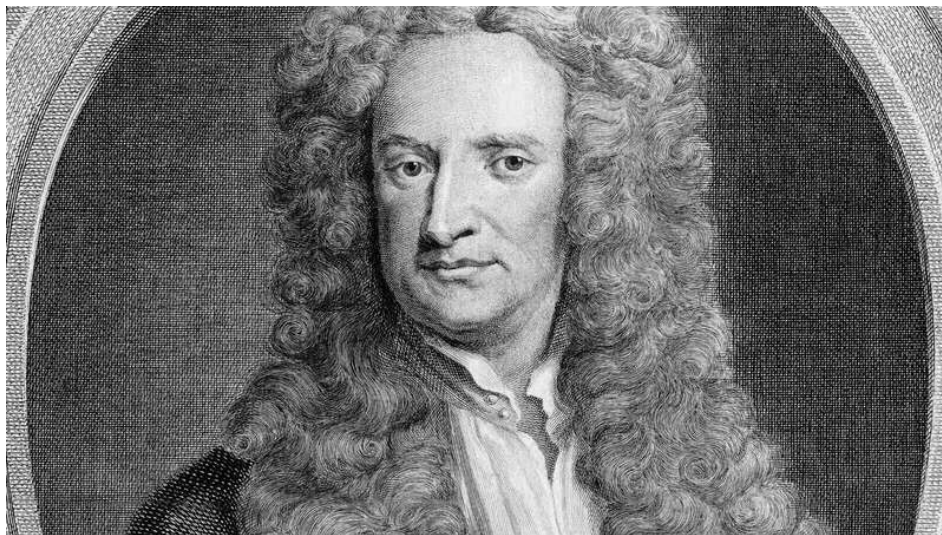


Daf Ditty Shabbes 118: Pangs of Messiah



“If you desire to know the manner...of the war of Gog and Magog you may see them both described by Ezekiel chap 38 and 39...where he represents how the Jews after their return from captivity dwell safely and quietly upon the mountains of Israel in unwalled towns without either gates or bars to defend them until they are grown very rich in Cattel and gold and silver and goods and Gog of the land of Magog stirs up the nations round about. Persia and Arabia and Afric and the northern nations of Asia and Europe against them to take a spoile, and God destroys all that great army, that the nations may from thenceforth know that the...Jews went formerly into captivity for their sins but now since their return are become invincible....”

Isaac Newton: *Yahuda Manuscript 6, fol. 17-18.*

“When the ships of the kingdom of Russia will cross the Dardanelles you [Israel] should dress in Sabbath clothes because this means that the arrival of the Messiah is close”¹

Vilna Gaon

¹ Rabbi Moshe Eisemann, Yechezkel. Jerusalem: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 1980 p581

וְכָל	פּוֹזֵי אֲרֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי מֵשׁוּם בַּר קַפְרָא כָּל הַמְקֵיִם שְׁלֹשׁ סְעוּדוֹת בְּשַׁבָּת נִצְוָל מִשְׁלֹשׁ	וְכָל
דָּלָה	הַמְקֵיִם שְׁלֹשׁ סְעוּדוֹת בְּשַׁבָּת נִצְוָל מִשְׁלֹשׁ	חֲזָלֵי
נָמוּ	פּוֹרְעָנוּיֹת מַחְבְּלוֹ שֶׁל מָשִׁיחַ וּמְדִינָה שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם	מִזְרֵיִם.
יָאֵל	וּמִמְלַחְמַת גּוֹג וּמִגּוֹג מַחְבְּלוֹ שֶׁל מָשִׁיחַ כְּתִיב	וּסְעֵנָה.
גִּי		כְּמִצָּה:

אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן פָּזִי אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי מֵשׁוּם בַּר קַפְרָא: כָּל הַמְקֵיִם שְׁלֹשׁ סְעוּדוֹת בְּשַׁבָּת נִצְוָל מִשְׁלֹשׁ פּוֹרְעָנוּיֹת: מַחְבְּלוֹ שֶׁל מָשִׁיחַ, וּמְדִינָה שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם, וּמִמְלַחְמַת גּוֹג וּמִגּוֹג. מַחְבְּלוֹ שֶׁל מָשִׁיחַ — כְּתִיב הֵכָא "יּוֹם", וְכְתִיב הֵתָם: "הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי שׁוֹלֵחַ לָכֶם אֶת אֱלִיָּה הַנָּבִיא לִפְנֵי בּוֹא יוֹם וְגו'". מְדִינָה שֶׁל גִּיהֶנֶם — כְּתִיב הֵכָא "יּוֹם", וְכְתִיב הֵתָם: "יּוֹם עֹבֶרָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה". מִמְלַחְמַת גּוֹג וּמִגּוֹג — כְּתִיב הֵכָא "יּוֹם", וְכְתִיב הֵתָם: "בַּיּוֹם בֹּא גּוֹג".

Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi said that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said in the name of bar Kappara: Anyone who fulfills the obligation to eat three meals on Shabbat is rescued from three punishments: From **the pangs of the Messiah**, i.e., the suffering that precedes the advent of Messiah, and from the judgment of Gehenna, and from the war of Gog and Magog.

The Gemara derives that one is rescued from the pangs of Messiah by means of a verbal analogy. It is written here, with regard to Shabbat, day:

כה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲכָלְהוּ הַיּוֹם, כִּי-שַׁבָּת הַיּוֹם **25** And Moses said: 'Eat that to-day; for to-day is a sabbath unto the LORD; to-day ye shall not find it in the field.

"Eat it today" (Exodus 16:25). And it is written there, with regard to Messiah, day:

כג הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי שׁוֹלֵחַ לָכֶם, אֶת אֱלִיָּה הַנָּבִיא-לִפְנֵי, בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה, הַגָּדוֹל, וְהַנּוֹרָא. **23** Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.

"Behold, I am sending you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of God" (Malachi 3:23).

RASHI

חבלו של משיח - כדאמר' בכתובות
(דף קיב:) דור שבן דוד בא בו
קטיגוריא בתלמידי חכמים שנאמר
ועוד בה עשיריה וגו' חבלי לשון
חבלי יולדה (הושע יג):

Rashi refers us to Ketubot 112b:regarding those days of birth pangs,

אמר רבי זירא אמר רבי ירמיה בר אבא דור שבן דוד בא קטיגוריא בתלמידי חכמים כי אמריתה
ועוד בה עשיריה ושבה והיתה (ישעיהו ו, יג) קמיה דשמואל אמר צירוף אחר צירוף שנאמר
לבער תני רב יוסף בזוזי ובזוזי דבזוזי

The Gemara continues to discuss the messianic age. **Rabbi Zeira said that Rabbi Yirmeya bar Abba said:** In the generation in which the son of David will come there will be indictments [*kateigorya*], i.e., denunciations and incitements against Torah scholars.

When I said this before Shmuel he said: The generation will undergo refinement after refinement, i.e., several stages of cleansing, as it is stated:

“And if there be a tenth in it, it shall again be eaten up” ([Isaiah 6:13](#)). Rav Yosef taught about the messianic era: **Despoilers and despoilers of despoilers** will plunder Eretz Yisrael at that time.

Ben Yehoyada (Ben Ish Chai) writing in Baghdad 200 years ago was prescient regarding the status of the Jew among totalitarian regimes: where a Yid will bribe an official to avoid trumped up charges, who will then accept the bribe then place new charges of bribery on the same. This will require a second bribe. This is what the language of the Gemara means by **בזוזי ובזוזי דבזוזי**: despoilers of despoilers.

בְּזוּזֵי וּבְזוּזֵי דְבְּזוּזֵי. עֵינֵי פִירוּשׁ
 רש"י, וקשה אם כן הוה ליה למימר
 בזוזי בתר בזוזי?
 ונראה לי בס"ד הכונה כי עושים
 עלילות בשקר על היהודי ויש להם
 אנשים תחת ידם לעשותם אמצעים
 לקחת שוחד מן היהודי כדי
 שיפטר והו לשלום והיהודי נותן
 השוחד להציל עצמו מידם ואחר
 שיתן השוחד עושין לו עלילה לומר
 שמענו שנתת שוחד וזה נגד חק
 הממשלה דאוסרת לתת שוחד והנותן
 גם כן מתחייב אצלם ואז בעבור
 עלילה זו חוזר ונותן שוחד כדי שינצל
 מעלילה זו של השוחד! וזהו בְּזוּזֵי
 הוא שחד הראשון וּבְזוּזֵי דְבְּזוּזֵי הוא
 שוחד השני דהיינו בזוזי בשביל
 עלילה של בזוזי הוא שוחד הראשון
 שנתן.

The *Maseches* ends with a few cryptic notes about the messianic age. In the generation in which the son of David, the Messiah, comes, there will be great hatred and persecution against Torah scholars. Perhaps it means that the people of the world will hate them because they are not being judged as are the rest of the world. Shmuel implies that there will be some sort of purge, and the “false” scholars will be removed so that the true scholars will receive their reward. R. Joseph foresees a plundering of the land of Israel.

Other gemoros echo the same sentiment as Sota 49b which speaks of *chutzpah* “impudence”

בעקבות משיחא חוצפא יסגא ויוקר יאמיר הגפן תתן פריה והיין ביוקר ומלכות תהפך
למינות ואין תוכחת בית וועד יהיה לזנות והגליל יחרב והגבולן ישום ואנשי הגבול
יסובבו מעיר לעיר ולא יחוננו וחכמות סופרים תסרח ויראי חטא ימאסו והאמת תהא
נעדרת נערים פני זקנים ילבינו זקנים יעמדו מפני קטנים בן מנוול אב בת קמה
באמה כלה בחמותה אויבי איש אנשי ביתו פני הדור כפני הכלב הבן אינו מתבייש
מאביו ועל מה יש לנו להשען על אבינו שבשמים

He also said: **In the times of the approach of the Messiah, impudence will increase, and high costs will pile up. Although the vine shall bring forth its fruit, wine will nevertheless be expensive. And the monarchy shall turn to heresy, and there will be no one to give reproof about this. The meeting place of the Sages will become a place of promiscuity, and the Galilee shall be destroyed, and the Gavlan will be desolate, and the men of the border shall go around from city to city to seek charity, but they will find no mercy...**

Most enigmatic is the citation from Yevamot

רב הונא אמר קיים משום דרב אסי דאמר רב אסי אין בן דוד בא עד שיכלו כל
נשמות שבגוף שנאמר (ישעיהו נז, טז) כי רוח מלפני יעטוף וגו' ורבי יוחנן אמר לא
קיים פריה ורביה לשבת יצרה בעינן והא ליכא

The Gemara clarifies the reasons for their opinions: **Rav Huna said he has fulfilled the mitzva due to a statement of Rav Asi, as Rav Asi said that the reason for this mitzva is that the Messiah, son of David, will not come until all the souls of the guf have been finished**, i.e., until all souls that are destined to inhabit physical bodies will do so, **as it is stated:**

<p>טז כי לא לעולם אָריב, וְלֹא לְנֶצַח אֶקְצוֹף: כִּי-רוּחַ מִלְפָּנַי יַעֲטוֹף, וְנִשְׁמוֹת אֲנִי עֹשִׂיתִי.</p>	<p>16 For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit that enwrappeth itself is from Me, and the souls which I have made.</p>
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“For the spirit that enwraps itself is from Me, and the souls that I have made” (Isaiah 57:16)...

Ben Ish Chai picks up on this “fourth spirit” which will be revealed in the future (messianic time) when all the souls of the “*guf*” a treasure storage of souls, will have materialized.

הַנְּשָׁמוֹת שֶׁבְּגוּף, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר: (ישעיהו
נז, טז) "כִּי רוּחַ מִלְּפָנַי יַעֲטוּף
וְנִשְׁמוֹת אֲנִי עֹשִׂיתִי". נִרְאֶה לִּי
בס"ד הַכּוֹנֵה כֵךְ דְּקָאֵי עַל רוּחַ
הַרְבִּיעִי הַעֲתִיד לַהֲתַגְלוֹת בְּזִמְנָא מֶלֶךְ
הַמְּשִׁיחַ דְּכַתִּיב בֵּיהּ (ישעיהו יא, ב)
וְנִחָה עָלָיו רוּחַ ה' רוּחַ חֲכָמָה וּבִינָה
רוּחַ עֲצָה וּגְבוּרָה רוּחַ דִּיעָה וְיִרְאַת ה',
וַיַּעֲטוּף כְּלוֹמַר יִתְאַחֵר מִטַּעַם כִּי
נִשְׁמוֹת אֲנִי עֹשִׂיתִי מִכְּבֹד וְהֵנֵם בְּאוֹצֵר
הַנִּקְרָא גוּף וְצָרִיךְ שִׁיבוֹאוּ כּוֹלֵם וְאִז
יִתְגַּלֶּה הַרוּחַ הַנּוֹכַח בְּזִמְנָא הַגָּאוּלָּה
בב"א [במהרה בימינו אמן].

TOSAFOS ²

תוספות ד"ה במנחה

Tosfos says our Gemara is proof to the opinion that Shalosh Seudos should be eaten after Minchah.

מכאן משמע דזמן אכילה שלישית בשבת היא מן המנחה ולמעלה

Opinion #1: It seems from our Gemara that the time for eating Shalosh Seudos on Shabbos is after (the time of) Minchah.

דלא כאותם שמחלקין סעודת שחרית ומברכין בינתיים

² Daf Advancement Forum

Opinion #2: This is unlike those who split their morning meal into two meals and say Birkas ha'Mazon in between them.

ומיהו מהא דאמרינן בפסחים בפ"ק (דף יג.) י"ד שחל להיות בשבת משייר מזון שתי סעודות
אין ראיה מדאין משיירין מזון ג' סעודות שאין לעשות ב' סעודות שחרית

Implied Question: However, there is no proof from the Gemara in Pesachim (13a) that says that when the fourteenth of Nisan falls on Shabbos one can leave over food for two meals (of Chametz for Shabbos). One cannot say that since it did not say three meals can be left over, it implies that one only saves two meals because they cannot make the morning meal into two meals (and they cannot eat a third meal of Chametz in the afternoon because they cannot eat Chametz at that time).

דהא כיון שאוכל הכל שחרית חשיב כסעודה אחת

Answer: Since he eats both meals in the morning, it is considered an amount of food for one meal.

Tur (O.C. 242) writes of a fascinating discussion (and painful to read) which he had with his father, the Rosh.³

נשאתי ונתתי בדבר לפני א"א ז"ל כמוני היום שיש לי מעט משלי ואינו מספיק לי
וצריך אני לאחרים אם אני בכלל עשה שבתך חול אם לא ולא השיבני דבר ברור
אח"כ מצאתי בפרקי אבות לרש"י שפי' על ההיא משנה דר"י בן תימא אומר הוי עו
כנמר שכתב ז"ל תכף לאותה משנה ר"ע אומר עשה שבתך חול שנויה ההיא דבן
תימא לאורויי דר"ע לא אמר אלא למי שהשעה דחוקה לו ביותר אבל צריך אדם לזרז
עצמו כנמר וכנשר לכבד שבתות ביותר ע"כ. ע"כ צריך כל אדם לצמצם בשאר ימים

The **Tur** told his father of his personal financial condition of poverty, where he had very limited funds of his own, and how he was in need of accepting money from others in order to subsist.

He asked his father whether he was obligated to eat the third meal on Shabbos, or if he was exempt due to his financial straits.

The **Rosh** did not issue a clear ruling to resolve his son's question. The Tur writes that he later found a comment of Rashi to Avos (5:20) which addresses this issue. In

³ Daf Digest Shabbos 118

our Gemara, Rabbi Akiva tells us that if someone cannot afford three meals for Shabbos, he should scale back and only eat two meals on Shabbos, which would result in his Shabbos being like the weekdays. However, when this statement is brought again in the Gemara in **Pesachim (112a)**, it is followed by the statement of Rabbi Yehuda ben Teima from the Mishnah in Avos, who says, *“One should be bold as a leopard, swift as an eagle, fleet as a gazelle and brave as a lion to do the will of your Father in Heaven.”*

Rashi explains that the juxtaposition of these two statements comes to teach us that although Rabbi Akiva does have his dispensation of having only two meals on Shabbos, this is only speaking about a person who has no ability to do better.

However, it is most appropriate for a person to be bold and swift in making extraordinary efforts to find the resources to have the third meal no matter what his financial status may be. Bach explains how he understands the question which the Tur asked his father.

Rabbi Akiva allows a person to eat only two meals on Shabbos, and not to take communal *tzedakah* funds. To whom was this directive given? Is this a guideline for a person who earns a living, about whom we say, “do not become dependent upon *tzedakah*”? But once a person is already taking *tzedakah*, he should be provided with enough for three meals. Or were the words of Rabbi Akiva also said about a person who already takes *tzedakah*, where we instruct him to minimize his consumption?

Bi’ur Halacha cites another opinion to explain the words of Rabbi Akiva. We are speaking about a person who has enough for three meals, but no more.

If this person eats everything he has, he is headed for a crisis. In order to avoid this emergency, he should eat only two of the meals out of the three that he has.

HALACHA

One should be very cautious to have a third meal, and even if he is satisfied he can fulfill it with about the volume of an egg. And if he cannot eat at all, he need not cause himself discomfort. And a wise person will not fill his stomach with the morning meal, so as to save room for a third meal.

RAMA: *And one who did not eat on Shabbat evening should eat three meals on the day of Shabbat. (the Rosh)*

דין של סעודות ובו ו סעיפים:

יהא זהיר מאוד לקיים סעודה שלישית ואף אם הוא שבע יכול לקיים אותה בכביצה ואם אי אפשר לו כלל לאכול אינו חייב לצער את עצמו והחכם עיניו בראשו שלא ימלא בטנו בסעודת הבוקר כדי ליתן מקום לסעודה שלישית: הגה ומי שלא אכל בליל שבת יאכל שלש סעודות ביום השבת (הרא"ש פ' ע"פ):

Poverty and Shabbat meals:

Yoreh Deah 250:4

אין פוחתין לעני העובר ממקום למקום מככר בפונדיון (הרמב"ם פירש שמשקל הפונדיון הוא ח' גרעני שעורה) מד' סאין בסלע ואם לן נותנין לו מצע לישן עליו וכסת ליתן מראשותיו ושמן וקטנית ואם שבת נותנים לו מזון ג' סעודות ושמן וקטנית ודג וירק ואם מכירין אותו נותנין לו לפי כבודו:

A poor man, who goes from place to place, shall receive not less than a loaf of bread costing a dupondium, when four S'ah of wheat are worth one Sela.

*If he remains over night, he should be given a couch to sleep upon and a bolster under his head, and oil and small fruit; and if it is **Sabbath**, he should be provided with food for **three meals**, and oil, small fruit, fish and herbs; and if he is known [to be worthy], he should be given as much as is befitting his honor.*

Jastrow

פונדיון m. (popular abridgment of Dupondium or Dipondium) *Dupondium*, a Roman coin equal to two Asses. Maas. Sh. IV, 8 ... הוא יוצא בפ' and he went to another place where the Isar (As) is worth a Dupondium. Kel. XVII, 11, a. e., v. פ' Y. Maas. Sh. IV, 55^b top שני two Isars are one Dupondium. Ib. III, beg. 54^a (not פונדיון); a. fr.—Bekh. 50^a פונדיון.—Pl. פונדיון. Y. Kidd. I, 58^d; Tosef. B. Bath. V, 12, a. e., v. מעד. Tosef. Maas. Sh. IV, 13. Ib. III, 6; a. fr.—Bekh. l. c. פונדיון.

Seudah Shlishit

On the first Shabbos after Moshe had informed the Jewish people that no manna would fall on Shabbos, but that instead, a double portion would fall on Friday, he told the people,

כה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲכָלְהוּ הַיּוֹם, כִּי-שַׁבָּת
הַיּוֹם לַיהוָה: הַיּוֹם, לֹא תִמְצְאוּהוּ בַּשָּׂדֶה.

25 And Moses said: 'Eat that to-day; for to-day is a sabbath unto the LORD; to-day ye shall not find it in the field.

"Eat it today, because today is HaShem's Shabbos. You will not find anything in the field today." (Shemos 16:25).

Yesterday's Daf, Shabbos (117b) derives from the fact that the Torah uses the word "*hayom*", today, three times in this verse (Ibid.) that there is an obligation to eat **three meals on Shabbos**. Our Daf documents the great rewards given to one who is careful to always eat these three meals.

Pri Megadim, quotes from the **Levush** that this obligation is from the Torah.

Sefer Chareidim, in his listing of the Mitzvos from the Torah (Perek 14 Ot 3), concurs, and asserts that this is the position of Rashi on the first Gemara in Shabbos above (Ibid. s.v. Talta).

Taz (Ibid. Siman 472 Sif Katan 1) quotes that the **Maharal of Prague** held this way as well. This seems, however, to be the minority opinion, as most of the *Monei HaMitzvos* (those authorities who wrote books listing all the *Taryag Mitzvos*) do not enumerate this as an independent Mitzvah.

Maharil⁴ writes that this obligation is **MideRabbanan**, and the Pri Megadim cited above assumes this as well.

Aruch HaShulchan (Orach Chaim 291:1) suggests that this Mitzvah was instituted by Moshe Rabbeinu, and that the three Shabbos meals hint at various important ideas, as mentioned in the Tur (Orach Chaim Ibid.).

Rambam (Hilchos Shabbos 30:9) writes

One should eat three meals on the Sabbath: one in the evening, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon. And he must be careful with these three meals, to not lessen from them at all. And even a poor person who is supported by charity must eat three meals. But if he was sick from an abundance of eating or was constantly fasting, he is exempt from three meals. And he is required to fix each meal of the three on wine and to break [bread] on two loaves. And likewise, on holidays.

⁴ Sheilos U'Teshuvos Maharil Siman 94

חַיֵּב אָדָם לֵאכֹל שְׁלֹשׁ סְעֻדוֹת בְּשַׁבָּת אַחַת עֶרְבִית וְאַחַת שְׁחֲרִית וְאַחַת בְּמִנְחָה. וְצָרִיךְ
 לְהִזָּהֵר בְּשְׁלֹשׁ סְעֻדוֹת אֵלּוּ שֶׁלֹּא יִפְחַת מִהֵן כָּלֵל. וְאַפְלוּ עָנִי הַמִּתְפַּרְנֵס מִן הַצָּדָקָה
 סוֹעֵד שְׁלֹשׁ סְעֻדוֹת. וְאִם הָיָה חוֹלָה מְרַב הָאֲכִילָה אוֹ שֶׁהָיָה מִתְעַנֶּה תָּמִיד פְּטוּר מִשְׁלֹשׁ
 סְעֻדוֹת. וְצָרִיךְ לִקְבֹּעַ כָּל סְעֻדָּה מִשְׁלֹשֶׁתָּן עַל הַיּוֹם וּלְבַצֵּעַ עַל שְׁמֵי כְפָרוֹת. וְכֵן בְּיָמֵם
 טוֹבִים:

that one must be sure to eat no less than three meals on Shabbos, one in the evening, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon, even if one is very poor.

Kaf HaChaim (Ibid. Sif Katan 3) quotes from the **Chida** that this extra effort for Shalosh Seudos is necessary because one would normally eat a meal on Friday night and some time on Shabbos morning anyway, even were it not required (see Sukkah 27a), while one would probably not otherwise eat late in the afternoon.⁵

It should be pointed out that the **Rokeiach** (Siman 55) allows one to forgo eating *Shalosh Seudos* altogether in order to hear a Shiur on Shabbos afternoon; the **Magen Avraham** (Ibid. Siman 290, beginning of the Siman) quotes this opinion, but then adds that this Shiur must be the type which teaches people Halachos and instills **Yiras Shomayim** in order for it to supersede the Mitzvah to eat Shalosh Seudos.

Rabbeinu Tam, in his Sefer HaYoshor (Chelek HaSheilos U'Teshuvos Siman 70 Ot 4), rules **that women too are obligated to eat Shalosh Seudos**, because "*Af Hein Hayu B'Oso HaNais*", meaning that they too benefited from the miracle of the manna; many Poskim quote and agree with this ruling.

Ran (on Shabbos Ibid. s.v. V'Kasav) cites another reason: women are obligated in all the positive Mitzvos of Shabbos just as men are, as indicated by the Gemara in Berachos (20b).

Shulchan Aruch (Ibid. Sif 6) **thus rules that women must eat Shalosh Seudos**; the **Aruch HaShulchan** (Ibid. Sif 4) notes that many women are unaware of this and ought to be told that they too should be careful to observe this important Mitzvah.

⁵ Reb Michel Taubes <http://www.tzemachdovid.org/thepracticaltorah/beshalach.shtml>

Birth pangs of Messiah

Tzror HaMor on Song of Songs 8:6:2-3

שימני כחותם. הישראל מבקשי אם החבלי משיח הכרחים מבקשים אנחנו מהקב"ה לבל יגרמו ריבוי הצרות להיות נסוגים אחור מאמונתנו ח"ו ע"כ מבקשים אנחנו מהקב"ה שישמני כחותם על לבו שלא ישכחנו ולבו הוא כינוי לרחמים: כחותם על זרועך. ואם ההכרח הוא לשלוח יסורים וזרועך יהי נטוי ח"ו עלינו להכות אותנו נהי עכ"פ כחותם על זרועך הנטויה לבלתי השחותיני כי הלא אם חטאנו ונתחייבנו מות או שאל ראה נא כי הנה לנו אחד לעומת על אחד מאלה:

ו שימני כחותם על-לך, כחותם על-
זרועך--כי-עזה כמות אהבה, קשה כשאל
קנאה: רשפיה--רשפי, אש שלהבתיה.

6 Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave; the flashes thereof are flashes of fire, a very flame of the LORD.

“Set me as a seal upon thy heart” *Israel requests that during the birth pangs of the Messiah that the Almighty won't multiply the sufferings sufficiently to impact our core belief system. So, we ask God “Set me as a seal upon thy heart” so that our hearts will not forget You during these turbulent times and may His heart be one full of mercy.*

“Set me as a seal upon thy arm” *and if perforce He must send us sufferings at least let Him not cause our destruction through it for we might be deserving of death.*

This dark commentary of foreboding realizes the frailty of human beings and the immensity of the end times and the midrashic rereading of the lover's desire as a prayer by Israel through these times.

In contrast, the **Shem M'Shmu'el**, son of the Avnei Nezer, sees hope and comfort in these hoary times if we merit it, if not, as he sees in his days (19th Century Poland) then the Midas Hadin will be allowed to be unleashed on Israel.

Shem M'Shmuel, Shemot 10:3

ונראה שזה מדה נוהגת לדורות. וכך יהי' ענין גאולה העתידה שאם ישראל יהיו זכאים וראויים לקבל החסדים. לא יהי' נזקקים לחבלי משיח, אך אם ח"ו ירד מצב ישראל פלאים ולא יהי' ראויים לקבל החסד, מה גם שאז הוא קטרוג האומות, שלחסד כל אפין שוין, אלא שלזה נמי יש דין מי ראוי לקבל חסד, וכאשר ח"ו לא יהיו ראויים גם לזה אז יתהוו חבלי משיח והאומות יתנהגו עמהם באכזריות חימה, כמו שאנו רואים בימינו אצה בעוה"ר, ובשביל זה יתעורר מדה"ד על אומות העולם האכזרים והרואים ושותקים או אינם מרעישים עליהם כדבעי, ועי"ז יושפל כח האומות...

So too (like the Exodus) this will be the pattern for the future. If Israel will merit and be fitting to receive mercies. They will not be damaged by the birth pangs of the Messiah. Only if they do not merit will they receive the critique of the nations. And during these birth pangs the nations will act with extraordinary cruelty as we see in our own days, (for our sins) this will activate the Midas HaDin by the nations...

Nobody comes close to the sweeping view of history like Reb Zadok Hakohen of Lublin,⁶ Like the NETZIV, these scholars were not immune to the modern notion of the self, as well as history. They were able to scan the Jewish archive and produce coherent theories about the history of Halacha (Reb Zadok) and Antisemitism (Netziv).⁷

⁶ See R. ZADOK HAKOHEN ON THE HISTORY OF HALAKHA Author(s): Yaakov Elman Source: Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought , FALL 1985, Vol. 21, No. 4 (FALL 1985), pp. 1-26 P

⁷ See Howard Joseph She'ar Yisrael, The Remnant of Israel, by Rabbi Naphtali Zvi Yehuda Berlin (1816-1893), is one of the earliest works by a Jewish scholar to address the question of antisemitism. Rabbi Berlin, more popularly referred to as the Netziv, was the most important leader of the yeshivah world in his era. From his perspective as head of the famed Yeshivat Etz Hayim of Volozhyn, he presented his views on this important subject. Indeed, the essay and Rabbi Berlin's many writings shaped the ideology of the yeshivah world and still exert influence on its thinking. She'ar Yisrael, The Remnant of Israel, recalls the form of a rabbinic responsum, but to a nonhalakhic question: why is there antisemitism? The answer is a sustained theological essay on the nature of Judaism and the historical destiny of the Jewish people. It demonstrates a well-thought-out appreciation of the problems posed by modernity for the survival of Jews and Judaism.

Pri Tzadik פרי צדיק Vayeshev, Chapter 5

כל המקיים שלש סעודות בשבת ניצול מג' פורעניות מחבלו של משיח (שבת קיח) 'איתא בגמ' ומדינה של גיהנם וכו' ואי' מהאריז"ל שהם כסדר הסעודות שבסעודת ליל שבת ניצול מחבלו של משיח. ויש להבין בשלמא דינה של גיהנם שייך לכל נפש בכל דור אבל חבלו של משיח שהוא רק בזמן שבן דוד בא וכמ"ש פירש"י חבלו של משיח כדאמרי' דור שב"ד בא בו קטיגוריא בת"ח גם הלימוד שלמדו שניצול מחבלו של משיח מדכ' הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליהו הנביא לפני בוא יום ובשבת כ' יום וביאת אליהו יהיה רק בעת בוא משיח בן דוד וגם בזמן ואיך שייך בכל שבת שניצול מחבלו של (כמ"ש סנהדרין צח) הגמ' אמרו ייתי ולא איחמיניה משיח. אמנם הגם שמשיח בן דוד יש זמן וקץ אימתי יבא אבל בחינת אורו של משיח ישנו בכל מה שמו דבי ר' שילא אמרי שילה שמו דבי ר' ינאי אמרו ינון שמו דבי ר' (שם) 'דור כדאי חנינא אמרו חנינה שמו ובודאי אמרו על רבם. ובכל הכנסיות של ת"ח נמצא התגלות אורו של פרשה זו אליהו (מנחות מה) 'משיח ואמרו כל א' על רבו. וכמו כן בחינת התגלות אליהו כדאי עתיד לדורשה ובחידושי הרש"ב בא שם כ' שאליהו יתגלה לא' בביהמ"ד לדרוש הפרשה. והיינו שיופיע בלבו התגלות התחדשות בד"ת והוא בחינת התגלו' אליהו

“Anyone who fulfills the obligation to eat three meals on Shabbat is rescued from three punishments: From the pangs of the Messiah, i.e., the suffering that precedes the advent of Messiah, and from the judgment of Gehenna, and from the war of Gog and Magog.”
Shabbes 118

And the ARI notes that these three are represented by the 3 meals on shabbat. i.e. Friday Night meal saves us from the Birth pangs of the Messiah. Now we must try to understand, I can see how the punishment of Gehinnom might applicable to every person in every generation, however how is the birth pangs of the Messiah have anything to do with us during Galut? It is only relevant when King David comes. However, it can be relevant since any gathering of Talmidei Chachamim has an aspect of the gilui of the light of Eliyahu/Messiah.

As cited in the chidushei RASHBAH that Eliyahu enlightens (reveals) to each (Talmid Chacham) in the Beis Midrash to expound the Parsha. This implies that in each heart there is a revelation (inspiration) of novella (hitchadshut) in Torah learning, which is the revelation of (the archetype) of Eliyahu.

True his roots in Psyszche Hassidut, the “nekuda p’nimit” the “iota” the “yud” or spark of the Divine rests within the heart of a Yid. (unlike CHABAD!). Here he receives his divine inspiration for *chidushim*. (the imaginative soul). Tapping into this source is tapping into the archetype of Eliyahu and has messianic connotations. This answers his didactic question as what relevance has a Sabbath meal to the birth pangs of the Messiah. Apparently the sanctity of the Sabbath meal not only saves a

person from Gehenna but allows him to tap into that messianic archetypal soul within his heart to produce new Torah, which is the obligation of every generation, in order to bring about the end of *galut* and the arrival of the Messiah.

I read into his text (between the lines) his unwritten implication, that birth pangs, whether for the messianic era or for the production of *chidushim* are painful.



The Dardanelles straits connects the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. It is a narrow strait in northwestern Turkey connecting the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara.



: כל המקיים שלש סעודות בשבת ניצול משלש פורעניות: מקבלו של משיח

Our daf claims that one of the three curses we will be spared of is birth pangs of the Messianic Era if we fulfil the obligation to eat the three meals on the Sabbath.,

It is said over in the name of **Rav Chaim Volozhyn** he had a kabbala, from the **Vilna Gaon** when the Russians will cross the Dardanelles river it will be the start of events before mashiach comes *men ken shoin untun shbosdike Kleider*.



Rav Moshe Shternbuch a great Grandson of the Vilna Gaon received a closely guarded secret that came to him from **Rabbi Yitzhak Isaak Chaver** who received it from **Rabbi Chaim of**

Volozhyn who received it from the **Gaon of Vilna** himself, who revealed it shortly before his death:

“When you hear that the Russians have captured the city of Crimea, you should know that the times of the Messiah have started, that his steps are being heard. And when you hear that the Russians have reached the city of Constantinople (today’s Istanbul), you should put on your Shabbat clothes and don’t take them off, because it means that the Mashiach is about to come any minute.”

Philo, also identified Magog with southern Russia.: *“Hierapolis, taken by the Scythians, was afterward called Magog.”* He shows that the dreaded barbaric people called the Scythians were identified with their ancient tribal name. Ancient history traces the Scythians to be a principle part of the people who make up modern Russia.

Herodotus, who wrote extensively in the 5th century BC. He is known as the Father of History. He wrote the earliest important historical narrative, in which he described the background and the course of the great war between the Greeks and the Persians in the 5th century BC.

Numerous archaeological discoveries have clearly confirmed Herodotus's reports in general, and his Scythian accounts in particular. Herodotus describes the Scythians as living in Scythia (the territory north of the Black Sea).

This agrees with **Yerushalmi Megillah 3:9** which renders Magog as the Goths a group of nomadic tribes who destroyed the Scythians and made their homes in Scythian territory. Southern Russia occupies this area today.

ArtScroll commentary to Ezekiel, says: *“The various traditions concerning the identity of Magog, who in Genesis 10:2 is listed among the sons of Noah's son Japheth, tend to place the land of Magog in what today is southwest Russia - the Caucasian region, which lies between the Black and Caspian Seas... This is in agreement with Yerushalmi Megillah 3:9 which renders Magog as “the Goths,” a group of nomadic tribes who destroyed the Scythians and made their homes in Scythian territory... Our identification of Magog as Caucasia, which was at one time inhabited by the Goths, is based on the assumption that the land of Magog is named after Japheth's son.”*⁸

The Ezekiel commentary noted that **Rabbi Chisdai Ibn Shaprut** wrote to a Caucasian kingdom in southern Russia which converted to Judaism in the 8th century AD in which he addresses the king as: *“prince, leader of Meshech and Tubal.”* This salutation indicates they had a tradition these countries were indeed located in Russia.

The Rosh Yeshiva of Baranovich wrote⁹

⁸ Yechezkel / Ezekiel: A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic and Rabbinic sources (ArtScroll Tanakh Series) Hardcover – January 1, 2000

⁹ Rav Baron <https://baranovich.org/shiurim/rabbi-baron-writings.html>

I have heard in the name of **R. Elchanan Wasserman** ל"צ ד"ה, who said in the name of the **Chafetz Chaim** ל"צ (who, as is well known, dealt extensively with the topic of the “*footsteps of Mashiach*” period in his later years) that towards the end of the pre- Messianic period the pace of world affairs would become accelerated far beyond the norm of the past.

Matters that once took several generations to accomplish will be achieved in a short time. The **Chafetz Chaim** lived to witness for himself the beginnings of the age of modern technology. The swiftness of developments in our own day make this even more apparent. Applying the **Chafetz Chaim’s** idea, we gain a deeper understanding of the verse (Isaiah 60:22) in which the prophet describes the projected dawn of the Messianic era: "In its time I will hasten it." The Sages (Sanhedrin 98a) already note the seemingly self-contradictory nature of this statement: If the redemption will come “in its [prescribed] time” then it cannot be hastened, and vice versa!

According to the **Chafetz Chaim**, however, the verse is easily understood. The Messianic era is indeed scheduled for a particular time.



RAV KOOK¹⁰

The Function of Chevlei Mashiach

The Sages indicated the deeply disturbing nature of *Ikveta deMashicha* with the term *chevlei mashiach*, the ‘birth pangs’ that precede the Messianic Era. In his seminal work, *Orot*, Rav Kook discussed various reasons for the intensified degree of materialism that characterizes

¹⁰ (Sapphire from the Land of Israel. Adapted from Igrot HaRe’iyah vol. II, p. 188, letter 555 (1913) (Igeret Takanah); Orot p. 85 (Orot HaTechiyah, sec. 45))

the era of national revival. His central argument is that the Messianic ‘birth pangs’ come to correct an imbalance stemming from centuries of stateless dispersion.

Rav Kook explained the process using the following analogy. The dregs at the bottom of a wine bottle help preserve the wine. If a bottle lacks dregs, and we wish to correct the situation by adding dregs, the initial result will be to muddy the entire bottle, temporarily ruining it. But as the dregs settle at the bottom, the wine regains its clarity and benefits from the preservative nature of the dregs.

So too, involvement in material pursuits is necessary to ensure the flow of normal life. The exile, with its concentration on spiritual matters, enervated the life-force of the Jewish people to such an extent that their national survival was in danger. The Jewish people needed to return to their land in order to survive as a nation. The return to the land and to a more balanced national life meant greater involvement in life’s material aspects. Thus, the early pioneers were occupied primarily with the physical revival of the Jewish people in *Eretz Yisrael* — draining swamps, planting crops, building cities, establishing defense organizations, political institutions, and so on. Initially, the crassness and brazenness of the pre-Messianic Era are cause for great consternation. But as the negative forces are subdued, like the settling of the wine dregs to the bottom of the bottle, their detrimental aspects dissipate.

Transforming Darkness to Light

The period of *Ikveta deMashicha* is a difficult time, and not all the Sages were eager to experience it. Rav Yosef, however, demonstrated great spiritual courage, saying, “Let the Messiah come; and may I merit to sit in the shadow of his donkey’s dung” (*Sanhedrin* 98b). Once again, we find the metaphor of the donkey used in connection with the Messianic Era.

Rav Yosef was accustomed to looking at the inner essence of things. He recognized the tremendous inner holiness hidden in this problematic generation, as symbolized by the Messiah’s donkey. Rav Yosef understood that the Messianic light will demonstrate how to utilize all forces, even the course — “the donkey’s dung” — for the sake of good. He knew that the darkness of national rebirth will lead to an even higher light of Torah and knowledge of God.



Harav Kalonymus Kalman Shapira (or Kalonymus Kalmish Szapiro) (or "Shapiro," a more common transliteration of the Polish spelling of his name "Szapiro") (20 May 1889–3 November 1943),

We cannot leave *chevlei mashiach* without the **Eish Kodesh**.¹¹

He was the Grand Rabbi of Piaseczno, Poland, who authored a number of works and was murdered by the Nazis during the Shoah.

The rabbi of Piaseczno, Kalonymos Kalmish Shapira (1889–1943), was one of the leading figures of early twentieth-century Hasidism in Poland. The sermons he gave in the Warsaw ghetto are an invaluable source because religiously devout Jews were less likely to keep a written record of their experiences than secular Jews. The sermons were not personal. They interpreted the specific portion of the Bible read on each week, and only rarely did they discuss directly current events in the ghetto and beyond. When Shapira did use them to explain the present, therefore, they are especially illuminating. At the beginning of the war, Shapira viewed the Nazi persecution of Polish Jews within the familiar framework of God's punishment for the sins of Israel. But he soon realized that this view was wholly inadequate to clarify the magnitude of Nazi persecution and Jewish suffering. He therefore adopted the metaphor of creation to interpret the suffering of the Jews. In his sermon of July 26, 1941, he viewed the current persecution as the "birth pangs of the Messiah" (*havlei mashi'ah*), as a step in a cosmic process of birth and new beginning. This process required a certain death before the rebirth, and because Israel as God's chosen people had been a key figure in this cosmic process, they must suffer the birth pangs in an especially radical way.³⁶

Nehemia Polen writes eloquently of the pathos in the Piaseczno's theology:¹²

¹¹ A World Without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide: Alon Confino | Apr 28, 2015

¹² The Holy Fire: The Teachings of Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira, the Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto, Jason Aronson, 1999
This is a journey into the mind and spirit of a sublime hassidic master in his moments of joy and tranquility, and later, in his time of personal and communal catastrophe. The reader takes a voyage into the rich and variegated world of twentieth-century Hasidism in Poland, a world destroyed by the Holocaust. This is a volume inspired by a deeply sensitive and poetic individual of faith who is grappling with an unfolding disaster. While the Holocaust has engendered a voluminous body of religious and philosophical writings attempting to probe the issues this unfathomable period raises in all their enormity, virtually all were written after the war, when a modicum of distance and reflection is possible. Contemporaneous diaries and chronicles written as the events were happening concentrate on the descriptive accounts of the horrors. *The Holy Fire*, however, engages a sustained theological reflection and stands alone as an extended religious response from within the heart of darkness itself while the catastrophe takes place, and is, for this reason, an extraordinary document and an astonishing personal achievement.

Rabbi Shapira is arguing that in normal times it is appropriate to weigh merits, to call to justice (and perhaps to find guilty) the individual and the community, but when the calamities have become so overwhelming that the primary burden has shifted to God, there is no longer any place for keeping accounts, for considerations of judgment or guilt. It is becoming evident to Rabbi Shapira that the march of events was making talk of sin and chastisement simply inappropriate, incommensurate with the magnitude of the ongoing crisis and its attendant pain. The sharp change, maintained consistently throughout the rest of *Esh Kodesh* involves the theme of divine suffering, a concept that becomes increasingly prominent in his thinking as time progresses.

The move away from a systematic religious calculus of reward and chastisement is associated with a new emphasis on mythic, eschatological and apocalyptic themes. This new consciousness is evident in a *derasha* delivered on July 26, 1941, on *hevlei Mashiah*: the “birth pangs of the Messiah.”⁵ Rabbi Shapira explicitly links this theme with the inadequacy of the sin/chastisement calculus. He writes:

Let us understand, in our diminished circumstance, the meaning of the birth pangs of the Messiah. The simple explanation of the function of these sufferings is that they serve to cleanse us of our sins before the revelation of the Messiah’s advent. But [this explanation runs into difficulties when we consider the following question]: Why should the generation of the Messiah have to suffer for the sins of past generations?

Rather [the explanation is along the following lines]: After the sin of Adam, God said, “In pain shall you bring forth children” (Genesis 3:16). This is not simply a kind of vengeance. . . . Rather, after the sin [in the Garden of Eden] the world became corporeal, so that each individual has a separate existence. In consequence, it is impossible for anything to give birth—i.e., to be the vehicle for the elicitation and revelation of new light—without the annihilation of a portion of the light of the individual self. In other words, it is impossible for anything to reveal the divine light without self-annihilation. Before a seed manifests a new creation—a tree with branches, leaves, and fruit, which is many orders of magnitude greater than the seed—the being of the seed must first be annihilated. That is why every seed must decompose in the ground, as a kind of death. This is precisely the meaning of “in pain shall you bring forth children”: It refers to death, or pain approaching death, for the forces which need to achieve annihilation before the birth of a new creation. . . .

He writes in real time over the three-year period 1940 until his deportation to Treblinka.

In his last sermon **Aish Kodesh** Massai July 1941 he writes ¹³

It can be explained simplistically as a way of cleansing sin before the great revelation that constitutes the coming of the Messiah. The question that asks itself, however, is why must the generation of people greeting the Messiah have to suffer for the sins of previous generations? After humankind's first sin, God said to Eve (Genesis 3:16), "In despair you will give birth to children." This was not just retribution, a punishment for sin...It is therefore impossible for anything new to be born without something dying, because for something to give birth to a new revelation of God, drawing new light down into this world, it must go through a process of nullification...We can watch this process in the germination of any seed that we plant...before the new tree can be revealed, the seed itself must cease to be...a kind of death. This is what is meant by the phrase "In despair will you give birth to children." A 4 woman experiences a painful process in which she relinquishes some of her physical powers, before she can give birth to a new creation. As we learn in the Midrash (Tanchuma, Tazria 6): "While squatting upon the birthing stool, ninety-nine of her groans despair unto death, while only one calls out for life."

Through the nullification of the existence of parts of herself, she prepares for God, blessed be He, to bring forth a new creation. This would seem to explain...the concept of the birth pangs of the Messiah. The redemption will be the revelation of God, when God reveals of His Light and Holiness through the Jewish people.

This is why the redemption and its timing are dependent upon the Jewish people. For the Jewish people to merit that such Light be revealed through them, there has to be a nullification of power, and these are the birth pangs of the Messiah, as it is written

ט	הָאֲנִי אֲשָׁבִיר וְלֹא אוֹלִיד, יֹאמֶר יְהוָה;	9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?
אִם-אֲנִי הַמּוֹלִיד וְעֶצְרָתִי, אָמַר		saith the LORD; Shall I that cause to bring forth shut the
אֶלֶּהֶּיךָ. {ס}		womb? saith thy God. {S}

Isaiah 66:9

“‘Shall I labor, and not give birth?’, says God.”

*The Holy Blessed One is laboring to give birth through the Jewish people, and so the Jewish people **suffer the birth pangs**, losing their powers as part of them die, for this is how they give birth to the Light of the Messiah.*

For us, it is the same as with a woman squatting on the birthing stool. We know that the strongest contractions indicate that the delivery is progressing, that the child has been revealed a little more.

¹³ J. Hershy Worch: Sacred Fire: Torah from the Years of Fury 1939-1942, New Jersey 2000.

So also, when seeing a Jew suffering greatly with the birth pangs of the Messiah, we know that a greater part of the Light of the Messiah is being revealed through that person.