



לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT
LIKKUTEI
SICHOS

Sicha Summary

Chelek 18 | Yud-Beis Yud-Gimmel Tammuz

The Context:

The month of Tammuz has two seemingly contradictory themes, expressed in two historical events and in two interpretations of its name. The 17th of Tammuz is a scripturally mandated fast day commemorating Nevuchadnezar's siege of Yerushalyim which eventually led to the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*. In a similar vein, the name "Tammuz" refers to an idolatrous deity. (*Yechezkel* 8:14) Thus it would seem that the theme of Tammuz is exile and Divine concealment.

But much later in history, a new theme emerged in Tammuz. The Previous Rebbe's death sentence was commuted to exile on the 3rd of Tammuz, and several days later, on the 12th of Tammuz, he was granted complete freedom. Similarly, Chassidic teaching revealed that the name of Tammuz alludes to intense Divine revelation: The word Tammuz is "denotes heating" (*Rashi* to *Yechezkel* 8:14), and the month is the hottest of the year, alluding to the unfettered revelation of Divine *light*. Thus, it would seem that the theme of Tammuz is redemption and Divine revelation.

The Attempted Synthesis:

Perhaps the concurrence of these two contradictory themes can be explained as follows: The purpose of exile and Divine concealment is to lead to redemption and Divine revelation. In order to encourage the Jewish people to not remain despondent when faced with the reality of exile, G-d introduced the theme of redemption through the 12th of Tammuz and the Chassidic teaching regarding the name of the month.

But if this explanation is correct, the day representing redemption should follow the fast day, to allude to the intended culmination of exile. The fact that the 12th of Tammuz precedes the fast day of the 17th implies that the redemption alluded to is not an outcome of exile, but one that precedes and sets the tone for exile.

The Explanation:

The dominant theme of Tammuz is indeed the fast day of the 17th. But this day can be understood in two ways: 1) On its surface, it is a day of punishment, Divine concealment, and exile. 2) If we probe deeper, however, we discover that the events of that day reveal G-d's deep love for the Jewish people. When a father chastises his child, he goes against his natural inclination to protect and love his child. He will do so only because his love for his child is so deep that it compels him to defy his own instinct.

When the Messianic Era arrives and the Divine reality will be plainly revealed, the deeper truth of the painful fast days will become clear.

For generations, we were only able to perceive the explicit meaning of fast days — pain and Divine concealment. But as the era of Divine revelation approaches, we are privy to the deeper meaning of the fast days. Thus, in these past generations, Chassidic teaching has revealed that the meaning of Tammuz is not idolatry, but rather, intense Divine revelation, and the celebration of the 12th of Tammuz has revealed to us that latent within the 17th of Tammuz is actually Divine love and redemption.

The Lesson:

When days of national suffering approach, it is natural to become despondent and hopeless. Chassidus, however, empowers us to view these days as expressions of G-d's love for us. This reinvigorates us to focus on the positivity within these times, and to not allow the superficial darkness of the day to overwhelm us. This attitude itself has the power to usher in a time when the true reality of these days will be revealed.