Rabbi Steinman and the Messiah, part 1

Marc B. Shapiro

Since in a recent post I discussed Maimonides and the Principle of the Messiah, let me add one more thing. Yet before doing so, I need to make a few preliminary comments. Many readers know about the Peleg, which has caused all sorts of problems in Jerusalem. After the passing of R. Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, the simmering dispute in the Lithuanian world broke out into the open, and a minority of the Lithuanian community refused to accept the leadership of R. Aharon Yehudah Leib Steinman, who was backed by R. Hayyim Kanievsky. The opponents, known as the Peleg, were led by the late R. Shmuel Auerbach.

While people are aware of the wild behavior of the Peleg youth as they are the ones who block streets in Jerusalem, there is very little awareness of what was another element of the battle in the Lithuanian community, and that was the attempt to delegitimize R. Steinman. An entire literature was created that focused on two things. The first was citing all sorts of things that R. Steinman said which were believed to be in opposition to haredi ideology. The point was to show that because of his supposedly liberal views he was not suited to lead the haredi world, and that he had departed from the approach of R. Shakh.[1]

The other focus, also found in Peleg publications, was to show that R. Steinman did not have the requisite Torah scholarship to lead the community. For obvious reasons, they never made this claim about R. Hayyim Kanievsky, and never explained why they felt able to disagree with R. Kanievsky who was the most
While this dispute was playing out, R. Steinman said something that was like manna from heaven for the Peleg, for now they had a chance to use some heavy “ammunition” on him, as they could claim that he rejected the Rambam’s Twelfth Principle which affirms the coming of the Messiah. In response to the attacks on R. Steinman, his defenders claimed that his words were taken out of context. During the dispute, a couple of people in correspondence with me wondered if R. Steinman should be added to the list of people who disagree with one of the Principles.

Here is a poster put up against R. Steinman by some unnamed extremist (found here).
So what did R. Steinman say that created such a mini-explosion in the haredi world. You can find the transcript of R. Steinman’s words here. You can hear the actual conversation here.

R. Meir Zvi Bergman, in discussion with R. Steinman, said that
according to the Rambam one must wait for the Messiah’s arrival and not merely believe in his coming.[2] In other words, there are two separate things that are required: 1. Belief that he will come, and 2. Actively awaiting his arrival. R. Bergman referred to the Rambam’s words in the Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Melakhim 11:1, which seem to say exactly this:

וכל מי שאינו מאמין בו או מי שאינו מחכה לביאתו לא בשאר נביאים

R. Bergman later notes that this is also included as part of the Twelfth Principle. What he must mean is the following: In the Principle the Rambam says that we must believe that the Messiah will come, and he cites the verse from Habakkuk 2:3: “Though he tarry, wait for him.” By citing this verse, the Rambam is adding a second aspect to the principle, just like he later does in Hilkhot Melakhim.

I would add to this that presumably the Rambam also had in mind Shabbat 31a, which says that in the next world everyone will be asked if צם את ישועה. How this sentence should be translated is itself a problem. Soncino translates it as “Did you hope for salvation?”, while Koren translates as “Did you await salvation?” Hoping for salvation and waiting for it are two separate things.[3] Artscroll’s translation combines the approaches of both Soncino and Koren: “Did you wait in hope for the [Messianic] salvation?”

In response to R. Bergman’s point, about the need to actively wait for the Messiah, R. Steinman replies that no one fulfills this, namely, no one is really waiting for the Messiah. My understanding of what he said is that no one is consciously focusing on, and anxiously awaiting, the Messiah’s arrival. They believe that the Messiah will come, but in the meantime they are learning Torah and doing mitzvot and when he comes, he comes, but until then Jews have plenty to do to keep themselves busy.
R. Bergman is surprised by R. Steinman’s comment and states that the Rambam says that if one does not wait for the Messiah he is a heretic, to which R. Steinman repeats his earlier point that no one does this. Upon being questioned again, R. Steinman replies that this is a “decree that the community cannot follow.” He adds that people say that the Chafetz Chaim “waited” for the Messiah. “Maybe yes, I don’t know. This is what they say, maybe yes.” R. Steinman then adds that the Chafetz Chaim was unique, but the Torah was not given just for such special people.[4]

R. Steinman’s statements are quite provocative, first, because he expresses uncertainty if the Chafetz Chaim can really be said to have actively waited for the Messiah, and second, because he makes it clear that the other great rabbis did not really wait for the Messiah. It would have been controversial enough if all he said was that he himself, or the people of this generation, do not really wait for the Messiah, but he applied this statement also to great ones of previous generations.

As the conversation continues, R. Bergman insists that waiting for the Messiah is one of the Thirteen Principles, and that in earlier times people indeed did wait for the Messiah. R. Steinman replies that in earlier days the Jews suffered greatly and that is why they had a focus on the Messiah.

R. Moshe Schneider, who was R. Steinman’s havruta and present at the conversation, adds: “The Rambam in the Thirteen Principles says, ‘Even though he may delay, nevertheless, I wait daily for him to come.’ Doesn’t he mean that there is an obligation in the Thirteen Principles to wait [for the Messiah]?” R. Steinman could have pointed out that the version of the Principle found in the siddur which R. Schneider quoted was not written by the Rambam, and its words do not appear in the actual text of the Principle found in the Rambam’s commentary to Mishnah, Sanhedrin. However, I don’t know how much this would help, for as we have seen, in the Mishneh
Torah, Hilkhot Melakhim 11:1, the Rambam is explicit about the need to wait for the Messiah.

R. Bergman adds that if people do not fulfill this aspect of the Principle, then all the Thirteen Principles are weakened.

So far we see that R. Steinman held that the Principle is to believe in the coming of the Messiah, but this does not mean that one has to “wait” for him, which I think means to have a focus on the Messiah and actively wait in hope for his return.[5] We also see that R. Steinman himself was not “actively waiting” for the Messiah. Although Chabad claims that a focus on the Messiah is basic to Judaism,[6] it appears that R. Steinman thought otherwise. The Hatam Sofer already mentioned—in opposition to Maimonides—that the Messianic idea, while of course true (and denial of it is heresy), is not an essential element of Judaism, namely, basic to the very structure of the religion.[7]

Many have wondered about these words of the Hatam Sofer. Yet they are simply a repetition of what appears in Nahmanides, and as is well known, the Hatam Sofer greatly valued the writings of Ramban. Here is what Nahmanides states (and as with the Hatam Sofer, despite these words he continues by noting that denial of the messianic idea is indeed heresy):[8]
Returning to R. Steinman’s conversation, in response to R. Bergman he cites R. Hillel’s view (Sanhedrin 99a) that there will be no Messiah for Israel, “because they have already enjoyed him in the days of Hezekiah.” It is not clear why he cited this. Was R. Steinman stating that one does not need to believe in an individual Messiah at all, in accord with the commentary to attributed to Rashi’s understanding that R. Hillel’s point is that in the future there will only be a messianic era, not a Messiah? R. Bergman asks R. Steinman point blank if he holds like R. Hillel in opposition to the Rambam, and R. Steinman does not answer the question, instead replying, “It is enough for us to observe the mitzvot that we can.”[9]

R. Steinman’s point in mentioning R. Hillel could also be that R. Hillel certainly did not “wait” for the Messiah, as he thought that the Messiah had already arrived. Nevertheless, he is not regarded as a heretic, thus showing that this point is not essential. In any event, it is obvious that R. Steinman was not happy with R. Bergman’s focus on the details of the Twelfth Principle, and instead wanted the focus to be on the performance of mitzvot.

Not surprisingly, when the tape of R. Steinman speaking to R. Bergman was released it created a great controversy, which was called סערת המשיח. For attacks on R. Steinman by Satmar rabbis, which degrade him in the most harsh way, including one that says that R. Steinman is “worse than Kook,” see here.

A Chabad rabbi, R. Yechezkel Sofer, also responded to R. Steinman’s words (see here), and he makes a very interesting point which could explain what R. Steinman was getting at. R. Sofer states that one is not a heretic if he is lacking an emotional connection to the coming of the Messiah. The problem is only if one develops an intellectual position that there is
no reason to wait for the Messiah. R. Sofer adds, however, that from a hasidic perspective a higher level of “waiting” is required, which he acknowledges not everyone is capable of. Here is how he concludes, and the second part of the sentence must be seen as a put-down of all those who do not put a stress on constantly waiting for the Messiah.

I think R. Steinman can be explained very simply, that despite what the Rambam says, it is difficult for virtually anyone to be emotionally invested in the coming of the Messiah, and thus have a sense of waiting for him, especially waiting constantly (every day) which is how the Principle is formulated in the siddur. R. Steinman was saying, what is the point of speaking about something which hardly anyone can fulfill? At the end of the day, it is enough to believe in the coming of the Messiah without adding anything else to this basic belief.

R. Avraham Yehoshua Soloveitchik defended R. Steinman, and this is some of what he said before he moved into a general attack on the Peleg:[10]
The upshot of R. Soloveitchik’s point is that thinking about the Messiah is not something that needs to be at the top of our concerns. Using Scholem’s terminology, we can say that R. Soloveitchik’s approach is that of neutralization of the messianic impulse. Should we be surprised that after R. Soloveitchik’s words were made public he too was attacked.[11] Here is a poster against him that was plastered on walls in Jerusalem.
Whatever you may think of R. Soloveitchik’s words, I don’t know how to square them with what his grandfather, R. Isaac Zev Soloveitchik (the Brisker Rav), is quoted as saying, that not only must we await the Messiah every day, but we must do so the entire day and every instant.[12] R. Moshe Mordechai Shulzinger notes, based on the Brisker Rav’s understanding,
that all those who give dates when the Messiah will arrive are undermining Maimonides’ Principle (which he explains in line with Maimonides’ words in *Hilkhot Melakhim*), because the result of their predictions is that they (and those who follow them) will not believe that the Messiah can come at any minute, as they will only be expecting him at a future time.[13]

R. Shulzinger also explains the meaning of the Brisker Rav in a different way than his words are usually understood. He says that what the Brisker Rav meant is that one must believe that the Messiah can come at any instant, and that is the meaning of “waiting” for the Messiah. Understood this way, the Brisker Rav’s point is exactly in line with what R. Steinman said, for R. Steinman never denied that the Messiah could come at any time. He simply said that the idea of consciously waiting for the Messiah is not something that a typical person can do. Here are R. Shulzinger’s words:[14]

"אינו מחכה והשằmין שיכול לבוא בכל רגע זה חיוב של אמונה ומכה על זמן מסוים שעדיין לא יבוא הוא שהחליט בלבו ח-וזה הוא חסרון אמונה...""רח", שאינו מחכה לביאתו

R. Shulzinger also prints a letter he sent to an unnamed rabbi who had argued that when the Rambam speaks of “waiting” for the Messiah, it does not mean that you must really believe that he can come at any minute. This rabbi compares it to someone who has a son in prison. He waits for the son to return home, even though he knows that this will not happen in the near future. According to the unnamed rabbi, this too falls under the Rambam’s understanding of “waiting,” a point that R. Shulzinger strongly rejects.[15]

In line with his understanding of the meaning of “waiting”, R. Shulzinger also makes the following very interesting point, which I don’t know if everyone would agree with: A person says
that he would prefer that the Messiah not come in the near future, but only in a few years as he will by then have completed study of the entire Talmud, and will be more prepared to greet the Messiah. Nevertheless, this person knows that God does not take into account his wishes, and he believes that the Messiah can come at any instant. R. Shulzinger says that this person has not violated Maimonides’ Principle. In other words, the Principle requires the belief that the Messiah will come, and can come at any instant. Yet it does not require you to actually desire the Messiah’s arrival. Thus, to give a different example than that offered by R. Shulzinger, if someone has a very good business in the Diaspora, it could be that while he believes in the coming of the Messiah, he does not actually want this to happen, because he thinks that after the Messiah’s arrival all Jews will have move to Israel, and he does not want to give up his thriving business. According to R. Shulzinger, these sentiments would not be in contradiction to Maimonides’ principle:[16]


To be continued

Excursus

Is there anywhere in tannaitic or amoraic writings where it says that all Jews will live in Israel is messianic days? I ask because this certainly does appear to be a widely held view throughout Jewish history. Maimonides states that “all Israel” will be gathered around the Messiah (Hilkhot Melakhim 12:3), but I don’t think this can be taken literally. I say this since according to Maimonides the messianic era will not be an era of open miracles, and people will still have free will, including free will to sin, so one can assume that some Jews will choose to remain in places outside of Israel. For those who see the messianic era as a time of
miracles, when life will not continue as it does now, then it makes sense to imagine a time when all Jews will come to Israel. Thus, R. Isaac Abarbanel states that in messianic days not even one Jew will remain outside of Israel. See his commentary to Ezekiel 39:28 (p. 583), Mashmia Yeshuah, ed. Golan (Bnei Brak, 2014), pp. 72, 208. This is also stated on many occasions by the Lubavitcher Rebbe. See e.g., Likutei Sihot, vol. 11, pp. 1ff.

On the other hand, R. Shmuel Tuvyah Stern understands the issue in a purely naturalistic way. He states that the Jewish people are themselves obligated to go to Israel, as God will not be bringing them there. Those who refuse to go, or delay in going, are preventing the Jewish people in the Land of Israel from the performance of certain mitzvot that come into effect when the majority of the Jewish population lives there. (Regarding these mitzvot, see R. Yehudah Amihai here.) In other words, R. Stern acknowledges that even in messianic times not everyone will follow the Torah path. See She’elot u-Teshuvot ha-Shavit, vol. 9, p. 62:

This topic has relevance to the issue of Yom Tov Sheni. Will it still be celebrated in messianic days for those Jews living outside of Israel? Since we will return to the old way of declaring Rosh Hodesh, rather than by a calendar, the assumption in pre-modern times would presumably have been yes, as far flung places would still not know what day was declared the New Moon. However, with modern communications, it would seem that there will be no Yom Tov Sheni in messianic days, even for people who live in the Diaspora.
Writing before the invention of modern communications, R. Moses Sofer states that there will indeed be Yom Tov Sheni in messianic days. See Derashot Hatam Sofer, vol. 2, p. 274b, s.v. למען. He sees this as in remembrance of our time in exile. See, however, ibid., p. 208a, s.v. כל, where he says that Yom Tov Sheni will be abolished in messianic days, and that this is the meaning of the rabbinic teaching in Yalkut Shimoni, Mishlei no. 944: “All the festivals [i.e., Yom Tov Sheni] are to be abolished in the future [messianic era], but Purim will never be abolished.”

Elsewhere, in speaking of Yom Tov Sheni in the messianic era, R. Sofer refers to it as ימי טובים של גאולתינו וב. He makes this comment while discussing R. Judah’s position in Gittin 8a: “R. Judah holds that all islands fronting the coast of Eretz Israel are reckoned as Eretz Israel” (see his commentary to Beitzah 4b. See also his commentary to Beitzah 24b and She’elot u-Teshuvot Hatam Sofer, Orah Hayyim no. 145 [end]). R. Sofer notes that this means that all islands in the Mediterranean on the same latitude as the biblical Land of Israel (which extends into Lebanon), are regarded as belonging to Israel. If you look on a map (and you can actually see a good one in the Koren Talmud, Gittin 8a) you will see that this means that Cyprus, Crete, and Sicily are part of the territory of Israel. R. Sofer states that Jews who live in these places in messianic days will have to observe a second day of Yom Tov.

It is not clear to me why R. Sofer assumes that R. Judah’s position is accepted. See Tosafot, Gittin 8a, s.v. Rabbi Yehudah, where Rabbenu Tam states that we do not accept his position. Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Terumot 1:7, also rejects R. Judah’s opinion.

In describing how far the territory of Israel extends, the R. Sofer writes (Teshuvot, Orah Hayyim, no. 145 [end]):
The word נסינים, which he uses, is found in Gittin 8a and it means “islands”. See Jastrow, s.v. נס and נסא.

(Regarding R. Judah’s position about the islands being included as part of Israel, R. Hayyim Kanievsky points to Psalms 97:1: “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad – ישמחו איים רבים.” R. Kanievsky asks why does it say איים in plural. He answers that this makes sense according to R. Judah’s view that the islands opposite Israel are included in the territory of Eretz Yisrael. See R. Kanievsky, Ta’ama de-Kra to Ps. 97:1.)

In the quotation above, R. Sofer refers to רמון ספרד. In medieval Hebrew, this is how the kingdom of Granada is called. The word “Granada” means pomegranate, which are abundant in that part of Spain, and a pomegranate was on the kingdom’s coat of arms (and is also found on the contemporary Spanish coat of arms). The reason the kingdom was generally called Rimon Sefarad and not just Rimon, which would be the literal translation of “Granada”, is because the expression רמון ספרד is a play on the biblical place רמון פרץ that is mentioned in Num. 33:20. See R. Meir Mazuz, Bayit Ne’eman, vol. 1, p. 32. In Yehudah Halevi’s poem בעברי על פני רמון מפחד the first line reads בעברי על פני רמון מפחד. Some scholars believe that instead of מפחד it should read ספרד. See Halevi, Diwan, ed. Brody (n.p., 1971), vol. 1, p. 78 (note to poem no. 34). Yet Halevi elsewhere does refer simply to רמון. See Diwan, vol. 1, p. 153, line 59, and vol. 2, p. 280, line 46.

Since the Hatam Sofer is absolutely clear in what he writes, that the boundary of Israel extends until the end of Granada, which means the Atlantic Ocean, I don’t understand how R. Mordechai Winkler can cite without objection a report that R. Sofer said that England also falls within the borders of Israel. See Levushei Mordechai, Yoreh Deah vol. 3, no. 49.)
R. Hayyim Hirschensohn interprets R. Judah’s position differently than the Hatam Sofer. He assumes that R. Judah is speaking not of the Mediterranean but of the Atlantic Ocean, and thus the territory of Israel extends all the way to the United States. He also interprets R. Judah to be including not merely the islands but also the land territory that is on the same latitude as Israel. What this means is that a good deal of the southern United States is included in the territory of Eretz Yisrael! Furthermore, R. Hirschensohn claims that according to R. Judah you can pray in the direction of these southern states, and those in the U.S. who want to fulfill all opinions should do this!. (Interestingly, he also does not see any significance for people in the U.S., who are so far from Israel, to face the Holy Land in their prayers.) See his article in Avraham Moshe Luntz, ed., *Yerushalayim* 8 (1909), p. 196:

See also R. Yeshayahu Steinberg in *Ha-Ma’yan*, Tishrei 5775, pp. 43-44, who has a different approach according to which even Northern France is perhaps regarded as having the holiness of Eretz Yisrael. He even says that if someone is forced to live in the Diaspora, it is better to live in northern France since it is in some sense part of Eretz Yisrael!

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If one has to live in the United States (or west of it), then R. Steinberger says that it is best to live in places on the latitude of Israel (that is, the places mentioned by R. Hirschensohn).

I don’t mean the following to be disrespectful, but I can’t help commenting that what R. Steinberger says might make sense on paper, but I am certain that no one in history has ever made living plans based on the assumption that there is some spiritual advantage due to the holiness of Eretz Yisrael to living in northern France or South Carolina over anywhere else in the Diaspora.

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It has been a while since I have done a quiz, so let me offer one now. Email me with answers at shapirom2 at scranton.edu

1. If you look at older machzorim, in the Tekiat ha-Shofar between the first two sets of blasts you find the letters שב. What is this about?
2. Where in Rashi’s commentary on the Talmud does he say that a certain individual knew all of Shas?
[1] In addition to citing “liberal” passages in R. Steinman’s works in order to discredit him, they also cited a number of strange things that he supposedly said, also in order to discredit him. As always with these types of attacks, it is hard to know if R. Steinman really said what they claim he did. There is a long history of famous rabbis being misquoted, both by opponents and even more so by supporters. Thus, I find it incredibly difficult to believe that R. Steinman ever said the following which is quoted in his name by an unnamed student.

Me-Ahorei ha-Pargod (Bnei Brak, 2012), p. 454.


[3] Generally, we understand “salvation” to mean the Messianic era. However, see R. Zvi Shapira in his commentary on the Sefer Mitzvot Katan, vol. 1, p. 5, who explains that for the Semak, it refers to individual salvation of various kinds.

[4] See also the Chafetz Chaim, Mahaneh Yisrael (Jerusalem, 1973), p. 172:
section]) on the issue of the future redemption. The chapter’s title is

vented על דברי העתיד בידינו לה ràng את הוראתם של יִשְׂרָאֵל

At the beginning of the chapter he writes:

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R. Shmuel Greineman writes as follows about the Chafetz Chaim (Chafetz Chaim al ha-Torah, p. 229):

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The same analogy that R. Levenstein cites in the name of the Chafetz Chaim is cited by R. Elijah Dessler in the name of his father-in-law, R. Nahum Zev Ziv. See Beit Kelm, vol. 2, p. 131.

[5] Regarding Maimonides’ Principle of the Messiah, R. Moses Salmon, Netiv Moshe (Vienna, 1897), p. 44, makes the interesting comment that in the days of the Sages, belief in the Messiah was not a dogma, denial of which would have been regarded as heresy:
I don’t understand his point about R. Akiva, as unlike R. Hillel, he did not deny the concept of a Messiah. He just falsely identified Bar Kokhba as the Messiah. Also, it is not clear whether R. Hillel was a tanna or an amora. See my Limits of Orthodox Theology, p. 141 n. 10.

[6] Regarding Chabad and the Messiah, it is worth noting that Elliot Wolfson has argued that the Rebbe’s secret teaching is that there will be no physical redeemer. Rather, the messianic redemption is able to occur within each person. See Open Secret: Postmessianic Messianism and the Mystical Revision of Menahem Mendel Schneerson (New York, 2009).


[8] Kitvei Ramban, ed. Chavel, pp. 279-280. See also ibid., p. 324, where Nahmanides has strong words about those who only focus on their personal lives rather than praying for God to bring the messianic era.

[9] R. Meir Mazuz offers the fanciful suggestion that the reason the Ashkenazic version of Kaddish—and I guess he would include R. Amram Gaon as well—did not include ויקרב משיחיה is so as not to decide against R. Hillel. See Or Torah, Tevet
Yet as R. Mazuz himself notes, even Ashkenazim say in the Amidah: \( \text{ומביא גואל לבני בניהם} \).

In *Kevatzim mi-Ketav Yad Kodsho*, vol. 1, p. 37, R. Kook explains R. Hillel’s position as follows:

\[ \text{אמנם ברוממות המוסר, חשב שמציאות מלך באומה באצד חסרון המוסר'} \]

\[ \text{הלל הי כי אם בא יבוא לנו, עלכן אמר אין משיח לישראל, necesita רק תוקף לאומי גדול ונעלה} \]

\[ \text{wałten של ישראל הוא המשיחות, תוקף לאומי נPropertyChanged מאד} \]

Yeshayahu Leibowitz claims that R. Hillel’s statement was directed against the Christians. He was telling them not to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, as the Jews already enjoyed the messianic era in the days of Hezekiah. See *Sihot al Torat ha-Nevuah shel ha-Rambam* (Jerusalem, 1997), pp. 400-401. Graetz already offered this suggestion. See *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. Hillel.

[10] See here where the poster against him that I include is also found.

[11] Unlike R. Avraham Yehoshua, R. Meir Soloveitchik spoke out against what R. Steinman said. See here. As long as we are speaking about the Jerusalem Soloveitchiks, let me also mention that R. Meshulam Dovid Soloveitchik writes that one who truly waits for the Messiah understands what the Zionists are all about. He also adds that those who have any happiness about the State of Israel are lacking in their belief in the coming of the Messiah. See *Shiurei Ha-Gaon Rabbi Meshulam ha-Levi: Derush ve-Aggadah* (Jerusalem, 2014), p. 601:

\[ \text{והנה מי שברור אצלו לגמרי ענין האמונה והציפיה לביאת המשיח הוא יודע להסתכל} \]

\[ \text{ומי שיש לו משהו של שמחה על الدولة ועל השלטון והחוקים, כראוי על הציונים,} \]

\[ \text{שהלהם הדבר מוכיח שחסר אצלו באמונה בביאת המשיח} \]

R. Meshulam Dovid Soloveitchik has many pages in which he blasts Zionism and the State of Israel in the harshest way imaginable. Yet after all this, he adds that nothing he says should lead to the degrading of any Torah scholar who is mistaken in this matter—a lesson Satmar authors would do well
to learn— and this was the path of both his father, the Brisker Rav, and his grandfather, R. Chaim. See ibid., pp. 601-602:

If one compares the path he chose . . . one might think he was following the same path as R. Moshe Feinstein had the same basic approach. See Iggerot Moshe, Orah Hayyim 5, no. 8:

As the Messiah can come at any time, including during the Covid pandemic, R. Gamliel Rabinowitz wonders if kohanim would be permitted to wear masks while performing their service in the Temple. See Or Torah, Elul 5780, p. 1327.

[12] Haggadah shel Pesah mi-Beit Levi, p. 120. R. Moshe Feinstein had the same basic approach. See Iggerot Moshe, Orah Hayyim 5, no. 8:

R. Jacob Sasportas, Tzitzat Novel Tzvi, ed. Tishby (Jerusalem, 1954), p. 41, writes:


R. Jacob Sasportas, Tzitzat Novel Tzvi, ed. Tishby (Jerusalem, 1954), p. 41, writes:

[16] Peninei Rabbenu ha-Avi Ezri, p. 417. There are myriads of other possible reasons why one might not wish the Messiah to
come soon or even at all. Consider this hypothetical case: A man who intermarried and had children later became a ba’al teshuvah and divorced his wife. He is now hoping that his former wife and children will convert. However, it will take some time for him to convince them that this is the best path. This man, who now goes to Daf Yomi, learned from Yevamot 24b that in the days of the Messiah no converts will be accepted. So while the man believes in the coming of the Messiah, and wants him to come, he does not want him to come too quickly, since he figures he needs a couple of years before his family will be ready to convert. While some will regard this man as a heretic for not waiting in hope for the Messiah every single day, according to R. Shulzinger’s understanding of the Brisker Rav, there is nothing lacking in this man’s belief in Maimonides’ Twelfth Principle.