



WEDNESDAY NIGHT TORAH STUDY

CHOL HAMOED SUKKOT 5787 · SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

When the Veil Begins to Thin

Mashiach, Prophecies, and a World Beginning to See

Tonight's question: Are we living during a period of increasing spiritual revelation — and what do authentic Jewish sources actually tell us to expect as the world approaches the Messianic era?

INTRODUCTION

How to Use This Workbook

Tonight we ask whether redemption is only something new entering the world — or also the revealing of a Divine reality that was here all along, but hidden. "The veil is thinning" is *our* image, not a classical phrase. We will test it against the sources, one text at a time.

HOW WE LABEL EVERY SOURCE

LABEL	MEANING
Direct Source	The text actually says this.
Classical Interpretation	A recognized commentator explains it this way.
Later Tradition	A later work or teacher connects the idea to the source.
Derash	A teaching reading, not the plain meaning.
Our Synthesis	A connection we are making tonight.

THE JOURNEY OF TONIGHT'S CLASS

CONCEALMENT	PROPHECY	MASHIACH	REVELATION
Hashem hides — He does not leave	The prophets describe a world that will know and see Hashem	The Sages, the Zohar and the Rambam teach how to wait — and how not to	The Tanya explains why the world was hidden, and how we reveal it

"For the earth shall be filled with knowledge of Hashem as the waters cover the sea." — Isaiah 11:9

PART I

The Face That Hides

What if Mashiach is not only about something entering our world — but about something that has always been here finally becoming visible? If Hashem fills all existence, why can we live our whole lives without seeing Him?

TEXT 1 DEVARIM**31:17–18**

"And I will hide My face from them... And I will surely hide My face on that day."

DIRECT SOURCE► **ANALYSIS**

Chullin 139b

The Gemara asks where Esther is hinted in the Torah, and answers with this verse: in Hebrew, "I will surely hide" sounds like the name *Esther* — the one book of Tanakh where Hashem's Name never appears.

► **LESSON**

The Torah does not say Hashem *leaves*. It says He *hides*. Someone who hides is still in the room.

TEXT 2 BEREISHIT**21:19**

"And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water."

DIRECT SOURCE► **ANALYSIS**

Bereishit Rabbah 53:14

"Everyone is presumed blind until the Holy One, blessed be He, lights up their eyes."

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

Did Hashem create Hagar's well — or open her eyes to one? Where have you felt Hashem was hidden? Where did He suddenly feel obvious?

► **LOOK WHAT THE TORAH IS DOING HERE**

A fact of Hebrew

The Hebrew words for *exile* and for *revelation* come from the same three-letter root, which means both "to uncover" and "to go into exile."

PART II

An Earth Full of Knowledge, Like Water

Isaiah 11 is the Bible's most famous Messianic chapter. It describes a king filled with the spirit of Hashem, and a world where the wolf lives with the lamb — and then it gives the reason.

TEXT 3 ISAIAH**11:9**

"They shall not harm or destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be filled with knowledge of Hashem as the waters cover the sea."

DIRECT SOURCE► **CLASSICAL INTERPRETATION**

Radak; Metzudat David on Isaiah 11:9

Just as no spot of the seabed is without water above it, no place on earth will be without knowledge of Hashem.

► **ANALYSIS**

Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 12:5

The Rambam chose this verse as the last words of his entire Mishneh Torah. The greatest legal code in Jewish history ends not with a law, but with an ocean.

TEXT 4 TALMUD***Ta'anit 7a; Bava Kamma 17a***

Why is Torah compared to water? Just as water leaves a high place and flows to a low place, Torah endures only with one who is humble. ... "Water means nothing other than Torah," as it says: "Ho, all who are thirsty, come to the water" (Isaiah 55:1).

DIRECT SOURCE**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION**

Why water? Isaiah could have said "as light fills the sky." What does water do that light doesn't?

► THE OCEAN FLOOR

Our Synthesis

Stand on a ship in the middle of the ocean. The seabed is right under you — mountains, valleys, whole landscapes — and you can't see any of it. But the water isn't hiding it the way a wall hides. The water *fills* it. Isaiah describes the future with the word "cover." Perhaps the future is not a world where the covering is torn away — but one where the covering *is* the knowledge.

TEXT 5 BEREISHIT 1:2 · BEREISHIT RABBAH

2:4

"And the spirit of God hovered over the face of the water" — this is the spirit of King Mashiach, as it says: "The spirit of Hashem will rest upon him" (Isaiah 11:2).

DERASH

TEXT 6 MISHNAH · JERUSALEM TALMUD

Sukkah 5:1

"Whoever did not see the Joy of the Water-Drawing never saw joy in his life." Why was it called the House of Drawing? Because from there they drew Divine inspiration, as it says: "You shall draw water with joy from the wellsprings of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3).

DIRECT SOURCE

► LESSON

The first revelation in the Torah of something that was there all along — Hagar's well — is water. In the Torah's second verse the spirit of Mashiach hovers over water. And this very week, the Temple drew water and Divine inspiration together.

PART III

The Biblical Veil

If we use the word "veil" tonight, we should know whether the Tanakh ever uses it. It does — once, powerfully.

TEXT 7 ISAIAH

25:7–9

"And He will swallow up on this mountain the face of the covering that covers all the peoples, and the veil that is spread over all the nations. He will swallow up death forever, and Hashem will wipe away tears from every face... And it shall be said on that day: Behold, this is our God; we hoped for Him and He saved us."

DIRECT SOURCE► **A VEIL OF MOURNING***Reading A*

The covering is a veil of mourning — the next verse swallows death and wipes away tears. The same word describes David covering his face in grief (II Shmuel 19:5).

► **A VEIL OVER THE EYES***Reading B*

The covering is a veil over perception — it lies over the nations, and the passage ends with everyone pointing: "Behold, *this* is our God."

TEXT 8 TALMUD*Ta'anit 31a*

In the future, the Holy One will make a circle-dance of the righteous, with Himself in the center, and each one will point with his finger and say: "Behold, this is our God."

DIRECT SOURCE**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION**

Can Isaiah 25 honestly support our image, "the veil is thinning"? What does it support — and what does it not?

PART IV

Hashem Is Already One

Every one of us has heard this verse. It is the last line of Aleinu, said three times a day — and it is in the haftarah of the first day of Sukkot.

TEXT 9 ZECHARIAH**14:9**

"And Hashem will be King over all the earth. On that day Hashem will be One and His Name One."

DIRECT SOURCE**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION**

Wait — isn't Hashem already One? What could "will be One" mean?

TEXT 10 TALMUD***Pesachim 50a***

"Is He not One now?" Rabbi Acha bar Chanina said: The World to Come is not like this world. In this world, for good news one says, "Blessed is the One who is good and does good," and for bad news, "Blessed is the true Judge." In the World to Come, it will all be "the One who is good and does good." ... In this world the Name is written one way and pronounced another; in the future it will be written and pronounced the same.

DIRECT SOURCE**▶ CLASSICAL INTERPRETATION**

Rashi, Devarim 6:4

"Hashem, who is our God *now* and not yet of the nations, is destined to be One Hashem" — quoting Zechariah 14:9. Every Shema says: Hashem is One now, and one day the whole world will see it.

Hashem does not change. Our perception changes.

"For I, Hashem, have not changed." — Malachi 3:6

TEXT 11 TANYA***Sba'ar HaYichud VebaEmunah, ch. 1 & 3***

In the name of the Baal Shem Tov: "Forever, Hashem, Your word stands in the heavens" (Tehillim 119:89) — the Divine word that created each thing is still inside it, bringing it into being every moment. If our eyes could see that life-force, the physical form would not appear to us as separate at all.

LATER TRADITION

LOOK WHAT THE TORAH IS DOING HERE — ONE CHAPTER, READ THIS WEEK

ZECHARIAH 14	THE TEXT
Verse 8	"Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem."
Verse 9	"On that day Hashem shall be One, and His Name one."
Verse 16	The nations go up every year "to keep the feast of tabernacles."

PART V

What Do the Prophets Actually Predict?

Before anyone says "this is a sign," we have to know what the signs are. For each theme: what the verse says — and what it does not necessarily say.

FOURTEEN MESSIANIC THEMES IN TANAKH

THEME	KEY VERSE	DOESN'T NECESSARILY SAY
Ingathering	Devarim 30:3; Isaiah 11:12	By what means, or how fast
The land blooms	Ezekiel 36:8; Sanhedrin 98a	How near "near" is
Rebuilding	Amos 9:11, 14	That it happens quickly
A new heart	Ezekiel 36:25–26	Before or after the outer redemption
Knowledge of Hashem	Jeremiah 31:33; Isaiah 11:9	That learning ends
Torah from Zion	Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2	That the nations convert
Israel and the nations	Tzefaniah 3:9; Zechariah 8:23	Who Gog is, or when
Peace	Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3–4	That the road there is peaceful
Justice	Isaiah 11:3–4	A test to apply to anyone today
A king from David	Ezekiel 37:24; Hoshea 3:5	Who he is
The Temple	Ezekiel 37:26; chapters 40–48	When, or by whom
The spirit poured out	Joel 3:1	That any claimant today is a prophet
Resurrection	Daniel 12:2	That it is part of the Messianic era itself
Hashem revealed	Isaiah 40:5; Malachi 3:23–24	That Eliyahu's arrival will be public

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

Which of these are *outer* events (history, politics, geography) — and which are *inner* (heart, knowledge, perception)?

PART VI

Before Mashiach

The prophets describe the destination. The Talmud asks what the road looks like just before we arrive.

TEXT 12 MISHNAH*Sotah 9:15*

In the footsteps of Mashiach, chutzpah will increase and prices will soar... the government will turn to heresy, and there will be no one to accept rebuke... the wisdom of scholars will decay, those who fear sin will be despised, and truth will be missing... the face of the generation will be like the face of a dog. **And on whom can we lean? On our Father in Heaven.**

DIRECT SOURCE**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION**

Did any line sound familiar? Now — would it have sounded familiar in 1300? In 1650? In 1938? Is this a prediction, a recurring pattern, or a spiritual description?

► TWO PATHS*Sanhedrin 98a*

"If they merit — I will hasten it; if not — it will come in its time" (Isaiah 60:22).

► TWO ATTITUDES*Sanhedrin 98b*

Ulla: "Let him come, but let me not see him." Rav Yosef: "Let him come, and may I merit to sit in the shade of his donkey."

► **A WARNING***Sanhedrin 97b*

"May the bones of those who calculate the end rot"
— for when the date passes, people say he is not coming.

► **THE PRACTICAL ANSWER***Sanhedrin 98b; Shabbat 118a*

What should a person do to be saved from the birth pangs of Mashiach? "Occupy yourself with Torah and acts of kindness." And keep the three meals of Shabbat.

► **LESSON**

Chazal did not hand us a checklist to tick off from the news. When it feels like truth itself is missing — lean on your Father in Heaven, learn Torah, do kindness, keep Shabbat.

PART VII

The Opening of Wisdom

The Talmud gave us darkness before dawn. The Zohar gives us something surprising: a flood of wisdom before the seventh millennium.

TEXT 13 ZOHAR*I:117a, Vayera*

"In the six hundredth year of the sixth millennium, the gates of wisdom above will open, and the wellsprings of wisdom below, and the world will prepare to enter the seventh, like a person who prepares on the sixth day, as the sun sets, to enter Shabbat. And your sign: 'In the six hundredth year of Noah's life... all the wellsprings of the great deep burst open, and the windows of heaven were opened' (Bereishit 7:11)."

DIRECT SOURCE► **WHAT IT SAYS — AND DOESN'T***Reading the text carefully*

The six hundredth year of the sixth millennium is 5600 — 1840 on the secular calendar. The Zohar says wisdom opens and the world begins to *prepare*. It does not say Mashiach comes in 5600.

TWO FLOODS

	OPENED FROM ABOVE AND BELOW	RESULT
Noah's 600th year (Bereishit 7:11)	Windows of heaven · wellsprings of the deep	The world covered with destruction
The 600th year of the 6th millennium (Zohar I:117a)	Gates of wisdom above · wellsprings of wisdom below	The world covered with knowledge — "as the waters cover the sea"

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

What might "wisdom above" mean? What might "wisdom below" mean?

TEXT 14 LETTER OF THE BAAL SHEM TOV

Rosh Hashanah 5507 (1746)

His soul ascended on high, and he asked Mashiach: "When will the master come?" The answer: when your teaching is made known and revealed in the world, and your wellsprings spread outward.

DIRECT SOURCE

► ANALYSIS

Later Tradition

Later Chassidic teachers read "wisdom above" as the spread of Torah and its inner dimension, and "wisdom below" as the explosion of science and technology — both meant, in the end, to reveal Hashem. That is a reading, not the Zohar's own words.

PART VIII

Eyes That Open

According to the Torah, the physical world is not all that exists. Do the sources say we will *see* more as redemption approaches?

TEXT 15 II KINGS**6:17**

Elisha prayed: "Hashem, open his eyes, that he may see." And Hashem opened the servant's eyes, and he saw — the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

DIRECT SOURCE**QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION**

When did the chariots of fire arrive?

▶ **UNCOVERED EYES**

Bamidbar 22:31

"Then Hashem uncovered the eyes of Bilam, and he saw the angel." The donkey saw first.

▶ **THE LADDER**

Mishnah Sotah 9:15

Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair: Torah leads to care... to holiness, humility, fear of sin, piety — then Divine inspiration — then the resurrection of the dead.

▶ **THE PROMISE**

Isaiah 30:20; Ezekiel 39:29

"Your Teacher will no longer hide Himself; your eyes shall see your Teacher." "I will no longer hide My face from them."

▶ **WHAT WE DON'T SAY**

Our guardrail

Unexplained phenomena are exactly that — unexplained. No Jewish source calls them angels or signs of Mashiach.

PART IX

A Contemporary Voice

Tonight we hear how Rabbi Tovia Singer reads several of these prophecies. Listen closely — then test his readings with the Rambam (Part X) and the six questions below.

TEXT 16 DANIEL**12:9, 11–12**

"Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end... And from the time that the continual burnt-offering shall be taken away, and the detestable thing that causes appalment set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Happy is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

DIRECT SOURCE► **A CONTEMPORARY READING***Rabbi Tovia Singer*

Reading each day as a year and counting from the completion of the Dome of the Rock (691), he arrives at 1980 and 2026. He urges: "Look it up for yourself."

TEXT 17 TALMUD***Berachot 10a***

King Chizkiyahu, told he would die, answered the prophet Isaiah: "I have a tradition from my grandfather's house: even if a sharp sword rests on a person's neck, he should not stop praying for mercy."

DIRECT SOURCE**TEXT 18** EZEKIEL**38:16; 39:21–22, 29**

"Thou shalt come up against My people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land... that the nations may know Me." ... "And I will set My glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see... So the house of Israel shall know that I am Hashem their God, from that day and forward." ... "Neither will I hide My face any more from them."

DIRECT SOURCE► **LOOK WHAT THE TORAH IS DOING HERE**

Gog comes "like a cloud to cover the land" — and the prophecy ends, "I will no longer hide My face." It opens with a covering and closes with the covering removed.

EXERCISE

Six questions for any claimed sign. 1. Where is the source? 2. What does it literally say? 3. How did classical commentators understand it? 4. Is the modern comparison direct or interpretive? 5. Has something similar happened before? 6. What would still need to happen? — Choose one claim you've heard and test it.

PART X

The Great Guardrail

After prophecies, calculations and wars, we open the most careful legal code in Jewish history. The Rambam ends his Mishneh Torah with two chapters on Mashiach.

TEXT 19 RAMBAM, MISHNEH TORAH

Hilchot Melachim 11:4

If a king arises from the house of David, who studies Torah and keeps the mitzvot like David his ancestor, and leads all Israel to walk in it, and fights the wars of Hashem — he is **presumed** to be Mashiach. If he did this and succeeded, built the Temple in its place, and gathered the dispersed of Israel — he is **Mashiach with certainty**. And he will repair the whole world to serve Hashem together.

DIRECT SOURCE

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

Why does the Rambam define Mashiach by results — not by feelings, miracles or charisma?

TEXT 20 RAMBAM, MISHNEH TORAH*Hilchot Melachim 12:2*

All these things and their like — no one will know how they will be until they happen... A person should not occupy himself with these matters or make them central, for they bring neither to fear nor to love of Hashem. And one should not calculate the end.

DIRECT SOURCE**TEXT 21** RAMBAM, MISHNEH TORAH*Hilchot Melachim 12:5*

In that time there will be no famine and no war, no jealousy and no competition... The whole world will be occupied only with knowing Hashem. Israel will be great sages and **will know hidden things**, as it says: "For the earth shall be filled with knowledge of Hashem as the waters cover the sea."

DIRECT SOURCE**► LESSON**

The most careful, anti-speculative authority in Jewish history ends with our theme: Israel will know hidden things. The veil lifts — through knowledge and Torah, not through calculation.

PART XI

Natural or Supernatural?

"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb... and the lion shall eat straw like the ox" (Isaiah 11:6–7). When Mashiach comes, does nature change?

TEXT 22 RAMBAM *Hilchot Melachim 12:1*

Do not think that in the days of Mashiach anything of the world's natural order will cease. The world continues in its normal course. Isaiah's wolf and lamb are a parable: Israel will dwell securely among nations once compared to wolves and leopards.

DIRECT SOURCE**TEXT 23** RAMBAN*Vayikra 26:6*

On "I will remove evil beasts from the land": in the future the animals will return to their nature before Adam's sin, when predators did not kill. Read Isaiah literally.

CLASSICAL INTERPRETATION

► THE ROOT OF THE DEBATE

Berachot 34b; Sanhedrin 99a

Shmuel: "The only difference between this world and the days of Mashiach is freedom from subjugation to the nations." Rabbi Chiya bar Abba: "All the prophets prophesied only about the days of Mashiach."

DEBATE

Which side convinces you more? What do both sides agree on?

PART XII

Why the World Is Hidden

We have asked when and how. The Tanya asks why. Why would Hashem create a world where He is hidden at all?

TEXT 24 MIDRASH TANCHUMA

Naso 16

"The Holy One, blessed be He, desired to have a dwelling place in the lower realms."

DIRECT SOURCE

TEXT 25 TANYA

Chapters 36–37

For Hashem there is no "up" and "down." This world is the "lowest" because here His light is most hidden — so hidden that a person can deny Him. The purpose is that the darkness itself be transformed into light, "as the advantage of light over darkness." ... "The ultimate perfection of the days of Mashiach and the resurrection of the dead — the revelation of the Infinite light in this physical world — depends on our actions and our service throughout the time of exile."

DIRECT SOURCE

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

Why would Hashem create a world capable of denying its Creator?

The purpose was never to escape the physical world. It is for the physical world itself to reveal Hashem.

THE INNER VEIL — TANYA

IDEA	SOURCE	IN PLAIN WORDS
Two souls	Tanya 1–2, 9	A Divine soul — "a part of God above" — and an animal soul, pulling in different directions
The hidden love	Tanya 18–19	Every Jew has a hidden love for Hashem. "The soul of man is the candle of Hashem" (Mishlei 20:27).
The beinoni	Tanya 12	The "in-between" person who never finishes the inner struggle — and keeps choosing good
What lifts the veil	Tanya 5, 32, 37, 41	Torah · mitzvot · prayer · teshuvah · tzedakah · love of a fellow Jew

PART XIII**Today**

Bringing the whole cosmic picture down to one chair in this room — yours.

TEXT 26 TALMUD*Sanhedrin 98a*

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi found Mashiach at the gates of Rome, sitting among the poor and the sick, unbinding and rebinding his wounds one at a time, so that if he were called he would not be delayed. He asked: "When will the master come?" He answered: "Today." ... Eliyahu explained: "Today — if you will listen to His voice" (Tehillim 95:7).

DIRECT SOURCE

► ONE MITZVAH

Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah 3:4

A person should see himself, and the whole world, as half innocent and half guilty. One mitzvah can tip himself and the entire world to the side of merit.

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

If Mashiach came tomorrow, what would you change today? And why wait?

JUDAISM 101 — BRINGING REDEMPTION HOME

STEP	SOURCE	A FIRST STEP
Mezuzah	Devarim 6:9	A kosher scroll on the right doorpost, upper third, with a blessing
Shema	Devarim 6:4–7	Cover your eyes; say the first line morning and night
Tefillin	Devarim 6:8	Weekday mornings — any shul will help
Shabbat	Shemot 20:8	Candles before sunset, Kiddush, dinner together, phones away
Blessings	Berachot 35a	A blessing before you eat
Torah daily	—	5–10 minutes, the same time each day
Tzedakah	Bava Batra 10a	"Great is tzedakah, for it brings the redemption near" — a box at home
Sukkot now	Vayikra 23:40–42	Lulav and etrog through Hoshana Rabbah (Oct 2); a meal in the sukkah

CONCLUSION

Key Points

KEY POINTS

1. Hashem hides; He does not leave (Devarim 31:18). Hagar's well was there before her eyes were opened.
2. "On that day Hashem will be One" does not describe a change in Hashem — it describes a change in the world's eyes (Pesachim 50a).
3. The prophets describe a world that will *know* and *see* Hashem — "as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).
4. Real parallels to the prophets exist — but judge by results, not predictions, and do not calculate the end (Rambam, Melachim 11–12).
5. The world was made hidden so we could reveal it through physical mitzvot; the completion depends on our deeds now (Tanya 36–37).
6. When will Mashiach come? "Today — if you will listen to His voice" (Sanhedrin 98a).

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Where is one place in your life where Hashem is present, but you have not yet learned to see Him?

THIS WEEK'S AVODAH

Choose one mitzvah with a physical object — the lulav, the sukkah, a tzedakah box, the mezuzah, or Shabbat candles — and do it slowly every day this week. Pause for five seconds: "This is the lower world becoming a home for Hashem." Next Wednesday, share one moment when you saw Him.

"You shall draw water with joy from the wellsprings of salvation." — Isaiah 12:3

Scripture in Parts I–XIII is quoted or closely rendered in English; Daniel 12 and Ezekiel 38–39 follow the JPS 1917 translation, with God's Name rendered "Hashem." Deeper Judaism · Torah · Connection · Personal Growth · Jewish Life.

