states, “All the statutes will be reinstated as in former times,

Thus, all the aspects that were lacking in the observance of the *mitzvos* because the entire Jewish people were not in *Eretz Yisrael* and the *Beis HaMikdash* was not standing – which, as a whole, constitutes what being in exile means – will be restored in a complete sense by *Mashiach*.

This is what is meant by saying that *Mashiach* will restore “the kingship of [the House of] David to its initial sovereignty... and all the statutes will be reinstated.” He will restore the observance of the Torah and the *mitzvos* to its complete state.

It is possible to say that the above has actual halachic ramifications regarding the faith in *Mashiach* and the necessity to anticipate his coming. Since this is the definition of who *Mashiach* is, believing in *Mashiach* must include not only the faith that he will come and redeem Israel from exile but also the belief that he will restore “the kingship of [the House of] David to its initial sovereignty... and [that] all the statutes will be reinstated.”⁵⁹

הִנְנוּ שֶׁכָּל הָעֲנִינִים שֶׁחָסְרוּ בְּקִיּוֹם תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהָיָה חֶסֶר בְּשִׁלְמוֹת כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ - שֶׁזֶּהוּ כְּלָלוֹת עֲנִינֵי הַגְּלוּת - נִשְׁלָמִים עַל יְדֵי הַמָּשִׁיחַ. וְזֶהוּ מָה שֶׁמְשִׁיחַ מְחַזֵּר “מַלְכוּת דָּוִד לְיִשְׁנָה כּו' וְחֻזְרֵינוּ כָּל הַמְּשֻׁפְטִים” - הוּא מְחַזֵּר שֶׁלְּמֹת הַלְכוּת וּמִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה.

[יֵשׁ לֹמֵר שֶׁזֶּהוּ גַם נִפְקָא מִנָּה לְהִלְכָה בְּפִעֵל, לְגַבֵּי הָאֲמוּנָה בּו' (וּבְנוֹגַע לְמָה צְרִיךְ לְהִיטֵת זֶה שֶׁמְחַכָּה לְבִיאָתוֹ): מֵאַחַר שֶׁזֶּהוּ גְּדֵר הַמָּשִׁיחַ, צְרִיכָה לְהִיטֵת הָאֲמוּנָה לֹא רַק בְּזֶה שֶׁיָּבֵא כְּדֵי לְגַאֲוֹל אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִהַגְּלוּת, אֲלֵא “מֵאַמִּין בּו'” שֶׁהוּא מְחַזֵּר “מַלְכוּת דָּוִד לְיִשְׁנָה . . וְחֻזְרֵינוּ כָּל הַמְּשֻׁפְטִים”].⁶⁰

when they would offer sacrifices.” According to that version, the intent of the phrase, “in his time, all the statutes will be reinstated as in former times,” is that sacrifices will be offered and the Sabbatical years, etc., will be observed. The first clause is not a separate matter. Perhaps this is also the intent in the standard printed text and the majority of the hand-written manuscripts, which do not begin the clause “we will offer sacrifices” with a *vav* (meaning “and”) between them. Two other hand-written manuscripts and *Kiryas Sefer* state this phrase with a *vav*.

** See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 9, p. 105, footnote 74, and the sources cited there.

59. On the basis of the above, it is possible to appreciate the precision of *Ramban's* wording in his *Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin*, ch. 10, at the end of his twelfth principle of the Thirteen Principles of Faith:

Included in the fundamental principle [of belief in the coming of *Mashiach*] is that there may not be a king in Israel except one who comes from the House of David and from the descendants of Shlomoh alone. Anyone who disputes this family's [kingship]

denies the name of G-d and the words of the prophets.

In his *Rosh Amanah*, ch. 1, Rav Yitzchak Abarbanel quotes *Ramban's* Thirteen Principles of Faith, basing himself on the translation of Shmuel Ibn Tibbun – about whom he says, “Upon his [translation] one can rely” – uses slightly different wording, that is, “whoever disputes the kingship of this family.” The implication is that *Mashiach's* kingship will not represent a complete innovation. Rather, he will be restoring and amplifying the perfection of the Torah and its *mitzvos* that David, his ancestor, pioneered.

צילומים מכמה כתבייד דפרק זה. לקמן בפנים ובהערות צויינו (בעיקר) השינויים הנוגעים לנדון דידן. ד) בלק כה, יז"ח. ה) כן הוא בדפוסים וכמה כתבייד הנ"ל (הערה ג). * ויש לומר בפשטות השינוי

“מיד בני עשו.”
“נוסח מלא בלתי מצונזר של פרק זה (פ"א מהלכות מלכים) על פי כתבייד ודפוסים ישנים בצירוף מבווא ושינויי נוסחאות” נדפס בסוף הרמב"ם (הוצאת פרדס (ירושלים). ושם גם

א) פרק יא ה"א.
ב) נצבים ל, ג.
ג) אבל בכתבייד הרמב"ם ודפוסים שלא שלטה בהם בקורת הצנזור (רומי רמ. שונציא רב. קושטא רסט. ווינציאה רפד. ש- (ברגדי). שיא (וישטיניאן))

What *Mashiach* Will Accomplish

The Implications of the Prooftexts *Rambam* Cites

10. In this context, we can understand *Rambam's* intent in citing the prooftexts mentioned above. On the basis of these sources, he demonstrates that *Mashiach* will come and reinstate the perfect observance of the Torah by “restor[ing] the kingship of [the House of] David to its initial sovereignty” so that “all the statutes will be reinstated....”

Rambam states: “The Torah attests to his [coming]” and then proceeds to cite proofs that convey two aspects of that assertion:

a) “G-d your L-rd will return [you from] your captivity... and gather you.” This verse teaches that there will be an ingathering of the exiles of Israel, bringing about the circumstances that will allow for the restoration of the kingship of [the House of] David and the observance of all the statutes,¹ i.e., the fulfilment of all laws and *mitzvos* of the Torah that were nullified because of the exile of the Jewish people.

b) “There is also a reference [to *Mashiach*] in the passage [concerning] Bilaam. There, he prophesied about the two anointed [kings]: the first anointed [king], David, who saved Israel from her oppressors, and the final anointed [king] who will arise from among his descendants and save Israel [at the End of Days].” This highlights the nature of the redemption that will be brought about by *Mashiach*: The role and purpose of *Mashiach* is to “restore the kingship of [the House of] David to its initial sovereignty.” “The

יו"ה. על זה מביא הרמב"ם ראיה, מנין שהמשיח יבא ויחזיר את שלמות התורה "להחזיר מלכות דוד לישנה כו' וחוזרין כל המשפטים" - "שהרי התורה העידה עליו". שבראיות אלו יש שני פרטים: שנאמר ושב ה' אלקינו . . . וקבצנו וגו' - מזה אנו יודעים שיהיה קבוץ נדחי ישראל, שזהו מצב המאפשר שיהיו "מלכות דוד . . . כל המשפטים", הקיום דהלכות ומצוות התורה שנתבטל על ידי גלות ישראל.

"אף בפרשת בלעם נאמר ושמ נבא בשני המשיחים במשיח הראשון שהוא דוד שהושיע את ישראל מיד צריהם ובמשיח האחרון שעומד מבניו שמושיע את ישראל (באחרונה)": מזה אנו יודעים שמה שיהיה על ידי המשיח, וענינו של המשיח, הוא "להחזיר מלכות דוד לישנה לממשלה הראשונה" - הוא

1. See the collection of responsa entitled *Chayim Sha'al*, Vol. 1, responsum 97, which states, “To explain: [The intent is that, in contrast to the era following the death of

King Shlomoh when the Jews were split into two kingdoms, *Mashiach*] will reign over all of Israel and Yehudah, as it is written (*Yechezkel* 37:22), “There will be one king over

all of them...? *Rambam* included all of this by saying [that *Mashiach* will ‘restore] the kingship of [the House of] David to its initial sovereignty.”

final anointed [king]” will be from the house of “the first anointed [king], David”² and he will restore the sovereignty David initiated.

Rambam continues, “That passage states...,” informing us that all the particular elements that characterized the kingship of the first anointed [king], David” will also be present in – and come as a result of – the kingship of “the final anointed [king],” *Mashiach*. The prophecy of Bilaam that *Rambam* cites includes all the details of his kingship, the beginning of his emergence, his sovereignty, and the perfect state of his rule when “he shall crush Moab’s princes.” In a like manner, *Mashiach* “shall break down all of Seth’s descendants.” Similarly, just as it was, prophesied about David, “Edom will become an inheritance,” so too, about *Mashiach* it is stated, “His enemy, Seir, will become Israel’s inheritance.”

With these citations, *Rambam* is emphasizing how *Mashiach* will bring about perfection in the observance of the Torah. He will enable the Jewish people to be released from the subjugation of the non-Jewish nations; moreover, he will establish dominion over these nations. This will make it possible for the Jews to “occupy themselves in the Torah and *mitzvos* in a desirable manner.”³ “They will be free to occupy themselves in the Torah and its wisdom, without anyone to oppress or disturb them,”⁴ as *Rambam* explains at length.⁵

2. Note *Sanhedrin* 98b, which states, “In the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will establish another David for them.... [They will rule together,] like a king and a viceroy.”* See *Zohar*, Vol. I, p. 82b, *Zohar Chadash*, p. 53a. See *Tzafnas Panei’ach al HaTorah*, *Bereishis* 49:9.

* The actual wording of the Talmud and the *Ein Yaakov* is *plag-keisar*, or half-caesar. The *Aruch*, *erech keisar*, states *plago*, “his half.”

3. *Rambam*, *Hilchos Teshuvah* 9:2.

4. *Ibid.*, *Hilchos Melachim* 12:4.

5. See the above-cited chapters in *Hilchos Teshuvah* and *Hilchos Melachim*.

On this basis, it is understood why one of the functions of a king – and a *mitzvah* incumbent upon him – is that he will “wage the wars of G-d” (*Hilchos Melachim* 1:8, 4:10). Note that the full name for this section is *Hilchos Melachim U’Milchamoseihem*, “The Laws of Kings and Their Wars,”* i.e., they are *their* wars. This implies that the concept of waging war is integral to the identity of the king.

Note also *Hilchos Melachim* 5:1, that states, “Initially, a king should not wage wars other than a *milchemes mitzvah*...., [i.e.,] the war against the seven nations [that occupied *Eretz Yisrael*], the war against Amalek, and [a war fought]

“מְשִׁיחַ הָאֲחֵרוֹן” מִהֶרְאֲשׁוֹנָה - “מְשִׁיחַ הֶרְאֲשׁוֹן שֶׁהוּא דָּוִד”.

“וְשֵׁם הוּא אוֹמֵר” שְׂכַל הַפְּרָטִים שֶׁהָיוּ בְּמְשִׁיחַ הֶרְאֲשׁוֹן - דָּוִד” וְהָיוּ גַם בְּ“מְשִׁיחַ הָאֲחֵרוֹן” זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ, מִתְחִיל מִתְחִלַּת הַתְּגָלוּתוֹ וּמְמַשְׁלָתוֹ עַד לְשִׁלְמוֹת שָׁל וְיִמְחֵץ פְּאֲתֵי מוֹאָב” שֶׁדָּגְמָתוֹ בְּמְשִׁיחַ “וְיִקְרַקֵּר כָּל בְּנֵי שֵׁט”, וְכֵן “וְהָיָה אֲדוֹם יְרֻשָׁה זֶה דָּוִד”, “וְהָיָה יְרֻשָׁה שְׁעִיר אוֹיְבָיו זֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ”.

מְשִׁיחַ יָבִיא לְשִׁלְמוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, שְׂכָן כְּתוּצָא מִזָּה שֶׁהָיוּ פְּטוּרִים מִשְׁעֲבוּד מַלְכוּתוֹת וְאֲדָרְבָּה, מְשִׁיחַ יִשְׁלוֹט עֲלֵיהֶם - יִתְאַפְּשֶׁר “לְעֶסוֹק בְּתוֹרָה וּבְמִצְוֹת כְּהֵגוֹן”[”] “יְהָיוּ פְּנוּיִין בְּתוֹרָה וּחְכָמָתָהּ וְלֹא יְהָיָה לָהֶם נוֹגֵשׁ וּמְבַטְלִי”[”] (וְכַמוֹ שֶׁהֲרַמְבַּ”ם[”] מֵאֲרִיךְ בְּזֶה)[”].

to assist Israel from an enemy which attacks them.” These matters – in contrast to a voluntary war – prevent the Jewish people carrying out the Torah and its *mitzvos*.

* Note that even though there are printings and manuscripts in which, in certain places, that title merely states “and wars,” not “their wars,” however in all the printings and manuscripts, at the end of *Rambam*’s introduction, before he lists the individual *Halachos* in detail, he mentions “The Laws of the King and His Wars” or “Their Wars.”

Honing Our Focus

11. The above concept enables us to understand why, beforehand, *Rambam* states, “Whoever does not believe in him, or does not await his coming, denies not only [the statements of] the other prophets, but also [those of] the Torah and of Moshe, our teacher, for the Torah attests to his [coming]...,” and why he supports that statement with the verse, “G-d your L-rd, will return [you from] your captivity” and the citation of Bilaam’s prophecy.

One might ask: Why is it so important when delin-
eating the laws of *Mashiach* to emphasize that one who
does not believe in him “denies not only [the statements
of] the other prophets, but also [those of] the Torah and
of Moshe, our teacher.”⁶ Seemingly, it would have been
more appropriate for *Rambam* to state this concept in
*Hilchos Teshuvah*⁷ when defining who is a denier of the
faith.⁸ However, by placing the concept here, *Rambam* em-
phasizes that the conception of *Mashiach* is fundamental
to *Hilchos Melachim* (the Laws of Kings): *Mashiach* will
bring about the consummate observance of the Torah’s
laws and its *mitzvos* – “restor[ing] the kingship of [the
House of] David to its initial sovereignty” so that “all
the statutes will be reinstated.” This concept is sourced

יא. על פי זה מובנת הקדמת
הרמב"ם: “וכל מי שאינו מאמין
בו או מי שאינו מחכה לביאתו
לא בשאר נביאים בלבד הוא
כופר אלא בתורה ובמשה רבנו.
שהרי התורה העידה עליו כו”
(ומביא על זה את הפתוב “ושב
ה’ אלקיך גו” ואחר כך “אף
בפרשת בלעם”);

דלכאורה מה חשוב כל כך
להרמב"ם בשיבות להלכות
משיח, להדגיש כי “לא בשאר
נביאים בלבד הוא כופר אלא
בתורה ובמשה רבנו”⁶, ויותר
היה לו להביאו לכאורה בהלכות
תשובה⁷ גבי גדרי כופר וכו”⁸?

אלא שמדגיש בזה הרמב"ם
שענין זה של מלך המשיח,
שהוא יביא לשלמות בהלכות
ומצוות התורה (ולתקון
מלכות דוד לישנה כו' וחזו"ר
כל המשפטים), אינו עוד ענין

6. It could be stated that *Rambam* is simply emphasizing how strong one’s faith in *Mashiach*’s coming must be and defining it. This is also a point of Torah Law – that one must believe in *Mashiach*’s coming must be with the indubitable certainty that stems from the fact that it was stated in the Torah by Moshe, our teacher, as *Rambam* states, “the Torah attest to his [coming].” Such certainty surpasses the conviction inspired by promises from other prophets. See *Rambam*’s statements in *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah*, ch. 8.

On the basis of *Rambam*’s statements in that source, we can also understand why here he speaks of denying not only “the Torah,” but also “Moshe our teacher.” The prophecy of Moshe our teacher was

validated during [the revelation] at Mount Sinai.” There, “Our eyes saw, and not a stranger’s. Our ears heard, and not another’s.” The certainty in the prophecy of Moshe, our teacher, brings about “assurance that prevails for all time” regarding the Torah’s eternity and immutability. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 19, p. 184ff.

These concepts underscore the precision in *Rambam*’s words and why he stated this concept in the negative – “[Whoever does not believe in him...] denies not only [the statements of] the other prophets, but also [those of] the Torah and of Moshe, our teacher.” When restating this concept, *Kiryas Sefer* writes, “denies the Torah, Moshe our teacher, and the other prophets.” The terminology *Rambam* uses

emphasizes the connection with Torah and by doing so highlights the nature of the faith we must have in *Mashiach*’s coming – that it must be accompanied by the definite assurance that stems from the Torah. Having faith in *Mashiach*’s coming with such certainty is also a *halachic* requirement.

Note that at the end of *halachah* 2 in this chapter, *Rambam* adds, “There is no need to cite prooftexts regarding the concept of the *Mashiach* from the words of the prophets, for all their books are filled with it.”

7. Similarly, such statements would have been in place in *Rambam*’s *Commentary on the Mishnah, Sanhedrin*, ch. 10.

8. *Rambam*, *Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:8.

in the Torah itself. By stating this, *Rambam* emphasizes that *Mashiach's* coming is not merely a further concept that was revealed by the prophets, but rather is an integral element of the Torah and the creed of Moshe, our teacher. The Torah itself is foretelling and promising that *Mashiach* will come and that he will bring about the consummate observance of the Torah.⁹

For that reason, *Rambam* states in summary: “These explicit words of the Torah include all that was said [on the subject] by all the prophets.”¹⁰ In other words, all the matters communicated by the prophets about *Mashiach* are an expression of the Torah, highlighting that *Mashiach* and the era he will initiate are identified with the consummate observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*.

The Ultimate in Observance

12. We can now understand why *Rambam* devotes a separate *halachah* to the description of the establishment of the three Cities of Refuge in the era of *Mashiach*. By doing so, not only is he citing a further proof that *Mashiach* will bring about an era characterized by perfection in the observance of Torah and *mitzvos*, but that, in that era, the *mitzvos* themselves will be brought to a complete state. Not only will man perform *mitzvos* in a more perfect manner than ever before, the *mitzvos* themselves will be able to be fulfilled in the ultimate manner G-d desired. Thus, it is only in the Ultimate Future that the *mitzvah* of establishing Cities of Refuge will be able to be observed in a more perfect way than ever before. As *Rambam* notes, the Torah commanded that in addition to the six Cities of Refuge established in *Eretz Yisrael*, “When G-d will expand your borders... you shall add three more cities.” *Rambam* proceeds to state, “This situation never occurred. [Surely,] G-d did not give this command in vain.” Thus, the

שְׁנֵי תַּגְלָהּ עַל יְדֵי הַנְּבִיאִים, כִּי אִם
עֲנִין שֶׁל תּוֹרָה וּמִשָּׁה רַבְּנוּ גּוֹפֵא:
תּוֹרָה גּוֹפֵא אוֹמֶרֶת וּמִבְּטִיחָהּ
שֶׁמְשִׁיחַ יָבֵא וְאֵז תִּהְיֶה שְׁלֵמוֹת
הַתּוֹרָה.⁹

וְלִכֵּן הוּא מְסִים: “וְאֵלוֹ הַדְּבָרִים
הַמְּפֹרָשִׁים בְּתוֹרָה הֵם כּוֹלְלִים
כָּל הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁנֶּאֱמָרוּ עַל יְדֵי כָּל
הַנְּבִיאִים,” שֶׁכָּל הָעֲנִינִים שֶׁנֶּאֱמָרוּ
עַל יְדֵי כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים עַל מְשִׁיחַ הוּא
עֲנִין בְּתוֹרָה עֲצֻמָּה, בְּשִׁלְמוֹת קִיּוּם
הַתּוֹרָה וְהַמְצֻוֹת.

יב. וְזֶהוּ גַם הַטַּעַם לְכַךְ שֶׁכְּתַב
הַרְמַב"ם אֶת הָרֵאִיָּה מְעַרֵי מְקַלֵּט
בְּהִלְכָה בְּפְנֵי עֲצֻמָּה, כִּי מִזֶּה מְבִיא
לֹא רַק רֵאִיָּה שֶׁמְפָרֵשׁ בְּתוֹרָה שְׁעַל
יְדֵי מְלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ יִהְיֶה הַזְּמַן שֶׁל
שְׁלֵמוֹת בְּקִיּוּם הַתּוֹרָה וּמְצֻוֹת,
אֲלֵא שֶׁמְצַאֲנוּ “בְּעַרְי מְקַלֵּט”
שֶׁיִּתְוַסֵּף בְּאוֹתָהּ מְצֻוֹה עֲצֻמָּה,
“וְיִסְפַּת לָךְ עוֹד שְׁלֹשׁ עָרִים גּוֹ”
“וְלֹא צָוָה הַקֶּב"ה לְתַהוֹ”. כְּלוּמַר

9. See footnote 13, below.

10. This conforms with *Rambam's*

conception of the purpose of prophecy as a whole, “to encourage the people regarding the words of the

Torah,” as stated in *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 9:2.

commandment to establish these additional cities indicates how the Torah itself points to a future era when the fulfillment of the *mitzvos* will reach consummate perfection, as G-d desires.

Observance and Miracles

13. Considering the above, we can understand the continuation of *Rambam's* statements in *halachah* 3: “One should not entertain the notion that the King *Mashiach* must work miracles and wonders, bring about new phenomena within the world, resurrect the dead, or perform other similar deeds. This is [definitely] not true.”

Two concepts are implied by *Rambam's* words: (a) The mission of *Mashiach* is not to “work miracles and wonders [or] bring about new phenomena within the world”;¹¹ and (b) his performance of wonders or his failure to do so should not be used as criteria to establish his identity.¹²

Rambam then concludes, “[Rather,] this is the primary focus of the matter: This Torah, with its statutes and laws, is everlasting.” This is a corollary to his previous statements and helps explain them. Since *Mashiach's* purpose and mission is to bring about a perfect state of the observance of the Torah's laws and *mitzvos*, if one would think that “the King *Mashiach* must work miracles and wonders [or] bring about new phenomena within the world” – i.e., bring about a change in the nature of the world – that would run contrary to the concept that “this Torah, with its statutes and laws, is everlasting.”¹³

שְׁהַתּוֹרָה עֲצֻמָּה אוֹמֶרֶת שְׁצָרִיךְ
עוֹד לְבֹא זְמַן שְׁבוּ יְהוּי מְצוּוֹת
הַתּוֹרָה כְּדָבָרֵי.

יג. עַל פִּי כָּל הַנֶּ"ל יוֹבֵן מֵה
שֶׁכֶּתֵב הַרְמַב"ם בְּהַלְכָּה ג': "וְאֵל
יַעֲלֶה עַל דַּעְתְּךָ שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ
צָרִיךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים
וּמַחֲדֵשׁ דְּבָרִים בְּעוֹלָם אוֹ מַחֲיֶה
מֵתִים וְכוּיִצֵּא בְּדָבָרִים אֵלּוּ, אִין
הַדָּבָר כֵּךְ" (שְׁבוּזָה הוּא שׁוֹלֵל שְׁנֵי
דְּבָרִים: לֹא זֶהוּ מַעֲגִינֵי מְשִׁיחַ
"לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים וּמַחֲדֵשׁ
דְּבָרִים בְּעוֹלָם"^ס, וְלֹא זֶהוּ הַמְּבַחֵן
עַל אֲמַתּוֹת^ס) וּמַסִּים "וְעֵקֶר
הַדְּבָרִים כִּכֶּה הֵן שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת
חֻקֶּיהָ וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיהָ לְעוֹלָם וּלְעוֹלָמֵי
עוֹלָמִים":

שְׁכִינּוֹן שֶׁגָּדְרוּ וְעִנְיָנוּ שֶׁל מְשִׁיחַ
הוּא כִּנֶּ"ל, שְׁלֵמוֹת בְּקִיּוּם הַלְכוּת
וּמְצוּוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, עַל כֵּן אִם עוֹלָה
עַל הַדַּעַת "שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ צָרִיךְ
לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים וּמַחֲדֵשׁ
דְּבָרִים בְּעוֹלָם" כִּדִּי לַפְּעוֹל שְׁנוּי
בְּעוֹלָם, הָרִי זֶה בְּסִתְיָהּ לְכָךְ אֲשֶׁר
"הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת חֻקֶּיהָ וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיהָ
לְעוֹלָם"^ס.

11. This – i.e., the point expressed in (a) in the main text – appears to be indicated by a straightforward reading of his words. Note, however, the following footnote.

12. This – i.e., the point expressed in (b) in the main text – appears to be indicated by *Rambam's* proof of this point by citing Rabbi Akiva's recognition of ben Koziva as *Mashiach* despite the fact that he did

not perform miracles. See *Rambam's* treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead, the beginning of ch. 6.

See the lengthy explanation of this *halachah* and *Ra'avad's* disputation of it in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 27, p. 191ff.

13. With this statement in the main text, the Rebbe appears to be emphasizing that *Mashiach* is not

introducing a new faith or even a new dimension in Torah. His coming is intended to bring the Torah given at Sinai – and for which G-d created the world (see *Rashi, Bereishis* 1:1) – to consummate fulfillment. Since the Torah requires the observance of the *mitzvos* in the world as it exists at present, were *Mashiach* to be required to change the nature of the world, that would run contrary to this purpose.

Accordingly, since the mission and purpose of *Mashiach* is not to bring about such miracles and wonders [nor to] bring about new phenomena within the world, it is also understood that the performance of such wonders does not constitute a means of establishing his identity.

As explained above (the end of sec. 6), *Rambam* gives criteria for evaluating the validity of a prophet:

The sign of [the truth of his prophecy] will be his prediction of future events and the validation of his words, as it is written,¹⁴ “If you will ask in your hearts, ‘How shall we recognize a prophecy that was not spoken by G-d?’”

Thus, the criteria of validating whether a person is a prophet is whether he will predict the future, for this is integral to his purpose and mission, as *Rambam* states,¹⁵ “We see from this that a prophet will arise for the sole purpose of telling us the future.”

Similarly, *Rambam* gives criteria for recognizing *Mashiach*. True, *Mashiach* will be a great prophet, greater than all the other prophets, close to the level of Moshe our teacher. Nevertheless, that does not define

ובהיות שגדרו וענינו של משיח אינו אותות ומופתים וחדוש דברים בעולם, הרי מובן גם שלא זה הוא המבחן על אמתתו.

כשם שלגבי נביא, הבחינה על אמתתו היא “האות שלו, שיאמר דברים העתידיים להיות בעולם ויאמנו דבריו שנאמר וכי תאמר בלבבך איכה נדע הדבר וגו’” (פנ”ל סוף סעיף ו), הינו שאמתתו נבחנת במה שהוא ענינו - “נביא”, הוא אומר דברי עתידות^ט;

על דרך זה מובן גם בנוגע למשיח, שאף על פי שיהיה גם נביא גדול, ויותר מכל הנביאים (קרוב למשה רבנו), מכל מקום

Based on the statement in the main text, it is possible to explain why *Rambam* considers the coming of *Mashiach* as one of the fundamental principles of faith (see *Rosh Amanah*, ch. 3, *hasafeik hachamishi*; *Chasam Sofer*, loc. cit.). The centrality of *Mashiach*’s coming to our faith is not only because – as stated in *Rosh Amanah* (ch. 14, *hataanah hashelishi*; see *Chasam Sofer*, loc. cit.) – “*Mashiach*’s coming is explicitly stated in the Torah, the Prophets, and the Scriptures... [and when] someone denies his coming, it is as if he denied the Torah, the Prophets, and the Scriptures.” There is a further point involved: *Mashiach*’s coming is fundamentally relevant to the consummate definition and expression of the Torah. One of the definitive elements of the Torah is that there will be an era when the Torah and its observance will be perfect.

To express this concept in other

words: The Torah’s eternity and perfection – to use *Rambam*’s words, “that this Torah, with its statutes and laws, is everlasting” – stems from the fact that it is G-d’s essential will (see the extensive explanation in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 19, pp. 182-183, and the footnotes there*). This applies not only to its dimension as the command of the Creator, but also to its study and its actual observance; there will come a time when it will be fulfilled in a consummate manner. This will be realized with the coming of *Mashiach*.

Perhaps this is also the reason that the belief in *Mashiach* is not counted among the reckoning of the 613 *mitzvos* (see *Rosh Amanah*, ch. 5, *hasafeik hashelishi*). This resembles the concept – and indeed, is a more comprehensive expression of the point – that the general commandments which encompass

the entire Torah are not included in the reckoning of the *mitzvos* (*Sefer HaMitzvos*, general principle 4) because their scope is not specific in nature. Similarly, since the belief in the coming of *Mashiach* is of a general nature, including the Torah and the *mitzvos* as a whole, it cannot be counted as a specific commandment.

Note that in *Hilchos Melachim*, loc. cit., *Rambam* states, “Whoever does not believe in him...” He does not – as he does in *Sefer HaMitzvos* – state that one must believe in him. See *Rosh Amanah*, the end of ch. 19.

*To explain what is meant by the expression that the Torah is “G-d’s essential will”: There are times when a person does something willingly. However, the reason is not because he wants to perform that action, but because that action will lead to a desired result.

his purpose and mission. Instead, the definition and purpose of *Mashiach* is that he will serve as “the King *Mashiach*,” restoring and establishing the perfect observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*. Accordingly, this – the Torah and its observance – constitute the criteria for evaluating his identity as *Rambam* states in *halachah* 4:

And if a king¹⁶ will arise from the House of David who delves deeply in the study of the Torah and observes its *mitzvos*... as prescribed by the Written Law and the Oral Law; and if he will compel all of Israel to walk in [the way of the Torah] and repair the breaches [in its observance, i.e., he will bring about perfection in the observance of the *mitzvos* among the Jewish people]; and if he will fight the wars of G-d....

Rambam mentions three criteria for establishing the identity of *Mashiach* (see sec. 14, below): a) his own personal attainments in the study of Torah and the observance of the *mitzvos*; b) his motivation of the Jewish people as a whole to achieve fulfillment in these areas; and c) his establishment of a setting for the perfect observance of the Torah in the world at large. This includes “fighting the wars of G-d” and thus removing the possibility of non-Jewish nations “oppress[ing] or disturb[ing]” the Jews in their study and observance.

All the above, however, merely enables us to say that “he can be assumed to be *Mashiach*.” It is only when he will actually bring about perfection in the observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*, as *Rambam* continues, “If he will act and succeed [in the above], vanquishing all the nations surrounding him, building the [*Beis Ha*]Mikdash on its site, and gathering in the dispersed remnant of Israel,” that it is possible

גדרו וענינו - “מלך המשיח” כנ”ל, וממילא מובן (הלכה ד) שהבחינה והסימן לאמתתו הוא באם ענינו בעצמו הוא תורה וקיומה - “ואם” יעמוד מלך מבית דוד הוגה בתורה ועוסק במצוות... כפי תורה שבכתב ושבעל פה” ופועל שלמות בקיום המצוות של ישראל, “ויכף כל ישראל לילך בה ולחזק בדקה וילחום מלחמות ה” כו’ (ש”לחום מלחמות ה” הוא גם פרט בהבאת שלמות קיום התורה כנ”ל, הסרת ה”נוגש ומבטל” מצד האמות).

אלא שכל זה אינו אלא לדעת כי “הרי זה בחינת שהוא משיח”, אולם כאשר הוא מביא לידי שלמות קיום התורה ומצוות בפועל, “אם עשה והצליח ונצח כל האמות שסביביו ובנה מקדש במקומו וקבץ נדחי ישראל”, אז

For example, a person goes out to work in a factory willingly. He does not want to work in the factory; he wants the paycheck that he will receive for his work.

There are other times when a

person has a desire that he cannot explain. He wants something, not because of what will bring him. He just wants it. It is explained in *Chassidus (Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 19, p. 296)* that such desires stem from the core of his being; he

wants these things because that is who he is.

Such desires are an analogy enabling us to understand that the *mitzvos* are expressions of G-d’s essential will. They are not inter-

to state “he is definitely the *Mashiach*.” It is only then, when “all the statutes will be reinstated... according to all the *mitzvos* set forth in the Torah” – i.e., perfection in the laws and observance of the *mitzvos* will have become an actual reality.¹⁷

דִּקְוָא “הָרִי זֶה מְשִׁיחַ בְּדָאִי”
שָׁכֵן אִזְ “חֻזְרֵינן כָּל הַמְשַׁפְּטִים . .
כָּל מְצֻוֹתָהּ הָאֲמֹרָה בְּתוֹרָה” -
שְׁלֵמוֹת בְּהִלְכוֹת וְקִיּוּם הַמְצֻוֹת
בְּפִעֻלָּתָּהּ.

Four Prophecies: Four Phases of *Mashiach*

14. By focusing on *Rambam’s* statements at the beginning of the chapter more closely, a further point can be added: In that *halachah*, he emphasizes that

יֵד. וַיֵּשׁ לְהוֹסִיף בְּזוֹהַ, שֶׁהָרְאִיּוֹת
שְׁמִיבִיא הַרְמַב”ם לְפָנָי זֶה אֵינֶן רַק

mediaries for another purpose – i.e., G-d did not command the *mitzvos* because He desired that man be more refined or for other reasons of this nature – the *mitzvos* are the goal in of themselves.

Since the *mitzvos* are G-d’s essential will, just as G-d is eternal and unchanging, so too, the *mitzvos* are eternal and unchanging.

14. *Devarim* 18:21.

15. *Rambam, Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 10:3. See also *Rambam’s* statements at the end of *ibid.*, ch. 7, and *ibid.*, 9:2.

16. *Halachah* 3 explains which criteria are not relevant in defining *Mashiach*. In *halachah* 4, he defines the correct criteria. *Rambam* begins this *halachah* with “and if,” using the prefix of a *vav* so that the connection to the previous *halachah* is highlighted. See the restatement of these concepts in *Kiryas Sefer*, which also connects the two points, stating, “*Mashiach* need not perform miracles and wonders. Instead, when a king will arise....” The connection between the two *halachos* emphasizes the previous point, as brought out at the beginning of footnote 13: that *Mashiach’s* purpose and function is not to bring about a new development in the world, but rather to bring the Torah and its *mitzvos* to their consummate fulfillment.

17. On this basis, it is also understood why, at the beginning of ch. 11, *Rambam* did not mention

Mashiach “fight[ing] the wars of G-d.” In that first *halachah*, he explains and defines *Mashiach’s* purpose – to “renew the kingship of [the House of] David, restoring it to its initial sovereignty.” This will be accomplished after he brings about a complete state of Torah knowledge and observance, i.e., when it has already been definitely established that he is *Mashiach*.

This will not yet be realized until he is victorious in waging “the wars of G-d.”

Based on the the latter point, perhaps it is possible to add a further explanation regarding a related concept, one that is appropriate at least from an inner, deeper perspective: *Rambam* mentions two *Mashiachs* – the first *Mashiach*, David, and the ultimate *Mashiach* because both dimensions will exist within *Mashiach* himself, i.e., there will be two corresponding periods and levels after the coming of *Mashiach*.

The first will be before he builds the *Beis HaMikdash*. Then, it is merely that he is *bechezkas Mashiach*, i.e., “he can be assumed to be *Mashiach*.” This level is comparable to that of David who did not build the *Beis HaMikdash*. His mission was to “wage the wars of G-d” (see *I Divrei HaYamim* 22:8). Furthermore, David prepared everything for building the *Beis HaMikdash*, drawing up detailed architectural plans for its construction, which were, as he told Shlomoh, “All written down, [inspired] by the

hand of G-d that was upon me, [enabling me to] conceive it” (*ibid.* 28:19; translation as understood by *Metzudos David*).

The second level will be realized when *Mashiach* has definitely established his identity, by building the *Beis HaMikdash* on its site. At this time, his function as *Mashiach* will be brought into complete expression.

See the letter of the Rebbe Rashab (*Igros Kodesh*, Vol. 1, Letter no. 130, p. 312) which elaborates regarding two phases and levels in the revelation of *Mashiach*. The Rebbe Rashab focuses on the wording of our Sages who at times refer to *Mashiach’s* coming as “the coming of the descendent of David” and at other times refer to “the com[ing] of David.” He explains (based on *Bach, Orach Chayim*, sec. 118) that there are two levels of *Mashiach*: his coming and activities before the rebuilding of the *Beis HaMikdash* and Jerusalem (when “he can be assumed to be *Mashiach*”) and his reign after he rebuilds the *Beis HaMikdash* and Jerusalem. Regarding that later time, our Sages said (*Megillah* 17b), “When Jerusalem is rebuilt, David will come,” i.e., then he will have definitely established his identity as *Mashiach*.

Note the different versions of the wording in *halachah* 1: “renew the kingship of David” or “renew the kingship of the House of David.” This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

Mashiach will bring about the consummate observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*, following the pattern of David his ancestor. However, *Rambam* is citing proofs, not only for the general concept – that “in the future time, the King *Mashiach* will arise and renew the kingship of [the House of] David, restoring it to its initial sovereignty.... and all the statutes will be reinstated... according to all the *mitzvos* set forth in the Torah” – but also for the particular points he mentions in *halachah* 4.¹⁸

For this reason, when citing proof from Bilaam’s prophecy regarding the two anointed kings, David and *Mashiach*, *Rambam* also focuses on the four elements and criteria that will be involved in the revelation of *Mashiach*. *Rambam* continues, “There, he prophesied...” mentioning how these four elements were reflected in the achievements of both David and *Mashiach*. By doing so, he clarifies what it means to “renew the kingship of [the House of] David, restoring it to its initial sovereignty.”

In general, these four elements can be divided into three categories of achievements: a) the personal characteristics of David and *Mashiach* themselves; b) their activity among the Jewish people and their sovereignty over them; and c) their endeavors and rule over the nations of the world and the world as a whole. The third category itself subdivides into two different periods and undertakings, as will be explained.

The Unfolding of *Mashiach*’s Sovereignty

15. The personal characteristics of David and *Mashiach* are reflected in the phrase, “a king will rise up from the House of David who, like David his ancestor, delves deeply into the study of the Torah and observes its *mitzvos*

על כָּל־לִוְיֹת הַדְּבָרִים בַּתְּחִלָּה
הַפָּרֶךְ שֶׁ”הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ עֵתִיד
לְעֲמוּד וְלִהְיוֹת מַלְכוּת דָּוִד
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִשְׁלַח הָרִאשׁוֹנָה . .
כָּל מִצְוֹתַי הָאֲמוּרָה בַּתּוֹרָה”
אֵלֶּיךָ גַּם עַל הַפְּרָטִים שֶׁבַּהֲלָכָה
ד’עב;

וְלִכְּנֹן יִבְיֵא הָרַמְבַּ”ם גַּם
בְּהוֹכְחָה מִפְּרִשְׁתּוֹ בְּלָעָם,
שֶׁנִּבְּא בְּשֵׁנֵי הַמְּשִׁיחִים . . דָּוִד
וּמְשִׁיחַ, אֵת אַרְבַּעַת הַפְּרָטִים
וְהַעֲנִינִים (בְּהַתְּגַלּוּתוֹ) שֶׁל
מְשִׁיחַ, וְכַמְּפָרֵשׁ - ”וְשֵׁם
נִבְּא” - שֶׁזֶּהוּ הַהִמְשָׁךְ שֶׁל
”לִהְיוֹת מַלְכוּת דָּוִד לְיִשְׂרָאֵל”.

בְּכָל־לִוְיֹת זֶה מִתְּחַלֵּק לְשֵׁשׁ
חֻקֹּת: (א) דָּוִד וּמְשִׁיחַ
עֲצָמָם. (ב) פְּעֻלָּתָם וּמַלְכוּתָם
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. (ג) פְּעֻלָּתָם
וּמַלְכוּתָם עַל אֲמוֹת הָעוֹלָם
(עַל הָעוֹלָם בְּכֻלּוֹ). וּבַעֲנֵן זֶה
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי עֲצָמוֹ יֵשׁ שְׁנֵי זְמָנִים
וְעֲנִינִים, כְּדִלְקַמּוֹן.

טו. עֲנִינִים בְּעֲצָמָם -
”עֲמוּד מֶלֶךְ מִבֵּית דָּוִד הַגֹּהֵן
בַּתּוֹרָה וְעוֹסֵק בְּמִצְוֹת כְּדָוִד
אָבִיו כְּפִי תּוֹרָה שֶׁבַּכְּתָב

18. Similarly, the particular point mentioned in *halachah* 3, i.e., the negation of the notion that *Mashiach* must work miracles is evident from the proof *Rambam* cites in *halachah* 2. There, he speaks of the

establishment of the Cities of Refuge. Such cities were to be established for the sake of a person who accidentally killed one of his fellowmen. This concept makes it evident that the natural order of the world will

continue in *Mashiach*’s era and thus lays the ground for the statement in *halachah* 3 that *Mashiach* need not work miracles. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 24, p. 109ff., where this concept is developed further.

as prescribed by the Written Law and the Oral Law.” This is explicitly indicated by the Torah’s words in Balaam’s prophecy, “I see him, but not now,” which refers to David, and “I perceive him, but not in the near future,” which refers to *Mashiach*. The words *areno* (“I see him”) and *ashureno* (“I perceive him”) indicate that this phrase is a prophecy concerning David and *Mashiach* themselves.

The second point mentioned by *Rambam*, “He will compel all of Israel to walk in [the way of the Torah] and repair the breaches [in its observance],” refers to the activity of David and *Mashiach* among the Jewish people and their sovereignty over them which is explicitly indicated by the continuation of the verse, “A star shall go forth from Yaakov,” referring to David, and “A staff shall rise up from Yisrael,” referring to *Mashiach*. Saying that the star and the staff will emerge “from Yaakov” and “from Yisrael” respectively points to the nature of the connection between these rulers and the Jewish people.

These phrases also reflect the perfection *Mashiach*, the ultimate anointed king, will attain and his advantage over David, the first anointed king. David is described with the analogy of a star, i.e., something that is exalted and elevated above people at large,¹⁹ as can be understood by *Rambam’s*²⁰ description of the heavenly stars, “All the stars and spheres possess a soul, knowledge, and intellect.... The knowledge of the stars is... greater than that of men.” Also, the phrase referring to King David refers to the Jews as “Yaakov,” the name used to describe the Jewish people as they are not on the highest rung of Divine service.

By contrast, *Mashiach* is described with the analogy of “a staff,” a means of asserting one’s authority. Thus, *Rashi* interprets the term “staff” as referring to “a king who subdues and rules,”²¹ i.e., with absolute sovereignty.

19. See *Radak’s* commentary on *Bamidbar* 24:17. See also the commentaries of *Ralbag* and *Ramban* who explain the meaning of this

phrase according to their interpretation that this phrase is referring to *Mashiach*. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 13, p. 88ff.

ושבעל פה. וזה מפרש בתורה “אֲרָאֵנוּ (אֲרָאָה אֹתוֹ) וְלֹא עֵתָה זֶה דָּוִד, אֲשׁוּרֵנוּ (אֲרָאָה אֹתוֹ) וְלֹא קָרוֹב זֶה מְלֶכֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ” - הַנְּבוּאָה עַל דָּוִד וּמְשִׁיחַ עֲצָמָם.

(ב) “וַיִּכְף כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לִילָךְ בָּהּ וּלְחֹזֵק בְּדָקָה” - פְּעֻלָּתָם וּמְלֻכוֹתָם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, וְכַמְפָּרֵשׁ בְּהַמְשָׁךְ הַכְּתוּבִי: “דָּרָךְ כּוֹכֵב מֵיַעֲקֹב זֶה דָּוִד וְקָם שָׂבֵט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל זֶה הַמְּלֶכֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ” - שְׁזֵה מוֹרָה עַל הַשִּׁיכוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, “כוֹכֵב מֵיַעֲקֹב . . . שָׂבֵט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל.”

[וּבְזֵה מִתְבַּטָּאת גַּם שְׁלֻמוֹתוֹ וַיִּתְרוֹנוּ שֶׁל מְלֶכֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ, מְשִׁיחַ אַחֲרָיו, לְגַבֵּי מְשִׁיחַ הָרִאשׁוֹן:

עַל דָּוִד נֹאמֵר הַלְשׁוֹן (א) “כוֹכֵב” שְׁמוּרָה עַל מִי שֶׁהוּא מְרוּמָם וּמְנֻשָּׂא מִשָּׂאֵר בְּנֵי אָדָם” [פְּמוּבָן מִדְּבַרֵי הַרְמַב”ם” בְּעִנְיַן כּוֹכְבִים כְּפִשְׁטוּם, “כָּל הַכוֹכְבִים וְהַגְּלָגָלִים כָּלָן בְּעַלֵּי נֶפֶשׁ וְדַעַה וְהַשִּׁפֵּל הֵם כּו’ וְדַעַת הַכוֹכְבִים כּו’ וְגִדּוּלָה מְדַעַת בְּנֵי אָדָם”], (ב) “מֵיַעֲקֹב” - שְׁמוּרָה עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא כְּפִי שְׁהֵם בְּתַכְלִית הַמַּעֲלָה.

אֲבָל לְגַבֵּי מְשִׁיחַ הוּא אֹמֵר (א) “וְקָם שָׂבֵט”, שְׁפָרוּשׁוֹ כְּפִשְׁטוֹ, הוּא “מְלֶכֶךְ רוּדָה וּמוֹשֵׁל”^ע,

20. *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 3:9.

21. *Rashi’s* commentary on *Bamidbar* 24:17.

This will be revealed when *Mashiach* “compel[s] all of Israel to walk in [the way of the Torah] and repair the breaches [in its observance].” And *Mashiach* is mentioned in connection with Yisrael, the superlative term referring to Jewish people.²²

The third point mentioned by *Rambam*, “He will fight the wars of G-d... act[ing] and succeed[ing in the above], vanquishing all the nations surrounding him” is alluded to in the verse, as *Rambam* states initially:

“He shall crush Moab’s princes” — this refers to David, as it is written, “He struck down Moab and measured them with a cord”; “he shall break down all of Seth’s descendants” — this refers to the King *Mashiach*, about whom it is written, “His rule [will extend] from sea to sea”.

Here, too, we see the superiority of the prophecy referring to *Mashiach* in relation to that referring to David. David is described as merely “crush[ing]” Moab, while *Mashiach* is described as “break[ing] down” Seth’s descendants. Furthermore, David is referred to as defeating only “the princes of Moab,” i.e., one nation, while *Mashiach* will conquer “all of Seth’s descendants,” establishing his dominion²³ over all the nations.²⁴

These concepts are also reflected in the prooftexts from the Prophets cited by *Rambam*. In reference to David, *Rambam* cites the verse, “He defeated Moab,” a single victory, over only one nation. By contrast, regarding *Mashiach*, it is written, “His rule [will extend] from sea to sea,” ongoing dominion, over humanity at large.

22. The advantage of *Mashiach* over David is also reflected in the first pair of clauses that refer to David and *Mashiach* themselves. Bilaam’s prophecy regarding David states, “I see him, but not now,” implying that he will be seen in the near future. “I perceive him, but not in the near [future],” which refers to *Mashiach*, implies that this is a lofty state and level that will only be realized after

a lengthy time. Only when our good deeds and Divine service vastly increase will we reach this level.

23. The statements in the main text reflect the understanding of *Targum Onkelos* of the verse. This interpretation appears to be borne out by the prooftext cited by *Rambam*, “He will rule from sea to sea.” Ibn Ezra interprets the term translated as “establishing his dominion”

שְׁוֹהַ בְּגִלּוּי אֶצֶל מְשִׁיחַ, וְיִכָּרֵף כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לִילָךְ בָּהּ וּלְחֹזֶק בְּדָקָה, (ב) “מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל” - שֵׁם הַמַּעֲלָה שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל.²²

ג) “וְיִלְחֶם מְלַחְמוֹת ה’ כו’ אִם עֲשֶׂה וְהַצְלִיחַ וְנִצַּח כָּל הָאֻמוֹת שְׂסָבִיבֵיו” - זֶה נֶאֱמַר בְּפֶסֶק וּמְחִץ פְּאֵתֵי מוֹאָב זֶה דָּוִד וְכֵן הוּא אֹמֵר וַיִּךְ אֶת מוֹאָב וַיְמַדְדֵם בְּחָבֶל וְקָרַקַר כָּל בְּנֵי שֵׁת זֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ שְׁנֵאמַר בּוֹ וּמְשָׁלוֹ מִיָּם עַד יָם.”

[שְׁגֹם בְּזֶה מְדַגְּשֵׁת מַעֲלָתוֹ שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ: אֶצֶל דָּוִד הוּא רַק (א) “מְחִץ”, (ב) “פָּאֵתֵי מוֹאָב”, וְאֵלּוֹ אֶצֶל מְשִׁיחַ נֶאֱמַר: (א) “וְקָרַקַר”, (ב) “כָּל בְּנֵי שֵׁת”, הַטְּלִיטָה²³ עַל כָּל הָאֻמוֹת²⁴.”

או כְּהִלְשׁוֹן בְּנִבְיָאִים: אֶצֶל דָּוִד (א) “וַיִּךְ” (ב) “אֶת מוֹאָב”; וְאֶצֶל מְשִׁיחַ: (א) “וּמְשָׁלוֹ” (ב) “מִיָּם עַד יָם”].

as meaning, “destroy”; see also his commentary, s.v., *inei Shes*.

Ralbag and *Radak* offer similar interpretations. See *Targum Yonason ben Uziel* and *Targum Yerushalmi*, and see *Likkutei Sichos*, loc. cit. This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

24. See the sources mentioned in the previous footnote.

Rambam concludes his description of *Mashiach's* activities by mentioning a fourth point, stating, “He will perfect the entire world, motivating all the nations to serve G-d together, as it is written,²⁵ ‘For then I will transform the peoples, granting them pure speech so that they will all call upon the name of G-d and serve Him with one accord.’” *Rambam* cites the allusion to this all-encompassing development in Bilaam’s prophecy, stating:

“Edom will become an inheritance” — this refers to David, as it is written, “Edom became the servants of David”; “his enemy, Seir, will become Israel’s inheritance”²⁶ — this refers to the King *Mashiach*, as it is written, “Liberators will ascend Mount Zion....”

Here, also, the superiority of *Mashiach* can be understood. The inheritance of Edom by David is expressed merely in the fact that “Edom became the

ד) “ויתקן את העולם כלו לעבד את ה' ביחד שנאמר כי אז אהפך אל עמים שפה ברויה לקרא כלם בשם ה' ולעבדו שכם אחד” - זה נאמר בפסוק “והיה אדום ירשה זה דוד שנאמר ותהי אדום לדוד לעבדים וגו', והיה ירשה שעיר אויביו זה המלך המשיח שנאמר ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון וגו'”^ט.

[שגם בזה מובנת מעלתו של משיח: בנוגע לדוד נאמר “והיה אדום ירשה” שזה מתבטא בכך ש’ותהי אדום לדוד לעבדים”]

25. Tzephaniah 3:9.

26. It is possible to say that this verse also relates to *Mashiach* “build[ing] the [Beis Ha]Mikdash on its site,” for our Sages (*Megillah* 10a; see *Zevachim* 112b, 119a) refer to Jerusalem as “the inheritance.” The implication is that, like an inheritance, G-d’s Presence in the *Beis HaMikdash* was established for all time in a manner which will never be interrupted. See *Rambam, Hilchos Beis HaBechirah* 1:3, which states that once the *Beis HaMikdash* was built in Jerusalem, that became the resting place for the Divine Presence and a *Beis HaMikdash* may never be built elsewhere. Moreover, as *Rambam* states (*ibid.* 6:16), once it became manifest in Jerusalem, the Divine Presence will never be uprooted from that place. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 16, p. 465ff.

This fact is not independently alluded to in a verse because it is included – together with “the ingathering of dispersed remnant of Israel” – in the allusion to *Mashiach's* ruling over the Jewish people, as indicated by the phrase, “a staff shall rise up from Israel.”

Perhaps it is possible to say – at least by way of allusion – that *Rambam* mentioned the prophecy being stated in “the passage concerning Bilaam” to emphasize and explain why the fundamental dimensions of his prophecy was concerning the downfall of the nations and the dominion of David and *Mashiach* over them. This follows the motif mentioned by our Sages (*Sanhedrin* 39b), “From – and within – the forest comes the ax to [fell] it.” Bilaam, the prophet of the nations (who resembled Moshe,* as stated in *Sifri, Devarim* 34:10, *et al.*) was the one who prophesied regarding the downfall of the nations of the world and Israel’s dominion over them. This reflects our Sages statements (*Sanhedrin, loc. cit.*) regarding Ovadiah who was an Edomite convert. Therefore, it is the conclusion of his prophecy that states, “Liberators will ascend Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau..., as cited by *Rambam* at the end of this *halachah*.”

Our Sages (*ibid.*) explain a similar motif regarding David. Ruth, the Moabitess, was his ancestor and

therefore it was specifically he who “smote Moab,” as *Rambam* states here.

* With regard to the level of Bilaam’s prophecy, see *Moreh Nevuchim*, Vol. 2, ch. 45, where *Rambam* states that Bilaam was granted the level of *ruach hakodesh*, like David and Shlomoh, but not prophecy. See the interpretations of Rav Asher Crescas and Rav Yitzchak Abarbanel to that source. See also *Tzafnas Panei’ach al HaTorah, Bamidbar* 22:38, which states that, originally, Bilaam merely spoke with *ruach hakodesh*. Afterwards, he ascended to the level of a prophet. And then, he wished to attain the level of Moshe, our teacher. His wish was not granted to him entirely; on the contrary, this attempt led to his downfall. From the wording of that text, there is some indication that his final prophecy regarding the nations’ downfall relates to the time when he desired to attain Moshe’s level. Consult that text.

servants of David.” However, the inheritance of Seir by *Mashiach* will not only affect the people of that city, as reflected in the proof-text cited by *Rambam*, “Liberators will ascend Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau,” which concludes with, “Sovereignty will be G-d’s,” i.e., *Mashiach* will enable G-d’s kingship to encompass all humanity.

What the Ultimate Horizon Holds

16. The advantage of the fourth point over the third – *Mashiach’s* “fight[ing] the wars of G-d” and vanquishing the nations to the extent that “his rule [will extend] from sea to sea” – is reflected by the wording *Rambam* uses. With regard to the third level, *Rambam* cites the phrase, “his rule,” while regarding the fourth level, he cites the phrase, “will become an inheritance.” Similarly, with regard to the third level, he writes, “He will fight,” while regarding the fourth level, he writes, “He will perfect the entire world.” The difference between these two levels resembles the novel dimension that inheritance possesses over conquest. A parallel to these two stages is found regarding *Eretz Yisrael* which was taken by conquest and also granted as the Jews’ inheritance.²⁷

War, victory, and conquest through war – in a manner of “break[ing] down” and “rul[ing] – implies dominion that runs contrary to the existence and the will of the one being conquered. By contrast, inheritance – “Seir will become [Israel’s] inheritance” – reflects how one becomes heir to something that is close and connected to him; he is not conquering and ruling over someone or something else.

A similar progression to a new and loftier level is reflected in the comparison between “perfect[ing] the entire world to serve G-d together” and “fight[ing] wars of G-d... and vanquishing all the nations surrounding him.” When the entire world is perfected, the

ואצל משיח - “וְהָיָה יְרוּשָׁה שְׁעִיר אוֹיְבָיו, לֹא רַק אֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר, וּכְנָאֵמֶר בְּפֹסוֹק “וְעָלוּ מוֹשִׁיעִים בְּהַר צִיּוֹן לְשַׁפֵּט אֶת הָרָעָשׂוֹ” שְׁסִיּוּמוֹ הוּא “וְהָיְתָה לְהַיְמֻלְכוּתָהּ”²⁷.

טז. הִיתְרוֹן בְּעֵינֵי הַרְבִּיעִי לְגַבִּי הַשְּׁלִישִׁי “יִלְחֶם מִלְחָמוֹת הַ” וּנְצַחֲוֹן הָאֲמוֹת - “וּמְשָׁלוּ מִיָּם עַד יָם”, מוֹבֵן מִן הַלְשׁוֹנוֹת עֲצָמָן “וּמְשָׁלוּ כּוֹ יְרֻשָׁה”, “וְיִלְחֶם כּוֹ וְיִתְקַן אֶת הָעוֹלָם”, וּבְדִגְמַת הַחֲדוּשׁ שְׁבִירְשָׁה לְגַבִּי כְבוֹשׁ (וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ ב’ עֲנִינִים אֵלּוֹ שְׁמַצָּאֵנוּ לְגַבִּי אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, שְׁנִלְקַחָהּ בְּכַבּוּשׁ וּבִירְשָׁה²⁷):

עֵינֵי מִלְחָמָה וּנְצַחֲוֹן, כְּבוֹשׁ מִלְחָמָה, הוּא בְּאִפְּן שֶׁל “קְרָקֵר”, “וּמְשָׁלוּ” - שְׁלִיטָה, הַפְּדָה הַמְצִיאֹת וְהַרְצוֹן שֶׁל זֶה שְׁכּוֹבֵשִׁין אוֹתוֹ; מֵה שְׁאִין כֵּן עֵינֵי הַיְרֻשָׁה “וְהָיָה יְרוּשָׁה שְׁעִיר” הוּא אֲדִרְבָּה, שְׁנוֹחֵלִים עֵינֵי שְׁקֵרוֹב וְשִׁיךְ לוֹ, וְלֹא שְׁכּוֹבֵשִׁים וְשׁוֹלְטִים עַל אַחֵר.

וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ זֶה מוֹבֵן הַחֲדוּשׁ בְּ”וְיִתְקַן אֶת הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ לְעַבֵּד אֶת ה’ בְּיַחַד” עַל “וְיִלְחֶם מִלְחָמוֹת ה’... וּנְצַח כָּל הָאֲמוֹת שְׁסָבִיבוֹ”, שֶׁהֵם

27. Note *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 15, p. 106.

nations themselves will willingly recognize the sovereignty of *Mashiach*. This is alluded to in the conclusion of the *halachah* that was stricken by the censor, “When the true King *Mashiach* will arise, succeed, and be exalted and glorified, [the nations of the world] will immediately all return and realize that their ancestors endowed them with a false heritage; their prophets and ancestors caused them to err.” As a result, “they will all call upon the name of G-d and serve Him with one accord.”²⁸

Our perfect faith in the coming of *Mashiach* as the Torah defines him and our anticipation of his coming – “I will wait for him every day anticipating that he come” – itself generates energy above. Moreover, it could be said that this includes also studying the laws of *Mashiach*. Our anticipation, study, and the change it brings about within us will itself²⁹ bring closer and hasten his coming, causing it to be in a manner that does not allow delay.³¹ May it happen in the immediate future.

עצמם מכירים באמתת מלכותו של מלך המשיח [ונכמרמו ומפרש בסיום ההלכה (שנשמטה על ידי הצנזור) ויכשעמוד מלך המשיח באמת ויצליח וירום ויגשא מיד הם כלן חוזרין ויודעים ששקר נחלו אבותיהם ושנביאיהם ואבותיהם הטעוים], ונפעל בהם לקרא כלם בשם ה' ולעבדו שכם אחד.²⁸

ועל ידי האמונה השלמה בביאת המשיח, כמו שהיא על פי תורה ו"מחכה לביאתו", אהכה לו בכל יום שיבא (ויש לומר שנכלל בזה גם הלמוד בהלכות משיח), הרי זה גופא²⁹ מקרב וממהר ביאתו באפן של אחישנה ובקרוב ממש.

28. The connection between this concept and *Mashiach* can be understood based on *Rambam's* statements in *Hilchos Melachim* 8:10, “Moshe was commanded by the Almighty to compel all the inhabitants of the world to accept the commandments given to Noah’s

descendants,” and those in *ibid.*, 4:10, that a king’s mission is to “fill the world with justice.”

Perhaps it could be said that the difference between “compel[ing]” and “fill[ing]” parallels the difference between the third and fourth points mentioned in the main text.

See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 23, p. 174ff.

29. See *Sichas Acharon shel Pesach*, 5699.

30. The implication is that *Mashiach's* coming will not involve a step-by-step progression, but that all the stages will occur simultaneously, as a single development.

ומלחמתו - ראה רמב"ם הנ"ל הערה מב. (סב) בפשטות יש לומר שהרמב"ם בא להדגיש תוקף האמונה וגדרה, וגם זה הוא הלכה, שהאמונה בביאת המשיח צריכה להיות בודאות והתאמתות כזה (לא כהתאמתות שמצד שאר הנביאים בלבד אלא" התאמתות שמצד) תורה ומשה רבינו (שהרי התורה העידה עליו), ועל פי מה שכתוב בהלכות יסודי התורה פ"ח. ועל פי זה מובן גם מה שהוסף "ובמשה רבינו", כי נבואת משה נתאמתה "במעמד הר סיני (על ידי) שעיינו ראו כו' ואזינו שמעו", והתאמתות בנבואת משה רבינו מביאה "נאמנות שהיא עומדת

ה' (כברמב"ם שם פ"א ה"ח. סוף פ"ד. ולהעיר שההלכות נקראו "הלכות מלכים ומלחמותיהם"), וגם זה ש"אין המלך נלחם תחלה אלא מלחמת מצוה . . . זו מלחמת שבעה עממים ומלחמת עמלק ועזרת ישראל מיד צר שבא עליהם" (שם ריש פ"ה), שענינים אלו דוקא מונעים את ישראל מקיום התורה ומצוות. מה שאין כן מלחמת הרשות. * ראה לעיל הערה מא. ולהעיר שגם להדפוסים וכתבייד שבכל מקום בהכותרת "ומלחמות" (לעיל הערה מב), הרי בהקדמתו בסופה לפני שמפרט פרטי ההלכות בכל הדפוסים וכתבייד "ודין המלך ומלחמותיו" (כנ"ל הערה מג), או ומלחמותיה,

(נו) ראה שו"ת חיים שאל ח"א סי' צז: פירוש שיהיה מלך על כל ישראל ויהודה כמו שאמר הכתוב ומלך אחד יהיה לכולם . . . וכל זה כלל הרמב"ם באומרו מלכות בית דוד ליושנה. (נז) ולהעיר מסנהדרין (צח, סוף ע"ב): עתיד הקב"ה להעמיד להם דוד אחר כו' כגון קיסר ופלא* קיסר. וראה זהר ח"א פב, ב. זהר חדש נג, א. וראה צפנת פענח על התורה ויחי מט, ט. * כ"ה בגמ' ועין יעקב. ובערוך (ערך קסר): ופלגו. (נח) רמב"ם הלכות תשובה פ"ט ה"ב. (נט) הלכות מלכים פ"ב ה"ד. (ס) הלכות תשובה והלכות מלכים שם. (סא) שעל פי זה מובן בפשטות מה שמגדיר ומצות המלך הוא שנלחם מלחמות

"ושם נבא" למאי נפקא מינה (ודוחק גדול לומה, כיון שמקדים "פרשת בלעם" צריך לבאר ד"שם נבא").

לכאורה יש לומר שהוסיף "ושם נבא"*, בהתאם למה שכתב לפני זה "כופר . . בתורה ובמשה רבינו", על זה ש"כופר . . בתורה" כתב "שהרי התורה העידה עליו כו", ועל זה שכוּפֵר "במשה רבינו" כתב "אף בפרשת בלעם נאמר ושמ נבא" (ולא "ואף בלעם נבא" (בבקריית ספר לרמב"ם שם)) וכוונתו לנבואת משה (וכן משמע בפירושו המשנה אבות (פ"ד מ"ד) "וכן דוד כו' ושיעדו השם יתברך לנו על ידי משה רבינו והוא הכוכב אשר דרך מיעקב כמו שביארו רז"ל". ולהעיר משל"ה (בלק שסב, ב) בפירושו הגמ' (בבא בתרא יד, ב) "משה כתב ספרו ופרשת בלעם"), היינו שכופר בתורה ובנבואת משה (ונקרא אפיקורוס וכופר) אף שגם תורה היא בכלל נבואת משה** (ראה רמב"ם הלכות תשובה פ"ג ה"ח**).

ועל פי זה יתורץ לכאורה גם זה שהביא הראיה מערי מקלט בהלכה בפני עצמה, כי זוהי ראייה נוספת מטברא "ומעולם לא היה דבר זה ולא זוה הקב"ה לתוהו", ואינו שייך ל"כופר . . בתורה ובמשה רבינו". וגם מובן מה שכתב "בערי מקלט הוא אומר" ולא "בפרשת שופטים נאמר" וכיוצא בזה, להדגיש שאין זה שייך לכופר בתורה כו'.

אבל מובן שגם זה דוחק ואין כאן מקומו. וראה לקמן בפנים סעיף יא.

* לכאורה יש לומר באופן אחר (ועל פי זה מובן הצורך להוסיף ראייה זו "אף בפרשת בלעם" על מה שכתב לפני זה "שהרי התורה העידה עליו" - דפרשת נצבים), שבוה מוכיח שמוכיח להתקיים, כי ההבטחה של תורה יתכן שלא תתקיים שמא יגרום החטא (ברכות ד, א) מה שאין כן בנבואה שהנבואה לטובה אפילו על תנאי אינו חוזר (רמב"ם הלכות יסודי התורה פ"ה ה"ד).

אבל נוסף על זה שכבר נתבאר לעיל (בפנים ט"ג) שהרמב"ם כאן לא בא להוכיח אמיתת הענין שבדודא יהיה, כי אם איך שהוא כופר בתורה ובמשה רבינו, ואם כן אין נוגע הענין דנבואה - הרי החילוק בין ההבטחה דאפשר שתתבטל שמא יגרום החטא לנבואה

הקב"ה ימלוך בעצמו ויגאלם לבדו". וראה שו"ת חתם סופר י"ד בסופו (סי' שנו). ושם: והאומר כדעת רבי הלל (שאין משיח לישראל אלא הקב"ה יגאלם) הרי הוא כופר בכלל התורה.

כ) ופשיטא שאין לומר שזוה המדרש* היחידי שמצא הרמב"ם שמפרש הכתובים האלו על מלך המשיח, ולכן הביאו כצורתו (חצי הכתוב הראשון על דוד וכו') - כי א (א) פשוט שאף על פי כן אין דרך הרמב"ם להעתיק כל פרטי הדברים שבמדרש, כי אם זה שנוגע לנדון דידן, (ב) מצינו במדרשי חז"ל שגם חלק הראשון "דרך כוכב מיעקב" מפרשו במשיח (ראה ירושלמי תענית פ"ד ה"ה. דברים רבה פ"א, כ. וראה תרגום אונקלוס ותרגום יונתן בן עוזיאל על הפסוק. ועל דרך זה מפרש הרמב"ם על הפסוק כל הכתובים על משיח. וראה דבריו בספר הגאולה (ע' רסו - בהוצאת שעוועל) מה שהשיג על הרמב"ם בלק שם שפירשו על דוד) - וראה לחם משנה לרמב"ם שם: ואולי הם מדרשים חלוקים - (ג) ועוד ועיקר: הרמב"ם כאן אינו בא להביא ראיות ממדרשי חז"ל "שכל הספרים מלאים בדבר זה" (יותר מ"בדברי הנביאים" - לשון הרמב"ם שם ה"ב), כי אם מהמפורש בתורה ופשוטות הכתובים.

* ע"ד לשון הרמב"ם הוא בבחי' בלק שם "על דרך המדרש". ועד"ז הוא במדרש הגדול עה"פ. וברמב"ם בספר הגאולה שם (מבלי הראיות של הכתובים). ועל דרך זה קצת במדרש אגדה (באבער) על הפסוק. וראה רלב"ג על הפסוק.

כא) סנהדרין צא, א.

כב) קרית ספר לרמב"ם הלכות מלכים שם. - על דרך סיוס מס' מכות.

כג) שופטים יט, ח"ט.

כד) שהרי בנוגע לערי מקלט ישנה עוד פרשה לפני זה (מסעי לה, ט ואילך, וראה גם פ' ואתחנן ה, מא ואילך), שמהלשון "בערי מקלט נאמר" אינו ברור מקומו בתורה (גם אם היה נאמר "בפרשת ערי מקלט").

כה) עוד יש לדייק בלשון הרמב"ם:

א) "בפרשת בלעם", והרי אין דרכו לציין המקור, וכמו שלא כתב בהפסוק שהקדים ושב ה' אלקין, "שהרי נאמר בפרשת אתם נצבים", (ב) הלשון

דבענין הא' כתב "זה מלך המשיח" ולאחרי זה (שכבר ידוע) כתב "זה המלך המשיח" (ה"א הידיעה (מלפני זה)).

* ובדפוסים שלפנינו גם ב"וקם שבט מישאל" כתב "זה מלך המשיח" ורק בבי ענינים האחרונים כתב "זה המלך המשיח".

וב' כתבייד (אוקספורד 591. שטוקהולם - הובאו ברמב"ם הנ"ל הערה ג) בכל הלכה זו "זה מלך". ולאידך, בב' כתבייד אחרים שם (אוקספורד 568, 610) גם באשורנו ולא קרוב כתב "זה המלך המשיח".

ו) שמואל"ב ח, ב.

ז) זכר' ט, י.

ח) בדפוסים ורוב כתבייד הנ"ל (הערה ג) "לדוד".

ט) שמואל"ב שם, ו.

י) בכתוב "ארים" ושם פסוק יד "ויהי כל אדום עבדים לדוד". ועל דרך זה בדברי הימים א' יח, יג. ובכתבייד שטוקהולם "עבדים לדוד". ולפי זה כנראה הכוונה לפסוק יד.

יא) ברוב כתבייד ליתא "וגו". וגם מזה משמע קצת שהכוונה לפסוק יד שבשמואל"ב שם, שהמשך הכתוב אין שייך לכאן. מה שאין כן בפסוק ו שם שממשיך "נושאי מנחה".

יב) בדפוסים שלפנינו "ויהי ירשה וגו". אבל כן הוא בדפוסים וכתבייד הנ"ל (הערה ג).

יג) עובדי' א, כא.

יד) ברוב הכתבייד הנ"ל נתקן גם המשך הכתוב "לשפוט את הר עשו", ובכתב" יד (אוקספורד 610) נוסף גם "והיתה גו".

טו) וכלשונו בפירושו המשנה פרק חלק יסוד הי"ב ומי שהסתפק בו כו' כפר בתורה שיעד בו בתורה בפירוש בפרשת בלעם ופרשת אתם נצבים (ועל דרך זה הוא בתרגום הר"י קאפאח).

טז) כד, יד.

יז) ראה אגרת תימן פ"ג קרוב לסופו (מהדורת קאפאח): כמו שהבטיחנו ה' בתורה באמרנו אראנו ולא עתה אשורנו ולא קרוב וכו' והיה אדום ירשה.

יח) אבל להעיר שלשון הרמב"ם הוא "העידה עליו".

יט) להעיר מפרש"י סנהדרין (צט, א) ד"ה "אין להם משיח לישראל, אלא

ההלכות מלכים*. ובכתביידי התימנים שם. וכן הוא שם (ובכמה כתביידי) בהקדמת הרמב"ם בסופה בההלכות דספר שופטים והלכות מלכים - ראה רמב"ם ספר המדע (ירושלים תשכ"ד). ושם נסמן.

(* אבל בהקדמת הרמב"ם בסופה (בסידור ההלכות דספר שופטים וכן בהלכות מלכים) בכל דפוסי הנ"ל "ומלחמותיהם" ("ומלחמותיהן").

(מג) בהקדמת הרמב"ם לספר שופטים "לפי שדיניו הלכתא למשיחא". אבל צריך עיון, כי: א) כמה הלכות לכאורה אינן הלכתא למשיחא (ראה לדוגמא: פ"א ה"ח ואילך שלכאורה אינן שייכות לאחרי ביאת המשיח) ב) מטעם זה גם ספר הח' והט' (ספר עבודה וקרבות) היו צריכים להיות בקיוב על כל פנים (ל)סיום ספרו.

[ובנוגע לקרבנות היה אפשר לומר בדוחק, כי לדעת הרמב"ם (הלכות בית הבחירה פ"ו ט"ו). וראה שם פ"ב ה"ד) "מקריבין הקרבנות כולן אף על פי שאין שם בית בנוי". אבל בנוגע לבית המקדש וכל השייך לזה אין לתרץ כן (על פי בראשית רבה סוף פרשה סד. ראה מנחת חנוך מצוה צה). כי הרמב"ם כתב בהלכות מלכים כאן (בריש הפרק ובסופו) דמשיח בונה מקדש (וראה הקדמתו לפירוש המשנה בנוגע למסכת מדות. הלכות בית הבחירה פ"א ה"ד). ויודעת השקלא וטריא בזה. ואין כאן מקומו].

ואולי יש לומר: הרמב"ם בתחלת ספר היד (ב"מנין המצות על סדר הלכות הרמב"ם) כתב "ספר ארבעה עשר: אכלול בו מצות שהם מסורין לסנהדרין כו' ודין המלך ומלחמותיו", ומכיון שהלכות מלכים הן "דין המלך כו" - מצות היחיד, לכן כתבו בסוף ספרו (אף שכמה הלכות שייכות לכל אחד מישראל (ראה הלכות מלכים פ"ה ה"ז ואילך)).

(מד) להעיר מספר המצוות להרמב"ם מצות עשה קעג (בתרגום ר' שלמה אבן איוב (הובא בהוצאת הר"ח העליר)): שצונו למנות עלינו מלך מישראל שיעמיד אמונתנו. (אבל ראה תרגומו (העליר) ובספר המצוות לפנינו והוצאת הר"ח קאפח). ובהלכות מלכים ספ"ד "ותיה מגמתו ומחשבתו להרים דת האמת כו".

בפירוש המשנה אבות (פ"ד מ"ד) "וכן בודד כו' והוא נביא" (להעיר דשם בא בהמשך "ויש לך ללמוד ממושה רבינו כו"), אבל בפשטות משם אין ראייה כי אינו מדבר במדריגת ומעלות הנבואה, כי אם על-דבר ענווה כו' ואינו נוגע החלוקי מדריגות דנבואה ורוח הקדש.

בשמונה פרקים (פ"ז): וכן דוד המלך ע"ה נביא אמר כו'. ושם בא לבאר מאמר רז"ל "אין הנבואה* שורה אלא על חכם גבור ועשיר . . ואין מתנאי הנביא שיהיו אצלו כל המעלות" ומביא דוגמא משלמה דודו, אליהו שמואל יעקב.

(* כן הוא בפירוש המשנה שלפנינו ובתרגום הר"ח קאפח. בגמ' שבת (צב, א) "אין השכינה שורה". ובנדרים (לה, א) "אין הקב"ה משרה שכינתו".

(לד) בדפוסי וכתביידי רמב"ם הנ"ל (הערה ג) "שהטפשים אומרים".

(לה) בכמה כתביידי (הובאו ברמב"ם הנ"ל הערה ג): אין חוקיה ומשפטיה משתנים (משנתות).

(לו) כן הוא בדפוסי וכתביידי הנ"ל (הערה ג) ונשמט בדפוסי שלפנינו.

(לז) סיום הלשון שבההלכה שנשמט על ידי הצנזור וכל המוסיף כו' רשע ואפיקורס - כנראה הכוונה לאותו האיש. ועל פי זה מובן המשך הלשון בהלכה שלאחריה ראה בהנסמן בהערה לט. אבל לפי זה - למה הוצרך לומר גם "ועיקר הדברים . . שהתורה כו' מהן".

(לח) הלכות יסודי התורה ריש פ"א. (לט) ביאור הלכה זו ברמב"ם - ראה לקו"ש ח"ח ע' 358, 361.2 בהערות.

(מ) כן הוא בדפוסי ודפוסי הנ"ל (בהערה ג) בכתביידי ודפוסי הנ"ל (בהערה ג) בא כן קטע שנשמט "ואם לא הצליח כו", והתיבות "ויתקן את העולם כו" הן באמצע דבריו שם, "וכל הדברים האלו (של ישוע הנוצרי) ושל זה הישמעאלי . . אינן אלא ליישר דרך למלך המשיח ולתקן את העולם כולו כו". וראה שם בסיום לשונו. וראה לקמן בפנים סעיף טז.

(מא) זהו השם המלא - כבהקדמת הרמב"ם (וב"מנין המצות על סדר הלכות הרמב"ם") ובהכותרת בספר שופטים והלכות מלכים.

(מב) כן הוא בדפוס רומי הנ"ל. וויציאה רפד. שי בהכותרת דספר שופטים

לטובה כו', מפרש הרמב"ם בהקדמתו לפירוש המשנה שהיינו החלוק במה שבין ה' לנביא עצמו (שבזה אפשר להיות שיגרום החטא) לזה שיאמר ה' להבטיח לבני אדם טובה בסתם, שבזה אי אפשר שלא תתקיים ההבטחה,

ואם כן מובן שגם זה "שהתורה העידה עליו" בודאי תתקיים. ועדיין צריך עיון.

(**) ראה פירוש המשנה פרק חלק יסוד השביעי ויסוד השמיני. ולהעיר מלשון הרמב"ם הלכות יסודי התורה פ"ח ה"ג. שם פ"ט סוף ה"א. ה"ד. ה"ה. נתבאר בארוכה בלקו"ש ח"ט ע' 177 ואילך.

(***) ברמב"ם שם: "האומר שאין התורה מעם ה' כו' אם אמר משה אמרו מפי עצמו הרי זה כופר בתורה", אף שבזה גם מכחיש נבואתו של משה רבינו, כבשלשה שלפני זה, ומשמע שתלוי במה בא להכחיש, אף שהכופר בתורה בדרך ממילא מכחיש נבואתו של משה, לא נקרא על ידי זה אפיקורוס. ועדיין צריך עיון.

(כו) מגילה יד, א.

(כז) שמואל ב יט, כב. וראה שם כג, א.

(כח) שמואל א יד, א. וכתוב זה הביא הרמב"ם (הלכות מלכים פ"א ה"ז) לענין משיחת מלך. וראה מגילה שם.

(כט) שמואל א כד, ז. יא. טו, כ. יא. טז. שמואל ב א, יד. טז.

(ל) להעיר משמות רבה פ"ב, ד. זהר ח"א רנג, א. שער הפסוקים פ' ויחי.

(לא) באגרת תימן ריש פ"ד (תרגום הר"ח קאפח): שהמשיח נביא גדול מאד גדול מכל הנביאים אחרי משה רבינו . . מעלותו הרי היא הרמה בדרגות הנביאים והנכבדת אחרי משה רבינו.

(לב) הלכות תשובה פ"ט ה"ב.

(לג) ראה מגילה שם ברש"י שהוא נביא וכן סוטה מח, ריש ע"ב. וקשה מזהר ח"ב קנד, א (וראה ניצוצי זוהר שם). וראה שער רוח הקדש בתחלתו. ובכמה מקומות דודו ושלמה (תהלים ומשלי - כתובים - דלא כסוטה שם) - מלכות רוח הקדש ולא נבואה נצח הוד. ואין כאן מקומו.

במורה נבוכים ח"ב פמ"ה (המעלה השניה) כתב: דוד ושלמה דוניאל הם מן הסוג הזה ואינם מסוג ישעי' וירמי' . . ודומיהם לפי שאלו . . לא דברו . . כי אם ברוח הקדש.

ואין כאן מקומו.
 (* להעיר שבאחד מכתבייד (אוקספורד 591) שהובא ברמב"ם הנ"ל (הערה ג) "מקודם שהיו מקריבין". ולפי זה הרי זה פירוש ל"וחזורין כל המשפטים בימיו כשהיו מקודם (שהוא בזה ש)מקריבין קרבנות ועושין שמטין כו", ולא ענין בפני עצמו. ואולי כן הוא הפירוש גם לפי הגירסא שבדפוסים ורוב הכתביי יד "מקריבין קרבנות" (בלי וא"ו). ובב' כתבייד (ברמב"ם הנ"ל שם) "ומקריבין" (בוא"ו). וכן הוא בקרית ספר שם.
 (** וראה לקו"ש ח"ט ע' 105 הערה 74. ושם נסמך.
 (ה) ועל פי זה יומתק מה שכתב הרמב"ם בפירושו המשנה פרק חלק בסוף עיקר הי"ב "ומכלל יסוד זה (דביאת המשיח) שאין מלך לישראל אלא מבית דוד ומזרע שלמה בלבד וכל החולק על המשפחה הזאת כפר בשם השם יתברך ובדברי נביאי". ובראש אמנה (לר"י אברבנאל) פ"א (שהעתיק הי"ג עיקרים מ"העתיק הר' שמואל תיבון . . . ראוי שנסמך עליה כו" כלשונו שם ריש פ"א) הלשון "וכל החולק על מלכות זאת המשפחה".

דגם שמיטין "ככל מצותה האמורה בתורה" תלוי ב"מקבץ נדחי ישראל". וראה רמב"ם הל' שמיטה ויובל סוף פי"ב. וכידועה השקלא וטריא בזה. ואין כאן מקומו].
 והנה לפי זה "מקריבין קרבנות ועושין שמטין ויובלות" הם תוצאה מב' הענינים שכתב לפני זה: "ובונה המקדש (ובמילא "מקריבין קרבנות") ומקבץ נדחי ישראל" (ובמילא "עושין שמטין ויובלות כו").
 ואולי מה שכתב "חוזרים כל המשפטים בימיו כשהיו מקודם" הוא מענין הא' שכתב "להחזיר מלכות דוד ליושנה לממשלה הראשונה".
 אבל צריך עיון השייכות, שהרי לכאורה הכוונה ב"כל המשפטים היינו התלויים בסנהדרין* - ד' מיתות ועוד (ראה סנהדרין נא, ב. ובפירושו רש"י שם ד"ה הלכתא) שחוזרין בביאת המשיח (ישעי' א, כו). אבל ראה רדב"ז הלכות סנהדרין פי"ד הי"ב "שהוא (משיח) יסמוך בית דין הגדול***. ולהעיר מרמב"ם שם פ"ב ה"ה "מלכי בית דוד כו' יושבין ודנים הם את העם". ולהעיר מקרית ספר הלכות מלכים שם "ומחזיר כל המשפטים כמו שהיו קודם". וראה לשון הרמב"ם סוף פ"ד שם: שאין ממליכין מלך תחילה אלא לעשות משפט כו' שנאמר ושפטנו מלכנו כו'.

(מה) ראה רמב"ם הלכות מלכים פ"א ה"ח. ספ"ד שם.
 (מו) ראה רמב"ם שם פ"א ה"ז: כיון שנמשח דוד זכה בכתר מלכות והרי המלכות כו'. שם ה"ט.
 (מז) שמואל-ב ז, א. הובא ברמב"ם ריש הלכות מלכים ה"ב.
 (מח) דברי הימים א' כח-כט.
 (מט) שם כב, א. הביאו הרמב"ם ריש הלכות בית הבחירה ה"ג. וראה סוטה ט, סוף ע"א. וראה סמ"ג מצות עשה קסג: זמן מצוה זו של בנין בית הבחירה לא הגיעה עד ימי דוד. וראה בארוכה לקו"ש ח"ט ע' 301 סעיף ו ואילך.
 (נ) להעיר דבהכותרת לפרקים יא ויב דהלכות מלכים בדפוס וינציאה רפד. שי - "הלכות מלכים ומלחמות ומלך המשיח".
 (נא) כן הוא בדפוסים שלפנינו. ובכתבייד ודפוסים הנ"ל (בהערה ג) "בית דוד".
 (נב) בכתבייד הנ"ל ודפוס רומי וקושטא הנ"ל "הממשלה". ושם ברמב"ם הנ"ל (הערה ג) מכתבייד: בממשלה, ממשלה.
 (נג) צריך עיון "מצותה" - לשון יחיד. וברוב כתבייד ברמב"ם הנ"ל (הערה ג) "מצותן (מצותם) האמורות (האמורה)".
 (נד) ראה קרית ספר לרמב"ם שם [ושם הביא הכתוב הנאמר ביובל, אבל מוכח מכאן דהרמב"ם סבירא ליה

(ג) ראה רד"ק על הפסוק. וראה רלב"ג ורמב"ן לפירושם שקאי על משיח. וראה לקו"ש ח"ג ע' 88 ואילך.

(ד) הלכות יסודי התורה פ"ג ה"ט.

(ה) פירוש רש"י על התורה.

(ו) והמעלה דמשיח מודגשת גם בענין הא', המדבר בדוד ומשיח עצמם: בדוד אומר "ולא עתה", אבל אראנו בזמן קרוב; ובמשיח - "ולא קרוב", לפי שזוהו ענין ומדריגה נעלית שבאה רק לאחר אריכות זמן שנתרבו מעשינו ועבודתנו בכדי להגיע לבחינה זו.

(ז) כבחרגום אונקלוס שם. וכן הוא לכאורה לפירוש הרמב"ם שהרי הביא "ומשל מים גו", ובראב"ע: הורס. וראה שם ד"ה בני שת. ועל דרך זה ברלב"ג ורד"ק. וראה תרגום יונתן בן עוזיאל ותרגום ירושלמי לקו"ש שם. ואין כאן מקומו.

(ח) ראה במקומות שבהערה הקודמת.

(ט) ויש לומר דשייך גם ל"בונה מקדש במקומו" שהרי "נחלה זו ירושלים" (מגילה יא. וראה זבחים קיב, ב. קיט, א) שענינה ירושה וקביעות שאין אחריה היתר (הפסק). וראה רמב"ם הלכות בית הבחירה פ"א ה"ג. לקו"ש ח"ט ע' 465 ואילך.

ומה שלא נרמו בפסוק בפני עצמו - כי זה נכלל (ביחד עם "קבץ נדחי ישראל") בממשלתו על ישראל - "וקם שבט מישראל".

ואולי יש לומר (על דרך הרמז על כל פנים) שלכן כתב הרמב"ם בפרשת בלעם, להסביר ולהדגיש מה שעיקר נבואתו היה על-דבר מפלת האומות ושליטת דוד ומלך המשיח עליהם, שהוא על דרך מינה וביה אבא ניזיל ביה נרגא, שהנביא של אומות העולם (שהוא בדוגמת משה*) - ספוי ברכה לה, יוד. ועוד) מנבא על מפלתם של אומות העולם ושליטת ישראל עליהם. ועל דרך מאמר ר"ל בנוגע לעובדיה (סנהדרין לט, ב. ד"ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון וגו" (שהביא הרמב"ם בסוף ההלכה כאן) הוא סיום נבואת עובדיה). ושם גם בענין דוד - "ויך את מואב", שהביא הרמב"ם (כאן).

(*) בדרגת נבואת בלעם - ראה מורה נבוכים ח"ב פמ"ה, שהיה במדריגת רוח הקדש (ולא נבואה) כדוד ושלמה. וראה פירושי קרשקש ואברבנאל שם. ובצפנת פענח על התורה בלק

להאמין בו, כמו שכתב בפירוש המשנה שם (וראה ראש אמנה ספי"ט).

(ס) ראה רמב"ם הלכות יסודי התורה פ"ה ה"ג: הא למדת שאין הנביא עומד לנו כו', וראה שם סוף פ"ז. פ"ט ה"ב.

(ע) ועל פי זה מובן ומודגש ביותר ההמשך להלכה שלפני זה, שלכן מתחיל הרמב"ם "ואם" - בוא"ו. וראה קרית ספר שם "אין מלך המשיח צריך לעשות אותות ומופתים אלא כשיעמוד מלך כו".

(עא) על פי זה מובן בפשטות מה שלא הביא הרמב"ם (גם) בתחילת הפרק שמשיח ילחום מלחמות ה' - כי שם מבאר הגדר והמכוון שלו (להחזיר מלכות דוד ליושנה כו') - לאחור שכבר הביא לשלימות התורה, כשהוא "משיח בודאי", מה שאין כן קודם הנצחון במלחמות ה'.

על פי זה אולי יש להוסיף (בפנימיות הענינים על כל פנים), שזה שהביא הרמב"ם שני המשיחים במשיח הראשון שהוא דוד כו' ובמשיח האחרון כו' - כי דוגמתו נמצא במשיח עצמו, ב' תקופות ודרגות לאחרי ביאת המשיח: לפני שיבנה בית המקדש - שאז הוא עדיין "בחזקת משיח", בדוגמת דוד שלא בנה המקדש, וענינו ילחום מלחמות (ראה בדרי הימים א' כב, ח) והכין הכל לבנין בית המקדש מיד ה' עלי השכיל (שם כח, יט); כשהוא משיח ודאי ש"בנה מקדש במקומו". וראה בארוכה מכתב כ"ק אדמו"ר מהורש"ב נ"ע (אגרות קודש שלו, חלק א' עמוד שי"ב, אגרת קל) בביאור לשון רז"ל "בן דוד בא" או "דוד בא" (על פי הב"ח או"ח סקי"ח) דיש ב' מדריגות במשיח: ביאתו לפני בנין בית המקדש וירושלים (שאו הוא בחזקת משיח) ואחר שיבנה משיח את בית המקדש וירושלים דאו "כיון שזבנית ירושלים - בא דוד" (מגילה יז, ב) - (משיח בודאי).

ולהעיר משינוי הגירסא ברמב"ם (כנ"ל סעיף ט והערה נא) "להחזיר מלכות דוד" או "בית דוד". ואין כאן מקומו.

(עב) ועל דרך זה בנוגע להשלילה (והפרט) שבהלכה ג' שמוכח הוא מהראיה שהביא בהלכה ב' שהיא הקדמה להלכה ג' - ראה לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 109 ואילך.

לעולם" בתורה - ראה בארוכה לקו"ש ח"ט ע' 184 ואילך.

ועל פי זה יומתק גם מה שכתב בשלילה "לא בשאר נביאים בלבד הוא כופר", ולא כהלשון בקרית ספר לרמב"ם שם "כופר בתורה ובמשה רבינו ובשאר הנביאים", כי גם זה הוא הלכה - בגדר אמונה בביאת המשיח. ולהעיר מלשוננו בסוף ה"ב שחזור ומוסיף "אבל בדברי הנביאים אין הדבר צריך לראיה שכל הספרים מלאים בדבר זה".

(סג) ובפירוש המשנה פרק חלק.

(סד) פ"ג ה"ח.

(סה) ראה לקמן הערה סח.

(סו) כדמשמע לכאורה מפשטות לשונו. אבל ראה הערה הבאה.

(סז) כדמשמע לכאורה מהראיה מנן כוויבא. וראה מאמר תחיית המתים רפ"ו.

בארוכה ביאר הלכה זו ברמב"ם והשגת הראב"ד בזה - ראה לקו"ש ח"ז ע' 191 ואילך.

(סח) על פי כל הנ"ל יש לבאר מה שהרמב"ם מנה ביאת המשיח לא' מהעיקרים (ראה ראש אמנה פ"ג הספק החמישי. שו"ת חתם סופר שם), שהוא לא רק "לפי שביאת המשיח באה מפורשת בתורה בנביאים ובכתובים כו' לכן הכופר בביאתו הרי הוא כאלו כופר בתורה ובנביאים ובכתובים כו'" (ראש אמנה פי"ד "והטענה השלישית". וראה שו"ת חתם סופר שם), כי אם לפי שזה נוגע לשלימות גדר התורה, שא' מגדריה הוא שיהיה זמן שהתורה וקיומה יהיו בשלימות.

בסגנון אחר: נצחיות ושלימות התורה, זה ש"התורה הזאת חוקיה ומשפטיה לעולם ועלולמי עולמים" (להיותה רצונו העצמי של הקב"ה - ראה בארוכה לקו"ש ח"ט ע' 3-182 ובהערות שם) הוא לא רק בענין ציווי בפועל, וזה יהיה בביאת מלך המשיח.

ועל פי זה אולי יש לומר שזוהו גם הטעם, שלא נמנה אמונה בביאת המשיח במנין המצוות (ראה ראש אמנה שם פ"ה הספק הג'). ועל דרך (ותיריה מוזו) זה שציוויים כוללים אינם נמנים במנין המצוות (ספר המצוות שורש ד). ולהעיר מלשון הרמב"ם הלכות מלכים שם "וכל מי שאינו מאמין בו כו", ולא כתב שצריך

וראה שם סוף פ"ד "ולמלאות העולם צדק". ואולי יש לומר שהם ("לכוף", ו"למלאות כו") ב' ענינים, כהחילוק בין ענין הג' וענין הד' שבפנים. ראה שיחת אחש"פ תרצ"ט.

(פג)

פא) להעיר מלקו"ש חט"ו ע' 106. פב) ושייכות ענין זה למלך המשיח מובן ממנה שכתוב שם (פ"ח ה"י) "צוה משה רבינו מפי הגבורה לכוף את כל באי העולם לקבל מצות שנצטוו בני נח".

כב, לח) דאחר כך עלה בגדר נביא כו' ואחר כך רצה שיהיה כמשה רבינו. ומשמע קצת שם, שזה שייך לנבואה זו האחרונה. עיין שם.

פ) ראה לעיל הערה יד.



SICHOS IN ENGLISH